Summary

Using a rare blood adoption ritual to make Hermione a pureblood, the order sends Hermione Granger Black back to 1971. Fighting old and new enemies, Hermione strives to end the war that brought her there to begin with. Finding love, doing what’s right, protecting the young, and becoming an integral player in the game of power is only the tip of the iceberg.
Chapter One

Hermione broke the surface of the ice-cold lake and gasped, feeling as if the cold was an iron band around her lungs, restricting their efficiency. They struggled to inflate as she inhaled fast, dragging her wet sopping hair out of her face, trying to clear her vision. It was distinctly uncomfortable treading water blind in a lake she was unfamiliar with. Merlin only knew what was in the depths of the black water.

She looked around frantically, searching for her two partners in crime and began to move to where some of the biggest ripples emanated from. Several seconds too long for her poor heart passed before Harry broke the surface, followed closely by Ron, sputtering and gasping for air. Relief weighed on her as she realized that everyone made it out of Gringotts alive. It was insane. They were insane. But they had the cup and that made it all worth it.

Movement from the shore, caught her eye and she slid her hand around the handle of her wand and clenched it tightly. She had no idea how long someone had been watching them, but it couldn’t have been anyone who wanted to harm them. They would have already done so.

“Snape,” Harry growled through clenched teeth as they swam to shore.

Hermione took that time to study their old professor and was shocked at what she found. He had always been thin but over the last year, he had lost a shocking amount of weight, evidenced by the way his robes hung from his emaciated frame. Her stomach clenched in pity and she struggled to keep it off her face, even as he pulled his upper lip back in a teeth-baring grimace, sweeping his limp greasy hair behind his ear.

Snape’s glittering black eyes watched them from his nearly unresponsive face as he watched the drenched Trio wade out of the mountain lake. Hermione couldn’t help but think of how sickly he looked, no longer the intimidating teacher who was threatening them with detentions and the loss of house points.

The most unsettling thing was that he wasn’t glaring at Harry like he usually did; He was staring at Hermione and it was unnerving. His black eyes bored into hers, through her and Hermione looked away first, focusing instead on the object he was holding in his hands. A stone basin etched in runes, a pensieve.

“Come to finish us off too?” Harry angrily accused, and Snape seemed to grow even older as they watched. His shoulders hunched as if he carried a great weight upon them, he looked tired as if he had just one more task before he could be laid to rest. Hermione thought grimly that it was the look of a man who had given up, a man who was preparing to die.

“I’m here to deliver Dumbledore’s final request. It’s not to suffer your special kind of idiocy,
Potter.” He sneered but it lacked the acid bite they were used to. Snape turned to Hermione and studied her face, not as a lover would but as someone who was resting all of their hopes and dreams on them. He thrust the basin into her hands and his face took on a wistful look. Averting his gaze, he began searching the pockets of his inner robes.

After a few moments of rummaging and scowling, he produced a tiny vial filled with a single memory and handed it to Ron who was now standing closest to the dour Professor. Ron obviously didn’t like the way Snape had been watching Hermione and successfully tried to wedge himself between them. These noble sentiments seemingly went unnoticed as Snape ignored him completely.

Hermione looked at him thoughtfully, she always thought there must be a damn good reason for his treason even if the boys still believed him to be a traitor. Dumbledore was known to be manipulative and crafty with a thousand contingency plans in place. He was always staunchly certain of his potions master, and that was good enough for Hermione. She believed there was more than meets the eye when it came to Severus Snape.

She took the basin, gasping with surprise. The basin was much heavier than it seemed to be. Hermione looked up in askance and with a barely recognizable nod in her general direction and ignoring the boys altogether, Snape twisted away with a pop, leaving the Trio to stare at the empty space he just occupied.

It was with great trepidation that the Trio opened the vial of memory and dumped it into the basin.

“Do you think it’s a trap?” Ron asked dubiously.

“There is only one way to find out, it is only a memory. What is the worst that could happen?” muttered Harry. He was angry with himself and it was obvious. Divination wasn't needed with Harry; he wore his feelings on his sleeve. It was obvious that he was angry for not preventing Dumbledore's death and even after all this time, most of that anger bled into his hatred of Snape, compounding an already tense relationship.

They each dipped a finger into the silver swirling liquid and were sucked into the memory that was swirling innocently in the pensieve.

"As a last resort Severus!" Albus Dumbledore said, sitting behind his desk with a serious expression on his face. His teacup was full, cold, and long forgotten pushed to the edge of the desk. He was obviously trying to elicit a positive response from his Potions Master.

"A last resort that involves the mangy dog and at least one underage student! Out of anyone to send back in time, you choose the know-it-all Granger girl? Why? Why not find a pureblooded child to send back? With a few charms, you could give all the pertinent memories needed! And why go through the Blood Ritual to make her a pureblood, just to send her back in time? No one will know her there; she need only lie. She isn't as deficient as the other Gryffindor's in that area.”

“Because Severus, a simple blood test would reveal her true parentage. We need to make sure that she is protected and the only way to do that is to have her adopted by blood into one of the most powerful pureblood families of the time. She is intelligent, powerful, and would do anything to change the events of James and Lily’s murder. If only to ensure Harry's upbringing would be better than with the Dursley's. She needs to be backed by at least one powerful family to move around as freely as she would need to and the only one with enough power at that time without dropping her into Death Eater hands is the Black's. It is a huge bonus for us that Sirius is on our side and without prejudice, too. On top of that, she is powerful, and Orion won't be able to resist claiming her.”
And what family have you chosen her new mother from that you would deem powerful enough to help protect her? I doubt the Weasley’s would be a good choice and most of the other families have few eligible female heirs on our side or at all for that matter.” Snape argued.

“Abbott. Hannah Abbott. I know what you’re thinking Severus and she doesn’t need to marry Sirius to make this adoption authentic. Hannah will just adopt Hermione. The plan is to send Miss Granger back in time to 1971 immediately after. It won’t affect Miss Abbott at all. The important part is that with a simple blood ritual, Hermione will be protected past, present, and future. There is no one who would dare challenge Orion once his support has been given and that is what we are counting on. In fact, I have it already arranged. Hermione will just have to go to Sirius when the time is right, and he will know what to do. If we could send her back before Voldemort’s first fall, we have a greater chance to destroy him before he ever hears of the prophecy. If I judged her correctly, and I am sure I have, she will willingly sacrifice her future in this time to change things in the past. Can you imagine a timeline where Lily lives?”

Snape stared at Dumbledore with a mixture of anger and hope, bowing his head in resignation. There was no point in hiding exactly how much he wanted that outcome.

The memory faded out and the Trio came out of the pensieve a little disoriented, half expecting to be standing in the Headmaster’s office. It was a great disappointment, however, when their circumstances hit them full force. Still soaking wet, and standing on the dam of the lake, the Trio stood holding the last plan enacted by the Headmaster. Hermione knew without a doubt that this was a last-ditch effort if everything went pear-shaped.

Maybe she wouldn’t need to go back. There was still time to destroy the Horcruxes.

"Hermione..." said Harry shocked as he trailed off.

"He wants me to go back in time," Hermione muttered, brows furrowed as she considered the ramifications of such a thing. Harry's eyes snapped to hers. Would it even work?

“You can’t seriously be considering this, ‘Mione!” said Harry. Although he said that, there was nothing he wanted more than to spend his childhood with his parents and not have to worry about a war or being the chosen one. The thought itself was intoxicating. On the other hand, Hermione would be gone, and she would have to take up the job that had been left to Harry by Dumbledore. Alone.

"What would our lives be like if You-Know-Who was dead long before our time?" She looked up at Harry, then at Ron, both looking broken-hearted. She could see it on their faces that they wouldn't stop her from going but neither would they encourage her to stay.

Her gaze caught on Ron's and felt deep within her gut that whatever she could have had with him was dead. If she stayed in this time, if they lived after everything was over, and most of all if they won, maybe they could be something. But they were losing the war. There would be no place in Voldemort's regime for Hermione or Harry. What kind of life would a Mudblood and blood-traitor have together? That is if they were allowed to live at all.

Harry hissed in pain and clutched his scar as his eyes went unfocused and glazed over.

“He knows that we have been hunting Horcruxes.” He panted, pressing his fingers into the small groove of his scar. “The last one is a tiara! He is headed to Hogwarts to check on it. It has the Ravenclaw crest on it.”

"It must be the lost diadem," Hermione said.
“There is no way to get there first, even if we could apparate right onto the grounds. That makes two Horcruxes we can't touch. I have failed!” Harry raged in the realization of their imminent defeat.

“We haven’t lost yet! In the pensieve, Dumbledore said all I would need to do was find Sirius. Well, we know exactly where he is! If we can’t win hunting Horcruxes, then we need to find a new way to fight him.” Said Hermione resolutely, knowing that she was damning herself in the process.

Dumbledore knew that if they weren't successful in finding and destroying the Horcruxes in time, they would need another option. And he provided one. Although, Hermione did wonder why he hadn’t sent her back while he was still alive. Hermione’s lips twisted with derision and answered her own question. She knew where, when, and what every Horcrux was now and how to destroy them.

With a flick of her wand, a gust of warm air surrounded them drying their clothes and bodies. Once she was satisfied, she dug around in her pocket and pulled out a small elastic circle and gathered her wild curls at the nape of her neck. She didn’t have time to try and coax the mass into something manageable. Hermione took the both of the boy's hands and together, they apparated just outside of Bill's wards at Shell Cottage.

The first thing Hermione saw when they crossed the boundary was Sirius sitting on the sand of the beach with his knees drawn up to his chin and his arms resting loosely on them. He looked good, better than he had since before his twelve-year stint in Azkaban, she surmised. He was still handsome with black hair and grey eyes that was the hallmark dominant Black family genes. Gesturing in the direction of the beach, she started down the grassy knoll letting the boys trail after.

**HGHG**

It wouldn't be long now, Sirius thought. Snape had sent his Patronus a half hour ago with the message 'package delivered'. After rolling his eyes in irritation, it had taken Sirius five minutes to locate Hannah Abbott at the Tinsworth safe house that Dumbledore set up for her in the middle of her sixth year.

She had been in the kitchen baking cookies when he strolled through the door and without saying a word, Abbott untied her apron strings and tossed it onto the table before reaching around the doorframe into the next room to grab a small suitcase. As always, she was packed and ready to go. Sirius leaned against the table, grabbed a cookie and took a bite, closing his eyes to savor the delicious taste and the rush of fond memories. Memories of living with the Potters; summers of fun and love and just the feeling that everything was right in the world. Memories of things long gone.

They left the cottage only minutes after he arrived and with a nod, they were at Shell Cottage. She went inside, determined to share the cookies she had made but Sirius left to wait for Harry, Ron, and Hermione on the beach. He had no idea what their views of the whole situation was or even if they intended on utilizing it. Sirius wasn’t completely sure what their task was, but he knew that it was the end game they were focused on. He could only hope they never needed to take Dumbledore’s plan B.

However, he assumed they would want to talk to him regardless of what they were doing and continued waiting. He assumed right.

He watched them slowly make their way through the sand dunes and shifted. Before Dumbledore had died, he had given a pouch of things to Sirius, a pouch that was now burning a hole in his pocket. Two letters, and a time turner.
The first letter was sealed, only to be open by Orion Black detailing the reason for her time travel. Although Sirius had tried many times to read it, even using his considerable mischievous talents, it was no use. It made Sirius nervous to depend so highly upon his dysfunctional family and Dumbledore's word that Hermione would be treated well. It wasn't Orion so much as Walburga, that he was worried about as Orion was more likely to just ignore her, but his mother was a whole other kettle of fish. She made everyone miserable. He was almost embarrassed to send Hermione to them.

Everyone knew how Walburga was via her portrait but what no one realized, was that the painted version must have been done on one of her happiest days. And that should have terrified everyone. Hell, he was terrified, and he was raised in that house even though he had escaped as soon as he was able. It angered him that they were thrusting Hermione into that house, into that situation. But Dumbledore had been adamant that she should be bonded to the House of Black.

After the way Harry's abuse at the hands of Petunia was overlooked, Sirius knew that Hermione's well-being wasn't Dumbledore's top priority either. He felt it was up to him to provide for her protection but felt impotent with no way to do so. It left a bitter taste in his mouth.

There was little he could do once the plan had been laid out for him except to follow it and hope they never had to use it. So, it was with great sorrow that he received Snivellus’ Patronus and set the plan into motion.

**HGHG**

Harry, Ron, and Hermione sat on the sand not looking at each other. Everyone knew why they were there. Hermione thought it was easier to keep her emotions in check when none of the men surrounding her made light of the situation or tried to fake being happy. They all sat there with heavy hearts and drained bodies fighting in a war they couldn't win without Hermione's sacrifice now that the final Horcruxes were fully out of their reach. She had no doubt that they would never find the Diadem now.

"I'm ready and not ready," whispered Hermione. "What if I change something that I think is insignificant and none of us are born as a result?" She worried, chewing on her bottom lip and stared wistfully at the churning sea.

"But what if you change You-Know-Who? What if one insignificant change is all it takes to win the war." Ron said, fiddling with a piece of driftwood. "Don't get me wrong ‘Mione. I don’t want you to go but if you have to, you need to live that life as if you don’t know about us here in the future. Change what you must and accept it. We will love you no matter what happens.” Ron reached for her hand and clasped it tightly in his. Hermione teared up at the faith they had in her.

"I will make sure things are better this time around. Can you imagine the Marauders growing up and not have to worry about war? I almost shudder to think of what you will do to the world, Sirius.” She smirked at him.

“Me? Whatever I do will pale in comparison to what your life will be like. I do want you to know, Hermione that you don’t have to go. I know it feels like you have no other options, but we can hide you. We can fake your death and make you safe until the war is over.” Sirius said to her seriously. Had Dumbledore been the one to enact this new plan, he had no doubt that no one would be giving Hermione the option to not go. It was the first time he was glad that Dumbledore was dead. She deserved the honor of a choice, however little it seemed like one.

"I can't sit in comfort and safety somewhere while all of my friends and family fight. I need to be where Harry and Ron are, the front lines. If it were just a matter of living, I would have taken my
parents and moved to the States after fourth year when You-Know-Who came back. Everyone that I love and cherish is here. I will live and die with them, for them."

Sirius nodded his head. He understood perfectly.

“That should be the new family motto. Et ego moriar pro domo. I live and die for family. It’s better than Toujours pur. Always pure. Utter rubbish!” He said. Harry and Ron cracked smiles. Sirius' disdain for the family beliefs was well known.

“It does have a nice ring to it.” Said Hermione with a smile.

Sirius let out a small snort of amusement as Harry looked at him with a raised brow in question.

"I think you will fit in with the family beautifully. After all, you will be my daughter and my sister. Who needs branches on a family tree? We have a lovely family spike.” He joked.

"The inbreeding jokes never get old.” chuckled Ron knowing his family tree wasn't much better.

Sirius wrapped his arms around Harry and Hermione as they stared at the roiling sea. They all sat together in silence a little longer before Hermione stood up and brushed the sand off of the back of her jeans.

“What can I expect with this blood adoption ritual?” Hermione asked Sirius, back to all business.

“It’s nothing too complicated. It uses an ancient blood magic ritual created for the sacred twenty-eight when a line was threatened to die out. One of the adoptive parents has to be the last in the direct line for it to work. Luckily, I am one such a line. There will be some blood collecting and your acceptance into the line of succession for the Black family and that is about it. Your new blood should reflect our combined heritage. It will hold up under the most intense scrutiny. I'm sure there is more that Bill can fill you in on once we get to the house." Said Sirius, as they walked off the beach and to the cottage that had housed them little more than a day ago. Although, it seemed like years.

Sirius led the way inside and Hannah and Fleur met them with a tray of cheese and crackers. It was a nice gesture and though Hermione hadn't eaten since they were here last, she knew that she couldn't have choked down anything if she tried.

As Fleur led the small group into the living room, Hermione noticed that all of the furniture had been removed, and a large red circle was painted on the wood floor. With a small sniff, she easily identified what ingredient was used to make it and wrinkled her nose. Blood. Human or otherwise she had no clue, but she was willing to bet that it was human. All of her suspicions were confirmed when Bill walked in the room, angry red scar at his elbow crease.

Hermione tried to ignore the uneasy feelings churning in her stomach. She didn't like when she couldn't research something, but she just didn't have the time. This ritual was something that she had to do by faith and it was utterly terrifying. If only she didn't feel like she was running out of time to do this before the world exploded. If wishes were fishes….

"I will be officiating this adoption,” Bill said looking at Hermione with a sympathetic look. “What will happen is Sirius and Hannah will claim Hermione to their bloodlines. The ritual will change her intrinsic biology to be as if she were born to them both, their combined DNA will become the blood that flows through Hermione’s veins. It will also change some of her physical appearances and she will take on the dominant traits of either or both families. Any spells used to find out ancestry will come up as the line of Black and Abbott. Any questions?” Bill looked at Hermione,
knowing that if anyone had questions it would be her.

"A million but there isn't enough time." Hermione shook her head. There was no question that she would go through with it anyway. She had to. At least she trusted every single person in the room with her life. They wouldn’t be doing this if they thought she would die in the process.

Once they were done, she would find the ritual and read up on it as much as possible. She trusted Dumbledore enough to believe his mad scheme would work. It was his failsafe after all. She was probably the only one left in the room who did still believe in the late Headmaster. There must be a reason for its particular use. She gulped nervously and licked her lips.

The four of them stepped into the circle with Bill was facing them while Hannah and Sirius stood slightly behind Hermione, each with a hand on one of her shoulders.

“Sirius Orion Black, do you take this child to be biologically yours as if she were born to you?”

“I do”

"Hannah Lynn Abbott, do you take this child to be yours biologically as if she were born to you?"

“I do.”

Bill reached for a silver chalice inlaid with a wide array of jewels and held it out for them to collect their blood. There was a small hiss of pain from Sirius before he reached around her to let his bleeding forearm drip over the cup letting a healthy amount accumulate at the bottom before sealing the wound magically. Hannah repeated the ritual cutting and healing, then handed Hermione the silver blade. She grimaced. Bloodletting was so medieval, and the blade reminded her too much of what happened at Malfoy Manor. Despite all of that, she sliced into her arm and watched the crimson river land in the cup mixing with Sirius and Hannah’s.

Bill waved his wand in a complicated pattern over the cup saying, “Et sanguinem miscere et genus”

In an instant, a bright white light enveloped the room, blinding each and every one of the people inside. It took several minutes for the light to recede and even longer to blink away the spots that obstructed their vision. A sharp intake of breath from Ron focused everyone's attention on him and followed his gaze to land on Hermione. He was speechless, his eyes open wide with shock and appreciation.

“Wow, ‘Mione.” He blurted.

Hermione's brown bushy hair smoothed into sweeping chocolate curls that cascaded over her shoulder to her waist. Her big brown eyes leached of color and melted into liquid silver; the exact replicas of Sirius'. She grew several inches with curves much more pronounced, making her shirt stretch uncomfortably tight across her breasts. It felt like her jeans were cutting off the circulation to her legs and groin and she wondered how it was even possible that they hadn’t split at the seams. Overall, she still looked a bit like herself in the face but now with the addition of some of the best traits of the Houses of Black and Abbott. At least she wasn’t a Bellatrix knockoff.

Ron was not the only one admiring Hermione, therefore, Sirius was doing a lot of glaring on behalf of his new daughter, a strong paternal instinct making him act protectively despite knowing that one of the perpetrators was his godson. Upon noticing his glare, Harry and Ron dragged their stares at the floor while Hannah led Hermione into the bathroom, so she could transfigure Hermione's clothes to fit better.
“It’s one of the side effects of the spell,” Hannah said while concentrating on transfiguring Hermione’s jeans to fit better even as Hermione did the same to her shirt.

“What is?” Hermione asked distractedly.

“The need to take care of you, protect you. The bond makes all such feelings stronger in the beginning so that a solid parent, child bond can form.”

Hermione nodded, feeling a rush of gratitude for Hannah. Hannah must know that it was killing her not knowing, not being able to research.

“I know it seems very unfair that Professor Dumbledore sprung this on you at the last moment while telling Sirius, Professor Snape, and I the details. I believe that he really did hope it wouldn’t come to this.” Hannah said as she stood up and fingered Hermione’s silky curls. “Are you sure it is necessary?”

“I’m sure,” Hermione murmured shakily. Voldemort was coming for them and once he rooted out the remaining Order members, he would make a show of killing Harry and her. If she stayed, she would only be witness to more and more of the deaths of her friends. She couldn’t bear to watch that when her new mission could potentially protect them all.

“Is there anything you want to know about this bond? I’ve been researching it ever since Professor Dumbledore asked it of me.”

“I think I would like to research it myself,” Hermione whispered, and Hannah nodded and took a step back, giving Hermione space.

“It just feels so odd,” Hermione continued. “I feel like myself and yet I feel like I don’t fit in my body. I feel like my whole body fell asleep and now that I’m moving around, my body is tingling with pins and needles.”

“You got taller and have more curves, surely growing as quickly as you have would result in feeling abnormal.”

“Have you ever taken Polyjuice Potion? Because it doesn’t feel anything like that and that happens just as fast.”

“I haven’t. Maybe it is because this is a permanent change,”

“Maybe,”

When the girls walked back into the living room, Sirius handed Hermione a purple velvet bag and a sealed envelope addressed to Orion Black. She pulled the golden drawstring open and pulled out a gold and diamond time turner filled with tiny round garnets mixed with the usual golden grains of sand in the hourglass. With it came a letter addressed to Hermione.

Hermione,

If you are reading this, then not only am I dead but we have failed in our mission and are staring into the abyss of utter defeat. You are the wizarding world’s last hope. I implore you to think about your options and what kind of life you hope to have not only for yourself but for your friends and family as well. With this letter, you would have received a unique time turner that I have invented just for this purpose. It will only work once because it can only hold so much power to make the jump and must be fueled with each use. It will take you to your Paterfamilias of the previous generation. Specifically, to Orion Black at Grimmauld Place. I have given Sirius a letter that is
magically sealed and can only be opened by your new Grandfather. You must give that to him as soon as you arrive so that it will ensure your safety and induction into your new family. Before you use this device, be sure to add to my incomplete list of knowledge outlining information about Tom Riddle’s Horcruxes.

Good Luck,

Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore

Hermione looked at the second page and noticed it was a list of Voldemort's Horcruxes. There were times, dates, people, and places. Information covered the page about Tom Riddle and his whereabouts during the first war. Everything that Dumbledore had known that was pertinent, was on the parchment. Including a helpful list of details about known Death Eaters, written in the spidery handwriting that she had read off of the potions board for the last six years.

For the next five hours, the Golden Trio filled in all the gaps of knowledge they had acquired about the remaining Horcruxes. Sirius even added information about the Marauders and several of the order members from the first war. When they were finished, she tucked the letters and time turner back into the purple velvet bag and shrank the whole thing to fit in her pocket.

Dinner was stilted. No one was in the mood for lighthearted conversation. The only sound that filled the room was the clink of the silverware as everyone forced themselves to eat.

“You can sleep in ze room that you used before, ‘ermione,” Fleur said kindly.

Hermione shook her head, “If you don’t mind, I would like to sleep in the other room.” She looked at Harry and Ron. “We can use the couch cushions like we did at Grimmauld that first night,”

“You were the only one that used cushions, Hermione,” Ron grimaced.

“If you don’t want to…” Hermione said looking away.

“I do want to. I was just pointing out that Harry and I slept on the floor,” he mumbled a pink tinge high on his cheeks.

And so, it was that Harry, Ron, and Hermione spent their last night together, sleeping on the couch cushions that were moved to the floor, reminiscent of the time they spent at Grimmauld Place, knowing it would be the last time they would see each other in this timeline. It would be the last time that they would all know what close friends they were. Things would never be the same.

Harry hissed a small breath and suddenly felt the disorienting relief and happiness of Voldemort when he found the diadem. There was no longer a future in this time for any of them. Hermione and Ron looked at him curiously, but he shrugged his shoulders and kept his own counsel. It didn’t matter anymore, not with Hermione leaving in the morning. They fell asleep on the floor in the small library curled around each other with tear streaks dried on their faces.

The next day found the inhabitants of Shell Cottage bidding Hermione a teary farewell. Hoping for a better future, Sirius put the time turner around Hermione's neck and placed a kiss on her temple before pulling her in for a bone-crushing hug. She didn't know it yet, but he did all he could for her, even more than he thought he could, but much, much less than he wanted.

The boys put on brave but sad faces, trying to remain strong for her. Neither was cut out for hiding their feelings. Ron was wrapping and unwrapping one of Hermione's curls over and over around his finger, staring at it rather than her. She would miss them terribly and knew if she didn’t leave then, she never would. Saving the world be damned.
With one last look at the loved ones that she was leaving behind, Hermione double checked to make sure she had both the velvet bag and her beaded bag. When everything was in place and there was nothing left to do, she stepped back from the small group of her friends and family and flicked the rings that had been preset for her. She felt the off-putting sensation of going back in time combined with the pull of a portkey. Time slowed to a halt and began to move backward at an ever-increasing speed before abruptly stopping, throwing her to the ground, dizzy and disoriented.

The moment time resumed its normal flow, Hermione took her head in her hands, feeling as if she was on a crude skiff at sea during a raging storm. Her stomach roiled.

Strong, firm hands grasped her arms, and pulled her to her feet. Unable to stand on her own, she weaved a moment before losing the contents of her stomach onto the very shiny and impeccably polished shoes of her new Grandfather before thankfully passing out.

*Combine this blood to make family -Latin to English google translator*
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Grimmauld Place

Chapter Notes

This chapter has been revised and edited from its original posted version. 1-18-19

Chapter Two

Hermione groaned as she awakened, groggy and disoriented. A bright light blinded her from the window in her usual room at Grimmauld Place. For a moment, she was confused thinking it terribly rude of Ginny to open the curtains so early. That girl was unnecessarily chipper in the morning.

Movement from the corner of the room startled her, drawing her attention. Quickly, she sat up, wildly searching for the reason for the sound. It didn't take long to pinpoint the disturbance. There she found a man sitting in an armchair that was in the corner of the room.

The man was tall with black wavy hair- reminiscent of Clark Gable in Gone with the Wind. His thick black lashed framed molten silver eyes. In that moment, she could understand where Sirius got his good looks from, he was a carbon copy of his father.

"Imagine my surprise, when trying to leave my personal library in my own home, I was accosted by a mere slip of a girl. One whom I have never met and yet without undue injury passed through the Black wards, which I might add are some of the best-laid wards in the country. My initial thought was that this girl must be a distant relation but then it came to me rather suddenly, that to pass through these particular wards, you would have to be of my direct line. So, my curiosity has been aroused. Who are you?" Orion asked.

"My name is Hermione Black and I am your Granddaughter from the future. I was sent here by my father, Sirius Black and Albus Dumbledore." She explained. It was disconcerting sinking into the role she was now bound to play. No longer was she Muggle-born Hermione Granger. Now she had to act the part of a pureblooded princess. "I have a letter for you." She added, shifting on the bed to draw out the bag that Sirius gave her.

After finding her wand, which had been placed next to the bed on the nightstand, she endeavored to grow the velvet bag grew back to its original size. A mere flick of the wrist. The man watched her spell casting with rapped attention and mild approval, a dark brow arched high, almost into his hairline. Hermione, ignoring his scrutiny, she pulled out the letter addressed to Orion Black and handed it to him.

As he read the letter, his knuckles grew whiter and whiter and his lips, thinner. He was silent for so long that Hermione started to feel nervous. After all, she had only been a Black for twenty-four
hours would she be able to hold up under severe scrutiny? Had she already given away the game? She shook her head. Hadn't she battled Death Eaters before? Hadn't she survived the odds stacked against her while first being Muggleborn then perhaps her worst infraction- being Harry Potter's best friend? She could deal with this. The plan had to succeed. It must! She tightened her hand on her wand, an unforgivable on the tip of her tongue.

She was startled from her dark thoughts when he suddenly pulled out his wand and cast a nonverbal 'Incendio' upon the letter. He must have been angry because she could feel the heat of the flames all the way across the room.

"Well… It appears that you have made a one-way journey to save our family from dying out during wartime." He said wryly, siphoning the ash off of his clothes with his wand. "Although, I'm glad to see we pulled Sirius back in line." He added acerbically, rising from his seat.

"Dad is better off being friends with the Potters just so you know," Hermione said indignantly, raising to Sirius' defense. "I think he would have left our family all together if he was forced to choose."

Silence rang through the room as layers of thick disapproval emanated from Orion.

"So, what should I tell people who ask me who I am?" Hermione asked, refusing to back down or take back what she had said.

"That you are from the future and are a Black, which is something that we will easily prove before anyone even knows of you. As for the rest, well, Walburga and I will raise you as our daughter. You will be siblings with Sirius and Regulus and will attend Hogwarts for your seventh year. I will take care of the rest. Your first rule will be to obey whatever I request of you."

"I came here for a fully drawn out purpose. If your commands interfere, I will put my mission first." Hermione warned. She wasn't going to let his overbearing attitude affect the entire reason why she was in the past.

"And what pray tell is your full mission?" The question was loaded, more sly and probing than curious as if he knew something of which she had been tasked with. Perhaps he did know something. Who knows what Albus Dumbledore wrote to her new Paterfamilias. After deliberating for several seconds, Hermione decided that she was going to change everything. So much in fact, that her future would be decimated. If she did that, then what did she have to fear by telling the truth. Wouldn't she face results quicker, easier, if she freely let everyone know that she was a time traveler? And her mission? She smiled. Would Tom Riddle be more curious or fearful of her if he knew that she was there solely to destroy him?

Hermione looked up into Orion's eyes and matter-of-factly said, "To take down Voldemort and save the House of Black. There is no doubt that he will destroy our family. You can't join him or support his causes. The first time around, you did, and I can't allow that to happen again. I wonder what you would think of the information that I've never even met Regulus in my time because he died before I was born. Tragically forced into service before he even graduated from Hogwarts."

"When were you born?"

"September 19, 1979. What is today's date?"

"August 20th, 1971. Have you attended your seventh year of Hogwarts in your time?" He asked, sizing her up from where she sat on the bed. Hermione shook her head. "Then perhaps we should say you are sixteen going on seventeen for your seventh year of school to avoid unnecessary
questions." He continued.

She nodded her head. It didn't matter what age he claimed she was with her time turner use, blood magic, and years of life-threatening situations already made her question her exact age.

"So, Sirius gets married right out of school?"

Hermione nodded and continued to weave the intricate tale that Albus Dumbledore and Sirius Black had concocted. "When he was nineteen. My mum is... was wonderful. I had a very happy childhood until Riddle came back. Dad never joined him though. It probably kept him and me alive." Hermione was half surprised that he accepted her information at face value, that he wasn't more suspicious.

"I hope you won't be offended if we do an experiment just to make sure you are in fact who you say you are." Orion threatened with a smile.

She refused to be cowed, to be intimidated. She had dealt with more difficult men than Orion Black. Again, she smiled. "Sure. What are you going to do? Familia invenire?"

"Yes." He said slowly, appraising her with a new, more interested, light. "Do you like potions?"

"I had the great advantage to learn under a true Master. He was the most talented Potion Masters in three hundred years."

"What were your O.W.L. scores?"

"O in everything except Defense against the Dark Arts in which I got an E. I am sure I will do better on my N.E.W.T.s."

He smiled indulgently at her "What house were you in?"

"Gryffindor."

"Well, I suppose you are Sirius' daughter and no one is perfect. Since you will be resorted here in this time, I am sure you will have a more favorable house. I have no doubt that if you truly are my granddaughter, you will be in Slytherin." He said pompously as Hermione rolled her eyes. "Walburga will prepare you for a shopping trip this afternoon and you will get everything you need as befitting a woman of the House of Black. The shower is across the hall, I suggest you make use of it. When you are ready, you can meet your brothers at breakfast in an hour."

The dismissal was abrupt as if he grew bored of the conversation. Hermione rolled her eyes and shrugged. She would be lying, of course, if she said she wasn't seriously looking forward to that hot shower.

As Orion left the room, his head whirled with ideas and forbidden knowledge. The circumstances of her time travel were all in there as were a few words beseeching him to act upon certain information that the letter contained. Dumbledore had the audacity not only to write to tell him his granddaughter would need to marry the Malfoy Heir to prevent the decay of the line and secure a powerful ally that they would need to combat Voldemort but also tell him the steps in which he needed to take to be successful at it. As if he needed Albus Bloody Dumbledore to tell him how to secure the heiress Black a husband.

He fumed and wondered what Dumbledore was really up to but there was no way that Orion would trust the source of the letter. Even if they had been on better terms. Only a fool would trust blindly,
in that way lied madness. And Orion Arcturus Black was no fool.

**HGHG**

The shower was glorious, and Hermione reveled in the sheer luxury of having such a convenience again at her disposal. It was such a strange thing being unused to things that in her time were basic commodities. Her younger self would shudder at the thought of months without a working shower or food or anything else really.

It took everything in her to step out of the shower and towel off, before wrapping it around her small frame. Now came the difficult part… dashing across the hallway in nothing but a towel. Hermione murmured a simple prayer to Merlin and flung the door open, dashing across the hall into the sanctuary of the bedroom that she knew so well.

Walburga stood rigidly at the window, her back to the room where she had laid out several robes that would serve Hermione until she was fitted for her own wardrobe. Because apparently, the robes she arrived in were unacceptable. From the stiff way she held her shoulders, it was obvious that Orion told her at least some of what Hermione was doing there.

Hermione shut the door quickly glad that none of her new brothers had caught her in such a state then faced her new mother with trepidation.

Walburga transformed from a frigid disapproving beast to a delighted child who had received a brand-new dolly. Her eyes raked Hermione from head to foot, thrilled at the shape she had to work with.

"Hello love," Walburga said, holding her arms out as if expecting a hug. Hermione shuttered internally as she remembered all the vile things this woman's portrait had ever flung at her. And as Walburga’s hands grasped Hermione shoulders, pulling her in closer and closer until she was able to drop air kisses upon Hermione's cheeks.

The repulsion was strong and immediate. There was no doubt in Hermione's mind that this woman was not warm, not loving, but fake. Vile and fake.

Hermione pulled out of the embrace and turned to the first robe laid on her bed. It was a simple light blue dress. Beautifully crafted and expensive, much more grand than anything Hermione wore on a day to day basis. She ran her fingers lightly over the fabric, marveling how soft and pliant the material was. Despite her unfavorable vibes of Walburga, she had to admit, the woman knew about fashion. This robe was incredible.

Interrupting Hermione's inner monologue, Walburga, handed her a stack of underthings and turned away, clearly expecting Hermione to dress int hem with her in the room. Hermione shuddered and pulled on the knickers under the towel, hoping desperately that everything fit and that Walburga would have no cause to turn around and 'help' her.

Thankfully, the underthings had special spells on them to make them size to fit and then Hermione hastily reached for the lovely blue robes and pulled them on, shimmying out of the towel at the same time.

Though beautiful, it was too tight in the bust, not tight enough in the waist, and was about three inches too long, dragging the hem on the floor.

"Alright," Hermione said, pulling the robe this way and that, but with a well-aimed spell from Walburga's wand, the robe's hem rose, the bust let out, the waist tightened. Hermione smiled as
she caught sight of herself in the mirror. She was beautiful, she would admit. Her long chocolate
hair smooth and long but she couldn't help missing her own wild curls. For so long they had been a
trademark, even if she constantly wished for more manageable hair. Walburga made quick work of
her hair. First turning Hermione's face this way and that, before pointing her wand at the heavy
mass, and directed her wand to pull Hermione's hair up into an intricate chignon. After fiddling for
a bit, Walburga finally backed away, clapping her hands.

Hermione barely had time to grab her bag before Walburga ushered her out of the door and down
the stairs. When she followed Walburga into the dining room, the first thing she noticed was that
Kreacher, who was much younger, was serving the table.

The next thing she noticed was a twelve-year-old Sirius Black staring unabashedly and ten-year-
old Regulus Black staring at his empty plate. She smiled at them, excited to begin changing Sirius'
life for the better.

"Morning!" she chirped to them.

"Morning," Sirius mumbled curiously, shooting surprised glances at his parents as they remained
silent at the noise. Regulus's eyes flicked up to hers, silent and wide-eyed. He was obviously shy
and possibly a bit nervous at her table chatter. Apparently, talking at meal times was not allowed.
Hermione chanced a glance at Orion whose lips had compressed to such a state, they were nearly
invisible.

Walburga merely sat opposite of Orion ignoring the exchange completely.

"Kreacher," Walburga raised her brows as if he should have known to start serving the family the
moment that she had sat down. "Serve breakfast."

"Yes, Mistress." The house elf bowed low to the ground, a sickly adoring glaze to his eyes. He
immediately jumped into action, snapping his fingers first at Orion's plate then Walburga's. Each
plate was given according to rank in the household, leaving Hermione, a girl, though technically
the oldest of the children to be served last. Not that she cred but it was such an odd way of doing
things. So cold and prim and proper even within the confines of the intimate family setting.

The clinking of silver against porcelain filled the room. And though Hermione moved to speak
several times, Sirius gave her a quick shake of the head. She rolled her eyes. This was going to have
to change.

When Orion was finished and placed his utensils on his plate, the rest of the family moved to do so
as well. Only Hermione kept on eating, refusing to eat by a dictated pace. Out of the corner of her
eye, she saw Regulus wince, but Sirius was looking at her with a sort of hero worship. Of course,
he was, her defying his parents like that. It was the stuff of his dreams.

Orion ignored Hermione's disobedience and cleared his throat. "We will be going to Diagon Alley
today to pick up school supplies and get Hermione new robes. Speaking of, Hermione, I flooed the
Headmaster before you came down and he will be here tomorrow to test your skills for placement.
You will be joining your brothers on the Hogwarts Express. Stay behind after breakfast while your
mother and brothers get ready to leave." Orion said.

"Yes, Sir." She said, a smile twitching the corner of her mouth.

"Father" he corrected.

"Yes, Father." It took everything in her not to roll her eyes. What pomp.
Walburga waved her hand and before Hermione could take another bite, and Kreacher cleared the table with a snap of his fingers. Hermione felt foolish with her hand half raised to her mouth, which was still open and waiting. Quickly, she snapped it shut, internally spiteful. Although, she did have to remind herself that she would be fed on a regular basis again. She didn't need to hoard the food or pace herself as she had for those months on the run.

After Walburga and the boys left it was just Orion and Hermione in the dining room. Orion brought out a simple stone bowl that had sat displayed in a curio cabinet in the corner of the room before placing it on the table. He reached into an inner pocket of his robe and pulled out a bright yellow potion into it and took Hermione's hand. Pricking her finger with a silver knife, Orion took her hand and squeezed seven drops of blood into the potion, making it splutter and hiss. The potion hissed and steamed before turning midnight blue. Tendrils of black smoke wafted out forming words in a beautiful script above the bowl.

*Paternal*

*The House of Black*

*Maternal*

*The House of Abbott*

*Pureblood*

Orion gave her a gentle smile and a pat on her shoulder then walked out of room seemingly satisfied.

**HGHG**

She had met Walburga with the boys in the library where they flooed to the Leaky Cauldron. Once she stepped through, Walburga siphoned off the dirt and shepherded them into Diagon Alley. Their first stop was Twillfit and Tatting's where Hermione was measured, prodded and prodded for what seemed like hours. Hermione suspected the Blacks had laid down a rather large sum on dress robes, day robes, Hogwarts robes, winter cloaks, under clothes, hairpins, and everything one could think of to wear. When she was finally released from the seamstress' stand, it was Regulus’ turn and they spent the next hour fitting the boys. Unexpectedly, Walburga allowed Hermione and Sirius the freedom to go to Flourish and Blotts alone, taking Regulus to the apothecary.

Sirius grabbed Hermione's hand and ran all the way to the bookstore. And he didn't let her go even when they entered. Instead, he continued to pull her to the back of the store all the while flashing her a killer smirk that could rival Malfoy's any day. As they rounded the last stack of Divination books, she came face to face with a very young James Potter standing next to a short woman that looked like Andromeda Black and a man who looked nearly identical to his son and grandson.

"Hermione, this is James. He's my best mate. And his parents Mr. and Mrs. Potter. Mr. and Mrs. Potter, James, this is my sister Hermione."

"Hello, Dear." Mrs. Potter kindly said although she had a thousand questions in her eyes.

"It's nice to meet you all," Hermione said politely and a bit awkwardly. Harry had truly looked like James at this age, minus the eyes of course. It was like staring into the sun, she couldn't do it without her eyes watering. So, instead, she focused on Harry's grandmother.

"I see you are going to Hogwarts this year? How old are you?" Dorea said kindly. Sirius and James
were having their own conversation that was mildly distracting as they were chuckling off to the side. Hermione struggled to tune them out.

"Yes, I am going to be seventeen in September" she lied, playing her part dutifully. She nearly jumped out of her skin when a slender, cold hand clasped over her shoulder.

"Dorea, Charlus." Sneered Walburga. At the sound of his mother, Sirius stiffened straight like a poker and he tried not to show the worry he felt.

"Walburga." Dorea nodded coolly. Hermione caught Charlus' eye and he winked at her. She smiled in response. Dorea couldn't help but continue, "Lovely to see Sirius again. James has had nothing but great things to say about the boy. And I just met your oldest daughter. Congratulations, I had no idea."

"I wouldn't expect you to be kept in the loop of things. Last I heard, your family cut you off completely."

Dorea smiled acerbically, nodding, accepting the battle. "I wasn't removed from the tapestry."

Walburga narrowed her eyes and her face adopted a look that reminded Hermione so much of her portrait. "yet."

"Dear," Charlus murmured. "Perhaps this isn't the best place for such things."

Dorea nodded, shooting an apologetic glance to Hermione.

Walburga nodded with narrowed angry eyes and ushered both of her children outside the shop where Regulus was waiting for them. Hurriedly they picked out the rest of their supplies and flooed back to Grimmauld Place.

**HGHG**

"Hermione, step into the parlor," Orion said the moment her feet cleared the grate.

Minerva McGonagall sat waiting with a cup of tea next to the fire. Hermione's heart jumped into her throat as she stared at the back of her old mentor's head. Longing flooded her entire being. What she wouldn't give for McGonagall to turn around and offer her a biscuit. To offer her comfort and familiarity.

Minerva did turn around, but her face was much younger, and no longer filled with the recognition of her favorite student.

"You must be Hermione Black," Minerva began as she stood, setting her tea service to the side.

Hermione just nodded. There seemed to be something rather large and dry stuck in her throat.

"No need to be afraid," Minerva continued gently.

"I'm not," Hermione managed to say.

"Alright then," Minerva said, drawing herself up into what Hermione fondly called her professor pose. "Let's begin."

Five hours. Five hours later, Minerva stepped into the floo and Hermione collapsed on Walburga's finely upholstered settee. Instinctively, she knew that Minerva had surpassed the information needed to place her hours ago but had stayed to truly gauge her abilities. And she had no doubt that
this was Albus Dumbledore's instructions.

**HGHG**

September first found the Black family on the platform 9 ¾ and after swift goodbyes, Sirius and Hermione entered the train. Sirius disappeared immediately searching for his friends leaving Hermione to search on her own.

About halfway down the train, a compartment opened, and she came face to chest with a tall blond man easily recognizable as Lucius Malfoy. She stepped back and froze, watching what he would do. He leaned against the compartment doorway and slowly crossed his arms over his chest. A slow smirk transformed his face from merely handsome to devastatingly so. And she watched, held by the sheer power of his gaze as he inspected her from head to toe and back.

That morning, Walburga had pulled her curls into two heavy silver combs, leaving the rest of her chocolate curls to tumble down her back, complimenting her fitted silver robe.

Hermione struggled to recall the fear and the hate for his older self but all she could manage was the strict reminder that she disliked him. And if she told her self that enough times, perhaps she would even believe it. There was something less hard, less evil, about his younger self. Freer. Mischievous, but not in a Draco Malfoy way, more like Fred and George. His resemblance seemed to begin and end with his looks.

"You must be the famous Miss Black. I am Lucius Malfoy." He finally drawled.

"Pleasure" she held out her hand and he brought it to his lips, lightly brushing a kiss to her knuckles. Molten silver eyes on hers, piercing through her.

"The pleasure is all mine." He purred, a sexy half smile on his face, that made Hermione's breath catch. "Why don't you sit in our compartment and I will introduce you."

She quietly agreed. It wouldn't hurt to try and save these future Death Eaters. Maybe their friendship would help her win the war against Voldemort sooner. And spending more time in Lucius Malfoy's company had nothing to do with it..."These are Theodore Nott, Cadeus Avery, Phelan Mulciber, and Ethan Bole. Gentleman this is Hermione Black." Lucius said.

After the introductions were made, Hermione sat in the seat opposite of Nott's, with Lucius sitting next to her.

Nott was tall and thin with sandy blond hair and light green eyes. He looked relaxed, but his posture was straight and proper with one ankle propped on his other knee. A happy boyish smile on his lips.

Avery was tall, dark, and handsome with dark brown eyes. Everything about him screamed intense and the way he was staring at Hermione made her blush. When he saw the effect, he had on her, he smirked, satisfied.

Malciber was taller than her but the shortest man in the room. He was overly muscular with brown hair and hazel eyes. He was good looking enough but being surrounded by this lot, he was constantly outshined. He had a slightly sadistic look as she met his stare and all she could imagine was him in the future at Hogwarts to slaughter Buckbeak. His eyes were tracing the path of her blush from Avery, it made her uncomfortable in a way the others had not.
Bole was the same height as Nott, but he was more muscular. He was obviously a quidditch player, he looked a lot like Fred and George minus the red hair. Bole had black hair and blue eyes without the devastatingly good looks of the Blacks.

Lucius, of course, was the tallest man in the room with his long blond hair pulled in a queue at the nape of his neck. It was tied with a black ribbon that looked suspiciously like satin or silk. His intense silver eyes pierced her looking, oh so interested. He placed his arm on the back of the seat, behind Hermione.

"So, Miss Black," Lucius began.

"Hermione, Please."

"Hermione." He said with another smile. "How is it that we have not heard about you until recently?"

"Well, it is a long story, but the short version is that I am from the future."

"The future?" Bole asked dubiously.

"Yup," Hermione popped the 'p' on yup.

"Really?" Nott leaned forward, tilting his head like an inquisitive puppy.

"Yes, really,"

"Prove it,"

"What would you like to know?"

"What am I like in the future?" Nott asked.

"I don't know you well at all. I know of your son, but we never really got along."

"And me?" Lucius asked. "Do you know of me?"

"I know of you," Hermione said looking away. "You are… different in the future. Your son and I often exchanged words."

"Anyone could come up with this information," Lucius said with a twinkle. "We are all heirs of families. It is our duty to provide heirs."

"Okay," Hermione said, biting her lips, deep in thought. "Okay… Lucius, you take Voldemort's mark and are his right-hand man. For a while anyway. You will do many horrible things in his name. You use your money to influence politics and to sway officials to look the other way during your illegal activities. You hunt Muggles like a sport. You look down on those who refuse to join your master." Hermione said. "Is that specific enough? If you have any doubts about me, you could always ask Orion Black."

The boys in the room paled at the thought of asking such a thing of the Black Paterfamilias. Lucius sat still, oddly quiet.

"No, we believe you," Bole said quickly on everyone's behalf. Half afraid she would tell him something he desperately didn't want to hear.

"How far in the future?" asked Nott curiously.
"Twenty-seven years."

"Really? That far?"

She laughed "All of you should rethink whatever marriage contracts you enter into."

"Well, at least we successfully carry on the family name." Laughed Nott. While Mulciber grimaced. He already had a betrothal contract that he couldn't back out of.

"I should warn you that your lives would last much longer if you stay away from Tom Riddle also known as Lord Voldemort. For each one of you, he is a death sentence. Oh, and his 'punishments' are aimed to destroy your family lines. He not so secretly hates all of you. By all means, though, do what you want." Hermione warned.

"But we were alive in your time. Why do you say this is a death sentence?" Lucius spoke for the first time since she told him of his activities as an adult.

"Well, I am not sure if you did survive, Lucius," Hermione began slowly. "I was held at the manor and escaped. I heard your master was furious and tortured you and your whole family. I don't know if you survived it."

"Why would he care about one girl?"

"It wasn't me that he cared about. It was the escape of my best friend that set him off. They are mortal enemies in my time."

"How did you escape Malfoy Manor?" Lucius persisted.

"Your House-elf,"

Lucius' brows rose in tandem.

"He was utterly devoted to Harry," Hermione smiled, reminiscing. "There was nothing he wouldn't have done for him. Including helping us escape from Voldemort."

"Harry is your best friend?"

"Was," Hermione said. "There is no going back. I am going to change everything,"

"That must be why you are willing to break so many laws about telling us about the future,"

"I've broken so many laws now, what does one more matter," Hermione said sadly.

Not wanting to stay any longer she decided to take her chances elsewhere. "It was a pleasure meeting all of you."

Hermione left the compartment in silence. The pureblooded heirs she left behind were gaping like goldfish and other than changing, they rode the rest of the way without talking, thinking hard about what Hermione had said.

After Hermione changed in one of the many loos, Hermione walked through the corridor, looking for another place to stay for the duration of the ride to Hogwarts.

Hermione had the wind knocked out of her as a girl ran into her, head on. Apologies spilled from the familiar girl. Hermione looked closer. She looked almost identical to Luna Lovegood, young, thirteen or fourteen, and was dusting off her Ravenclaw robes.
"Hi! I'm Pandora. I don't recognize you. Are you new? Do you know what house you will be in? We don't really get transfer students." She didn't seem as odd as Luna but still definitely scattered.

"Hermione. Yes, I will be here for my seventh year. Not yet, Professor McGonagall said I would be sorted privately before the first years tonight."

"I hope you get sorted into Ravenclaw." She gushed despite not knowing Hermione at all. Pandora waved goodbye after only a few minutes to make her way back to her friends. Hermione shook her head with a fond smile.

The next compartment she passed, she saw someone unpleasantly familiar. Dolores Umbridge. No Fucking Way. She walked past before she was tempted to eviscerate the ridiculous toad. There would be plenty of time to make her suffer later.

She finally settled into the second to last compartment with none other than Narcissa Black. Her very own cousin. Crazy. Narcissa was as tall, graceful, poised, and snobbish as she would become in the future. However, she did give Hermione a bright smile and invited her into her exclusive club. Something about fashion, or debutants, or garden design. Whatever it was, it was boring but safe. She tuned Narcissa and her friends out as easily as if they were Lavender Brown and Parvati Patil.

As soon as the train arrived, and Hermione took one of the thestral led carriages that brought her up to the castle. Immediately, she was pulled aside by Professor McGonagall to be sorted privately before the first years were led to be sorted.

Minerva ushered her into a small rarely used room off of the Great Hall, the same one that would hold the contestants of the Tri-Wizard Tournament many years into the future. Hermione sat on the stool as the Professor placed the hat on her head.

'My dear, Hermione Granger Black, we will meet for the first time in the future and yet here you are twenty-one years before that meeting. I see you are a true Gryffindor through and through but that is not where you need to be.'

'No just put me in Gryffindor! Its where I belong. Where I want to be!' Hermione shouted at the hat in her head.

'You are here to prevent war and death. It is your duty. I see it so, so clearly. The front lines call for the brave, but you need to go behind enemy lines. If you save even one of them, imagine how many innocents you would save along the way. They are only your enemies in your time. Give them another option. The ministry is corrupt, Voldemort is rushing us headlong into a war, but you, you could change everything.'

'Since when do you give advice?' asked Hermione petulantly.

'I am only solidifying your thoughts. You believe what I have told you and I will make the choice that you are not quite prepared to make for many reasons. Being a part of your enemy camp does not make you evil. Life is not so easy. People are not split between good people and death eaters. Become someone who cannot be ignored. Become what they need.'

'What do they need? Another ruler to rally around?'

'They need love. As does every living and breathing person. I say that though one could survive without it, not having it is the cruelest kind of torture. Take them from their lord and master. Make them yours.'
Before Hermione could reply the hat shouted SLYTHERIN. She hopped off of the stool and handed Professor McGonagall the hat and walked unsteadily, shocked, into the Great Hall with the sorting hat's words swirling around her head. Feeling like the biggest traitor, she sat among her new housemates. She sat to the left of Lucius Malfoy distractedly staring up at the line of first years that were now being led into the Hall.

If she had glanced in Lucius' direction, she would have seen his desire and want that sat uncharacteristically naked on his face. Though she didn't notice, many others did, several of those were determined that this time, Lucius Sodding Malfoy would not get everything he wanted.
Chapter Three

The next morning, she walked alone to the Great Hall being the last girl in the dorm to rise for breakfast. She sat between Narcissa who was chatting to Deidra Yaxley about the latest trends and a young brown haired boy who was either thirteen or fourteen who was staring sullenly at his plate.

“Good morning Narcissa!” Hermione said

“Morning Hermione! We just got the latest edition of Flitterbill’s. Deidra’s older sister has a subscription and sends them on when she is done. Alissa Travers released her winter line and It’s absolutely amazing. I’m going to try and talk my mother into letting me order a few things over the holiday.”

“That’s great.” Said Hermione without any excitement. Narcissa shook her head and turned back to Deidra where she was assured of a better reaction.

Hermione turned to the boy on her left and she gave him her biggest smile.

“Hello, I’m Hermione Black.”

“Daemon Scabior. Fourth year.” He snapped. He obviously wanted her to leave him alone. Not going to happen.

“Nice to meet you, Daemon!”

He grunted and watched her out of the corner of his eye as she pulled the fruit to her plate followed by eggs and toast with some bacon. No one had ever shown that much pleasure to be in his company. He narrowed his eyes. What did she want from him? He decided to be wary of this new girl and watch her. No matter if she was a part of the Black family, he refused to be used by wizarding royalty.

Hermione decided to take a leaf out of Dumbledore’s book and twinkle at everyone. He usually twinkled at Harry, Ron, and Hermione after they got back from one of their dangerous escapades which was always paired with just enough house points to win the cup. Looking back, that would anger anyone in any house who had seemingly won at the time. No wonder Slytherin and Gryffindor were at each other’s throats.

She approached Professor Slughorn who was handing out the schedules for the year. After getting her course schedule, she felt a tap on her shoulder.

“What class do you have first?” Theo Nott asked
“Double Potions”

“Me too!” He snatched her schedule out of her hands. “You are in all of the advanced courses with me. Our schedules are nearly identical.” He smirked at her. “In that case I would be honored to show you to your classes, Miss Black.”

“How many times do I have to ask you to call me Hermione?”

“At least once more, Miss Black.” He winked at her and grabbed her hand leading her down to the potions classroom.

“You don’t need to lead me by the hand. I’m a big girl, I can walk all by myself.”

“Oh I am aware.” He held her hand just a little tighter. He chuckled noticing when Hermione blushed.

**HGHGHGHG**

Lucius was waiting in the stone corridor next to the potions classroom leaning casually against the wall. It seemed to be a common theme with him. He was truly a handsome man and he made it look effortless. She kind of hated him for that. When she had expended any effort at all to look good it had taken her hours. She just didn’t have the time for that. Although now that her hair was smooth and sleek it made her over all appearance look better. Stupid purebloods and their unicorn puking rainbow genes. He made leaning against the wall ridiculously sexy. Thinking about it, he probably practiced in front of a mirror. Hermione rolled her eyes.

He flashed her a genuine carefree smile so unlike the Lucius of the future. He pushed off of the wall and with a nod to Nott, he lifted her hand to his lips with his eyes locked on hers. It was incredibly erotic. Her breathing hitched and her heart raced. It was no wonder he got out of going to Azkaban the first time around. His charm was lethal.

“Good Morning.” He murmured over her hand. Hermione’s expression was glazed as she imagined running her fingers over his well-developed chest. He chuckled at her and released her from his hypnotic gaze as the classroom door was opened by a younger and less portly version of Professor Slughorn.

Hermione chose a seat next to Avery and Theo. It wasn’t that she didn’t want to sit next to Lucius, it was just that she sat in her normal seat. It was a habit.

Theo shot Lucius a smug look behind Hermione’s back which resulted in a haughty glare full of promises of retribution and jealousy.

“Good morning Hermione.” Avery turned to look at her with his dark eyes. Hermione’s face lit up like a Christmas tree.

“You called me Hermione! Everyone else calls me Miss Black. Good Morning Cadeus!” She smiled widely and aggressively twinkled. There really was something to this twinkling. No wonder Dumbledore used it so much. It really threw people off balance. Avery looked shell shocked by her exuberant greeting. Case and point.

His face softened as he gave her a sweet smile. “How do you like the Hogwarts of 1971 so far?”

“It’s really not much different. Even many of the teachers are still the same. It’s a bit disorienting not being in the same house though.”
“Oh? What was your house previously?”

“That’s a secret.” She shot him a mischievous glance and put her finger over her lips.

“If you want somewhere to hang out later, the Quidditch team will be practicing tonight. Usually we don’t start for a few weeks but Mulciber was made our new captain and he is determined to win the cup this year. We have the best team we have had in years. Ravenclaw has beat us the last three years but this year is ours.”

“We’ll see.” She whispered biting her lip which drew the eyes of the three Slytherin males. Noticing the class was about to start, Hermione pulled out parchment and quill to begin taking notes. Professor Slughorn had made it to the front of the room to stand next to two bubbling cauldrons.

“Can anyone tell me what either one of these two potions are?” He asked.

Hermione raised her hand in the air a second before Theo’s.

“Miss Black?”

“The potion on the right is Gregory’s Unctuous Unction which causes the drinker to believe that whomever gave them the potion is their best friend but it only lasts for three hours. It’s identifiable by its clear color and bright green smoke. It also is odorless except on Tuesdays where it smells like pumpkin pasties.”

“Excellent ten points to Slytherin. Mr. Nott?”

“The Mopsus potion gives the drinker, seer like powers and is able to manipulate objects telekinetically. It is a silver potion with deep purple vapor and smells like apples.”

“Wonderful another ten points to Slytherin.” Said Professor Slughorn happily.

“Today we are going to learn how to make Volubilis potion. Can anyone tell me what it is? Miss Black?”

“It alters the drinkers voice and can restore their voice if they have lost it ending the silencio charm. When completed correctly it will be a yellow color that smells like fresh cut grass. Although it doesn’t have many ingredients it’s tricky because it is very exact.”

“Too right Miss Black! Take another ten points for Slytherin. Turn to page two hundred and five and start preparing your potion. The student with the best potion will receive a vial of the Mopsus potion that should last the entirety of one day.” He winked at the class and sat behind his desk.

There was a mass surge headed to the student storeroom to gather the ingredients. Hermione stayed behind and set up her cauldron and supplies and when most of the students were back in their seats she went to the store room to get her own.

She prodded the fire under her cauldron lower letting the syrup of hellebore and the honey water simmer for three minutes. She finely chopped the mint while she waited. She added the mint and stirred clockwise nine strokes and another three counter clockwise and let it simmer for ten minutes. She cut the mandrake into identical one inch cubed pieces and added them to her potion when it turned light pink. She stirred counterclockwise thirty strokes adding a clockwise stir every third stroke. On the last stroke, her potion turned butter yellow. It was nearly perfect.

Professor Slughorn walked around the classroom looking in each students’ cauldron. Only Theo
and Hermione were successful in making their potion and declaring both to be superb he gave them each a small vial of the Mopsus potion. Which Hermione immediately placed in her beaded bag.

“For next class a four-foot essay on the effects of using the Oblivious unction too often and why a healing drought wouldn’t work. Dismissed”

Hermione gathered her books and felt smug. Harry should never have won Felix Felicis in sixth year. She felt childishly vindicated.

The four Slytherins walked together for a few corridors before Lucius and Avery headed to divination and Theo and Hermione went to Arithmancy. But before they got to the classroom a small second year Severus Snape came up to Hermione holding a tightly rolled scroll.

“Dumbledore wanted me to give this to you, Miss Black.”

“Thank you. Call me Hermione!” she gave him a smile and tried not to hug the young boy and scar him for life. She felt Snape had always been on their side unlike Harry and Ron.

“Severus Snape.” Severus gave her a small uncomfortable smile and sent her major side eye. He wondered if she had been slipped a cheering potion. He shook his head. Not his problem. He wasn’t the first person to be offset by her open friendliness. The rumors surrounding the girl were wide and varied. Many claimed she was raised by a group of dragons in the mountains and they taught her how to breath fire. Another rumor he heard said she was from the future. He didn’t believe them for one second. First of all, dragons were not friendly and second there was no way a person could travel to the past more than a few hours. However, it was well known that she is a long lost Black and Sirius’ sister. Wizarding royalty. He would reserve judgment until he knew her better, if she was anything like Sirius he would have to be on his guard.

Hermione waved at Severus’ back as he walked away even though he had turned abruptly and left without saying goodbye. She shrugged. He was such an odd boy. She unrolled the scroll

**Miss Black,**

*If you would be agreeable, I would like to meet with you in my office at 8 P.M. I hope you are enjoying your first day back at school. I like Lemon Drops.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

*Albus Dumbledore*

She shoved the scroll into her book bag and met Theo’s inquiring look.

“A meeting with Dumbledore tonight. I’m going to have to watch quidditch practice another time.” She muttered.

He raised his eye brow and nodded but they didn’t have any time to talk. Professor Fancourt assigned partners for the year, pairing Hermione with Rosemond Flint a Hufflepuff who acted a lot like Lavender Brown.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione was walking alone to her last class when she heard a shuffling yet muffled noise coming from one of the less used corridors between Charms and Alchemy. A subject that wasn’t offered in her time that she decided to take this year. It was also the only reason she had been in this part of the castle. She sped up, rounded the corner, and then came to a dead stop. Dolores
Umbridge, Gellis Burbage, and Anna Selwyn were hexing a second year that Hermione identified as Tera Strong. Tera was on the floor silently screaming at whatever curse they had her under but Hermione would bet everything she had that it was the cruciatus curse.

"Expelliarmus. Petrificus totalus. Stupefy." She yelled felling her fellow Slytherins easily. Taking Gellis’ wand as it flew into her hand.

“What the hell is this?” Hermione spit out through clenched teeth.

Gellis was trembling. The only girl out of three still standing to take the wrath of the approaching Hermione Black. Her fury was intimidating as her hair was sparking ferociously and dangerously. Gellis wildly surmised those sparks would be deadly if touched. Unluckily for her, she was the only one able to answer Hermione’s questions at the moment.

“Keeping the little Mudblood in line.” She whispered.

“Really.” Hermione purred “Pullus maxima.” Gellis promptly turned into a white chicken and proceeded to cluck down the hallway. That spell couldn’t be lifted for a full six hours. Thank you, Fred and George. She dropped Gellis’ wand at her feet, fighting the impulse to snap it. She hurriedly turned to the young girl still trembling on the ground.

“Finite incantatem. Are you okay? Tera is it?” The girl was suffering from the aftershocks of the curse that Hermione knew so well. She reached into the beaded bag that she always carried with her ever since she obliviated her parents and pulled out a healing potion.

Tera nodded “I will be. Thank you, Hermione.”

“You’re welcome. If anyone else bothers you, tell me and I will take care of it.”

The girls both looked up when Avery turned the corner. His eyebrows shot up into his hairline as he took in the scene in front of him.

“What happened here?”

“Umbridge and her nasty friends.” Hermione turned to the three girls/poultry with a look full of vengeance. “Would you tell Professor Hornby that I took a second year Gryffindor to the hospital wing?”

“Sure. What are you going to do with these three?”

“Leave them. It will wear off eventually.”

Avery watched her walk towards him with the tiny Gryffindor tucked under her arm. When she passed him he couldn’t help himself but to softly caress the hair that flowed behind her like a living entity. He took a deep breath as they disappeared around the corner he had turned moments ago. That woman was absolutely amazing. Her long curly brown hair hung down her back in a silky curtain that he longed to run his fingers through. He wanted her from the first moment he laid eyes on her on the Hogwarts express and since then, he had discretely inquired of his father about her eligibility. After all there wasn’t any sense in pursuing a betrothed woman, unless she was betrothed to him.

**HGHGHG**

She was looking forward to her meeting with Professor Dumbledore. She had eaten dinner with Narcissa who insisted she meet the rest of the girls in the society club. She only escaped because of
her appointment with the Headmaster. Thank God for small miracles. Narcissa was bound and
determined to pull her into the fold. That girl was quite formidable.

On the walk up to his office, she thought about all of the differences between the people she knew
in the future compared to their past selves. If she didn’t know what the future looked like, she
would never guess they would become Death Eaters. Their treatment of Muggleborns confused her
the most. Of course, she knew that they would be treating her differently if they knew she was a
Muggleborn witch but they ignored the Muggleborns of this time, except for Umbridge’s merry
band of wannabe’s. They believed they were superior but they didn’t feel the need to beat down
the ‘less fortunate’ as Narcissa calls them.

Before she knew it, she was standing in front of the griffin statue that guarded the Headmaster’s
office.

“Lemon Drop.” Hermione said and the statue moved to allow her entrance. She walked up the
spiral stairs and knocked on the heavy wooden door at the top.

“Come in, Miss Black. Welcome!”

“Professor it is really good to see you alive again!” She sat in the chair across from him and set her
bag on the floor beside her.

“If I wasn’t already privy to your time traveling I would be terribly confused! Lemon Drop?” he
twinkled in warning and invitation simultaneously. She idly wondered if she practiced would she
be able to twinkle like that one day. It was something to aspire to she supposed.

“Well it’s not like it’s a secret.”

“Terrible things happen to witches and wizards who meddle with time Miss Black. It should be the
utmost secrecy.”

Hermione was incredibly confused. Orion didn’t tell her what was in the letter but she assumed one
of the things mentioned was that it was unnecessary to keep her time traveling a secret. She thought
she was going to be used as bait or something but now that she thought about it, Orion wasn’t a
man to take orders. It was unlikely he would follow them unless it suited him to do so. She had to
remember that the Professor Dumbledore in this time wouldn’t know the reasons he sent a letter to
Orion or its contents.

“Sir, I believe it was in a letter that the future you sent to my father. I didn’t get to read it because
you spelled it closed and could only to be opened by the recipient. “

Dumbledore’s eyes became hard and lost the twinkle all together.

“I highly doubt that in any time I would encourage you to tell all and sundry about time traveling.
No matter who they were or their reasons for being in the past. Miss Black, am I correct in
assuming you are here to prevent a war led by Lord Voldemort?” She narrowed her eyes. Orion and
her were going to have a talk.

“Of course Sir. In the future, he found out we were destroying Horcruxes and was able to safe
guard two of them. Nagini and the diadem. There was very little we could do after that. So here I
am. Twenty-seven years in the past, exactly when you set the time turner for. You gave me a list to
bring to this time with instructions to update whatever I could. You detailed the Diary, the ring,
Nagini, and the locket but that locket wasn’t the real Horcrux as we found out later. Harry, Ron,
and I added the cup, the Diadem, and updated the information on the locket. On top of that you
wrote information about known Death Eaters and sympathizers and we added Order members from
the first war, among other things we thought might be useful.” She pulled out the heavily marked
parchment out of her pocket that she grabbed out of her trunk in preparation of the meeting tonight.
It made her smile to see the boys sloppy writing before she had taken over writing the list. If she let
them write, no one would ever be able to make out what was what.

“I’ll take the list Miss Black and start the hunt for the horcruxes. I want you to live your life here
as normally as possible. As if you were any other seventeen-year-old girl who also happened to be
a Black. You are an invaluable resource but I do not want to use children on the battlefield this
time.”

Hermione duplicated the list and handed it to Dumbledore.

“Sir, I don’t think I can just hand this off. I want to help. I have been fighting against him almost
my whole childhood. Other than you and Voldemort, I am probably the most educated person
about horcruxes. At least in Britain anyway.”

“We will see. I was told you came via time turner. Do you still have it?”

“Yes.” She pulled out the purple velvet bag from her pocket and pulled out the beautiful time
turner. It dangled from her fingers lightly swinging as she went to give it to Dumbledore. He
looked pleased as he reached out to take it from Hermione’s hand. It gave out a warning zap of
magic to discourage him from touching it.

“Well that complicates things.” The headmaster looked puzzled. And Hermione put the time turner
back in the velvet bag with a shrug.

“Since I am fresh out of Basilisk venom, I plan to use fiend fyre until another option is presented to
me. I will start with the diadem. If you are determined to help, I will be searching the Room of
Requirement for the diadem on the thirtieth of October.” He dismissed her

“Okay Sir. Until then. Good night.” She left his office deep in thought forgetting to close the door
all the way.

When she was almost to the griffin statue, she realized she had left her bag in the Headmaster’s
office on the floor next to the chair. Turning back, she stopped just before she got to the door upon
hearing two voices coming through it. She quickly stepped off the board that groaned under her
feet and hoped it went unnoticed. Curiously she peeked through the crack left in the door when she
neglected to close it on her earlier departure.

“I told you she was clever. She has been fighting against the greatest evil our world has seen ever
since she befriended Harry Potter in her first year.” Dumbledore moved in front of the window
listening to the other man.

“I want to see her again too. She is dead and using someone else’s death to fuel a time turner that,
apparently, we can no longer touch sits wrong with me. What happens to me in the future that I feel
that is an acceptable loss?” A second but older Dumbledore moved over to the window in
Hermione’s line of sight and patted the shoulder of the slightly younger man. Hermione furrowed
her brow and her eyes widened in shock. What the Hell? She was staring at two Dumbledore’s and
wasn’t there a rule about coming into contact with your past self? Well who was she to talk about
rules, her being in 1971 broke many laws too. She frowned, who were they talking about? She
shifted slightly to see into the office better.

“It’s not like you don’t want to help her and save everyone. But that is impossible. That particular
event brought Voldemort down. I don’t know why you feel so guilty about this. I just want to use the magical disturbance of the Potter’s deaths to kill Voldemort and to power the time turner to go back farther than ever before. But only after Tom Riddle is defeated. With enough magical energy, I could go back to the day Ariana was killed or even before she was harmed in the first place. We could kill two birds with one stone! We just have to ensure events unfold the way they were meant to. It is imperative that Lily give her life for Harry’s protection so that the curse will rebound off of him. In the few moments after Voldemort falls I will be able to imbue the time turner with the magical excess.” The younger Dumbledore was shaking his head.

“And what about the final horcrux? Are you going to point your wand at that infant to rid the world of Tom just so you can go back in time?” Hermione clamped a hand over her mouth in horror. Why did he NEVER once tell Harry he was a horcrux? If he planned on time traveling, then why did he need her to come back too? Hermione wondered how Dumbledore managed it. She saw his dead body that night. She saw Hagrid carry his body to his tomb. Her mind was spinning.

“I believe I can save him. Miss Black wouldn’t allow anything less.”

“We also need her to ensure Orion Black does not pass the Time Travel Secrecy Law at the Wizengamot in February. I cannot afford that law to be passed.” She wrinkled her nose. She could think of several reasons that she wouldn’t want that passed personally if it was what she thought it might be.

With tears brimming in her eyes she carefully made her way past the statue and ran down to the Slytherin common room. Her forgotten bag was laying on her bed when she arrived with a note laying on top.

_Hermione,

A funny thing I've noticed that I completely forget to have looked at, is that defective board right outside my door that groans any time someone steps on it. Do not think less of an old man for trying to alter events that he so desperately wished he could change.

Albus Dumbledore

That was the first night she cried herself to sleep since healing at Shell Cottage from the torture she suffered at Bellatrix hands.

**HGHGHGHG**

Over the next month, Hermione kept thinking about the Headmaster and what she had heard. It gave her a lot to think about and she was good at reading between the lines. After all she was always deciphering what the Ministry was going to inflict on them. She didn’t know how she was going to handle this situation. She needed someone she would be able to trust. The more she thought about it the more she realized her choice in this matter was simple. Either trust the Headmaster or trust Orion Black. And trusting Professor Dumbledore after knowing he was going to allow and use the deaths that she came to the past to prevent was unacceptable. She promised that this time she would save everyone.

The Headmaster wanted to discourage her involvement but Harry deserved better than that. How many times did Dumbledore lead Harry along only giving him enough information to not die? He was pulled by the invisible strings of the Headmaster and Harry always resented that. She needed to be on guard against the powerful wizard. Orion was her best bet. She was resolved to talk to her father over the Christmas Holiday but it wouldn’t do to forget that that man was Sirius’ father. The man who allowed all sorts of horrible things to happen to him and who was and will always be
Slytherin. Maybe trust was too strong of a word. An even trade or a business arrangement was more likely.

She was brought out of her musing by Professor Stebbins in Defense Against the Dark Arts.

“Turn to page one hundred thirty-six. Creating counter curses.”

**HGHGHGHG**

She spent the week leading up to Halloween surprisingly in good company. Lucius, Cadeus, and Theo had inducted her into their small group, allowing Hermione to discreetly blow off Narcissa’s debutant society. Hair and makeup charms were just not something that she was interested in.

She found herself watching quidditch in this time just as much as when Harry and Ron played. As long as they didn’t try to get her onto a broom she would consider it a win.

On the way back to the castle from the latest training session that Avery coerced her into watching, she was pulled into an abandoned classroom. She wasn’t really paying attention but when she whirled on her abductor, wand at the ready she saw that it was Lucius who had grabbed her.

“Whoa, I’m not going to hurt you Hermione. I just wanted to talk to you.” He said with his hands raised to his shoulders, palm out. He was clearly deeply amused by her reaction.

“What did you want to talk about?” She put away her wand and looked at him curiously.

He gently pulled her to his chest and bent down and kissed her sweetly on the lips. He kissed a path to her ear and whispered. “I’m not going to apologize.” He ran his finger on her cheek pushing a curl behind her ear. It sent tingles down her spine.

“I didn’t ask you to.”

He smirked into her hair. He stepped forward which forced her to step back until she was up against the wall. He put his hands on the wall either side of her head.

“What is this?” she whispered

“I’ve never met anyone like you. Every time I am near you, I want things I didn’t know I wanted.” He leaned in for another kiss but hesitated as if to ask her permission this time. Whatever he saw on her face he took as agreement and closed the gap between them. His lips were smooth and soft and he tasted like bergamot. Hermione melted into him, even knowing who he might become and all of the horrible things he could do. He smelled like spice, it invaded her space so that it was all she could smell. He was intoxicating. She brought her hands up and ran them over his chest to his shoulders and hummed her approval at the feel of him. He was more wiry than muscular and stronger than he looked. Lucius ran the fingers of his hands down her arms encircling her forearms trapping them around his neck, making her shiver and gasp. He licked and nibbled on her lower lip but with a low moan he pulled away and put his forehead against hers, breathing hard.

“Would you do me the honor of attending my family’s Christmas ball with me over the holidays?”

“I would be happy to.” She breathed before he took her lips in another toe curling kiss.
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Courtship Rules and Intent

Chapter Four

Breakfast was an interesting affair the morning of the first quidditch match of Slytherin vs. Ravenclaw. Hermione was unused to the fierce house rivalry between any houses other than Slytherin and Gryffindor but it had been amusing to watch the whole week leading up to today’s match.

Bole was particularly amusing. He spent the last two weeks sending Benjy Fenwick the captain of Ravenclaw’s team handkerchiefs from every girl in Slytherin. Embroidered with slurs and smack talk and everything. Every time Benjy got one he turned white then green and the one memorable time when he puked all over Sybill Trelawney during breakfast. Hermione facetiously wondered why Sybill didn’t see that coming.

“Hermione are you going to come watch the match?” Asked Avery.

“Hmm? Oh of course! Just because it doesn’t take up all my time doesn’t mean I don’t like to watch it.” She filled a bowl full of strawberries and started eating them.

Avery and Bole sent her happy smiles over their shoulders as the team made their way to the locker rooms. This left Lucius and Hermione as the last two seventh year Slytherin students still eating.

“When you’re done with breakfast I’ll walk down with you.” Lucius said as he daubed his napkin on the corner of his lips making Hermione focus on how plump his lips were. There was no getting around it, she was falling for him. Hard. Who would have thought Lucius would be so desirable? Hermione watched him out of the corner of her eye as she fished another strawberry out of her bowl. His long blond hair was shorter than he would wear in the future. He had it pulled back in his signature que at the nape of his neck held with a black satin ribbon. He was wearing a set of quality dark blue robes over the same color trousers and a white oxford button up. He looked delicious.

The people in the room faded out as she fantasized being alone in the Great Hall with him. She envisioned his hands caressing her face and as the tip of his fingers glided over the curve of her bottom lip. She would turn and take the finger into her mouth and suck. Her eyes would flick to his so that she could watch his pupils blown wide with lust and desire. She would run her fingers over his muscular thigh and he would be unable to do anything but kiss her lips to taste her. To pull her closer, so he could run his hands over her waist to rest just below her breasts. He would kiss down the column of her neck while she moaned with abandon, because his lips would feel like fire and ice. His nimble fingers would unbutton her shirt placing tiny kisses on the skin exposed. He would grab her waist and lift her to the table top and push her legs apart to stand between them. One of his hands would run up her leg finding the sensitive spot behind her knee. He would murmur how beautiful she was and how hard she made him. And she would feel him pressed into her thigh. His other hand would cup her breast and his fingers would roll and pinch her nipple making her gasp. She would be so wet that her knickers would be ruined and when his hand made it to her mons he
would moan in ecstasy. His fingers would run over her knickers until he found her sensitive nub. She would take a quick breath as her eyes rolled to the back of her head. His mouth would find her nipple and lave the hard peak until she started to beg. ‘Please. Oh my God. Don’t stop.’ He would smirk against her skin and with a pop release her nipple. Taking her lips passionately, nibbling her lower lip. He would push her panties aside to feel her arousal and insert his finger into her dripping quim. He would feel how tight she was around his finger and there wouldn’t be anything he would want more. His thumb would be pressing against her clit driving her wild. She would hear him unbuckling his belt and she would open her mouth for him as his tongue sought hers. She would be able to hear the clack of his trousers hitting the floor and the rustle when he pushed down his pants. She would twitch with surprise when she felt his heavy erection resting on her inner thigh, skin to skin. He would grip her thighs and pull her to the edge of the table as he lined up to take her for the first time. He would go slow for her as he entered her, stretching her. Her eyes would go wide at the uncomfortable pain that would quickly turn to rapture as his fingers again found her small bundle of nerves. He would pick up the pace as she got used to having him inside of her. She would start to pant as she got closer to climax. Reaching the edge, she would shatter, her walls clenching around him as she screamed her release. He would join her moments later with a rush of breath as he came. He would kiss her eyelids and lips as he told her how much he adored her. And she would kiss him back. Because she loved him.

“Are you okay Hermione?” Lucius asked. “You look flushed. Do you have a fever?” he put his hand on her head to check.

Hermione blushed in embarrassment red overlapping red, realizing she was caught having a wet daydream about the very man who caught her. She pressed her thighs together to relieve some of her desire. Wondering if she would have a chance to change her knickers before the match. Looking at Lucius who was getting a little antsy waiting, she decided she didn’t have the time and would just deal with the consequences of having a wet daydream in public.

“I’m fine. I’m just excited to watch the match.”

“Right. Well, if you are ready. Shall we?” He smirked. It didn’t look like he believed her but being a gentleman, he let it drop.

“Yeah, sure.” She muttered gathering her green and silver scarf and light blue over robe to keep her warm. No muggle clothes for her anymore. What a shame that was too. She never thought she would miss jeans so much. Maybe when she gets a place of her own, as long as Walburga doesn’t see them, that is. She planned on advocating for Sirius though.

Lucius and Hermione were half way to the pitch when Nott passed them with the Head Girl from Ravenclaw. Sagitta Bulstrode on his arm. She was no doubt a relation of Millicent from Hermione’s original timeline. Two days ago, Theo got a letter from his father that made him withdrawn and taciturn. Hermione tried to bring him out of it many times but every time he looked at her, it seemed he would get worse. The next day, he was dating Sagitta and he became cold and distant to everyone but no one more than Lucius. Lucius had always been treated with respect and deference but they no longer seemed to be friends. Hermione felt like Theo was slipping from her grasp. How could she shield him from Voldemort if he wouldn’t even look at her?

She sent a sad look to his back and then looked up into Lucius’s face. His brow was furrowed as if he were deep in thought as he looked at the back of Theo’s head. Hermione had asked Lucius what had happened last night at dinner but if he knew, he wasn’t telling.

After they took their seats, Alex Jordan started introducing the teams. He sounded so much like Lee that Hermione was thrown into the memory of Harry’s first match. A wave of sadness and
nostalgia passed over her. Never forget. Make the future my bitch. Take down evil narcissistic megalomaniacs. You know, stuff to do in my spare time. She thought sarcastically. She missed them, her best friends, her family. She took a deep breath and focused back on the pitch.

“Ravenclaw, the reigning champions, three years in a row. Keeper and Captain Benjy Fenwick. Chasers, Emmaline Vance, Angelica Corner, and Barnabas Cuffe. The beaters Stirgis Podmore and Edgar Marchbanks. And last but not least, the seeker, Pandora Greengrass. I never thought her interests would leave the realm of faeries to be a seeker but there you go. And against all odds, she is a fantastic seeker with an unparalleled winning streak.” The Ravenclaw team rose into the air and took a lap around the pitch.

“Jordan!” a highly exasperated Professor McGonagall said.

“Right you are Professor. Here is Slytherin. Captain and Beater Flynn Mulciber. Watch out for that one he likes to play dirty.” Mulciber scowled in his direction and Professor McGonagall was heard in the background telling him to only announce facts not opinions. Hermione could tell where Lee got his skills from. She giggled lightly and if she had turned her head, she would have seen Lucius watching her with a small smile and a soft look. The kind of looks girls swoon for.


“Mr. Jordan!”

“My thoughts exactly Professor.” He said cheekily. There was a low chuckle throughout the stands. The Slytherin team took to the air and after doing their obligatory lap around the pitch they started warming up before Professor Beery called the teams down for the captains to shake hands. Even from up here, it looked like Fenwick and Mulciber were trying to break the other’s hand. Hermione shook her head in amusement. Somethings were the same no matter what time period one lived in.

“What are you thinking about?” Lucius asked.

“My best friends from the future. Harry was the captain and seeker. I was just thinking that it didn’t matter what time period I live in, quidditch will still evoke the same reactions. It looked like Fenwick and Mulciber were trying to break each other’s hand. It just reminded me of Harry.” She was smiling and shaking her head.

“Are you ever going to tell me your previous house?” he asked with a raised eyebrow and smirk.

“At least not today.” She smirked back.

“You miss him.” He said referring to Harry, not quite keeping the jealousy from his voice.

“Yeah, for all intense and purposes he was my brother. He was my father’s godson.” She shivered in the cold.

“Was his godson? Or will be?” Lucius wrapped his scarf over hers around her neck.

“Both, for me anyway. If I had stayed, he would have died. In fact, I would be dead too.” She fiddled with the tasseled ends on his scarf. She brought it up to cover the lower part of her face and breathed in the spicy smell of him. It nearly pulled her back into the wet daydream from breakfast. He was staring at her with worry. “Will he come after you? The Dark Lord?”

“Yes, you can count on it. I am from the future and he will want me.”
“That will keep you safe at least. You’re pureblooded and from the future. Two very good reasons to keep you alive.”

“He will have to kill me because I will never join his followers and he will never get what he wants from me.” She said with a twist of her lips.

“Why risk so much if you know he will try to kill you? You could run from this or hide. Your family could keep you safe.”

“Because the alternative is untenable.” She said.

Their focus was brought sharply back to the game as Slytherin scored the first goal.

“Ten- Zero Slytherin. And Avery has the quaffle. Good shot Podmore!” Jordan announced as the Ravenclaw beater hit a bludger straight into Avery’s path to the hoops. He dropped the quaffle down to Scabior who had been flying below him. He was a wiry and quick chaser as he swerved around Vance and Cuffe as they tried to clothesline him in hopes of stealing the quaffle. He quickly dived below them pulling back up enough to throw the quaffle through the left hoop. Fenwick tried to block it but missed by a fingertip. A wave of groans rose from the Ravenclaw stands and a near deafening roar of approval burst from the Slytherin supporters. Slytherin wasn’t the only house who wanted Ravenclaw taken down from their pedestal.

“Another ten points for Slytherin. Twenty- Zero Slytherin. Vance takes possession of the quaffle and speeding towards the Slytherin hoops. Ohhh. Vance is hit straight in the back with the bludger hit by Rookwood. Probably trying to take her out of the game. Wilkes has the quaffle and oh my goodness rammed straight into Corner. Is she okay? She looks a bit dazed?”

“Jordan!”

“Right you are Professor. Ten more points to Slytherin, making the score thirty to zero. Cuffe has the quaffle and it looks like he might actually make it to the hoops. Ah, maybe next time, Cuffe. Blocked by Keeper Bole.

It looks like the Ravenclaw seeker has seen the snitch followed closely by Rosier. They are neck in neck. Slytherin wins one hundred eighty to zero.” Rosier had punched the air in triumph. That had been Slytherin’s first win against Ravenclaw in two years. Mulciber had a look of pure happiness.

Lucius and Hermione made their way out of the stands to congratulate the team on their victory. Avery caught Hermione around the waist and swung her around in exuberance. It made her laugh that he was so carefree and happy. Lucius stepped in as soon as Avery stopped and gave him a withering glare. It made Avery smile wider and tighten his hold on Hermione’s waist.

“That was absolutely brilliant Avery.” Hermione beamed. “Well done!”

“Yes, well done, Avery.” Lucius growled as he tried to burn a hole through Avery’s hand with his eyes.

“Thanks!” laughed Avery as he pulled away from Hermione and walking backwards headed towards the locker rooms. “I’ll see you later Hermione.” he said still smiling, ignoring the glowering Lucius completely.

**HGHGHGHG**

Instead of studying in the library like she had planned, Hermione found herself sandwiched
between Avery and Bole in the Three Broomsticks with a butterbeer in her hand, exactly one week after Slytherin stomped all over Ravenclaw’s winning streak. They had dragged her from her self-imposed exile in the library to enjoy Hogsmead 1971 as Bole put it. She was delighted to find the bookstore, Shafiq and Tomb’s which had closed before she attended Hogwarts in the future. Avery and Bole declared that since Lucius was unable to come this time because of Prefect duties that she would take his place in their group. Although, they quickly found out that Theo was taking Sagitta to Madam Puddifoots turning their group of four, into a group of three. The three of them gagged and shot Theo pitying looks whenever they saw him barely tolerating his date. He kept shooting Hermione wistful glances when she wasn’t looking, Sagitta didn’t even notice his distraction.

The boys wanted to go into Zonko’s but Hermione wanted to go back to Shafiq and Tomb’s and get that first edition potions book by Vindictus Viridian that she thought Severus would love for Christmas. He was on the list of the Slytherin’s she wanted to save.

After buying the book, she put it in her beaded bag and walked out of the door. She heard a noise from the alleyway next to the book store and followed the noise to see what was going on.

When she got halfway down the alley she saw James, Sirius, Remus, and Peter holding Severus at wand point. They were obviously in the middle of the altercation and she was pleased to see that though Snape was out numbered he held his own. Well, Hermione wasn’t a prefect in this time so she decided to have a little fun at the expense of the Marauders.

Nonverbally casting a disillusionment charm she snuck quietly behind the four boys. She pointed her wand at James and Sirius’ trousers and trying to hold in her snickering she sent her spell.

“Cadunt Vestimenta.” *Falling Clothes-English to Latin Google translate.* She flicked her wand tip down to the ground and Sirius and James’ trousers were around their ankles. She thought it appropriate payback on Snape’s behalf. Harry had told both Ron and her what he saw in the pensive the last day of Occlumency lessons. Having her fun, she lifted her disillusionment.

“My own sister, a traitor.” Sirius wailed as he thumped his hand over his heart in mock betrayal. Not even caring that his trousers were still on the ground and his pants were showing. Hermione shook her head.

“Four against one Sirius. If you wanted me on your side, you should have made sure it was a one on one duel. If you don’t act honorably, I am not going to feel bad about taking the other side. And pull up your damn trousers.” The boys shot her a grin and reached down to pull up their trousers.


“HA!” she rolled her eyes. “I’m rather impressed with Severus, he was holding his own just fine. To be honest he probably would have won this round.” She saw Peter shrink against the wall hoping to not be seen but Hermione had been watching him closely. She would have to take the rat down if she couldn’t save him. She would try to save him first, even though she knew she couldn’t save everyone. Remus’ head was hanging in shame. Though not throwing curses himself, he did nothing to discourage his friends.

Hermione turned back the way she came as Severus rammed his shoulder into James’ moving roughly through to walk back to the castle with Hermione.

“I could have taken them.”

“I know.”
“Then why did you interfere?”

“It was an amazing opportunity to give Sirius a smack down.” She smirked in absolute amusement. When Sirius remembered this in the future he was going to make her young-self suffer. She could feel it.

**HGHGHGHG**

Wednesday morning rolled around and Hermione was eating breakfast in the Great Hall when Agni the Black family owl landed primly next to her plate carrying a rather large parcel. She put it in her beaded bag for later and gave her bacon rinds to the beautiful black and grey owl. Agni hooted softly and flew out of the hall.

She didn’t get to open it until her free period just before lunch. It was lucky for her that she was alone in her dorm when she found the time.

She pulled out a large book titled Duties of an Heiress by Vicky Bishopper, three bottles of Sleek-eazy’s hair potion, and an envelope stuffed so full the seams had started to split. She pulled out the parchment. The first page was a note from Walburga.

My Dearest Daughter,

Your father and I are very pleased with your efforts. We were not surprised in the least to receive so many offers. I have enclosed all of the things you will need to continue with your mission. Don’t embarrass us. Remember you are a Black even if your mother was an Abbott. I have enclosed those suits we have accepted on your behalf. You will be expected to accept courtship of each young man. Spend time with them. We will discuss your preferences at Christmas.

-Mother

What the hell? Hermione thought in chagrin. She nearly forgot the way pureblooded marriages came about. Damn. She set the note on the bed and laid out the three remaining pieces of parchment in front of her. On the top of each was the words Courtship rules and intent. They detailed the financial worth of each of her suitors on top of copious amounts of rules that she would peruse later. The first was Lucius Malfoy and her heart fluttered. Next was Cadeus Avery, really? And last was Caradoc Dearborn. The Head Boy? Hermione couldn’t even remember if she had spoken to him beyond polite greetings. She put her head in her hands and starting laughing uncontrollably. Figures.

Once she controlled herself, she shoved everything back into the box and tossed it unceremoniously into her trunk. For once not caring about the way she was handling a book. It was probably a first edition too. She made her way to the Great Hall for lunch wondering how to ‘court’ three men at once when she knew she only wanted one.

**HGHGHGHG**

The next time she saw Lucius and Avery together was in Herbology after lunch. The three of them shared a table with Theo who was only speaking to Avery. They waited for Professor Beery to untangle himself from his latest acquisition, a baby Venomous Tentacula for class to start. The very same Venomous Tentacula that she knew in the future. She smiled at it and gave it a loving pat as she passed it when she entered, earning her looks of incredulousness from both Slytherin house and Gryffindor.

Incidentally this was also the only class she had with all three of her suitors. Dearborn was across
the room at a table with Lizzy Bell, Camron Wood, and Gwenog Jones. He was talking to Lizzy and Hermione took the opportunity to check him out. She wasn’t interested per se but Walburga had made it clear she was to get to know all three men. Caradoc was average height and thin with honey blond hair and light brown eyes. He was good looking in a boy next door kind of way. She was shaking her head as she looked away. Catching Avery’s raised eyebrow, she shrugged. She sent him a kill me now look. He chuckled under his breath.

With several small puncture wounds on his face and hands, Professor Beery started today’s lesson, occasionally smacking the roaming vines of the Venomous Tentacula.

“Today we will be transplanting the asphodel into larger pots before they are to be planted next fall. Asphodel are incredibly delicate at this stage and must be handled with the utmost care. I will put two students to a group. Your partner will be yours for the rest of the year.”

They were each paired with a person from a different house to ‘improve house relations’. Hermione was paired with Lizzy Bell, but Lucius was not so lucky. He was paired with Caradoc and it was immediately obvious that they hated each other. Lucius oozed disdain and Caradoc radiated anger. Hermione watched in fascination. She had never seen them talk unless it was about Prefect duties and both were always civil.

Lizzy noticed where she was looking and laughed lightly.

“You know they never got along but it was a mutual understanding to ignore each other until last week. The last Prefect meeting turned hostile between them in three seconds flat. It was incredibly entertaining. I wonder what changed.”

“Last week it all changed?”

“Yup.”

Last week Orion probably sent the Black Acceptance as was customary for courtships according to rule 55 paragraph 2. She also suspected there was an unspoken rule that the suitors were aware of who their rivals were even though she searched the rules and came up empty.

Class ended when Caradoc exploded the pot he was supposed to transplant the asphodel in. Lucius looked like he had won a major victory while Professor Beery was docking points for Caradoc’s negligence. Hermione shook her head. Her life was already complicated. Was it really fair to add this on top?

**HGHGHGHG**

Avery sat on one of the green wingback chairs in front of the fireplace in the Slytherin common room when Hermione came back from the library that night. He looked up as he heard the door open as a reflex but as soon as he saw her, his whole face lit up.

“Hey, Hermione. How’s it going?

“Good and you?”

“Good, good.” He muttered. He stood up placing the book he had been reading on the table and stretched his arms over his head and walked over to where she was still standing. He had an amazing body, she couldn’t help but admire.

“I received my acceptance. I’m very happy you said yes.” His dark eyes bored into hers.
“It was accepted on my behalf.”

“Well that explains why Theo’s was rejected.”

“Theo asked for courtship?”

“Well...I think he was the first one of us to do that too.”

“Oh my goodness. So, that’s why Theo won’t talk to me. He thinks I rejected him?”

“Uh huh. It’s usually left up to the girl to choose. I wonder why Lord Black is doing it for you.”

She gave him a nonplussed look.

“It is Orion Black we are talking about. He even intimidates my father, and he is bad ass.” Said Avery reflectively.

“The thing is, I can understand you and Lucius being accepted. I talk about you both enough in my letters to my father for him to know what I think about both of you. Also of Theo too. So, it doesn’t make sense that Theo’s would be the only one rejected. And before I got the letters I had no idea Dearborn even knew who I was.” Hermione shook her head.

“Maybe it has something to do with the added clause.” Said Avery reasonably.

“What added clause?”

“Where the families’ alliance has to stay with The House of Black against The Dark Lord.”

“Really?” Hermione said incredulously.

“My family has been typically on The Dark Lord’s side but when it was revealed that you were a time traveler, a Black, and incredibly powerful, my father jumped at the chance that you might be the next Lady Avery. He was positively drooling at the thought. I on the other hand don’t care about that so much, I just want you.”

“Avery…”

“Don’t. Don’t tell me no. Not yet. I know you like Lucius but give me a chance. I know I can make you happy. Let me try.”

“Okay. I won’t say it until I’ve told my father my choice which won’t be until Christmas.” She had a problem with telling people ‘no’ it seemed.

“You won’t regret it. I promise!” He pulled her in for a hug and buried his face in her curls.

**HGHGHGHG**

Theo sat on the step with his back to the wall listening to the conversation that Avery just had with Hermione. He felt better knowing she didn’t reject him but he had a buildup of fury at his father, Lord Black, and the Dark Lord and he was incredibly jealous that his two best friends had a chance to court her. Didn’t he deserve to be happy too? Didn’t he deserve to try and win her?

The letter his father sent was a copy of the rejection letter and a short letter telling Theo since he was ready to enter into courtship, it would arranged. His father had sent courtship intent to Sagitta Bulstrode without consulting him and obviously did not care that he was irrevocably in love with Hermione Black. After the many letters that he sent begging his father to pursue a betrothal
contract for Hermione, how could his father expect Theo to just forget about her and move on to a different woman?

The sole reason, it seemed, that his suit had been rejected was the family allegiance to the Dark Lord. So, if he wanted Hermione, he would have to ensure The Dark Lord’s demise.
Hermione was walking up to the Astronomy Tower late Thursday night. It was one of those clear crisp nights where she would love to have a steaming hot cocoa in her hand and gaze at the stars. She received her first Slug Club invitation that day and she was still deciding whether to accept. Lucius thought she was mad, only the best of the best get into the club. Whatever. She rolled her eyes. Lucius could be so pompous sometimes. It was with a grimace that she remembered the Christmas party from sixth year. Ugh, McLaggen.

She ran her fingers along the wall in the stairwell as her thoughts began moving to the horrible night in sixth year where Malfoy let the Death Eaters into the school and a huge battle broke out, right here in these corridors. The place where the Golden Trio’s final journey began.

The place of Dumbledore’s supposed death. Dumbledore was such a bastard! Hermione thought and snorted in non-amusement. The whole order accused Professor Snape of a murder he didn’t even commit. Introducing Dumbledore, the entertainer and for his final trick, leave Snape to pick up the pieces. Voila.

As she got to the top of the tower she heard little sniffles. Deciding to check it out, she slowly crept onto the rampart. She was shocked to see Sirius in the same pose that she had found him in on the beach at Shell Cottage the day of the adoption ceremony. It must be a defense mechanism.

“Sirius?”

“Go away ‘Mione!”

Hermione didn’t say anything as she sat behind him and put her legs on either side of his body. She pulled him to her chest so that his head was leaning on her collar bone and rocked began to rock him. She told him how much she loved him, that whatever was wrong she would fix for him, and most of all if they needed to go on the lam she would do so.

He gave a shaky chuckle as he thrust a piece of unfurled parchment at her. Holding it up to her face she muttered ‘lumos’ and a small blue light erupted from her wand tip.

Ungrateful,

Do not think for one moment that your father and I are pleased. We have had more letters from your teachers about your behavior with those blood traitors you call friends than you can imagine. You are an embarrassment to the Most Ancient and Noble House of Black! If you don’t shape up there will be dire consequences. Also, do not think that we will allow you to visit their nasty little homes over the holidays. Consider this your punishment. Find new friends who are worthy of the Black Heir.
Walburga

P.s. Your cat Blinks died.

“What a bitch! Don’t worry Siri, if you want to go to James’ house over holiday I’ll make sure you go. I would like to see you in less trouble, but the happy go lucky prankster is what makes you, you. You do not have to change for anyone. I love you the way you are.”

Sirius turned and looked at her like he had never seen her before. She looked like a fierce warrior goddess, jaw set with determination radiating from her as she pulled him closer and held him tighter, kissing his temple and petting his hair. He had never had anyone who cared for him like she did other than Regulus. ‘This is how a real mother is supposed to act’ he thought.

“I’m sorry about Blinks.” She whispered into his hair. And Sirius started to sob in earnest.

**HGHGHGHG**

Theo had been in a depressed mood ever since he got the rejection of suit by Lord Black. Why wouldn’t Lord Black ask him where his allegiance lay? Why would it matter what his fucking father believed?

He roamed the halls, taking comfort in the quiet castle. He liked to walk when he had a lot to think about and boy did he ever. Earlier that night he sent a letter to Lord Black asking on his own behalf the right to courtship and agreeing to the extra stipulation laid out and defined in the previous courtship terms. Now he was just awaiting an answer and he was nervous as hell.

Theo wasn’t watching where he was going when he heard whispers and what sounded like someone crying. He moved out of the stairwell of the Astronomy tower walking closer to the dark blob on the floor. As he got nearer, he heard Hermione’s unmistakable voice murmuring words of comfort to the person she was holding. Jealousy flared quick and bright, thinking it might be Lucius or Avery but as he moved ever closer, he realized it was her younger brother, Sirius Black. He didn’t want to disturb their private moment and started to back away. He resolved to talk to Hermione in the morning, hopefully she would forgive him.

Avery thought Theo was angry or resentful as the reason why he hadn’t talked to her in weeks, but that wasn’t the case. He was incredibly embarrassed and shy. He wanted more than anything to talk to her, to touch her, to be with her but he was afraid. Afraid that if he got any closer to her that he would fall deeper in love with her. She was already in love with Lucius, a blind man could see it. Facing rejection was extremely difficult for him but for her, he would try again.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione showed up at the Room of Requirement at 7am the day before Halloween. After walking in front of the door back and forth three times thinking, ‘I need the room of hidden things’ she opened the door to see the backside of Dumbledore who was bent over and his top half was completely hidden by the large bookshelf he was looking behind.

“Sir?”

“Oh Good, Miss Black! How wonderful to see you again my girl! As I walked in the room and realized the sheer number of things to look through, I decided the best place to start is the beginning. Hence the reason I am blocking the door.” He was twinkling furiously.

“The Diadem is on a table with a wig and a bust, or it will be. I would rather believe it to be on that table now sitting for all of those years. That’s where I will start. Harry had hidden a potions book
in here and trying to mark the spot he put the tiara on a wig and a bust. So, let’s cross our fingers and hope for the best.”

“Right you are!”

It didn’t take Hermione long to lose Dumbledore in the masses. She had gone straight past several rows before turning down a random path. She walked through that row then turned down the next. The room was full of oddities. In the first half hour, she had found How to become Animagi in three easy steps by Ernest Biddywell. It was a banned book in 1642 for a reason, many people that used this book had been unable to return to their human forms. Even the forced reversal spell had failed. Hermione put it in her bag for later. Maybe she would add to the theory and give it to Sirius in a few years. After all she was sure she could make it safe with a few adjustments.

“I’ve been looking for this for years!” Came a boom from where she assumed Dumbledore was.

“Are you okay, Sir?”

“Never better, Dear! Never better.”

She continued to look around for the diadem and jumped when she felt a hand on her shoulder. She whipped around to see a very amused Dumbledore uncharacteristically smirking.

“Put this book in your amazing bag! I believe it could be of great use to you someday.” She took the book and he left her there, going back to where he was supposed to be looking. She looked down at the title ‘Sacrifice and Love: The Compendium by Merlin’ Her eyes bugged wide. There were only three copies of this book in the whole world. She felt giddy and light headed and with great regret put it in her beaded bag for later. First things first, the Horcrux hunt.

At noon Dumbledore tried to get Hermione to take a lunch break but she strongly declined the offer and continued her search. She came upon a strongly warded Crystal vial etched with TMR an hour later. Inside was a swirling green liquid that she identified as Basilisk Venom. It seemed to Hermione that Voldemort kept giving her ways and means to destroy his soul. Almost as if he was tempting fate by being so assured of immortality.

It took the duo several more hours before Hermione yelled “YES! I found it Headmaster!” She was standing in front of a large cupboard which looked like the wood had been abused and the varnish looked like bubbles that had popped, leaving the wood destroyed. In the cupboard, there was a cage with a skeleton of something that had five legs. Perhaps Hagrid had tried his hand at inventing new species when he was in school. It sounded like something he would do. A tarnished tiara sat to the left of the cupboard half hidden under a hideous wig. The second her fingers touched the diadem she felt the familiar and distinct aura of a broken soul, being intimately acquainted with how they felt. She knew it would affect her strongly having been tainted by the locket for so many months on the run.

“Brilliant!” he beamed as he turned the corner to stand next to her. She held out the horcrux and Dumbledore nodded to the ground but refused to touch it. Future Dumbledore must have told him about the ring.

“Lay it down on the floor and stand behind me and we will help Voldemort finish destroying a priceless artefact that he abused so many years ago.”

He lifted his wand and cast fiend fyre. Hermione had never seen the dark curse and was in awe of the sheer magical power it took not only to cast it but to control it. ‘This right here ladies and gentlemen was the reason why Grindlewald was defeated and Voldemort was afraid of this ancient
wizard.’ Thought Hermione.

The diadem screamed and at first, tried to show Dumbledore his greatest fears, but being no stranger to his weaknesses, he easily disregarded it. After all, standing night after night in front of the mirror of Erised was its own special kind of torture. With a great deal of hope to change that particular event, he was able to ignore the tiny broken soul that once had been beautiful in its entirety and innocence.

Once the metal was cool, Hermione bent down and picked it up then stuffed it into her beaded bag. She had plans for them. Plans that might change everything.

**HGHGHGHG**

Scabior was a scrapper, a fighter, a winner. He made it his job to let people know that he was not a man for sale like his father. He held himself to a code of honor and cunning that would impress even the most powerful of men. He was distrustful of the members in Slytherin house and for good reason. They were not nicknamed the den of snakes for no reason. He treated Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff with mild tolerance and on principal loathed Gryffindor. As a general rule, this was how most Slytherin’s reacted to the social structure in the school. There was a hierarchy that was followed religiously even between the houses. There were the Sacred twenty-eight, the Purebloods, the Half-bloods with roots in the sacred twenty-eight, Half-bloods without prestigious relatives, and Muggleborns. Even within those tiers were a pecking order. So, when a rich Pure blooded girl born within the sacred twenty-eight comes in and completely ignores the rules and is kind and loving to everyone, except Umbridge and her crew. Which was understandable as she utterly loathed them, everyone did, and she also didn’t bother to hide it. In short, Hermione didn’t act like she belonged. In fact, she acted like she knew the rules and threw them out of the window if they didn’t suit her. She was something completely other.

Scabior had been watching Hermione since the first day and finally came to a conclusion. She was someone worth protecting. Not that she couldn’t protect herself, not at all, but she shouldn’t have to. She radiated the light, everything that was good and pure in the world. And he was just the man to do it. He didn’t doubt that she would marry a powerful man and into a powerful family but Lordlings tended not to get their hands dirty doing what needed to be done. That is why men like Scabior existed. If he were a little older he might have tried to woo her. But realistically he had nothing to offer her, or any woman. He was a lowly poor pureblood on the dregs of society.

So, when it came to his attention that something nefarious was swirling around Hermione he took it upon himself to investigate. To his dissatisfaction it had taken him several weeks to uncover a plot against her. Surprisingly, Umbridge had nothing to do with it. However; he still hadn’t found the culprit. What he did find out was that sometime between Halloween and Christmas there would be a portkey, and on the other end would be Voldemort. That was all the information he could glean from his various sources.

Now the problem was, who to tell and whether or not Hermione should be told. Typically, in the proper order of things he would tell her betrothed. But she had three courtships and none were trustworthy. The Avery family were a nasty business to cross. They had a penchant for the dark arts and three generations back, the Lord Avery invented an entrails expelling curse. They were also previously known sympathizers to the Dark Lord. The Malfoys were pretty and powerful but they were politicians through and through. Like he said earlier, they wouldn’t get their hands dirty when they could hire someone like Scabior. Dearborn was the wild card. Their family wasn’t as well-known but fairly comfortable monetarily. He was as pompous a pureblood as they came.

Where Avery and Malfoy were seeking an arrangement out of love and desire, Dearborn’s motives
weren’t as cut and dry. He was like a puppet; no outward emotions while being pulled into direction by the puppeteer. Who the puppeteer was, is what concerned him.

Scabior had only just made up his mind to tell Headmaster Dumbledore, when as he turned the corner on the fourth-floor corridor, he saw Dearborn locked into a passionate snog with Dorcus Meadows. Scabior melted back into the shadows to observe. It’s not that he had a secret voyeur kink, it was the fact that Dearborn was trying to marry Hermione. And Scabior was her self-proclaimed protector.

He backtracked silently and using a secret passageway, he avoided that corridor altogether to get to the Headmaster’s office. It would be just his luck that the Headmaster wasn’t there and feeling that the importance outweighed his pride, he sat on the floor with his back pressed against the Griffin statue and settled in to wait.

**HGHGHGHG**

After Professor Dumbledore and Hermione left the room spirits sky high, she decided to ask for a favor.

“Sir, could I floo home for a few hours. I have something I need to discuss with my parents.”

“I can only allow one hour. If you would meet me in my office at eight I would be happy to open the floo for you.”

“Thank you Sir!” she smiled and with a wave good bye she skipped down the corridor to her common room.

It was in the same high spirits that when returning to his office he saw a fourth year Slytherin student sleeping against the griffin statue.

“Daemon, my boy.” He shook the thin shoulders.

With a gasp Scabior came to trying desperately to remember where he was and when he looked into the twinkling eyes of the Headmaster it came rushing back to him.

“Sir, I need to tell you something that may or may not be true but either way between us I believe we could stop it from happening.”

“Come up to my office with me and I will order us some tea and you can fill me in on the details.” Dumbledore was twinkling obnoxiously again. He suspected that the plot in reference was about Hermione and if Daemon told him what he thought he would, then it would prove Hermione was once again successful in turning another dark soldier to the light. ‘well done’ he thought to Hermione.

**HGHGHGHG**

The Slytherin Common room was empty when Hermione arrived covered in dust and cobwebs. Small miracles do happen thought Hermione. She decided to shower and dress in the jewel tone purple robes Walburga had purchased for her all those months ago. One thing about Walburga was that she had excellent taste in clothes. They were tighter than her Hogwarts robes showing off her figure in the most pleasing way. pulling her hair back into a low chignon, she left a few tendrils to frame her face. She needed to look every inch the part of the pureblooded Heiress if she was going to do what she wanted to accomplish. So she added light pink eyeshadow, black eyeliner, and a bit of mascara making her eyes pop. She was not out to impress anyone; it was war paint. Simple as that.
That did not stop Lucius from walking into a wall, Avery to stare, and Nott to immediately flush red as she walked into the common room, oblivious of the disruption she caused. She was pulling her gloves out of her beaded bag and her outer robe was draped over her arm, in case she was thrown out of Grimmauld Place. She didn’t know how well it would go. Then she approached Lucius and Avery near the fireplace while Nott looked on from the couch still bright red.

“I’m headed home for dinner tonight but I will catch up with you both tomorrow if things go well.” Hermione said to the men who were desperately trying not to stare at her breasts. She shot a quick glance to Theo on the couch. She had given up on trying to make Theo talk to her. Either he would man up or he wouldn’t.

“Have a good evening.” Lucius said in a husky broken voice. Realizing belatedly that he had completely failed in ignoring her delectable curves, his eyes snapped up to hers which were twinkling in amusement, clearly not as oblivious as she pretended. And he wasn’t the only one.

Standing on tip toes she placed a kiss on Lucius’ cheek using her hand on his chest to stabilize her. Lucius stood there in a daze as she retreated. Her breasts had brushed against his chest and it took every ounce of self-control he had to let her go.

Speaking of self-control Lucius was getting in good practice with it when after she kissed him she walked to Avery and repeated the gesture. He saw red. Avery shot him a competitive look before grabbing her wrists and instead of letting her kiss his cheek he turned to capture her lips with his. She tasted of honey and cinnamon. Her lips were soft and pliant under his and for a fraction of a second he could have sworn she responded. Before he could be sure, she pulled away from him and with narrowed eyes and a smack to his shoulder she started yelling.

“Cadeus! That was completely unbelievable!”

“I agree” he interrupted with a happy smile.

“I didn’t mean that in a good way!” she shouted, fingers twitching to bring out her wand she whirled away to avoid the temptation. She didn’t have time for that.

Avery thought that even with her verbal and physical abuse it was worth it, he would do it again. Kissing her in front of Lucius was a bonus, a very unexpectedly amazing bonus. He smiled wide and with a saucy wink he smacked her bum making her stutter and flush. With only an angry glare thrown over her shoulder she left the common room to go to the Headmaster’s office. Leaving the two men to face off in which would forever more become known as the Great Wizarding Duel of 1971.

**HGHGHGHG**

Theo left Lucius and Avery to plan their duel and followed Hermione out of the common room.

“Hermione, wait.”

She stopped and looked at him with mild shock.

“You’re talking to me now?” she said still flushed from the impromptu bum smacking debacle.

“I’m sorry I’ve been an ass to you, I just” He ran his fingers through his blond hair and sighed. His light green eyes were unusually dark. “I just, Gods, Hermione I miss you and I hate that we aren’t talking and I know it’s my fault. I’m just, I’m just sorry.”

“I forgive you Theo!” She threw her arms around his waist. “I miss you too. You are the best study
partner.”

He wrapped his arms around her pulling he tightly into his body. He rested his cheek on top of her head. Even if he was just a study partner to her, he would take it.

“Have a nice time with your family.” He pulled away and took a step back when all he wanted to do was press her against the wall and do unspeakable things with her and to her.

“Thanks”

“I’m pretty sure Lucius will make Avery pay, by the way.” He threw her a mischievous smile watching her tender smile turn irate as her eyes narrowed.

Hermione stomped every step of the way into the Headmaster’s office now thinking of Avery and his actions. Dumbledore took one look at her with raised brows but wisely held his council. Hermione grabbed a fist full of floo powder and with a nod in his direction she angrily shouted ‘Grimmauld Place’ and with a swirl of green and purple she was gone. Dumbledore turned to Fawkes who was perched in his cage near the desk.

“I wonder what happened to make her so infuriated. It’s times like these I wish I was able to watch these things like the muggles do with television. I have a feeling the story is a thrilling one.”

He decided to meander down towards the Slytherin Common room to see if the situation was going on. It was his favorite reason to use the disillusionment charm.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione took a few minutes to calm down before leaving the empty library of Grimmauld place. This conversation needed to be done a certain way. It was very delicate. Nodding to herself that she was under control, she started to look for her parents.

She opened the sitting room where Regulus was sitting on the floor staring at the carpet. He looked sad and lonely. It concerned her greatly to see.

“Hey Reg!” She said in a happy voice. She walked into the room and bent down to give him a hug when he flinched away. He wouldn’t meet her eyes when she pushed up the sleeve of his robe and saw many nasty bruises in all different states of severity. She quickly unbuttoned the top buttons over his chest and saw the same mottled bruising that was on his arms.

“This ends today.” She growled. She brought out her wand.

“Plaga Curare.” She pointed at his exposed skin. The bruises faded to look as if they were a week or two old. She pulled him to her and kissed his temple.

“Thanks ‘Mione.” He whispered.

“Of course, I love you Reg. Why don’t you go up to your room and I will have Kreacher get you when dinner is ready?” She whispered back.

He nodded and walked out of the room. Taking a few more minutes to calm down, Hermione left in search of her parents.

The next room was the winner. Her mother was impeccably dressed and coiffed sitting on the sofa with a glass of wine in her hand looking as unruffled as ever. Orion was wearing black dress robes, looking angry and was staring into the fire. The drink in his hand much stronger than his wife’s
wine.

Hermione cleared her throat in the door way.

“I had no idea you would be here tonight darling.” Walburga said rising from her seated position to greet her daughter.


“How **dare** you harm a child. When I found Reg, he was covered in bruises and the damaging letter you sent to Sirius was completely out of line. Listen well Walburga, if you lay another finger on them or say anything that is not loving I will murder you. Do not for one second believe I am not capable of it. I have broken into and out of Gringotts riding on a dragon, I have broken in and out of the Ministry being the number two most wanted person in Britain, I have hunted Horcruxes, I have worn them and kept them close, I have battled my enemies who wanted to kill me and survived. The first time I dueled for my life I was only fifteen. This wasn’t my first time traveling through time to fix things although not on this scale. I have held an illegal animagus in a jar for half a year. And the list goes on and on. I will protect Sirius and Regulus, and I will be damned if you try to stop me.” Hermione said in a low dangerous voice.

“I don’t think I said it better myself not ten minutes ago.” Said Orion. His allegiance clearly with his children.

Walburga had a nasty, stubborn look on her face, her back straight and shoulders back, chin in the air.

“I will discipline **my** children as I see fit. You are an interloper here. I have been better to you than you deserve. I see now, exactly how much you are like Sirius. So defiant. I really wasn’t able to beat it out of him was I?” she said nastily. Two wands snapped up at the same time spells clashing as they were released.

“Imperio” said Orion

“Langlock” shouted Hermione. She turned her head to stare at Orion.

He shrugged his shoulders.

“We can’t have you go to Azkaban for killing her, now can we?”

“You do realize that the Imperious curse is an unforgivable and you could be sent to Azkaban, right?”

“Who is going to confront me about it? The Ministry? They wouldn’t dare. I’ll make her behave and when Regulus is old enough to go to Hogwarts I will release her. It’s little less than a year. It’s not like I hadn’t told her I was going to do it not twenty minutes ago.” He said. He picked up his tumbler where he had set it on the mantle and tossed back the fire whiskey in one go. He filled and drained it three more times before nonverbally releasing Walbruga from the langlock jinx Hermione put on her.

“Dinner is ready, Master” said Kreacher as he popped in.

“Kreacher, would you get Regulus and bring him down to the dining room? I’ve only got a half hour before I need to return to Hogwarts.”
“Yes, young Mistress.” He said with a low bow.

The four of them sat around the dinner table with varying expressions. Confusion, anger, resignation, and glazed in no particular order.

“So you broke into and out of both the Ministry and Gringotts?” Orion asked nonchalantly. Regulus was staring at him with incredulousness. There was never any talking during meals.

“Yup, my life is a freaking adventure.”

Orion chuckled and let her finish hoovering her dinner.

After she was done eating, she dropped kisses on the heads of her male family members and with a last glare to Walburga, Hermione ran to the floo so as not to be late.

When she got back to the Headmasters office it was empty except for Fawkes who was gently cooing at her from his perch. She softly stroked the Phoenix’s brightly colored feathers on her way to the door. It was unusually quiet for a Saturday night that still was before curfew. Hermione shrugged it off and meandered down to the Slytherin Common room which also was empty of people.
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

The Great Wizarding Duel of 1971

Chapter Six

Incidentally, it was the Prewitt twins from Gryffindor that set up the subtle but not secret dueling room for the two Slytherin wizards. News about the fight had broken out among each of the houses after a couple of snogging students had overheard Lucius and Avery arguing. Snogging was put on the back burner as the Hufflepuff and Gryffindor students beat feet back to their common rooms to spread the news. The Gryffindor had a brother in Ravenclaw and this was how the rumor mill of Hogwarts rolls, faster than lightning. News in the common room was that two Slytherin Princes’ have declared a duel. Fabian Prewett ever a fast thinker and in more trouble than most, ran out of the Gryffindor common room with his twin Gideon in tow to find the two wizards.

Approaching the argument, Fabian found interjecting to be tricky as the jinxes and hexes being thrown around were no joke. Using a powerful shield charm, he relegated the wizards to opposite sides of the room then voiced his proposal.

“If you are serious about this, I know just the place. There is a warded room on the fifth floor that used to be used for upper level students dueling in DADA. I can take you there. Name the time and place and we can make it happen.” Gesturing between himself and his twin with a huge smile.

“But she is gone. We settle this tonight.” Lucius spat angrily at Avery. There was only a half hour before curfew, so the need to work fast pushed the twins into action.

“Tonight it is. Right this way gentlemen, right this way.” Said Fabian lowering the shield gesturing for the two men to follow.

“*Expecto Patronum*. Spread the word. Dueling room, fifth floor, now. Bets at the door.” And a silvery boar bounded out of the room ahead of the small entourage stopping in each common room as it went.

When they arrived at the huge room, the rival wizards looked around with impressed looks on their faces. It was a full arena easily the size of a quidditch pitch with stadium seating surrounding it. In the center of the clearing was a stage for dueling. Suspended over the platform was a large ball of light that filled the whole room. Unknown to the students below, it was the teacher’s observation room.

There were only four chairs in the sphere and three of those were filled. Headmaster Dumbledore sat in the bright yellow center overstuffed arm chair. His rainbow-colored dressing gown clashed terribly with the décor but it was obvious that he was enjoying the scene greatly. He was munching on a large bag of popcorn with a wide smile, occasionally leaning to his right to offer some to the disapproving tight lipped Transfiguration teacher, still in her teaching robes. The third chair was occupied by an excited Professor Flitwick, who was making observations and bets with the cheery Headmaster who also was still in his teaching robes having followed a group of students to the
arena while on rounds.

“Settle down Minerva, that room is warded and protected so well that I doubt anything harmful would befall them. However magic understands intent. I hope they realize that.” He said with a twinkle.

“This is highly inappropriate, Albus! It’s already past curfew and nearly the whole school is here.”

“Then just think of all the detentions you will be able to hand out as they go back to their dormitories.” He said with a chuckle. She turned red and started to incoherently admonish the ridiculous headmaster.

“Shhh, Minerva. The players have arrived.” He said as he turned their attention back to the arena. Twinkling madly, still eating popcorn.

It seemed like the whole school was trickling in from the various doorways into the room and Avery would swear afterwards that he had seen Professor Flitwick in the corridor when they first arrived, though Flitwick would strenuously deny it after. Jordan and a few other Gryffindor’s were taking bets as students filed in. The students easily identified the group as they made their way to the stage and moving aside as if they were Moses parting the red sea. Theo reached them before they made it to the clearing, flashing Avery a smile and sent Lucius a challenging stare.

“I will duel the winner. Winner takes all. The losers back off of her. No Unforgivables, No fatal curses. Actually, maybe we should make it so that you cannot cast anything you cannot personally heal too. No Medi-witches, No Hospital wing.”

“You want in too?” Said Lucius derisively. “Don’t make me laugh. You haven’t even talked to her in two weeks, and rumor has it that you are in contract with that Ravenclaw chit.” Sneered Lucius.

“I sent The Rescind of Contract on the grounds I am legal age and my father signed for me. I should hear back tomorrow. I sent an updated proposal to Lord Black a few days ago and I am just waiting on his reply. I have every reason to believe it will be favorable.”

“What would you have to offer her when your father disowns you?” Avery asked in disbelief. “We are offering her the chance to be Lady of the Manor and hold all titles and wealth. What will your broke ass offer her then?”

“I highly doubt my father would disown me. He wants her in the family as much as I want her. He won’t be pleased with my methods but he won’t do anything drastic. The only thing that really entices him is the hunt. Both the House of Malfoy and Avery are fighting for an heiress from the House of Black. Now imagine that she chooses the House of Nott. That is why he would never disown me. To forever lord it over two wealthy, titled rivals. He is a sick man, my father.” Said Theo.


Lucius stalked up to the platform and shrugged out of his robes and handed them to one of the Prewett twins. He rolled his shirt sleeves to his elbows and unbuttoned the top two buttons on his white oxford. He cut a dashing figure, wand at the ready, proud and arrogant.

Avery gave Theo a friendly smack on the shoulder and a smile as he took off his robes and placed them on one of the seats in the front row. He climbed the stage on the opposite end of Lucius and they walked to the center. Jordan stood between them on the platform.

“Ready then, gents? Play above board.
Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to the Great Wizarding Duel of 1971!” The crowd roars their approval. “We have here today a set of duels of epic proportions. For the first round, Lucius Malfoy vs. Cadeus Avery. For the second round, Winner vs. Theodore Nott. Winner takes all. What that all is, we don’t know, but the bets are being set as we speak. Rules are as follows, nothing can be sent that the castor cannot heal. No Unforgivables, no Medi-witches. Wizards bow, and take your paces.” Jordan backed off the stage watching as the wizards bowed to each other, never taking their eyes off their opponent.

They spun on their heels and counted ten paces and turned dropping into their stances.

“Petrificus totalus.” Said Avery

With a silent wave Lucius deflected the curse.

“Ebublio” He sent a second curse at Lucius.

Another silent wave and Lucius deflects the spell to the floor effortlessly letting it dissipate safely. He points his wand at Avery.

“Ictus”

Avery deflects the curse with less precision than Malfoy and the curse hits a fourth year who jumps up with a yelp rubbing the spot on his arm that took the hit.

They stared at each other for a moment then with a flick of Avery’s wand a huge bubble of water encased Lucius. Struggling with the need to breathe, Lucius made a complicated gesture with his wand and the water transformed into ice as he changed the bubble to a whip. Avery was unprepared for the sting across his cheek, drawing first blood.

Avery tried to melt the whip by casting fire on it, but it just imbued the flames and flicking it again, Lucius had it wrap around Avery’s torso. Pinning his arms to his side the flames licking his skin, burning him through his shirt. Leaving small charred holes in a line.

“Give up, Avery?” smirked Lucius.

Avery glared at his opponent and concentrated, severing the whip into fifteen sections that scattered across the stage with the flex of his pectoral muscles. There wasn’t a girl in the crowd who didn’t appreciate the view. His shirt in tatters.

He thrust his wand at Lucius sharply with narrowed eyes and a thick green ooze hurtled toward the blond wizard. It smelled putrid and with a wave Lucius turned the gelatinous blob into flower petals sending them to harmlessly rain onto the watching crowd. Earning the appreciation of the girls who were giggling while picking petals out of their hair. Avery quickly waved his wand over his shirt with a silent ‘repairo’.

Lucius turned the stage underneath Avery’s feet into an ice sheet watching with amusement as he tried to stay on his feet on the slippery surface. Avery rose pillars of ice from his feet and used the structures for support as he extended the ice sheet all the way across the stage. With a quick wave of Lucius’ wand the ice shattered and a giant monster rose from the cracks. It was grey and terrifying. Exactly how a plesiosaurus would look. It snapped its terrifying teeth at Avery’s face and with a flick of his wand it turned into a cobra who turned about face to attack the wizard at the other end.
Lucius turned the large snake into a glittering emerald statue. Leaving it center stage to make his next attack.

If the students had been able to see inside the observation room, they would have seen Dumbledore clapping his hands and Flitwick on his feet in excitement while Minerva’s hand covered her entire face.

The students were eating up the incredible show of power. The creativity and sheer amount of skill that went into this duel was amazing, and there wasn’t a student enemy or friend who didn’t recognize this.

Lucius lazily drew his wand in the air in front of him and a bright white ball of light disconnected from his wand tip and hung in the air. Using a simple movement, the ball enlarged and thinned out, making it completely flat like a coin. He sent it toward Avery who trying several spells to block and transfigure, failed as it wrapped around him in a half circle. It didn’t touch him but it began to play a scene on the surface that only the combatants could see.

Hermione was lying naked face down on a bed. Her feet were in the air, crossed and her head turned to the watching wizard. Her arse was covered by a green silk sheet leaving her thighs and back bare. A naked Lucius crawled up the bed next to her, kissing her from ankle to neck as her face showed exquisite pleasure. Full of jealousy, Avery changed the scene and pushed it to the outside for Lucius to see.

Now, Hermione was up against a wall wearing the most becoming purple dress robes, the exact ones she wore to see her family that night. Her legs were bare and they were wrapped around Avery’s naked torso, while her head was thrown back and her hands were in his hair gripping painfully. His mouth was on her collar bone and his hands were on her arse under the robes holding her up as he thrust into her.

Lucius saw red and shattered the thin screen into a million pieces that turned into golden thread like lines twining around the two battling wizards. They didn’t pay it any attention because it wasn’t a spell either had cast, so they disregarded it.

In the observation room, Dumbledore was on his feet with a serious look on his face, no twinkling in sight. He recognized those threads and he was torn whether to act and dissipate the golden strings or to let the threads bind them.

“What is that?” Asked Flitwick.

“Threads of Fate. I’ve only seen it once before and I hesitate to act. To interfere with magical intent that way would be dangerous.”

Flitwick turned his attention now serious back to the stage.

Lucius and Avery were locked in a battle of wills inside a ring of fire, when Theo climbed up on stage as if in a daze. He flicked his wand passing through the flames safely. There was a shout from Avery and Lucius at his interference until there was a blinding light. The three men were woven in the golden threads their magic fueling the binding.

An explosion threw the three duelers off the stage to land unconscious on the ground. Thinking that it was part of the duel no one moved or spoke for several seconds before the screaming began. Dumbledore swept in and with the other two teachers, herded the students out to go back to the Houses to which they belonged.
“Mobilicorpus.” Muttered the three teachers in tandem, floating their unconscious charges to the infirmary.

Poppy bustled in as the teachers laid the boys on beds. She approached Lucius’ bed first and after running several diagnostic charms, she turned to the Headmaster.

“It is the oddest thing. He is completely fine except his magic is different than anything I have ever seen. She lifted his shirt to show them the golden tattoo that had settled on his rib cage. The tattoo was a golden time turner with sparkling red dots mixed with golden dots within an hourglass. Dumbledore’s blood ran cold when he recognized an exact replica of the time turner that he had created to send Hermione to the past. He quickly searched Avery and Nott and found their new tattoo’s. Avery’s on his front shoulder above his heart, and Nott’s was on his groin near his right leg.

Dumbledore sent Professors McGonagall and Flitwick out to make sure the students had made it to their respective common rooms and to think of a school wide punishment for breaking curfew so brazenly.

Softly calling Fawkes after they left, he asked him to find future Dumbledore and bring him to the hospital wing. Several minutes passed before a flare of flame entered into his field of vision. Poppy stared at the two men before shaking her head muttering about an old spell that hit her in the head when she was younger. She was trying to convince herself that she was in St. Mungo’s and this was all a dream.

With a small fond smile, future Dumbledore watched her go as she firmly shut her door behind her.

“It was the Threads of Fate. I saw the whole thing. Not only that but it marked them for her. What can that mean?”

“There is only one thing it could mean. The magic is trying to anchor her here.”

“There was only one for us. It gave her three. Why three?”

“Three of the most powerful young wizards, it seems our little time traveler is not done traveling through time. But don’t despair, she will come back to us here in this time. I believe she will live out her life in this time line. The magic wants her here. As to why three, and these three at that, I believe they all love her. They held a duel tonight over her and intention fuels magic. Their intent was to make her theirs and it almost worked, they won’t realize the distinction yet. They are hers, not the other way around unless or until she marries one or more of them.”

“The wizarding world has not seen a plural marriage in thousands of years. I wonder how Lord Black will take this. He will either be really pleased or absolutely furious. There really isn’t any way to predict that outcome. We will have to visit their families and explain. They will be unable to marry another unless she can release them and I am not sure that is possible.”

“Also, now we have to think of an appropriate punishment for them.” Young Dumbledore twinkled rubbing his hands together in anticipation.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

The next morning Hermione was up bright and early, excited to have fixed something in this timeline for the better. She couldn’t wait to tell Sirius. She looked around the dorm that she shared, noticing all of her dorm mates were still asleep. ‘How unusual’ she thought and with a shrug of her shoulders she got up and took a shower, relishing in the quiet bathroom.
She walked up to the Great Hall for breakfast alone not seeing anyone at all in the castle on the way up. She passed a row of pumpkins on her way remembering that Halloween was that day and Hagrid had decorated with the usual Jack-O-lanterns and bat decorations for the feast. When she entered, she saw the staff table full but there were only three other students eating. She sat next to Severus who was the only Slytherin eating. He had propped up his potions book against a pumpkin juice jug and was blindly eating while reading. Hermione smiled, and he used to call her a know-it-all.

“Where is everyone? Did I miss something?” Asked Hermione bewildered.

Severus choked on his pumpkin juice causing Hermione to thump him on the back unhelpfully.

“Are you serious? How did you miss it? The whole school was there!”

“Miss what? Where? I went home last night. What the hell did I miss?”

“Only the most epic duel ever!” he said

“Duel? Between who?” She asked interestedly

“Malfoy, Avery, and Nott.”

Hermione was dumbfounded.

“Why were they dueling?” she asked with a sinking feeling in her stomach.

“It wasn’t advertised but I heard that it was started when Avery smacked your bum last night.”

“Oh my God.” She whispered burying her face in her arms in mortification.

“What happened to them? I am assuming they got caught?” She asked from the safety of her arms.

“The hospital wing, the last I heard. The headmaster took them there himself. But I have a feeling that the student body will suffer for the entertainment last night. Oh, and I won several galleons in bets last night. It was very lucrative.”

“Who did you bet on? Wait, who won and what did they win?”

“I bet that none of them would win, that it would be a draw between the three. They were knocked unconscious before they could finish the duel. Something happened that I have never seen before a golden web surrounded them then it exploded.”

“An explosion? Are they okay?” She said finally lifting her face to meet Snape’s in a panic.

“Last I heard they were fine but recuperating under Madam Pomfrey’s care.” She relaxed when she heard that. Poppy had fixed Harry more times than should have been possible. That woman was amazing.

“Astute observation, Mr. Snape.” Said Professor McGonagall with a pinched displeased look.

“Miss Black, The Headmaster would like to see you in his office when you have finished breakfast. The password is Sugar quills”

“Yes, Professor.” Hermione said feeling guilty even though she hadn’t taken any part of last night’s duel. Professor McGonagall walked away snapping at anyone stupid enough to cross her path.

Hermione quickly ate her food and when the Headmaster left the Great Hall, she left Snape to his
breakfast, slinging her bag over her shoulder.

The walk up to the Headmaster’s office was fraught with worry. She was worried for the boys; she was worried about the situation. For a moment, she had convinced herself that they had died and Dumbledore called her up to break the bad news. She had worked herself into quite a state by the time she got to the griffin statue.

“Sugar Quills.” She muttered and the statue jumped aside to let her climb the stairs in abject terror, completely convinced they were dead.

Upon entering the Headmaster’s office several things became clear to her. All three boys were alive but looked extremely uncomfortable and wouldn’t meet her eyes. Dumbledore was also not meeting her eyes and Fawkes turned his back to the whole situation. She narrowed her eyes in irritation and her hair started sparking. Every time her hair snapped with electricity the men in the room flinched. All four of them.

“Thank you for coming, Miss Black. First thing is first. These three boys were bound by the Threads of Fate. We will go into further detail later about that but right now they are in fact, bound to your magic. Show her.” Dumbledore said to Hermione, gesturing to the boys.

“What do you mean bound to my magic.” Hermione said dangerously.

“My dear, we can address that a bit later in privacy.” Dumbledore said and the three boys looked incredibly relieved.

Lucius unbuttoned his robes and lifted his shirt to reveal his new golden tattoo. Hermione gasped in surprise and ran her fingers along the tattoo on Lucius’ ribcage making him suck in air quickly.

“Did I hurt you?”

“No.” He grunted stiffly staring at a spot on the floor. She gave him a look of puzzlement. Was he angry with her? She pushed down her hurt feelings and got back to the task at hand.

“Amazing, they are exact replicas.” She said to Dumbledore as she reached into her pocket and brought out the purple velvet bag. She pulled the beautiful time turner out and dangled it so the boys could see it. They were shocked, it really did look exactly like their tattoos.

“I believe all you have to do is prick your finger and put a drop of blood on each tattoo. If you refuse they will get sick and eventually die. They have been marked for you.” He handed her a small silver knife.

The boys looked uncomfortable as she shot them each a glare and they still wouldn’t meet her eyes. She pricked her finger with a small hiss and ran the digit lightly on Lucius’ ribcage over his golden tattoo, there was a flash of green light and the tattoo started to move. The golden rings appeared to be spinning but the hourglass was still. Avery was next. She reached up to eye level where his tattoo was and felt him flex under her fingers and his tattoo started to move like Lucius’. Last she moved to Theo who turned bright red and opened his robes again and unbuttoned his trousers and pushed them down on the right side baring only the skin around his tattoo low on his groin. He wasn’t the only one blushing. She squeezed her finger to force out one last drop of blood and smeared it on Theo’s tattoo. He blushed again when as she touched him he grew an impressive erection that he couldn’t hide as she was focused looking down there. Lucius and Avery snickered but stopped quickly at the menacing look Hermione sent their way. They had good reason to be afraid.
As Theo’s tattoo lit up and began to move, Hermione felt a hot sensation on her lower back just above her bum. She quickly moved her robes out of the way and untucked her shirt out of her skirt showing everyone in the room her new matching tattoo. Avery tenderly ran his finger over hers with a small smile. She sighed. ‘Okay universe, what else are you going to shove on my shoulders?’ she walked a fine line between being the luckiest person in existence and the unluckiest.

“Do they need to put their blood on mine?” She asked Dumbledore.

“I don’t think so because you are who they are bound to but also they are your responsibility now. More about that later as well.” He told her gravely.

“You three are dismissed with a reminder about what we talked about. The consequences should fit the crime don’t you think?” Dumbledore said with a warning twinkle.

“Yes Sir.” They muttered and filed out of the office.

“Well this changes things for you my dear. I know that you came here believing that you would live out your life here as it was a one-way trip but it seems you will go through time again. However, I do not believe you will go back to the future, I believe you will go back in the past further. Biscuit?” he thrust the cookie tin in her direction.

“Um, no thank you. You want me to save Ariana for you, Sir?” She asked looking him in the eye. He had the good grace to blush as the door to his personal apartments opened revealing future Dumbledore.

“Exactly so. It seems that we can’t touch your time turner for whatever reason and I believe I have come up with a way to fuel the time turner. However, that would only be enough to send you back. But conveniently the Thread of Fate just handed you the way back to this time. They are your anchors. I imagine you would have two or three hours’ tops in the past before the bond would bring you back. That would be plenty of time to grab her and bring her with you.”

“I absolutely refuse to use the Potter’s death to fuel it. If you can’t find another way, I won’t go.” The Dumbledore’s didn’t look surprised by her knowledge.

“I have a plan that would make that unnecessary but Tom Riddle would need to be defeated first.”

“That is why I am here.”

“You need to ask Lord Black to help us.”

“Why me? Why can’t you ask?”

“He hates me at the moment.” Said future Dumbledore in a cheery voice. “It could have something to do with the letter I sent to him.”

“Why did you write one at all if you were coming back to this time? And what did it say?” She asked curiously.

“I didn’t mean to come to this time. I set my turner to go back to 1899. It heated up the further back I went and exploded when it dropped me into this time. I am as stuck here as you are my dear. My theory is that I didn’t have enough magical energy to fuel the trip. Which is why I chose the Potter’s deaths as the source of magical excess to use in your time turner. I did come up with something else that might work now that certain things are falling into place. We will discuss that
when it is pertinent.” He ignored her second question completely.

“Harry was right. Your mistakes are much bigger than normal wizards.” She looked at him in horror.

“Let’s keep that between us.” He said tiredly. “I would give up almost anything to change the day Ariana died.”

“Just as I would do anything to change the fate of the Potter’s.”

“Point taken. Until the Halloween feast tonight, Miss Black.” Future Dumbledore said with a small tired twinkle.

Hermione bade them good bye and went to her second class of the day having missed her first.
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Slughorn's Christmas Party

Chapter Seven

Hermione was standing in front of Narcissa’s enchanted mirror frowning at her reflection while the blond standing behind her was smiling and clapping, ridiculously pleased at her handiwork. The silver silk shimmered on Hermione’s body as if she were wrapped in water that hugged her curves gracefully. Her dark hair had been manipulated into a simple twist chignon at the nape of her neck leaving quite the expanse of skin on display from the low-cut back. The dress reached nearly to the floor as Hermione gathered the excess material in her hands to once again look at the black death traps Narcissa had insisted she wear. As for Jewelry, she had only a simple silver neckless with a simple round diamond pendant and a pair of diamond drop earrings.

“Merlin, I think you are finally ready.” Declared Narcissa while the other girls who were still in the dorm nodded in agreement.

“And I am only fifteen minutes late. How much would you bet that my date has abandoned his post thinking I had run away?” Hermione muttered.

The girls chuckled at her as Narcissa imperiously said ‘nonsense’ and pushed her out of the door sending her on her way to the Slytherin Common room. Leaving her to walk out there on her own. Hermione had been half joking when she made the comment about being abandoned but she wasn’t shocked when she saw Avery leaning on the side of the fireplace staring into the flames clearly waiting patiently if not happily.

He was tall with black hair that was allowed to hang over his dark eyes until it annoyed him and he brushed it back with his hand. Her breath caught in her throat. His shoulders were broad, more so than Lucius’. It was obvious that he was a quidditch player. He was extremely fit and there was a rumor floating around that he had washboard abs on a godlike body. It wasn’t that hard to believe as he stood there resplendent in black dress robes.

Hermione cleared her throat feeling just as awkward and nervous as she had all those years ago at the Yule ball in her fourth year. Avery spun quickly towards the stairs to the girls’ dorms, stopping just as he had taken an unconscious step towards her, his mouth dropping open in awe and his eyes dark with appreciation. He started to approach her once again.


She blushed at his intensity as he stared at her with his dark eyes and looked down. Avery always made her feel like the most desirable woman in the world. Grabbing her hand, he brought it to his lips and at the last second turned it over and lightly kissed her palm, sliding down to her wrist, putting his nose to her pulse point and breathing in her scent. Closing his eyes to savor her smell, Avery lingered over her hand looking like he was in pain. It made her stomach tighten and her lips parted in a silent moan. It was an incredible intoxicant watching him get aroused by no more than
the way she looked and smelled. It made her feel powerful, sexy, and wanted. Things that she had never felt, before she came back to this time.

She used the opportunity before leaving to gaze at him in return. She could feel herself grow wet at the juncture of her thighs as she envisioned running her hands across his tight abdomen, absently wondering if he had any chest hair. Thinking about how delicious he would look shirtless, she began to blush. Judging by the expression in his eyes, he was thinking about the same thing. Cadeus Avery was one hell of a man.

He pulled her into his hard frame and kissed the sensitive skin below her ear. He quietly groaned but took a step back keeping hold of her hand through it all. He quietly muttered to himself, too low for Hermione to catch. He placed her hand properly in the crook of his arm and led her out into the corridor and up to where the Slug Club Christmas party was being held. During the short walk, Avery took the opportunity that being alone afforded to ask her questions. Her favorite foods, colors, flowers, and anything else he could think of.

When they finally joined the party, they were a good half hour late and the party was in full swing. All levels of their classmates were in attendance as well as many notable people of the time. She caught sight of Lucius conversing with his father who looked so much like future Lucius that her spine began to tingle. It was uncanny. She also saw Theo standing off to one side chatting with Bertie Bott about his fairly new invention, Every Flavour Beans.

This Christmas party felt nearly identical to the one she attended sixth year but with much better company. Hermione rolled her eyes, nothing would change in nearly thirty years for the portly potions Professor.

Slughorn was a connoisseur of people with potential to add into his menagerie as a collector of art would hang paintings throughout his home to be admired by everyone who walked through the doors. This network scheme seemed beneficial to many and was a source of pride and power to the old Potions Professor. His singular goal was to surround himself with wealth, intelligence, cunning, and favors. It also didn’t hurt in his mind that these powerful players would be thankful for the step up.

It was an intoxicating thing to feel like the most powerful men and women in the world owed thanks to him. He was a glutton, he fed on those feelings and gorged figuratively and literally on the fruits of such labors. It was a sickening thing to know that this man had gobbled up every ounce of flattery and deference Voldemort had once given him. Going even so far as to aid The-Boy-Who-Became-The-Dark-Lord and then hide the invaluable information that in the end helped Harry and Dumbledore figure out how many Horcruxes there were. He had not changed at all, and Hermione surmised that given the right situation he would answer the same questions to any who were brave enough to ask.

This was not the only reason for her antipathy. She found herself missing lessons with Professor Snape. Not for his outstanding personality but for his indisputable skill. For all that the dour man hated his job as evidenced by his extremely unpleasant personality, he was much more adept than Professor Slughorn.

Hermione jolted back to reality when Avery led them into the party and had stopped to chat with Dominic Scrivenshaft who had just taken over the Hogsmeade branch from his father. They chatted about the latest invention Quick-Quotes-Quill. Hermione scowled but otherwise said nothing, having spied Rita Skeeter across the room talking with George Macmillan, a seventh year Hufflepuff. Hermione knew that Rita had started her journalist career earlier this year at the Daily Prophet and Hermione was watching her closely. She wasn’t sure when Rita became an
unregistered Animagi but she would find out the moment it happened.

Slughorn came over after the three of them discussed the charms used for the Quick-Quotes-Quill declaring that the young power couple had to meet the next prime minister, Cornelius Fudge. Hermione was sorely tempted to decline but knowing Slughorn would badger her, she decided just to get it over with. Maybe she should take Fudge to meet the Centaurs like she did with Umbridge but no, she dismissed the thought as soon as it crossed her mind. She was a legal adult and the Centaurs would not appreciate being used to do her dirty work a second time. She wouldn’t be able to leave the Forbidden Forest unscathed. She sighed and remembered the documentary she once watched about a colony of ants that had feasted on a man who had been buried up to his neck and left for dead as a punishment. Too vindictive, she mentally shook her head. Even Fudge didn’t deserve that. Today anyway.

All in all, the party was really a gathering of influential people who ate and drank and talked. Hermione thought it was a waste of time, but Avery seemed to enjoy meeting all of the interesting people who attended. He was very good at charms and Hermione knew he would become one of the best in the country. It was interesting for him to talk about the newest inventions.

After making the rounds of required thanks and smiles they gave their good byes to their host and Avery led her out into the corridor with a contagious smile on his face. She sighed in relief, it seemed stifling in there.

They had made it halfway down to the dungeons when Avery tugged her into an empty classroom. He set some pretty powerful wards on the door before grabbing Hermione and crashing his lips to hers.

Heat radiated from his body, surrounding her in his frenzied need and his hands had cradled her face while his lips plundered hers. They were breathing heavily as they broke apart for air. His lips made a trail over her nose and cheeks while her hand came up to caress his muscular back. She seemed to come to her senses and pulled away putting several feet between them.

“Avery, I don’t know about this.”

“Don’t worry Kitten, I will take care of you. Trust me.”

“This isn’t about trust.”

“Oh really? Do you know what I think?”

“What.”

“I think you are scared. Scared because you like Lucius and scared because you like Theo, and scared you like me. You are scared that you think you can only chose one of us but Kitten, that is not how it is. You can have as many of us as you want. And I’m sure Theo would let me speak for him in this when I say you would make us happy men if we could just get past this thing you have about more than one partner.”

He moved closer to her sweeping his black eyes down her body as he visibly grew aroused.

“I am not scared! I just believe that marriage calls for one man and one woman.”

“That is such a muggle way of thinking.”

“Yes, because you know so much about muggle beliefs.” She snarked
“I will admit I don’t and polyamory is not a common thing. But neither is the magic that binds the four of us. I felt a draw to you from the first moment I saw you and now, I have a hard time not touching you.” He pouted.

Hermione’s thoughts were swirling. What if her thinking was overly muggle? She would have to do some research tomorrow in the library, she thought.

Avery looked smug like he had won a major point.

“Will you trust me?” He asked her.

She thought about it. She could always stop him if she started to feel uncomfortable. She nodded her assent. With a slow predatory smile Avery stalked to her, watching her every move. Her breath caught at the hungry look in his eyes as he pulled her to his body and started kissing her lips.

His lips were firm but soft, a contrast of feeling, as her lips molded to his. He licked her lips, hoping for the chance to explore her further while tenderly nibbling on them.

Hermione felt amazing like she was riding a roller coaster at a muggle theme park. Her stomach dropped and flipped at the same time as she opened her lips in invitation.

She wanted to feel his skin on her fingers, to feel the hardness of his flesh which was so different from the softness of her own body. Growling in frustration she brought her hands to his chest and began to unbutton the robes he was wearing. He chuckled into her ear as he sucked and nibbled his way down the column of her neck while his deft hands had started to push the thin silver straps of her dress off of her shoulders. Her raised arms prevented the dress from falling to her waist but it loosened enough to bare her breasts for him. He was already so hard for her and nearly lost control when he saw how hard her dusky nipples were. They were begging to be squeezed and sucked.

Avery moaned as Hermione flicked his newly bared skin with her questing tongue while pushing his robes down his arms. He helped her by shrugging them off and letting them pool around their feet on the floor leaving him only in the matching black trousers. She ran her nails over the black hair on his chest following the path of his exposed treasure trail. He threw his head back as she continued placing open mouth kisses over his chest and the occasional lick to particularly defined muscles. The rumors were absolutely, one hundred percent true. Standing on tip toe she traced the golden tattoo that marked him as hers with her finger tips and reverently kissed and licked the image on his shoulder. For a delicate looking tattoo, it made this amazing man look anything but effeminate. He radiated power and need so strongly, no one could be in doubt of his virility.

He looked at her like he was a thirsty man and she had the only water for miles. He grabbed her wrists and moved her hands away from his body and when she whimpered at the loss of contact he smiled and pushed the straps of her dress the rest of the way off her arms. Understanding what he wanted, Hermione sent the shimmering silk to the floor leaving her in an icy blue thong and black heels.

His breath caught when he saw her naughty knickers and decided then and there he would buy her thousands of those tiny scraps of lace just so he could have the satisfaction of taking them off, either by gently sliding them down her long sexy legs or by ripping them off in his excitement. Both options appealed to his male ego. He raised his hands to circle her tiny waist and guided her backwards. He watched as her shapely arse bumped into the bulky teachers’ desk that comprised the furniture in the room. He lifted her to sit on the top and while spreading her legs, stepped between them to plunder her lips once more. Hermione ran her fingers through his silky hair as the black tresses tickled her cheek. His hands moved up to cup her breasts, and pulling away from her mouth he brought his lips to the luscious peaks drawing one in his mouth. He drove her wild as he
sucked and licked at the sensitive pebble. Trailing kisses along the mounds of flesh. Avery attended to the neglected nipple using his fingers to roll and flick the red peak that he had just abandoned.

He pushed her to lay down on the desk and after grasping her ankles, he put them on his shoulders leaving a wet trail of kisses on her creamy thighs. He caressed her outer legs with his fingers until he reached the silky band of her knickers at her hips. He curled his fingers under the elastic and slowly dragged them down her legs, only stopping his onslaught of his mouth long enough to pluck the tiny thongs from her feet and throw them over his shoulder to land on the discarded pile of dress robes. Showing off his incredible Quidditch reflexes.

Hermione was moaning with abandon now, her head moving back and forth on the desk making tendrils of her hair come loose from its confines. Avery had never seen anything more beautiful. And with a mission fueled by lust, he continued his trail of kisses to her center. She was spread beneath him, pink and glistening. He could smell her arousal and it made it difficult to put his needs on the back burner to take care of hers.

He ran his tongue from her dripping center to her clit making her wail in ecstasy. He felt a gush of wetness as he explored her folds with his finger. Gently easing his finger in and out of her, he once again began to lick the bundle of nerves that made her moan like a sex goddess. He was addicted to the sounds she made as he sucked her into his mouth using his arm to hold her steady as his other hand continued its slow fucking. He added a second finger into her greedy quim and felt her rhythmic tightening around them. She wouldn’t last much longer.

“Cadeus, Please. Oh My God!” She screamed as she convulsed around his fingers with another gush of wetness. He drew his fingers out of her and brought them to his mouth to suck on as he lowered her legs off of his shoulders. He moaned, enjoying the taste of her pleasure, sweet and tangy.

He leaned over her bringing his mouth to hers. She could taste herself on his tongue and felt his erection through his trousers against her sensitive mons as he rocked against her center. She moaned again satiated but with the growing promise that he could make her come again.

“You make the sweetest noises, Kitten.” He murmured on her lips.

He pulled her back up into a sitting position and tugged her to stand on the ground as he walked over to their clothes. Picking up his wand he cast ‘scorgify’ on the front of his pants where he had thrust against her and handed her dress to her as she turned her back to him for modesty while he pocketed her knickers. Taking the time to watch her dress from behind admiring her silhouette before dressing himself. He walked up behind her when she was again fully clothed, pulling her to his body. She could feel how hard he was through all the fabric against her lower back. He lowered his head to kiss her neck again.

“I can’t wait to have you and the day I do, I am going to keep you awake all night. I am going to see how many times I can make you come.” He rasped in a low husky voice.

“You sound confident, and confidence is key.” She said quoting a popular muggle movie with a satisfied smile.

He threw back his head and laughed. She smiled wider. She had never heard him laugh like that before and made it her new mission to hear it as often as possible. He ensnared her as surely as if she were under the effects of Amortentia.

**HGHGHGHG**
Theo was seriously starting to feel like a creeper. It really wasn’t his fault that he ended up in places where he observed her and that she didn’t know he was there. Although to be fair, he should have said something the second Avery pulled Hermione into the classroom. Although at what moment was there a chance to interrupt without embarrassing her? Better to just cast disillusionment and silencing charms then watch to see the outcome. At one point, he was nodding vigorously when Avery was trying to convince their witch she could have them all. What happened next was the best wet dream a man could have.

It was so hot watching her come on Avery’s face, he couldn’t help himself. He reached into his trousers and started stroking his turgid flesh. He imagined walking up to them and having Hermione suck him off while Avery lapped at her center. It didn’t take him long to shudder and come onto his hand with that image in his mind.

He watched as Avery pocketed her tiny knickers with interest. He wanted a pair too and one day he would pull a pair off of her with his teeth. What a challenge that would be.

He waited until the pair left before lifting his spells and making his way back to the common room. He couldn’t even remember the reason he was alone in the classroom as he meandered down the halls. The next morning, he would replay what he had witnessed over and over as he wanked in the shower, spilling his release on the floor.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione was sitting on the lounge in the library at Grimmauld Place across from Orion after Hermione and Sirius returned home that afternoon for the Christmas Hols.

“Father, I need your help.”

“With what? I’ve received the letter from the Headmaster detailing the Threads of Fate which tied three of the most eligible bachelors and heirs to you. It doesn’t surprise me in the least that a Black would hold such power. Tetragamy though unusual, is a great advantage to our family prestige and the added powers for the wizards or witch involved is a huge blessing. The bond has to be completed between soulmates which make it near impossible to orchestrate, which is why it is so uncommon.”

Hermione was taking in the relaxed happy manner, in which Orion imparted his approval for the strong coupling. She shook her head, she wasn’t just in crazy town, she was the lead float in the parade.

“What do you mean more power for the ones involved?” She asked

“It binds each person’s magic together and lets any of the group use the combined reserves. You specifically, have bound three extremely powerful young wizards on top of being powerful yourself. You will find many people who will cater to you to curry your favor.”

“Wow. I’ve been reading up on plural marriages in the Hogwarts library but the material was woefully lacking. I didn’t really learn much. I had no idea there was so much involved.”

“That is why you four are as good as married. They cannot marry another. You could marry them all, or reject them, or take a few but why would you? The power it would bring you would be worth it. I’m not going to force you, Hermione, but I strongly suggest marrying all three.”

“Okay, something to consider then. I will think about it. Anyway, the reason I wanted to talk to you was not my love life but Voldemort. I need your help to find and destroy his Horcruxes.”
Hermione didn’t think Orion could be surprised but he was. He didn’t seem surprised about the horcrux situation but that there were more than one.

“Horcruxes! Plural? How many does he have?” he asked with horror.

“In the future he made seven, currently he has five and I know what they are. Finding them is much harder. I know where they will be, but many have not been placed yet.”

“I will help you on one condition.” He said fingering a small scar on his jaw.

“A condition? When someone needs help destroying a dark lord who kills people, the answer should unhesitatingly be yes.” She groused.

“I am Slytherin not a damn sentimental Gryffindor!”

“What is your condition then?”

“You will allow one favor to be collected at my discretion in the future.”

“What favor?”

“That would be revealed at the time of collection.”

“So, let me get this straight. I have to sell my soul otherwise known as an open ended favor to my father for help that should be provided for the betterment of mankind?”

“That about sums it up.” He said almost flippantly.

“Do I have a choice?” She asked sullenly.

“Of course. You don’t have to take the offer.”

“But if I don’t take it you won’t help.”

“Correct.”

“I should have never told you I was originally a Gryffindor.” She muttered

He laughed and while smiling leaned forward and took her slender hand between his much larger ones.

“No, probably not, dearest.”

She made a face and sighed.

“Fine. I agree. One open ended favor will be granted.”

“I request an unbreakable vow.”

“Are you fucking kidding me?”

He raised his eyebrows as she glared at him.

“In for a penny, in for a pound.” She mumbled angrily.

“Wonderful, we can do that in a few hours when Lord Malfoy comes to visit. He can seal the oath.”
“Yeah, great.” She said sarcastically.

“Anything else?”

“Let Sirius go to the Potter’s for some of the holiday.”

“Of course.”

“Reg goes with me when I go places, no questions.”

“Fine, as long as neither of you are put into harm’s way.” He qualified.

She nodded acceding the point.

“I want to visit with The Weasleys’”

“Dear Merlin, Why?” he asked mildly shocked and disgusted.

“In the future, they saved my life many times. They were like family.”

“I can’t believe I am agreeing to this.” He pinched the bridge of his nose. “Are we done? I can’t take much more.”

Hermione pulled out the duplicated list that she prepared for him and handed it over. She felt that she couldn’t give Orion access to everything on the parchment and only had relevant horcrux information copied over. After all Orion was a wily bastard. Unnamed promise indeed.

Hermione began thinking about the grand Christmas plans she had for Sirius and Regulus. She smiled, remembering how festive and cheery Sirius was the year that they all spent the Christmas Holidays at Grimmauld Place. She suspected he had not had many happy Christmas’ in his youth.

The first thing she did after leaving the library was to check on Reg and made sure he was happy and being treated well, then carting him around Diagon Alley with her for Christmas Shopping. They spent several hours laughing and enjoying their time together only agreeing to end their outing if ice cream was involved.

A few hours after the siblings returned, Kreacher popped in to her room to let her know Lord Malfoy was there and she was being summoned to the library. She set the book aside that she had been devouring and after straightening up her clothes, she walked down to meet them as dread settled over her.

Lord Malfoy was sitting in the same spot she had occupied only hours ago with a glass of fire whiskey in his hand. Orion was sitting in his usual spot holding his own glass of the expensive liquor.

“Ah, Dear Heart. Come in. Let me introduce you to your prospective father-in-law. This is Abraxas Malfoy. Abraxas, My daughter Hermione.”

“It’s a pleasure to meet you Lord Malfoy.” She said as he inclined his head.

“The pleasure is all mine.” He said.

“Are you ready, My Dear?” Orion asked Hermione.
“As ready as I will ever be I suppose.” She muttered. Abraxas threw a smirk over her head to Orion. He was clearly amused.

Hermione walked over to Orion as he stood, unfolding himself gracefully from his chair. They clasped each other’s wrists as Abraxas stood over them wand in hand.

“What is your middle name Miss Black?”

“Please, call me Hermione. My middle name is Jean.”

“Your father has already told me the vows you both intend to make.” He said as Hermione nodded silently.

“Will you Orion Arcturus Black give your assistance in the task Hermione Jean Black has asked of you concerning the downfall of the Dark Lord?”

“I will.” The first golden ribbon wrapped around they joined hands.

“Will you Hermione Jean Black agree to fulfill one future favor as yet unspecified for Orion Arcturus Black?”

“I will.” A second ribbon of light erupted from Abraxas’ wand and wrapped around the hands of the father and daughter.

“Will you both agree to keep both requests secret?”

“We will.” They said in tandem as a bright flash of gold enveloped their hands for a third and final time.

**HGHGHGHG**

One night about a week after the break began, Sirius had snuck into her room after Orion and Walburga went to sleep and curled up next to her playing with her curls.

“I’ve never seen Reg so happy.” He said looking at his fingers twisting in her hair.

“I came home a few months ago and I laid down some rules for our parents.”

He quietly laughed.

“Yeah, I can see that. You must have scared them shitless.”

“Probably.”

“I’m glad you came here ‘Mione. I am almost afraid of what our lives would have been like without you.” He murmured sleepily.

“I don’t know what my life would be without you.” She said quietly into his hair as he started to snore. He was the reason she was there in Grimmauld Place and had a family. Even if they were bat shit crazy. Not all of it was bad though, she got to be a big sister to two of the most incredible people.
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Christmas and Theo Nott

Chapter Eight

Christmas morning Hermione was woken up by two bouncing boys jumping on her body inadvertently leaving bruises with elbows and knees in their excitement. Her large pile of gifts had been pushed onto the chest at the end of the bed by a thoughtful Regulus as Sirius was peeling open her eye lids yelling ‘Thank you. Thank you’ at the top of his lungs shoving whatever was in his hand into her face.

Hermione was not and would never be a morning person. Christmas was not even an exception. While on the run, Harry and Ron had learned quickly and had taken their shifts to watch the camp in the mornings on alternating days leaving the scary woman to sleep in and take the night watch. For that she was always grateful but suspected it was more a survival tactic than a thoughtful one from the boys.

Sitting up in bed she forced her eyes to open with a smile that looked more like a grimace than a grin. Happy faces were difficult when a girl had resting bitch face especially so early in the morning.

“Whoa ‘Mione are you okay?” Reg asked.

“I’m just a little tired. Why?”

“You look a little…”

She raised her eyebrows when it looked like he wouldn’t finish.

“You look horrible! Been tortured all night, have you?” Said Sirius not even realizing he was close to death via big sister as she clenched her teeth and narrowed her eyes.

“Merry Christmas to you too, Sirius.” She growled through clenched teeth.

Looking at Reg’s scared and uncertain face she forced herself to relax. He was sensitive to other people’s moods.

“Merry Christmas Reg!”’ she said softly and opened up her arms as he crawled into bed with her. She covered them both and pulled him close to cuddle, ignoring Sirius’ loud voice. Reg started to giggle as Sirius started to poke Hermione on the back of her head over and over before she finally snapped.

“SIRIUS ORION BLACK!” She yelled as he ran full speed out of the room laughing maniacally while Reg was holding his sides giggling harder at her now red angry face. He gave her a sweet peck on the cheek and left the room singing Christmas carols as he went.
Grumpy now, she decided she was already awake and wouldn’t be able to fall back asleep and walked across the hall to take a shower leaving the presents until after. She felt she wouldn’t appreciate them as much in her current mood anyway.

It took her nearly an hour to shower and dress before she sat on her bed to open her gifts.

She got beautiful golden dress robes with red and blue beading and Black family jewels to go with it from Walburga and Orion, A book from Sirius; A Princesses Guide to take over the world by Cleopatra, a set of Runes and Hair ribbons from Reg, a new spell from Snape that would act like an audiobook in her ear, an Amethyst necklace with the Malfoy crest (subtle), A vial of basilisk venom, a goblin made dagger, and red and gold knitted socks from Dumbledore, a small grey flecked kneazle delivered by a Nott house elf that Hermione named Euphrates, a charmed journal to only open for her and under the false bottom in the same package a wide array of lacy knickers from Avery.

She chucked and dumped the knickers into her drawers and put the rest of her gifts away for later then headed down to the dining room for Christmas Breakfast.

She was the last to arrive and by the time she got there the boys were squirming in their seats while Orion read the daily prophet and Walburga smiled dazedly at the wall. From the puppy dog looks Sirius had started throwing her way she assumed he was starving and would like her to hurry up and get to the table so they could begin.

Orion called Kreacher to bring breakfast and cleared his throat. Sirius dug in to the delectable French toast as soon as it was laid out of him. She was surprised and mildly disgusted at how much he shoved in mouth while using just enough manners to only earn a scowl from his father.

“Hermione, I have a gift for you that came into my possession very early this morning. I was going to wait until later but I would really like to see your reaction to it now.” He had barely eaten before daubing the napkin at the corner of his mouth in a movement so reminiscent of Lucius that it had made her smile.

He took a small flat velvet box out of his pocket with an overlarge red bow and levitated it to her. Hermione pulled it to her in confusion, they had already given her several pieces of jewelry.

She slowly opened the lid and upon seeing the ‘gift’ Hermione’s jaw dropped in shock.

“I don’t know how you did it.” She whispered

“I have my ways.”

“I told you about them days ago. I am impressed!” And she looked it too. She picked up the object and let it dangle from its heavy golden chain clearly showing a golden locket with a large ‘S’ on the front. Hermione could feel the miasma that was a portion of Voldemort’s soul.

She looked at him with wide eyes brimming with tears as the boys looked on the exchange curiously but silently.

“Merry Christmas, My Dear!” He smiled.

“You are a formidable opponent, Father.” She choked out. It was a damn good thing they were on the same side.

Hermione ran up to her bedroom and dipped the dagger into the venom hoping it was like the sword of Gryffindor in which it imbues only that which makes it stronger and grabbed her beaded
bag. The trip back to the dining room frustrating her as she slowed down enough to be safe. After all, one shouldn’t run with poisoned daggers.

Upon reentering the dining room Hermione pushed her plate to the side and replaced it with the innocuous looking piece of jewelry. Why Voldemort didn’t use a grain of sand was beyond her. Even if he made one of them something like that, Harry, Ron, and her would have never found it. He would have been assured of immortality.

Taking a deep breath, Hermione slammed the dagger through the locket causing it to scream in rage. It didn’t have months of skin to skin contact to feed off of her fears and insecurities this time. It wasn’t strong enough to fight back. Well that answers that question, the dagger did indeed imbue the venom. Hermione finally felt like things were coming together and she was on even footing in the war against Tom Riddle the Horcrux maker and not Voldemort the master purist. She felt it was an important distinction.

It was utterly destroyed as it sat on the ruined tablecloth looking nothing like it had when the boys used the Sword of Gryffindor on it. It was much less mangled this time.

Two Horcruxes down, three to go.

Hermione sat down with a huge smile of relief and victory as she dropped it into her beaded bag with the other destroyed vessels. It was obvious that Orion was fighting a smile as Hermione hungrily shoveled food in her mouth making happy noises of contentment nearly as wildly as Sirius. For the rest of the day she was in high spirits wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas, reminiscent of a reformed Scrooge from Dicken’s A Christmas Carol.

**HGHGHGHG**

The day after Christmas she had taken Sirius over to the Potter’s so that he could spend the rest of his holiday there. When she had flooed into their sitting room after Sirius, she had been surrounded by the comforting arms of Dorea Potter.

“How did you get Walburga to agree to this? She has been adamant about not allowing any of her children here since Sirius became James friend their first year.” Dorea said finally letting Hermione go with a pleased smile.

“My mother is on an official time out.” She said between tight lips ending the subject entirely. It nearly made Dorea smile at the thought of anyone putting Walburga Black into time out.

The only outward sign that she had heard the young woman was Dorea’s rapid blinking in surprise before smiling widely and leading her into the dining room for pancakes. The table was nearly full as all the Marauders were now present with Sirius already sitting between James and Remus. She smiled indulgently at the boys and they were so shocked at her overly friendly attitude that forks loudly clattered against plates before the owners pick up their forks and chins from the table. Her friendly smile was nearly as disarming as drawing her wand but in a much subtler way.

“Would you care to have breakfast with us, Hermione?” Asked Charlus Potter.

“That is very kind, Mr. Potter but I have another errand to run today. If you will excuse me. Oh, and Sirius, behave.” She never felt more like a mother hen than at that moment and that was saying something. She mothered Harry and Ron for months if not years.

“You are welcome here anytime, Hermione.” Said James loudly before flushing and joining Remus and Peter’s conversation about the upcoming Hufflepuff match with Gryffindor. With a smile and a
wave, Hermione walked outside to the apparition point, twisting with deliberation into nothingness.

**HGHGHGHG**

She landed with a low crack on the outskirts of a grubby town named Cokeworth. She walked through the filthy streets until she was standing in front of the building she had been searching for. It had taken her a few months to find out where Snape had lived and a few months more to learn of his home life. He was as secretive a boy as he would become a man. In the beginning of December, there were only a few stealthy nights of breaking and entering involved when she had looked in the highly warded files of the fierce medi-witch, Poppy Pomfrey. Between the examinations and handwritten notes in the margins, it didn’t take a genius to realize two things about the great Severus Snape. The first being that he was exceptionally bright and quickly learned pertinent healing charms, the second was that he refused to talk about his home life. It took Hermione a few weeks to decide on her course of action and refusing to wait any longer to save yet another Slytherin, she found herself standing in front of his home. If she could influence him young enough, he would not have the desire to become a Death Eater, hopefully.

The street was quiet with a melancholy that suffocated the whole town. She walked up the stairs, raising her hand to knock on the door. The sound was obnoxiously loud on the silent street. A beautiful woman with shoulder length black hair and kind green eyes opened the door.

“May I help you?” The woman asked curiously. It was obvious that Hermione was a witch, stunning in her ivory over robe with the fur lined hood pushed back. Hermione was taken aback at the nice woman that Hermione surmised was Snape’s mother. She was very beautiful; Snape must take after his father. She tried to hide her surprise.

“I am Hermione Black and I know Severus from school. I came today because I have a younger brother who I think would get along great with Severus and I wanted to invite him to stay with us for the remainder of the Christmas holidays.” Hermione said stripping off her light pink mitten to shake the woman’s hand.

“Eileen Snape. I am Severus’ mother. Come in! Can I get you anything? Tea?” She said taking Hermione’s hand in her own and ushering the cold girl inside the house.

“No thank you, Mrs. Snape.” She said with a smile.

“SEVERUS.” She yelled as a dark headed boy came down the stairs. “Miss Black came to invite you to spend the rest of the Christmas holiday with her younger brother.”

He whipped his head around to look at her as incredulousness settled onto his face.

“You can’t be serious.” He said with loud sigh he capitulated and nodded his head in acceptance. He truly liked Hermione, she always acted like his big sister. Not that he needed one! He would meet her brother
if it made her happy but at the first sign of a Sirius clone he would floo home, no matter what she wanted.

Severus was a boy wonder. He had all of his things packed so fast she barely blinked before he was once again in front of her. She took his trunk and banished it to the hallway at Grimmauld Place while they walked out of the house to the waves of good-byes from his mother.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione had been in her room for several hours before an owl pecked at her window insistently. She opened her window and the owl flew in to rest on her desk holding out his leg, thrusting his letter at Hermione. She was a beautiful white owl that looked nearly identical to Harry’s owl, Hedwig.

“Who do you belong to, beautiful?” she crooned at the pretty aviary. The owl hooted as she took the letter and fed her a treat.

**Dearest Hermione,**

*I would like to request the pleasure of your company tomorrow at 7pm for dinner at Ansil's in Diagon Alley.*

*Always yours,*

*Theodore Nott*

With a big smile Hermione snatched a piece of parchment off of her desk and hastily scribbled her affirmation before tying it gently onto the preferred leg. With another gentle hoot, she swooped out of the open window heading back to her master.

Hermione squealed a little bit in excitement. This would be the first time she got to spend one on one time with Theo. Who would have guessed he was such a shy and sensitive guy? She thought about how Harry and Ron would react about her dating three Slytherin’s. They could hold grudges like you wouldn’t believe. It’s probably the reason Hermione was sent and not either of them.

She opened her wardrobe, looking through her robes looking for the perfect one to wear on her date with Theo tomorrow night. Finally settling on a fitted coral set that hugged her curves to perfection. She hung it on the outside of the wardrobe to be steamed by the house elves and moving on to her shoes and jewelry next. Knowing she would need Walburga’s hair charms, she went down to the library to find a book of beauty charms.

Severus and Reg were playing wizards chess while Orion was reading a book and drinking fire whiskey in the arm chair Hermione mentally ascribed as his. She ran her fingers along the spines of the books as she searched for one she never thought she would need.

“What are you looking for, Dearest?” Asked Orion not looking up from his own book.

“The book of beauty charms with the spell that Walburga uses on my hair. I just got a letter from Theo asking me on a date for tomorrow night and I think it’s about time that I learn them. I don’t want to keep asking Mother” she said shifting her weight uncomfortably. Using Walburga’s skill while she was under the Imperious made her feel like she was no better than her enemies. The line of right and wrong was so blurred where it came to that woman, Hermione often swung from vindication to crushing guilt. It was vigilante justice, plain and simple.

“Why didn’t she teach them to you when you were younger?” Asked Severus curiously.
"I am from the future where we were running for our lives. We were more concerned with staying alive than how our hair looked." Hermione said over her shoulder still scanning the shelves.

Severus looked flabbergasted as Orion smirked at him behind the book. He got a really big kick out of Hermione ability to just drop that information on people’s heads like it was an everyday occurrence. It was hilarious.

Orion stood up and walked to the far side of the library that housed the section for witches and pulled a small blue book from the top shelf. He brought it back and handed it to Hermione.

"Awesome! Thank you, Father. Night boys!" she waved, face already plastered to the pages of the book in her hand.

Theo had been seated already when Hermione walked into the upscale restaurant ten minutes early. The concierge lead her to the table through the diners who were inconspicuously watching the beautiful young woman being led to the eligible Nott heir that many matchmaking mama’s had been eye balling. In just one look, it was obvious that the family she had come from was prestigious. The mama’s pulled back in their claws immediately, complaining about the unfairness of it all. Hermione smiled widely as he stood welcoming her and pushing in her chair after she sat.

"You usually look so beautiful Hermione, but especially so tonight.” He told her with a sweet expression on his face. She saw pride and happiness in his eyes and felt incredibly flattered. Avery was a confident flirt and always made her feel sexy, Lucius was a strong personality that made her feel wanted, and Theo was the guy who fought to have a chance with her even when it seemed hopeless. He made her feel loved. The three men who were bound to her gave her different but important things and she was quite attached to all of them. She was definitely falling in love with her wizards.

Theo was wearing green robes that complimented his light green eyes and blonde hair. She couldn’t help the fluttering in her chest as she looked at him under her lashes over the menu that had been placed in her hands.

The waiter came back and they ordered their meals. Theo looked at her, drinking in her happy face that was slightly flushed from his perusal. She avoided his eyes while staring at his hand that he had resting on the table in embarrassment. He couldn’t help but look at her lips as she chewed on them nervously. Her lips had starred in many of his fantasy’s as of late and watching her worry them was making him think of the things he would like to do to them. He grew uncomfortably hard. Thanking tables, table cloths, and loose fitting robes, Theo tried to subtly adjust his erection into a more manageable position.

"Thank you for Euphrates." Hermione said to break the awkward silence.

"No problem.” He smiled at her. “Did you have a pleasant holiday so far?”

"Yeah, it’s been nice. I’ve definitely had worse.” She said

Had anyone bothered to ask Hermione at the beginning of her date with Theo, she would never had guessed where they ended their night. After a nice dinner, he had taken her to Fortescue’s before asking her if she would like to see his favorite place in the whole world. She said yes without hesitation not wanting the evening to end. They strolled down Diagon Alley hand in hand to the
apparition point. With a quiet pop, they appeared in a rose garden that had charms to enable the roses to bloom year-round. It was an outdoor garden enclosed by stone walls and magic. Roses of all colors and stages of bloom surrounded the space and the smell was incredible. The stone walls, trellises, and arches were absolutely covered leaving only a small circle in the center of the garden to sit. There were no entryways into the garden, it was completely secluded.

Theo walked over to a pretty pink bloom and using a severing charm, handed Hermione the rose. She brought it up to her nose, inhaling the intoxicating scent.

Theo slowly moved towards her as he glanced up at him through her lashes, nose still buried in the flower. He leaned in to kiss the tip of her nose while she lifted her head connecting their lips instead. The shock of their lips touching for the first time wore off as Theo moved in closer enveloping her in his strong frame. She put her arms around his neck and ran her fingers though his hair while molding her body to his.

Hermione pushed Theo to walk backwards until the back of his legs bumped into the bench. She pulled back a little so that she could gently push his shoulders and force him to sit. He pulled her onto his lap, both of her legs in between his and fingered her hair sliding it off of her shoulder and tracing the heavy curls down her back. Her hair felt like silk. Her skin was petal soft and luminescent in the moonlight.

“I would die a happy man if we could do this for the rest of our lives.” He whispered into her ear, still running his fingers along her spine.

“I feel like I stole all of your lives, yours, Avery’s, and Malfoy’s. You are bound to me and have no other choices. What if you would have loved the woman you married? I stole that from you by coming back in time.”

“I am going to love the woman I marry because I already love you.” He was running the tip of his nose along her jaw. Her breath caught in her throat as her eyes began to fill with tears. Theo always said the most beautiful things to her.

“I am already in love with you too.”

His head snapped up from where he was kissing her shoulder to stare at her in open mouth wonder. His eyes darkened as he grabbed her face and kissed her thoroughly. Exploring her mouth with his tongue as hers battled for dominance with his.

Hermione shifted on his lap until she was straddling him as he wrapped his arms around her waist bringing her as close to his body as she could get. She leaned her head down as she gently pulled the hair on the back of his head forcing him to look up at her as she took his lips in another kiss. His hands started roaming her body inching up the material of her robes to feel her skin on his.

His hands finally skimmed over the backs of her thighs and pulling her legs further apart. He lightly ran his fingers over her shapely arse before cupping her cheeks and lightly squeezing. He wanted her so badly it was painful.

Hermione was running her hands over every inch of his body she could reach. She reached up and slowly undid the bindings of her robes letting them fall around his knees, his arms pressing the material into her lower back as he explored her skin. He unclasped her bra and flung it into the rose bushes, never to be found again.

Theo groaned loudly as she presented her naked breasts to his gaze. His hands abandoned their exploration of her arse and flung her robes to the ground as he brought his hands up and cupped
them reverently. He lightly brushed a finger over her nipple eliciting a low throaty moan from Hermione. She shivered and arched her back as he leaned in and covered her breast with his mouth. Dropping tiny kisses on the sensitive peaks.

Hermione stood pulling Theo with her. She was standing in bright pink lace knickers and tiny kitten heels. She quickly kicked off her shoes as Theo undid his robes and laid them out on the ground guiding Hermione to lay on top as he followed. He had one knee between her legs as he pushed her back while putting his weight on his one arm that was next to her head.

He brought his head down again to kiss her lips as his now free hand traced the line of her body from bust to thigh. Slipping one finger under the top of her knickers, he ran them lightly from hip to hip.

Hermione touched the lines of the muscles over his back and shoulders, running down the length of his body, brushing over the sparse chest hair making his nipples harden. Her fingers danced over his abdomen as she reached the top of his trousers gently unhooking them at the waist and shifted until both of his legs were framed by hers. She began tugging down his trousers until he was as naked as she was. It caught her off guard that Theo hadn’t worn any pants but shaking off her surprise quickly, she threw him a naughty smile and grasped his erection with one hand. He was the softest steel. She started to move her hand on his cock as he groaned again while sliding her knickers off.

She was so wet; her arousal filled the air around them. His fingers quickly found her center and concentrated on her hooded bundle of nerves. She moaned his name, the way he was touching her was like the sweetest ambrosia. Her eyes rolled into the back of her head. She came quickly, groaning out her pleasure.

“Say you want me, Hermione.” He whispered on her lips.

“I want you. I want more!” she said

He guided his hard cock to her sopping entrance and gently pushed. She was so tight, going slow would be the death of him, the most incredible death. He stopped when he reached her barrier.

“Take a deep breath, Honey.” When she had done as requested, he snapped his hips forward. She let out a small pained cry and he went motionless to allow her time to adjust for his invasion. After a minute, she started wiggling under him making him groan loudly.

“Theo, MOVE!” She demanded in a breathy voice.

“As you wish.” He slowly slid out until only the tip of his cock was still in her then at the same even pace pushed back in going faster and faster with each thrust. She wrapped her legs around his hips digging her heels into the back of his thighs encouraging a faster pace. She lifted her hips to meet his, rubbing her clit against his hard body driving her to a second orgasm.

She screamed out as she came again. More sensitive than ever. Her tight walls were pulsating around Theo’s cock driving him over the edge with a grunt. He was kissing her face and claiming her lips once again until they were both breathless.

“You are the best thing to ever happen to me, Hermione Black.” Theo said gazing at her through tender eyes.

They laid there connected, satisfied and spent, holding each other for just a while longer.
Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

The Christmas Ball

Chapter Nine

It was finally the night of the Christmas Ball held by the Malfoy’s and Hermione was putting the finishing touches on her hair when Walburga announced Lucius’ arrival. Orion had taken him into his study for a ‘man to man’ chat while they waited for the ladies, giving Walburga enough time for a once over.

Walburga used some of her handy hair charms to make Hermione’s hair stay in the complicated plait and curl configuration that complimented her small face. These hair charms proved that it was pretty handy to know beauty charms and they were so much more efficient than hairspray.

Hermione stood up and ran her hands down the ornate gold dress beaded with blue and red that Walburga had gifted her for Christmas. The pattern was intricate as if she were a phoenix in flight. On her shoulders, there was a golden organza cape that flowed to the floor with a three-foot train embroidered with thousands of tiny feathers in white silk thread. Her luminescent skin offsetting the heavy colors making it appear as if she glowed. She wore rubies set in gold around her throat and wrists with fluttering gold feathers hanging from her lobes. Walburga added a small hairpiece from china that came from an Empress, it was shaped like a phoenix on a perch. It was worked in gold with a body of rubies and the gold feathers tipped with more rubies and sapphires. She wore it on the left side of her head where it wrapped around so the beak was on her temple and the tail reached to the back of her head. Walburga explained to Hermione that one hundred years or so prior, Phineas Nigellus Black had saved a muggle Chinese prince, Zaitian, from a poisoning from a rival family trying to topple the Empress Cixi. He went on to become Emperor, even if it was in name only. Empress Cixi was so grateful that she took the hairpiece she had been wearing and gave it to the traveling wizard in reward. It was one of the most intricate pieces of jewelry Hermione had ever seen. With one last pat, Hermione left her room heading to Orion’s office to collect her date.

The men were coming out however, and Hermione spied Lucius’ a split second before he noticed her. He looked amazing in charcoal grey dress robes. His hair hanging loose perfectly to his shoulders. He looked like he was coming down with something though. She wrinkled her brow in concern. He was drained of all color and sweating, wearing a slightly disturbed look on his face. He shot a slightly terrified look at Orion before looking up the stairs. So, he’s not sick, just threatened by Orion; she thought with a silent snicker, trying to control the expression on her face to avoid embarrassing her date.

When he finally did look up at her, his face went slack.

“Stunning.” Lucius said with reverence. “Absolutely ravishing.”

He took her hand and kissed her knuckles and felt his hair brush her wrist as he leaned over it.
“You look incredible as well Lucius.” She said to him.

“Beautiful, My Dear. We will have to beat all of the eligible bachelors off you tonight.” Orion said with a fond chuckle and a warning look tinged with amusement to the Malfoy Heir as Lucius’ neck flushed in anger but was able to bite back a scathing comment. Whether it was out of fear or respect remained to be seen. With Lucius, his motivations were never clear.

Orion lifted the hand of his wife to his lips with no feeling or expression. She was arm candy in every sense of the word. Hermione wondered if they were forced to get married. Orion seemed to hold no love and little thought for his wife. She was a nasty piece of work but Hermione had always assumed that they were nasty together. Orion was quite nice once you got past that ‘I am God’s gift to Earth’ persona. Maybe Walburga wasn’t always this way, maybe she is a product of her surroundings. Then again, when she started abusing her children she forfeited any right to sympathy. Hermione thought uncharitably.

Hermione could hear that Reg and Severus were talking on an upper floor watching the older family members get ready to leave for the ball that they weren’t required to attend. And from Reg’s expression last week when he was informed, she would venture to guess he was quite happy to forgo the honor.

Orion and Lucius led their ladies into the library where they flooed into the receiving room at the manor. The black marble fireplace easily fit the four of them and Hermione turned around to admire the monstrosity never having been in this particular room. She had been nervous that she would have issues going back to the manor because of her torture. But with it filled to the brim with sparkling, happy people, it had a completely transformed into an unrecognizable atmosphere.

As Hermione was surrounded by lights and glittering women and splendidly dressed men, the noise crashed over her in an overwhelming wave. It reminded her of the Yule ball. Although, the sheer opulence of everything made her inwardly cringe. Balls such as these had gone the way of the VCR and the telegraph, especially after the first war where such extravagance was met with quiet disapproval and hauteur. Not that balls had stopped being held in her time, en contraire, they were just not as over the top. They worked under the less is more motto.

Their small group descended upon the guests fluttering from group to group, as Lucius quietly showed off his intended. Not that she realized that was what everyone assumed. She was very good at learning pureblooded traditions and what not, but there was no denying she was Muggleborn. Things that she would have picked up by being constantly exposed to that world, fell by the wayside as the subtleties and undercurrents swirled around her, she was undeniably unaware.

It wasn’t until she had been taken to the dancefloor by a middle-aged Mr. Selwyn who had offered happy felicitations did she start to feel a trickle of fear. One of her greatest fears was to be caught in a situation where she didn’t know what was going on. How could she save herself if she was ignorant of the danger?

She didn’t spend much time in confusion as the dance ended and she was claimed by Lucius. They looked magnificent together waltzing around the room. So much so that they were turning heads as they passed.

“Lucius, could you explain to me why I was just offered felicitations about our union?”

“Being seen together at such a function is usually considered an engagement.” His brow furrowed.

“Didn’t your mother teach you that in the future?”

“There wasn’t much time for engagement etiquette while living in a tent.” That was a handy excuse
to use to compensate for her muggle upbringing in such matters.

“You lived in a tent?” He asked scandalized.

“Yes for eight months and with only my two best friends.”

“Where were your parents.”

“Well, let’s see, which version do you want? The one that I have told everyone, or the truth? I’ll warn you there is only one person in this time who knows the truth and it is not my father. I’m tired of deceiving the three of you.”

“I want the truth.”

“Then I will tell you, in private. Why don’t I take you somewhere tomorrow?”

“I would be delighted. Anyway, I hope you are not angry. Had we not been in courtship, no one would have assumed that we were engaged in the first place.”

“So it’s only the fact we had a prior understanding. I thought rule 32 article 5 stated I had to attend a public function escorted by each of my suitors?”

“Yes, but that usually refers to tea parties and luncheons.”

Hermione rolled her eyes. ‘Preposterous’. She muttered making Lucius snort in laughter.

Hermione excused herself to go to the loo. Perhaps she shouldn’t have been surprised but she ran smack into Narcissa as she turned the corner.

“Narcissa! It’s great to see you!” Hermione said. It was still odd for her to think of Narcissa as a friend and weirder still as family. Hermione always thought Narcissa to be the weakest and most shallow of the Black sisters but after being around her for a while it was noticeably untrue. Her interests just lied in a different direction. At least she wasn’t as insane as Bellatrix.

“Hermione! I saw you dancing with Malfoy earlier. You both looked marvelous!”

“Thank you! Who are you here with?” asked Hermione curiously.

“Evan Rosier. He’s so dreamy, isn’t he?” she asked with a faraway look on her smiling face.

“Sure. I’m very happy for you.”

“Well, I must get back.” Narcissa walked on as Hermione waved good bye to her. Hermione turned back to her mission to find the loo.

Hermione was the only girl in there for the moment and she took advantage of the peace. That is until Lillith Mulciber walked in. In twenty-seven years, Pansy Parkinson would look identical to her mother as she looked at this ball. It was difficult to be polite to the young girl, they even had the same pug nose. Deciding she had spent enough time in there, Hermione walked out of the bathroom.

She was halfway down the corridor when she was pulled into a dark room. A deep masculine voice was erecting wards around the circumference which would have rivaled any of the Black’s. Her back was pressed against the hard planes of the man’s front and this man was hard, in the fun sense. She breathed deeply in and smelled Lucius’ spicy scent, relaxing into him as a result.
“We can’t be in here too long. We will be discovered.” Hermione said.

“Only if they notice.”

“My father is sure to notice.” She said.

“Then we will have to stop talking, won’t we. I have wanted to do this all night.” He groaned. Using his finger tips to move aside her necklace as his lips connected to the base of her neck and gently sucked as if he tried not to leave a love bite but failed. His eyes glowed with satisfaction when he saw his mark on her neck. His lightly stubbled face rubbed against the sensitive flesh of her neck and his breath ghosted across her collar bone.

She was drowning in sensation. His hands were all over her, memorizing her body. He twirled her around to face him and plundered her willing mouth with his own. His tongue was indulgent of hers, yet clearly being the one in control. He was a man who knew exactly what he wanted and demanded it as his natural right.

“There you are Darling, and I thought you had gotten lost. How thoughtful of Lucius to make sure you were breathing. Not hurt, are you?” Lucius and Hermione froze still lip locked as Orion opened the door staring at the both of them. Tearing her lips from Lucius’ in mortification, her eyes found a spot on the floor very interesting. Lucius muttered a constant stream of obscenities as he rested his forehead against Hermione’s temple in frustration.

“Oh and Darling, you have some bruising, just there on your neck. Let me fix it for you. You should be more careful not to slip and fall.” Orion raised his wand and fixed the love bite as he was now openly glaring at Lucius. Hermione had flushed in embarrassment knowing that was what Orion wanted. It was obvious he didn’t approve of trysts in an empty room mere steps away from the crowded ballroom. Even though the room had been heavily warded. Wards he broke in the matter of moments.

**HGHGHGHG**

Half way through the evening Hermione was standing alone while she waited for Lucius to rejoin her after he left to get her a drink. He had been gone for quite a while when she was approached by Caradoc Dearborn with a cup of water in each hand. Peering through the crowds Hermione saw that Lucius had been cornered by the current Minister of Magic and was forcefully being held there by Orion, probably as punishment for their earlier dalliance. He was shooting her glances every few minutes trying desperately to extract himself from Orion’s formidable claws.

Caradoc handed her one of the goblets and after she took a sip he addressed her.

“What a lovely party don’t you think, Hermione?”

“Yes, it’s quite nice.” She said hesitantly trying not to be rude but decidedly uncomfortable. She looked around discreetly, searching for a polite way out.

“Would you care to dance with me?” He asked with a steely glint in his eyes. Taking her arm firmly in his and steered her out onto the dance floor not waiting for her to answer.

“No, thank you. I am waiting on Lucius.” She said trying to keep the smile plastered to her face while trying to dig in her heels. She started to feel overly hot and breathless, her vision began swimming. Maybe she needed more water. She took a small gulp of the cool liquid to quench her sudden burning thirst, unconsciously finishing the cool liquid. Caradoc took the empty chalice from her, passing both to a house elf whose job it was to collect the glasses as he continued to lead
her out of the room.

“Something is wrong. I need to find Lucius or my father. I feel sick.” She said turning slightly green. ‘He had drugged her! The stupid bastard had drugged her, Hermione Fucking Granger, wait no, Black!’ She thought ferociously, her equilibrium spinning.

He twirled her onto the dancefloor, artfully weaving through the others basically dragging her towards the gardens, presumably for fresh air or so she hoped. She was so dizzy at this point that she was holding on to him for dear life. Everyone else seemed to be dancing on the ceiling.

“I’ll just take you outside for a bit of air, Darling.”

“Not your darling, take me back!” She slurred. The edges of her vision darkening. She needed to find Lucius right now! She let Caradoc go as he led her down the stairs only to be grabbed firmer and led into the winding paths of the topiary, away from the entrance.

“You are correct, you are not mine and yet I brought you a gift anyway. See how generous I can be?” He suddenly let her go with a little push as she tried to rip her arm out of his grasp only to collapse heavily on the gravel path landing on her bum and holding her aching head in her hands. Reaching into his robes, he brought out a small green leather box the size and shape of one that would hold a ring. When he opened the lid, there sat a small thin silver ring shaped as a serpent eating its tail. He used his silk handkerchief to shove it onto her ring finger unceremoniously and the magic burst from the ring making a bubble of green light around her body.

After only a few seconds, Hermione, who was barely conscious felt the pull of a portkey before slipping into the darkness. She truly despised portkeys.

**HGHGHGHG**

When she came to, she found herself laid out on a bright purple chaise lounge in an ornate room that was tastefully done in creams and purples. Turning her head to the right she saw a large bed and to her left was a fireplace that rivaled the one at Malfoy manor. She sat up in bewilderment. The last thing she remembered before passing out had been Dearborn handing her a cup of water. What. The. Fuck. She felt as if her head would explode at any moment. Looking around the room she saw that there were several closed doors and curtains drawn so that she couldn’t tell if it was still night time. She searched for her wand hoping that it had only been dislodged out of the hidden pocket in the gown and had rolled under the heavy furniture. But after several minutes, she had to admit to herself that she didn’t have it and it was probably done on purpose. There were three full potion vials on the table next to her head and pulled them closer one at a time to inspect them. One was a minor healing potion, one was an anti-nausea potion, and the last was a pepper up potion. How thoughtful of that kidnapping booby. When she got through with Dearborn he wouldn’t even be able to cry out for his mum. And that was a promise. She downed the contents of all three potions and immediately felt better. They seemed to be of the same quality of Professor Snape’s.

Getting up, she approached the door nearest her realizing quickly that it was locked. Her logical mind told her it must be the door leading out. Moving on she easily opened the second door which turned out to be an impressive bathroom. It was white marble and with gold veining throughout. She took the opportunity to relieve her bladder, then moved on to the last two doors. One turned out to be an empty wardrobe room and the other was a doorway connecting to another suite of rooms. She was surprised it had not been locked as she walked through into the more masculine dark brown and blue room. She looked around finding the door she guessed would lead to a hallway and made a hastily beeline for it.

“Leaving so soon are we?” Asked a low honeyed voice. It made her stop in her tracks and slowly
turn around hearing the beads on her dress quietly clack together.

After Ron had left Harry and Hermione in the woods all those months ago, they had avoided talking about their missing friend at all costs. Harry and Hermione had gone over and over again the information that he knew about Voldemort. On one particularly bad day, they had sat together on the frozen surface of a lake they were camped on, talking again about the malevolent villain whose pieces of soul they were hunting. Harry was getting frustrated at Hermione for not understanding the details about Tom Riddle that would only be learned by talking to the man, snake, thing and thus, ended up polishing a small circle on the ice to try and project the image of Tom Riddle in his early twenties. It was a surprise for both of them when it worked. At the time, she had been shocked at how beautiful and handsome he was.

Even knowing how he looked pre snake regeneration, she was still surprised when she turned around to the lilting voice who had stopped her mad dash across the room. Realizing just now how devastatingly handsome he truly was. He was older now but with a timeless attraction that would draw women to him no matter his age. She didn’t bother to answer him but chose instead to gaze in horror and confusion trying to figure out what went wrong. Wasn’t Dearborn in the Order the first time around?

Tom Riddle was sitting at the desk that was placed against the window across the room. He had turned in the chair sideways crossing his leg over his knee as he steepled his long fingers together gently touching the tips to his lips.

“And so we finally meet, Time Traveler.”

“Tom Riddle.”

“You know me?” He asked seemingly pleased.

“I know more about you than I know about myself. But do I know you? No, I would say not.”

“What is it you think you know?”

“You are a Half-blood that was raised in a muggle orphanage. Your mother was Merope Gaunt and your father was the muggle Tom Riddle. You are the heir of Slytherin and released the basilisk in your fifth year ending in the murder of Myrtle Warren who currently haunts the girls’ bathroom on the second floor which is also the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets. Shall I go on?”

“Yes.” He said quietly, his impassive face might as well have been made of stone.

“When you were in Hogwarts you created the Knights of Walpugis, the original Death Eaters. You branded them with a ‘special’ magical tattoo of your own creation tying them to you so they could call you when needed or you could call them. The image itself was designed by Rowle when he was twenty-five. You and your merry band of princelings toured the world searching for ubiquitous magic and you found one such example in a small African village where the elders could fly.” She mocked.

At this Voldemort started staring at her with a thoughtful expression on his face. That certainly wasn’t common knowledge.

“Well lovely, you won’t mind staying here as my guest until I return? If you try to leave, it will be very unpleasant for you.”

He stood up and walked close to her raising his hand and tracing the phoenix hair ornament.
“If you are a good girl, we shall get along just fine.” He purred in her ear, smiling evilly as he noticed the goose pimples raising on her flesh.

“Until I return.”

Once when she was little she had gone to church with her Nana after spending the night at the old estate where Hermione’s family hailed from. The church was opulent in its decorations and the priests were luminous in their white robes as the pastor took the pulpit. He had a low but impressive voice that carried to each of his constituents with ease. He was a wonderful speaker and Hermione, even as a little girl had been held captivated by his story of good and evil. One part of the story had stuck out at her, resonating within her being. Lucifer was God’s favorite and he was the most beautiful angel of all.

It wasn’t until years later that Voldemort and Lucifer had been connected in her mind, the message never truly leaving her even though her church going days had stopped with her Nana’s death only a year later. She shivered making the beads on her dress sing and dance. How could such evil be so beautiful?

She stood shivering for a few moments before twirling towards the door as it made a soft click after he left. She buried her face in her hands as she sank to the floor in a disconsolate pile of misery. Who knew where she was? What was Orion and Lucius doing right now? Did they think she was safe and had left the party on her own? She had a feeling it would be too late by the time they found her.

She mentally slapped herself as she decided she didn’t want to be found on the floor of his room when he returned. She got up and started to go back through the connecting door when she noticed all of the books covering the entire wall. She didn’t dare touch them as her fingers itched to do but she studied the titles noticing that many of them were rare and collectable titles. She had looked at nearly the whole collection when she came upon a small black journal tucked between two monstrous texts. Her heart beat sped up and her breath came out in great huffs as if she had just run a marathon or had been punched in the stomach. She ran a finger along the spine and trembled as she felt the presence of a Horcrux. She gently slid it off of the shelf and tucked it under her arm hoping to God that this wasn’t just a cruel, cruel joke.

She ran into the purple room trying to push a chest against the connector wishing more now than ever that she had her wand. She located the beaded bag that she carried everywhere and put the horcrux among its ruined brothers.

It wasn’t long before she grew bored in the room having tried and failed to pick the lock on the door and decided to bathe before she lost the chance with the return of Voldemort. When she got out of the bath she noticed her gown was hanging in the wardrobe and a set of pretty dark blue dress robes were laid out for her on the bed. A small House elf stood in the corner of the room waiting for her.

“I is pippy. Pippy is helping the Miss to dress. Master orders Pippy to care for Miss.” Pippy said happily. Bobbing across the room Pippy hugged Hermione’s legs tightly in adoration. Hermione didn’t have the heart to tell the little house elf no, so nodding her head she let Pippy help her dress. Hermione was surprised to see Pippy in a dark green silk toga with the Slytherin crest on his chest. If this was indeed Voldemort’s elf, then why was it so well cared for? She wondered, completely baffled.

Hermione and Pippy were startled when the connecting door slammed loudly against the trunk that had been shoved in front of it. There came some expletives on the other side as the trunk was lifted and moved aside with a nonverbal levitation spell as Tom Riddle swept into the room with a
terrible, mocking grin on his face.

“Did you think you could keep me out if I wanted to be in here?” He demanded brutally.

“No, I thought it might tick you off. And give me some warning.” She muttered the last bit.

He looked at her with a face made of stone before bursting out in laughter.

“You supposedly know me intimately and yet you dare to anger me?” he said still amused. “That’s bold.”

“I am not afraid of you.” She said.

“Which is curious, because you should be. I heard something quite unbelievable about you.”

“Really? There are many things about me floating around.” She said brazenly. “Some people are convinced I have been raised by Dragons. Is that to which you refer?” she said in amusement. That was her favorite rumor.

“No, I have heard that your magic has bound three pureblooded princes to you. Powerful ones. I find that very interesting. The sheer amount of power that you four could wield…” He said trailing off as his thoughts took him to a place that he wanted to explore very much.

“That is none of your business.”

“Oh but it is when the three men in question are the sons of my followers. Did you think they would contract for you without my permission? I don’t think so.”

“I have no doubt that your followers are as loyal as always. After all you conditioned them while attending Hogwarts. How often did you use the Cruciatus curse on your most loyal followers to make them so obedient?”

“Only as often as they deserved. I must punish them when they displease me, how else will they learn?”

“That is disgusting. Fear only can control for so long before they will turn and bite their master.”

“Only if we are talking about dogs, don’t forget, I reward them just as generously as I discipline.”

“What do you want with me?”

“Join me.”

“No.”

“Just like that?”

“Just like that.”

“What can I give you to change your mind?”

“There really isn’t anything I want that you could give me or tempt me with.”

“Everyone has their price.”

“That is true. I just don’t believe that you could meet mine.”
“We shall see.”

“Can I leave now?”

“Leave? When we are having such a wonderful time? Why would you leave?”

“To go home and hopefully sleep on my own bed. Not that this room isn’t lovely.” She said sarcasm dripping from every syllable.

There was a loud pop and an old grizzled veteran of a house elf apparated in the room.

“Master, there is a Lord Black here to see you.” Voldemort raised his eyebrows in surprise. Followed by the dark look of a man denied what he dearly desired.

“Pack Hermione’s belongings and bring them down to the sitting room where you presumably left Lord Black. As for you Hermione, I shall escort you myself.” He took her limp hand and put it in the crook of his arm. Forcing her closer than she ever wanted to be and escorted her through the large home that rivaled many of the sacred twenty-eight estates.
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Riddle Manor

Chapter Ten

As they entered the sitting room they saw Orion had leaned against the marble of the fireplace lost in contemplation or so it seemed.

“Orion.”

“My Lord.” Orion Black turned around and began without looking Hermione’s way once. “You have done our family honor with your distinction in inviting Hermione to your home. However, her suitor and I were quite distressed when we couldn’t find her at the ball. Naturally we thought the worst but as soon as we found that young Caradoc had put something in her drink and sent her off via portkey, you can understand our overwhelming concern. I am afraid the boy is of little use to you now. If I had but known he was one of yours, I would never have tortured him for so long. Alas, his decent into madness once my Legilimency tore through his mind is quite irreversible.” He lamented.

“I can see how the mistake might have been made.” Voldemort said through narrowed eyes, still holding Hermione hostage on his arm.

The thing Hermione was learning about Orion Black was that when he used his apologetic voice, one should be terrified that his very life was hanging in the balance. Even if that someone was a Dark Lord.

“Hermione, it has been a pleasure having you in my home. I look forward to seeing you again soon.” Voldemort inclined his head at her while he patted her hand finally relinquishing his hold on her. “Oh, and I would appreciate you returning that valuable book you borrowed from me.” He said with a glint in his eyes.

Her eyes went wide as her pupils were blown wide in fear. She reached into her beaded bag and drew out the Diary. As she pulled it out of her beaded bag the chain of the locket got tangled into the buckle of the diary leaving it dangling in mid-air. Hermione stared at it in horror. It drew the eyes of all three occupants in shocked silence. Each one of them knew exactly what was suspended in front of their eyes and the significance was lost on none.


“That’s um something um unimportant.” Hermione said staring resolutely at the ground.

“DO NOT LIE TO ME!”

“What do you want me to say? That I killed your necklace on accident? That I don’t know what it is?”
“You know.”

“Yes.”

“You know there is more than one.”

“Yes.”

“You’re hunting them.”

“Are you really surprised?”

Instead of an answer he raised his wand casting as he went, showing them exactly why he had been so feared and revered. It was a rare thing indeed to catch Voldemort off guard but it seemed he was forming a habit of underestimating people.

As Voldemort hurled his first curse at Hermione, she was wrapped in a protective bubble that she had cast which was reinforced by Orion. The Two Horcruxes still clutched in her hand.

Hermione shoved the Horcruxes back in the bag.

“Orion, Apparate!” Hermione yelled. She turned on the spot to apparate away, but nothing happened. She heard a deep rumbling laugh wash over her as she realized she wouldn’t be leaving that way. Orion had popped out and back in quickly. He must have realized she didn’t follow. Knowing what she had to do, Hermione shoved the bag in his hands.

“Get the fuck out of here, Orion!” She yelled. Even as startled as he was, he was a man who knew how to get shit done. People like that understand the price of their actions and knowing that once he left, Hermione would suffer the consequences. Regardless, he left her there. He must destroy the Horcruxes at all cost. Sadness weighed him down as he materialized outside the wards of Malfoy manor.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

Orion walked in the foyer to see the Lord of the manor physically holding his heir back from leaving the manse. When Lucius caught site of Orion, alone with Hermione’s bag that she always took with her, he became a mad man. Yelling at and begging his father to release him so that he could get Hermione from where ever she was being held.

Orion ignored the younger man for the moment focusing his attention solely on Abraxas.

“I need to know if you have what I asked for. My daughter’s life depends on it.”

“Are you going to hand it over to him?” He asked with a sneer.

“I must destroy them all, I promised her.”

Abraxas looked at Orion calculatingly while Lucius calmed down enough to follow the conversation with confusion.

“I have it, but not the last one, I am afraid. It was gone when I got to the old shack.”

“I think WE can help you with that.” Two Albus Dumbledore’s strode into the room looking as badass as ever holding up the Gaunt ring that had an obvious crack down the center. Twinkling merrily with each step.
“It is terrible timing, but we will work with what we have. It also helps that we have the advantage, right, Mr. Avery” Future Dumbledore said as Cadeus strode into the room with Theo beside him.

“I can feel her or I could several hours ago. Something is blocking me now.” Theodore Nott said with a smirk.

“How is it that you can feel my daughter through a link, Mr. Nott?” Orion said with narrowed eyes. He knew what it would take to make the link work. The smirk fell off Theo’s face being replaced with a look of apprehension. “Should I expect any more surprises?” Orion glared at Lucius and Avery.

Avery took a step back turning a pasty white color holding his hands up and palms out in surrender. He may not have had sex with Hermione but he got pretty damn close. He was surprised that out of all three of them that it was Theo who had been first but he wasn’t jealous that Theo was with her, it was more that he was jealous of the time they spent together. It was weird, before they were marked all he seemed to feel was jealousy.

“Now, now, Orion. It is not the time to castigate your sons-in-law for consummating their marriage.” Said 1971 Dumbledore Twinkling.

Orion went red in the face and with an obvious struggle, not one curse left his wand. There were many in the room who were impressed, as well they should have been. They were well versed in the impetuousness of the Black family. It was dangerous to cross any Black.

“Then there is just the matter of the diary and the cup.” Orion snapped still not quite in control.

“Are we in possession of either?” said Future Dumbledore.

“The cup is in my study.” Offered Abraxas.

“Hermione found the diary for us. When she realized that he set up wards to imprison her but not me, she shoved the bag at me. That girl is a warrior.” Orion bragged, proud of his daughter.

“Does she have her Christmas gifts in her bag by any chance?” Asked 1971 Dumbledore.

Orion opened the bag and a crashing sound rumbled out of the opening.

“Undetectable extension charm. Absolutely incredible!” Abraxas said stunned. That was powerful magic and a devil to get right.

Orion reached in and grabbed the diary with the locket still dangling from the clasp, followed by the two ruined vessels. He stuck his hand in again rather bravely thought both Dumbledore’s.

It was quite spectacular that when the people in the room would later tell the story, it didn’t need any embellishment. Orion pulled out what was once a dagger, that was now a full sized broad sword encased in Merlin’s everlasting diamond that had once housed Excalibur.

How the hell did Hermione get her hands on that? Everyone but the Dumbledore’s wondered. They knew exactly where it was from, she put that book to good use in the two months that she had it.

Orion drew the sword from the stone and with a powerful thrust destroyed Riddle’s diary. One more to go. He thought as he reached for the cup that Abraxas held out to him.

**HGHG**
Hermione was furious. She was literally tied. Like on a ribbon leash, tied. Voldemort had secured a black satin ribbon around her neck making it indestructible and melded the ends together to make a continuous loop. Then he attached a black smoky chain from the ribbon to the serpent ring he wore on his finger, going invisible as the spell completed. She felt like a dog sitting there being held in place by a simple ‘Petrificus Totalus’.

Voldemort had left her only moments after she thrust her beaded bag at Orion but he was gone for an hour before sauntering back in calling for tea watching her as if she was a most amusing play. It had taken two hours to tire herself out. She had cast every charm, hex, and curse she had in her vast mental arsenal after Orion left, even the dodgy ones.

Once she had sat down across the room from him, he put her into a full body bind. He then informed her of the nature of the serpent ring as he secured the ribbon around her neck.

It could only be removed by the wizard who had cast the spells, he gleefully informed her. They were trapping, tracing, and binding spells strong enough to overcome most other magics. As long as she wore his ring, he could claim her and all the magic a two-way bond would afford, effectively cutting her off from Theo, Lucius, and Avery. Apparently, he found a way to bypass the soul mate requirement. She wondered how the spells on the ring could do that.

**HGHGHGHG**

“If you can’t feel her, we have to run under the assumption he is blocking it. It would be safer for her that we draw him out and meet him on a neutral plane.” Said Abraxas.

“Dealing with Tom Riddle as I have for the last fifty years, I think I am the best qualified to make that judgment. We are inside his wards. I would say that is not neutral ground.”

“And yet you had to send a young girl, back in time to take care of this mess. The wards will fall. It has to be right here, where he cast them. We can’t take the risk that he could get away and hide Hermione from us.”

“You have that much confidence in this plan?” Dumbledore grumbled. He hated when his plans got superseded.

“As a matter of fact yes. He wants my heir as a soldier in his insane crusade. I think we should go in wands blazing, and take him out quickly now that he is vulnerable without his Horcruxes.” Abraxas said stubbornly.

Future Dumbledore pinched the bridge of his nose.

“Vulnerable does not mean weak, Abraxas. He is one of the most powerful wizards ever.”

“Between the four of us, I am sure we can break whatever enchantments he is using.”

“Oi! What about us?” objected Avery

“The three of you are liabilities. You are far too young and have yet to procreate. We cannot risk killing off three Houses of the sacred twenty-eight. What are you even doing here? Go back to the Manor!” Remarked Abraxas

“Well, it doesn’t matter if we currently have children or not, the mother of our future children is in there!” Theo angrily whispered.

The seven men hiding in the hedges of Riddle Manor were discussing tactics while casing the
house.

“I must say, I am rather flattered to have warranted not just one visit by our esteemed Headmaster, but two. How droll.” Drawled Voldemort casually leaning against the fence.

“Frankly, Orion, I am surprised at you most of all. Being the revered master of wards the world claims you to be. You should have known you couldn’t cross them without alerting me. Where is the diary?”

Orion smiled as the others surrounded the powerful wizard.

“I have it right here. Would you like it back?” Asked Orion as the rest gave him funny looks. His daughter wasn’t the only one with a few nasty tricks up her sleeve.

Voldemort narrowed his eyes as Orion drew one ruined Horcrux after another out of the bag and laid them at his feet. Voldemort was so concentrated on the ruined vessels that he didn’t notice the Dumbledore’s starting to cast a black cage over him. It wasn’t truly black bars, but undulating ropes of shadow and flame. Something that he had picked up from a friend of his that he met while traveling as young man. This cage had only one weakness. It wouldn’t work on a person who was in love. No problems there.

The rage started pouring out of Voldemort as his eyes snapped up to meet the eyes of the man in front of him.

He lifted his wand and a bright yellow light filled the clearing. Everything went silent for a moment before gale force winds swirled around the clearing blasting half who stood against him off their feet. Abraxas slashed his wand through the air sending hundreds of tiny sharp ice shards, they were like homing missiles. No matter how they were buffeted by the wind they sailed through the air towards their target. Hundreds of tiny cuts marred the body of the despot standing in the center of the fray. Lightning flashed from Theo’s wand as his eyes went completely black, no whites showing at all.

Voldemort sent the young man a series of time-release exploding pods that attached themselves to his clothes. Avery and Lucius were beside their friend detonating the explosive pods before they reached him. The summoned lightning strikes were tearing down the wards around them.

Orion finished arranging the ruined Horcruxes and sent a jet of purple light at them. It activated the dormant curse he set, making a hole in the wards, ripping them down one at a time.

Theo, raising his wand above his head drew a simple figure eight pattern in the air, making a harsh bell clang as everyone froze in rapture of the other worldly sound. He sent a mild stinging hex to the Dumbledore’s, urging them to finish the complicated prison.

Voldemort flicked his wand the second he was released from the sound of death’s call. A green ball of light encased Orion and he started to scream in agony, blood trickling from his ears. Lucius turned to his future father-in-law and used every spell he could think of to release the man from his confinement.

Abraxas cast a series of curses rapid fire, Crucio, Imperio, Avada Kedavra, each missing its mark, to his great frustration.

**HGHGHGHG**

Drawn by the noise, Hermione wandered out of the house and into the gardens beyond the drawing room. Once she moved beyond the six foot hedges the sight that greeted her eyes was incredible.
Seven of the most powerful men of their time had surrounded Voldemort, obviously trying to keep him on the offensive. When she saw the green bubble encase Orion, she grew panicked. She could feel the spell pull from her own reserves. Determined to cut it off and save them, she tried to remove the ring with renewed determination.

With every second that passed, Orion’s screams grew less urgent as he began slipping into madness. Desperate, Hermione drew out the purple velvet bag and reached in for the Time Turner. As she pulled out the powerful relic, the ring on her finger crumbled, the enchantments failing. Her eyebrows drew together. That was something she would look into later as she negated the spell on Orion. He fell unconscious to the ground. Blood trickling from his eyes, ears, and nose. Hoping he wasn’t dead, she drew upon her magic noticing the sheer amount that she commanded was now much larger than it had been before. She had a hunch it was her wizard’s magic.

Swishing her wand just right, a bright white bolt of electricity flew from the tip, holding Voldemort in stasis as she stepped forward helping the Dumbledore’s complete the cage.

Abraxas watched as his soon to be daughter-in-law emerged from the hedges, wielding her wand with decisive movements, joining in the fray. How did Hermione know this shit? Thought Abraxas in amazement. It had taken him nearly his entire life to be as skilled as he was and she was quickly surpassing him and everyone else around her.

With Hermione’s considerable added power, the cage was rapidly completed, holding the most feared wizard the world had ever seen.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione collapsed on the ground where she stood. A black smoke chain visibly connecting the young witch to the angry imprisoned wizard. He laughed with maniacal abandon as the men around her rushed into action.

Lucius picked her up and apparated back to the Manor, dissolving the smoke tether. He laid her out in the sitting room, yelling for his mother over his shoulder. She was one of the best medi-witches of her time.

“Lucius, whatever is the matter?” She bustled in the room.

“Hermione has a dark curse on her. Fix her mother. I can’t lose her.”

“I’ll do my best. Milly!” She called

A house elf popped in next to her mistress.

“Mistress called?”

“Take Hermione to the Golden room and bathe her. I will be right up.”

“Yes, Mistress.” She bowed low before walking to the young girl and gently clasping her hand and with a crack was gone.

“Mother, what should I do?” Asked Lucius brokenly.

“Floo, Othello. Tell him I am summoning him to the manor and to bring his team.”

He nodded as she left the room with the same urgency that she had come.
Hermione was moaning incoherently obviously hallucinating, talking about people who were not yet born. Lucius sat by her bedside caressing her hand with his fingers talking quietly to calm her down.

She had been in this state for two weeks without any change, the healers coming and going as they thought of new ideas or tried a new counter curse.

It had taken Orion two days to be cured without any lasting effects. The healers had said if he was in that curse for even one moment longer he would have been driven to insanity.

He had wanted to move Hermione home but the rest of the group staunchly opposed it. She couldn’t be moved. And so they took it in shifts to sit with her and talk to her, hoping that would bring her out of her delirium. Those that were not sitting with her were in their respective family libraries searching for a way to take off the blasted ribbon, that the healers had identified as the catalyst.

Avery was all for murdering Voldemort in the hopes that the magic would dissipate if he was no longer alive. But he was over ruled by one of the Dumbledore’s who stated that killing him could have terrible and far reaching consequences. The Dumbledore’s had been walking around as if their world had collapsed. The others had no idea he cared about Hermione so much, even though he was the one that sent her to the past to begin with.

It was nearly time to change shifts again. Theo walked into the Golden room a little early, intending on updating Lucius on their lack of progress. He had walked around the room to where Hermione’s things were set out and started touching them as if they would give him the answer he so desperately sought.

At that moment, a flurry of healers flooded in followed by a whole contingent of people waiting for her to wake. Apparently, they had found something they wanted to try. Theo stood watching them, not yet daring to hope that this time something would work.

After an hour of hopeful faces falling into disappointed looks, Theo turned back to his lazy perusal. He picked up the small purple velvet bag and curiously opened it peering inside. He was astounded to see the Time Turner innocently lying at the bottom. Reaching in to grab it, he drew his hand back with a loud expletive bringing the offending appendage to his mouth.

“What happened, Mr. Nott?” Asked 1971 Dumbledore who was peering at the bag in recognition.

“I stuck my hand in the bag to get a better look at the Time Turner on the bottom when it shocked me.”

“The time turner?” Dumbledore asked losing interest.

“No, the bag.”

Both Dumbledore’s heads snapped up.

“Hand me that bag.”

He put the bag in the Headmasters hand as the older man reached in the bag drawing his hand back out with a hiss of pain. He waved his wand over the top.

“Astonishing. Orion, would you pull out the Time Turner for us?”
Orion gingerly reached in the bag fearing the zap that the others felt, however he met no resistance and grasped the Time Turner sitting innocently at the bottom and drew it out of the bag slowly.

Leaving the Time Turner dangling from Orion’s fingers, Dumbledore grasped the bag by the bottom and while holding it open he gently grasped the silk ribbon with the inside of the bag. With a delicate tug, the ribbon turned grey and began crumbling from around her neck. And for the first time in two weeks, Hermione fell into a deep healing sleep.

**HGHGHG**

“An innovative spell that Sirius must have created was cast on the bag. He must not have trusted us to see to her safety. Only a person of the Black bloodline who had only the best of intentions for Hermione could safely put their hand in it. Those conditions would also enable that person to touch anything that has ever been in it. I once tried to examine the Time Turner when she first arrived and was unable to touch it, I thought it had to do with my own time traveling but now I see that isn’t so.” Explained Future Dumbledore.

“Sirius did this?”

“Oh yes, I recognize his magical signature.”

“It must have been really difficult for him to send her back.”

“I believe it was difficult for her entire family and friends network, the ones that knew anyway. She was much beloved in her original timeline.” Future Dumbledore added.

“We are lucky that he was so concerned. Without that bag, Hermione would have died.” Avery stated. “And soon.”

**HGHGHG**

Hermione was up two days after the ribbon was destroyed and after a week of being coddled by everyone, she was utterly frustrated. She was fine enough to get out of that room. Damn it! Lucius had been trying to convince her to go back to the room and even once opting to throw her over his shoulder. His mother caught him and commanded he not man handle his future bride. Reluctantly he placed her feet back on the ground. She walked into the sitting room looking for the book she had laid down earlier that day. She wanted to finish reading it. He erected wards over the room as he intended to confront her about her shoddy listening skills. ‘Why couldn’t the woman just do as he said?’ He thought.

“Lucius, I am fine!” Snapped Hermione as she got onto her knees looking under the divan.

“I thought I had lost you!” Yelled Lucius as he followed her around the room, trying and failing once more to get her to rest.

Hermione glanced at him with concern and understanding.

“Losing you would have destroyed me. I am not going to just go off prancing into the sunset marrying some poor girl as I go! I cannot live my life without you. You are it for me.” He thundered.

“Yes it might have taken you time, but Lucius you are strong. You would have moved on.” She was trying to placate him as she moved over to one of the tables still searching for that book.

“You are not hearing me. Or Theo. Or Avery. We would have died!” He chucked a priceless Ming
vase at the door. Chest heaving with emotion.

Hermione walked towards him and put a hand upon his chest abandoning her search as he stared at the door over her shoulder. Refusing to even look at her.

“I survived. I’m right here.” She murmured comfortingly, trying to soothe him out of his rage.

“It so easily could have turned out the other way, Hermione.”

He turned his hard, angry eyes on her and grabbed her arms, pushing her against the door the shattered vase crunching at their feet.

“I don’t think you realize what you mean to me then if you are so bound and determined to dismiss my worry.”

“I do not dismiss your concerns, Lucius. What would you have me do? Live in a protective bubble for the rest of my life.”

“Yes!”

“You are being completely unreasonable.” She shouted trying to get out of his grasp.

His lips claimed hers in furious panic, not to hurt her per se but because his adrenaline was still high with fear. He tore her robes off in a frenzied haste and she helped him as best she could with so little room between them. After her robes landed on the floor, Lucius requisitioned her lips again forcing them apart. His hands reached between them and ripped the tiny yellow thong off with little to no effort and lifted her up as she wrapped her legs around his hips. She undid as many of his buttons as she could, feeling the same frantic need that Lucius was feeling.

Lucius was overflowing with anxious energy. Having nearly lost her had made all of her objections to this plural marriage untenable. The three of them had decided that no matter what it took, they would win her heart and tie her to them with marriage. She was too important to lose.

Fumbling for his pocket he finally found his wand, not having the time or inclination to separate and undress. And with a muttered charm they were both naked in each other’s arms. Taking her bottom lip in between his teeth and giving her a little nip, he adjusted her body slightly and let gravity pull her down on top of his cock. He stilled for the moment in euphoria as her wet quim surrounded him. She was ready for this, for him.

He was incredible as he was focused and tensed drawing out of her and slamming back into her making her moan and rock against the wall.

“You will never fucking leave me! Promise me!”

“I promise.” She was breathless.

“Fucking right you won’t!” He growled as he shifted his balance and carried her over to the settee still deep inside her and laid her down letting his hands roam her body making sure she was with him, still all in one piece. Again, he commenced his almost brutal pace, muttering incoherently.

His hand roved down her body to her sensitive clit and rubbed until she came around him, squeezing his cock, nearly to the point of pain. He didn’t stop rubbing her even as she tried to push his fingers away from her over sensitive nub.

“Oh God, Oh God. Lucius, I can’t.”
“Yes you can, Pet. Once more for me.”

She was sobbing in ecstasy, completely at Lucius’ mercy. Every time he pounded into her it moved her up the settee a little bit more.

“That’s right, Pet. Come for me. Look at me!” Her silver eyes flicked up to meet his intense blue ones as she came undone around him once more. He had never seen anything so glorious as the way she looked in that moment and with a load roar, he came, shooting spurts of his seed into her, coating her walls as they squeezed him. They laid there for a few minutes before Lucius cleaned them up. Dressing in silence after shaking out Hermione’s robes, Ming vase wouldn’t be a good look on her.

As she turned to leave him, he grabbed her arm and pulled her into a tight embrace his chin resting on the top of her head.

“Stay.”

“I wasn’t going to leave. I was just going to open the door for Theo and Avery who are standing listening on the other side of the door. They broke the silencing ward as you were fucking me against the door. I believe they enjoyed what they heard.” She said with a naughty smirk.

With the flick of his wand the door unlocked and opened, showing not only her two other suitors but her father too. Orion was the only one smiling and that was the most terrifying site Hermione had ever seen. And that includes the time that she was trapped with Voldemort.

“Hello, so glad you could join us, Lucius. I have decided to hold the wedding next Saturday at one. Any man who has touched my daughter and does not show up, will be in forfeit of his life. I will personally see the three of you to the alter to wait for your bride. Do you understand me?”

“Yes, Sir.” All three men said fighting huge smiles. It was exactly where they wanted to be but felt they were already on rocky ground with the powerful Paterfamilias. “Consider yourselves officially engaged.”

“Do I not get a say in this?” Asked Hermione exasperated.

“You break my heart, Darling. I didn’t want to know you did anything with boys other than hex them.” He looked at her slyly as she blushed with mortification.

“Maybe everyone should hear what I have to say first. Call the Lord’s Malfoy and Nott. I have a feeling this will turn out pretty nasty. Take a seat.” Hermione gestured still bright red, at the settee that Hermione and Lucius had just christened.
Hermione stared utterly annoyed at the twinkling Dumbledore of her time. Who invited those meddling wizards anyway? Don’t they have a school to run? Hermione thought petulantly.

Perhaps, Hermione wouldn’t have been so bent out of shape but SHE called that meeting and it had been completely hijacked! Once all the pertinent people arrived she intended to address several important things. However, once they got on the subject of Hogwarts, everyone had an opinion on what should happen.

The facts had been a good place to start. It was the end of January for which Hermione had been unconscious through. Avery, Malfoy, and Nott had been doing their assignments and sending them in via floo or with the Headmaster, stating that they refused to go back when they were supposed to and couldn’t leave her while she was so sick and maybe dying.

With that in mind, it was determined that the four of them would return to Hogwarts the very next day, despite the surprising objections from Hermione. If they would just listen to the rest of what she had to say, they would understand why she would need at least a week more. She sighed in exasperation. The men in her life were very high handed. She bet they would rather hunt for the Horcruxes without her, ensconcing her safely at Hogwarts.

Hermione glared at the Headmaster; as both forms, present and future, avoided her gaze. That made her hypothesis even more likely.

“Fine. We will go back to Hogwarts tomorrow. Moving on.” She acquiesced, knowing she wouldn’t win against all of them. “Doesn’t it strike any of you odd that Voldemort was captured so easily?”

They looked at her incredulously. His capture had not been easy. Dumbledore lost all twinkle, he looked grim.

“I suspected when he came to confront us about his wards.” He said

“He left for an hour after Orion apparated with my beaded bag and that is more than enough time to create another. I can only speculate what receptacle he used for it. There is no way he got his slimy hands on the Sword of Gryffindor. How long do we have before he breaks out of his imprisonment?”

It was like the rest of them weren’t even there. They watched the conversation between Hermione and Future Dumbledore as if it were a tennis match.

“Six months. Less if he has help.”
The men all looked horrified. They thought it was over. Hermione looked determined.

“Six months? We need to reset the wards then!” Said Abraxas.

“That is not an option. The magical cage will hold him but he is powerful and resourceful, even if it will limit his magic. He will not leave the cage alive.”

“Dead is good.” Avery cracked his knuckles.

“Except he made another Horcrux the day I was captured.”

“Fuck.”

“Exactly. Like I said, this time I don’t know what it is.” Hermione explained.

“We will search for it. So now it’s a bit more complicated.” Orion crossed his leg over his knee nonchalantly.

“A bit more complicated?!” Abraxas sneered.

“Are we not resourceful and powerful Abraxas? Are you telling me you cannot handle one wizard?”

“You don’t know him like I do! I went to Hogwarts with him.”

“And yet you turned from your master.” Orion sneered.

“You know nothing of my motivations.”

“If I didn’t know better, I would say you are still a faithful lapdog.”

“I handed you the fucking cup. What more do you need from me to prove my allegiance has changed?”

“Abraxas, as much as you helped with the cup I am inclined to believe your connection is unbroken to him.” Hermione looked him dead in the eye. “Once you are in, you are in. Just as Theo, Lucius, and Cadeus are bound to me, you are just as bound to him. Your tattoo happens to be a bond that is designed to force you into a servitude and our bond is made out of something much more wholesome, more like a marriage. I cannot help but compare them. We are irrevocably changed and tied for life as you are to Voldemort. But I also know you are a master Occlumens and I happen know that it is possible to turn spy against Voldemort. In my time, there was a man who walked the line of double agent for nearly twenty years at great personal cost, I am sure.” Future Dumbledore looked like he was going to burst out in jubilant laughter and happiness, sending Hermione waves of profound satisfaction.

“I’ve heard that you went and retrieved young Mr. Snape to entertain your younger brother over the holiday.” He said happily.

“Yes, well, the amount of times he saved my life and the lives of my friends really can’t be counted. I owe him a life debt.” She sniffed haughtily. There was an uncomfortable silence for a few minutes as Lucius looked as if he figured out a piece of the puzzle that was Hermione Black. “You did him a great wrong, Professor, and I hope you plan to make it up to him in this new timeline.”

“I most definitely will, Miss Black. Lemon drop? Anyone?”
“No.” Hermione said on everyone’s behalf.

“Are you sure?”

“Oh yes, I’m pretty sure that they are doused in Veritaserum.”

The men looked scandalized while Dumbledore continued his obnoxious twinkling with his trademark enigmatic smile as Hermione looked at him unimpressed.

“Before we move any further, Hermione, you will floo home next Friday night to be married on Saturday. When the four of you return, you will respect every rule Hogwarts has in place for student conduct when you floo back Sunday night. Regardless of your marital state. I would hate to pull Hermione out before her N.E.W.T.s for a pregnancy. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir” Rang out from the three young men on the Settee.

“I hope that whatever shenanigans you four have been up to have been safe in that regard?” He eyeballed the three men.

Hermione chuckled at her wizard’s faces that turned a putrid shade of green in fear.

“I am on the modified contraception potion and it is active for six months. I made and took my last dose November first. Since the modified version hasn’t been published yet, I will continue to make it in secret.” Hermione’s face was beet red at this point. What girl wanted to talk about their sex life with not only the man who considered her a daughter but also in front of her future father-in-law. How humiliating.

“Very well.” Said Orion.

“Okay, on to the next bit of business.” Hermione timidly said. They looked at her curiously. Why would Hermione be frightened? She took a deep breath and she stared at a spot on the floor, a speck of Ming vase no doubt.

“I was a Muggleborn who was adopted using an archaic blood adoption by Sirius who was thirty-nine and Hannah Abbott who was my age. They were not married, nor planned to be. It was purely for my protection in this time.” She wouldn’t meet their eyes. Not that she was ashamed of her parents, but the sheer weight of the lie until now felt like it was burning her world to the ground. She seemed to collapse into herself waiting for insults to be thrown her way. She looked up into the serious gaze of future Dumbledore, hoping for an ally and finding none. It was obvious he didn’t want her to tell. “I believe I was the one chosen to go back because I was on the front lines of the war and was very powerful in my own right. I technically didn’t have any parents when Sirius adopted me. I obliviated my muggle parents to keep them safe from Voldemort at the end of sixth year.”

“How in hell do you know Grimmauld Place so well then?” Orion inquired. That was not the question she was expecting, also he didn’t seem angry, just confused.

“Harry Potter will become Sirius’ God son and he is my very best friend. We spent many summers and holidays being protected in that house by the incredible wards. I’m positive though that Harry and I have much better memories of it then Sirius did.”

“You, knowing so well what we are, chose our family?”

“Well maybe I should take some credit, Orion. After all I set the whole thing up as a last resort.” Dumbledore chimed in, now that the danger of being blasted out of the room has passed.
“Of course. I should have known.” Orion sneered.

“I understand If all of you are angry but I will not apologize for doing what I needed to!” Said Hermione defiantly.

“The thing is, Kitten, it doesn’t matter to me. If you didn’t pass the blood test, I doubt Orion would have publicly recognized you. In every sense of the word you are a Black but like I said, it doesn’t matter. I’m still yours.” Avery chimed in. The shoulder shrugs and nods from Lucius and Theo made in agreement made her eyes water. How did she get so lucky?

“You will always be my daughter, even if I will be punishing you for that deception. Although, it just makes you more of a Black and to be honest, how could anyone ever prove you are not who I say you are? Even the Goblin’s recognize you. It was one of the first things I checked, you see, I was quite thorough.” Said Orion.

“So you weren’t really living in a tent with two best friends? You lived in muggle England?” asked Lucius remembering what she told him at the ball.

“Oh no, that part was completely true. Harry Potter, Ron Weasley, and I lived in a tent for months while on the run hunting Horcruxes while the Order fought on the front lines against his Death Eaters. We destroyed Horcruxes, all except two. He found out we were hunting them and took the Diadem before we could get back to where it was hidden. Then of course there was Nagini, his snake that he kept with him at all times.”

“The Order?” Asked Abraxas.

“The Order of the Phoenix is an organization I created to fight against Voldemort and his followers.” Twinkled Future Dumbledore.

“Right, of course, Dumbledore’s far reaching hand. I should have known.” Ranted Abraxas.

“Ron Weasley? Is he from the same Weasley family you insist upon seeing this summer?” asked Orion.

“The very same. They were like my wizarding parents. I spent many summers and holidays with them too.”

“Is there anything else we should know?”

“I was tortured in Malfoy Manor’s Drawing room by Bellatrix Black Lestrange. But it doesn’t look anything like it will or has.”

“How long was your torture?” Asked Dumbledore in concern.

“An hour, maybe more, maybe less. I’m not sure as one ‘crucio’ ran into another. It was how we found out that the cup was in the Lestrange vault.”

“How did you get to the cup if it was in Gringotts?”

“We broke in and then rode a angry, blind dragon out. It was terrifying.”

“Three teenagers broke into Gringotts?” Abraxas was shocked.

“And rode on a dragon to escape?” Theo questioned with a huge smile on his face.

“Yes and with a sneaky Goblin. Always be careful when you enter into a deal with one of those
buggers. Especially when it concerns a Goblin made artifact.”

They were all shaking their heads in mystification. Breaking into Gringotts was supposed to be impossible. This girl was incredible. The Dumbledore’s however were twinkling obnoxiously, as if his favorite pet had just won first place at a show. He knew she didn’t realize it but she had just solidified her position with these men. They now thought that such power was better off in use to a family and everyone in this room barring himself would one day be a part of her family. There was the small matter that Orion might come after him, that letter that Dumbledore sent to him was now promulgated to be full of lies. He had better watch his back for a while. As proven by the heavy glare sent from the man himself.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione was resting in her bed in the Slytherin dorm for the night thinking of the events that took place earlier that day. Kreacher had packed her trunk and brought it to Malfoy Manor so that she could floo to Hogwarts with her wizards.

After hearing her real birth status, the older men in the room decided that it was not true and never happened. These men were accustomed to making their own realities as it suited them. They were completely ridiculous. She shook her head while smiling. To be honest she was relieved to have told them. She hated lying, especially to those she loved.

Thankfully they missed dinner at the castle opting instead to have one more quiet dinner at Malfoy Manor and arrived afterwards, so she only had to deal with her house mates. They were happy to see her and were genuinely relieved she felt better. She was just a kind person to everyone and because of that everyone worried about her. Some of her dorm mates were even approached by the other houses to ask after her wellbeing and Narcissa being her cousin, received the full brunt of it. She however only knew what news her mother sent to her and that was not much.

Hermione happily settled into her bed and pulled out the book Dumbledore gave her in the room of requirement. It was incredibly useful and full of archaic magic that was no longer taught for various reasons or believed to be lost. She opened it up half way to the place where she marked and started on the next chapter.

Love spells

Of all the spells created some of the most powerful spells are love spells. Not manufactured love like Amortentia, but using the power of a love one already has for another to fuel spells. One of the most well-known of these, is a protection spell that uses the sacrifice of life from the one in love to protect the life of the recipient. There is no known spell to counteract the protection spell once it has been cast.

Another such example is the imbue spell. Using your love of a specific person to imbue an object with excess magical energy sacrificing their own magic. It is possible to retain enough to do simple spells, these types of sacrifices are generally used for objects like the resurrection stone or boosting the power of an already magical object like the invisibility cloak.

Hermione slammed the book shut and jumped out of bed.

“Oh my God.” Hermione didn’t even bother to put on shoes when she ran out of the Slytherin dorms and through the corridors headed to the Headmaster’s office. She blew by several teachers and prefects making their rounds, offering no explanations or apologies.

When she got to the Headmaster’s office followed closely by Professor McGonagall, she yelled the
password, ‘Cauldron Cakes’ before shooting up the stairs.

“Dumbledore’s get out here! I found something!”

“Miss Black! How dare you! A student’s complete disregard for the school rules.”

“Thank you Minerva, I will take care of this.” Professor Dumbledore said as he left his chambers in a bright blue dressing gown tied over purple pajamas.

“Yes Headmaster.” The disgruntled Transfiguration Professor said grudgingly, not happy to be dismissed.

They waited until the Deputy Headmistress had passed beyond the Griffin door before addressing the obviously sensitive reason Hermione had for barging into his office in the middle of the night.

Hermione thrust the book under Future Dumbledore’s nose the second he left the private quarters of the Headmaster.

“Yes my dear, I’ve read this.” Dumbledore said frowning.

“Yes but look at the part about imbuing an object. Why couldn’t you use this method to fuel the Time Turner and go back? If you want to see your sister badly enough would the price be worth it?”

“It would only fuel it one way and It would take all but a little of my magic. But you could return. You have three powerful anchors; you could bring her forward.”

“What? Bring her forward? Are you mad?”

“I am an old man, what use have I for powerful magic. If I could have her back, it would be worth it.”

“You could just make the trip back and stay there.”

“I already have an anchor, and he died in this time. I cannot use this method to go back.”

“You would use me?”

“You are the only one in the whole world with the ability.”

“It would leave us vulnerable to Voldemort if you used your magic to fuel it right now.”

“I would wait until you were bound to your mates.”

“How kind.” She said sarcastically.

“I would do anything, I would owe you the greatest debt, Hermione Granger.”

Her eyes teared up. She had not been called by her birth name in months. It brought so much back. She narrowed her eyes. That sneaky bastard! Using her emotions to manipulate her but when she looked into the sad tired eyes of an old man desperate for absolution her anger crumbled.

She would not say no to him.

“I cannot believe I am agreeing to this. First off, I do not promise anything! I will try to change circumstances but I will not promise to bring her forward. I will do what I can.”
His eyes lit up as if Christmas came twice that year.

“Monday morning before breakfast bring your husbands here, and we will do it then.”

“What about Voldemort?”

“I have the utmost confidence in Orion Black.”

“Dear God.” She exclaimed rolling her eyes heavenward. Maybe she should become a praying woman.

“Until Monday, Hermione.”

“Very well, Professor. But I think Orion should be here on Monday morning. I just have a feeling about it.”

“Very well, Call me Albus.”

“Okay, Albus. Monday morning it is.”

**HGHGHG**

The next morning during breakfast an owl landed in front of her carrying a tightly rolled scroll. Not recognizing the owl, she unfurled the parchment in befuddlement.

*Miss Black,*

For the punishment of being a student out of bed after curfew and running haphazardly through the halls ignoring authority figures, you receive a detention tomorrow night at 8pm with Professor Slughorn.

*Next time, avoid witnesses.*

*Albus Dumbledore*

‘Avoid witnesses? Unbelievable!’ She thought shaking her head. No wonder the Marauders were able to get away with so much.

“What is this? We haven’t even been back for a whole day and you have detention. When did you get this?” Nagged Theo.

“Last night I was reading and I found something that I thought Professor Dumbledore would find enlightening. So, I made it known to him and I will tell you about it later. In private. The room of requirement at 7pm.” She raised her brow at the three wizards as they nodded their heads in affirmation.

**HGHGHG**

She was pacing the length of the room of requirement as the three seated wizards watched. She knew that she was rightly worried about their reactions to her revelation. She was so lost in thought she didn’t see Avery leave the couch and slide his arms around her waist pulling her back to his chest.

“You’re killing me, Kitten.” He whispered to her.

“None of you are going to like this.” She whispered back. He frowned into her hair and pulled her
back until she was seated on his lap in between Theo and Lucius.

“Take a deep breath, Honey.” Said Theo encouragingly.

“I have to go to the past but with you three as anchors, I should be able to come back no problem.”

“Should?!” Lucius asked incredulously as Hermione winced. She placed her hands on his chest rubbing tiny circles in a soothing manor.

“When do you have to go?” questioned Avery.

“Well, I have to wait until we are married and completely bound. It will pull me back to this time.” Theo put his hand on her thigh inching up slightly under her skirt. The thought that he might touch her intimately right here, right now, in front of the others turned her on like nothing had before. She could feel her nipples harden. Avery must have noticed her indrawn breath because his hand was inching up her other thigh.

“We will just have to bring you back. No matter what. Won’t we Kitten.” Said Avery. As he lowered his mouth to her neck. She closed her eyes in rapture and leaned her head back on his shoulder.

Lucius inclined his head towards hers and captured her lips, running his tongue over them in a bid to open them and let him explore her. He deepened the kiss, plunging his tongue into her mouth, tasting her, dominating her. She could feel him unbuttoning her robes and button up beneath, his fingers running over her tender exposed flesh.

He released her mouth with a pop only to lean down and take her nipple into his mouth, using his tongue to soothe her aching breasts. As she moaned, Theo grasped her chin turning her face so that he could devour her lips, fingers now tracing her knickers. His tongue just as skilled as Lucius’ sending her into a sea of sensation.

Avery in the meanwhile had pushed her knickers aside and thrust in first one finger then another into her wet cunt, using his fingers to stretch her enough to comfortably take him. His fingers worked faster and faster. Between the three of them, they were torturing her body with unimaginable sensation.

“You are so wet, Kitten.” He murmured onto her skin making her groan into Theo’s mouth. Avery took his hands off her long enough to unbutton his trousers and with Theo’s help, lifted Hermione high enough to slide them down, freeing his massive erection. She now sat with her back flush to Avery’s chest with her legs spread, draped over the outside of his open knees with Lucius on the floor between them still suckling and rolling her nipples. As Theo sat on the divan, his questing fingers found her clit and began to rub while he kissed her. She took a quick indrawn breath in between kisses as she felt an intense orgasm begin to build in her. Avery put his hands on her waist, lifting her up enough to place her over his cock. He slid her down on him slowly, reveling in the feel of her. She moaned again as she was fully seated while being held in place by Avery’s large masculine hands. He lifted her back up enjoying the friction that caused him to groan as she tightened around his cock, sucking him in further to her body that reluctantly let him go as he lifted her again. He began to move her faster, as she convulsed around his dick while Theo’s fingers sent her into a mind-blowing orgasm.

Her wizards were fucking talented, she thought. Avery brought her down on his cock hard before coming into her as the euphoric feelings erupted with in him. His forehead rested against the back of her shoulder as he caught his breath.
“You are so fucking hot, Hermione.” Avery said. Every man in that room silently agreed.

“Isn’t it time for your detention, Honey?” Theo asked innocently, smiling at her sleepy face. Bringing his fingers to his mouth to suck of the sweet taste of her come.

“Ung.” She groaned, spent as the three men smirked at her.

“Then we better let you go, Pet.” Lucius released her nipples with a light pop. Leaving them red and pebbled. She gave the three of them sweet kisses before fixing her uniform and casting a ‘scorgify’ on her lady bits. With a wave and a dazed expression, she left the room of requirement and headed to the dungeons for her detention, not realizing her knickers were now in Theo’s pocket.

As she arrived to the Potions classroom she noticed Professor Slughorn grading papers behind his desk. He lifted his head long enough to give her a fatherly ‘It could happen to anyone but don’t make it a habit’ look.

“Welcome, Miss Black. This is the first and hopefully last detention you find yourself in.”

“Yes, Sir.” She muttered.

“Tonight you can prepare and store these ingredients. When you are finished, you may leave.”

“Yes, Professor.” She said dutifully.

**HGHGHGHG**

Avery, Lucius, and Theo stayed in the room of requirement after Hermione left. Theo felt that they shouldn’t directly stop their witch from going but wanted to make something happen that would prevent her.

Avery felt they should let her make that decision, which left Lucius as the tie breaker. On one hand, he was super protective of his witch and on the other, she was more than capable to get things done. If she felt like she needed to go, he would move mountains to bring her back. He decided to fully trust in the Threads of Fate that bound them and hope for the best.

“What will we do if we can’t bring her back?” Demanded Theo.

“Why wouldn’t we be able to? Even Dumbledore said we would be able to.” Avery cajoled.

“Haven’t you figured it out by now? Dumbledore LIES!”

“I believe him in this. Hermione has a healthy dose of skepticism when it comes to the Headmaster. She wouldn’t risk all four of our lives for no reason.”

“I have a feeling that she needs to do this. I think we should support her.” Lucius chimed in. Theo glared at him, having been sure Lucius would take his side.

“I don’t like it but I see I am outnumbered, so I will keep my mouth shut, for now.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Friday came faster than Hermione could have imagined. She floated through the day knowing what tomorrow would be for her. Despite that morning being woken up by an excited Narcissa chattering at a thousand miles an hour, in her hand was an invitation to Hermione’s wedding that was to be held at Black Castle on Saturday.
Finally, it was time for her to floo home and Sirius met her in the Headmaster’s office with a huge smile.

“James and Remus got invitations to go a well! This is going to be awesome!”

“I am glad you approve.”

“I just want to know how you did it.”

“Did what?”

“Got my friends invited.”

“I have my ways.”

“I swear you are scarier than anyone I have ever met.”

“And don’t you forget it!” She mussed his hair with a wide smile and a chuckle.

They went through the floo landing at the library at Grimmauld Place as Orion sat in his chair looking at them over the top of his book.

“Excellent! Right on time. If you both will follow me.” Orion said setting his book aside and leading them out through the front door, taking their hands and side along apparating with them.

Hermione felt the familiar squeezing sensation before they landed on the extensive grounds of Black Castle. Hermione stood in shock. She knew this castle. Most muggles knew this castle. Orion had apparated them to Belvoir Castle.

“Did you not know that we also held the title of Duke of ---- in the muggle world?”

She shook her head silently in amazement.

“Well, now you know.”

She nodded. What more was there to say?
Chapter 12

Chapter Twelve

Hermione was surrounded by the women of the Black clan, being pampered and prepared by the team of beauticians who had been hired for the weekend for the wedding party. Apparently, this wedding would be the social event of the year and every Black in the country planned on capitalizing on being family of the bride, regardless of the fact most of them have never even met her.

There was an assortment of different types of personalities that constantly had Hermione on edge. The elderly family friends, many of whom had daughters or granddaughters of marriageable age who were wearing black crepe and weeping hysterically, boo-hooing their congratulations. There were the second cousins who were bound and determined to be her very best friends and anticipated leaving with their weight in swag. The third cousin twice removed otherwise known as Muriel who hated her at first sight and had sent sly stinging hexes to her ankles, telling all and sundry that her ankles were too skinny anyway. And on top of that she had to deal with Great Aunt Calidora who was convinced Hermione had the young wizards under the Imperius curse and recommended several love potions that were allegedly much more reliable for long term use.

Then there was Bellatrix, a nasty piece of work in any timeline, who made it her special mission to ruin Hermione’s day. She had been desperately trying to tie down one of the Lestrange men and out of bitter fury of not being the bride that day, had chosen to take it all out on her lucky cousin who without any effort or planning ended up affianced to three heirs of their respective families. Narcissa was a good friend to her, protecting her from her deranged sister when Hermione was otherwise occupied, and called Hermione to the private room where she was to get ready to walk down the aisle.

At noon, the team was putting the finishing touches on her hair and make-up when Hermione finally rejoined the room full of female relatives, who were getting ready themselves. A hush fell over the collective as Hermione positively glowed with youth and happiness, dazzling everyone as she stood in her bridal gown. It was a strapless light pink sheath with a mermaid flair overlaid with long sleeve ivory lace. Her dark chocolate curls were pinned up into a classy curled coiffure with a diamond and garnet circlet that every Black bride had worn for the last thousand years. It was imbued with several charms for fidelity, fertility, compatibility, and compassion, she was told in no uncertain terms that once it was settled on her head that it could not and would not be taken off for seven days and could only be removed by her husband’s fathers in acknowledgment of the successful union.

It was all rather antiquated but she good naturedly put up with it all, after all, it wasn’t like she could have the wedding of her dreams. For that she would have to have the Granger’s there, and they wouldn’t get married for another three years. She embraced her odd new family and worked to make them kinder and more temperate, which was proving more difficult by the moment as
Mortimer Bones was yelling about those hooligans who wouldn’t leave an old man in peace. By hooligans he meant Sirius and James, naturally, who were seen hiding under the seats scaring anyone who dared sit in the unclaimed spots.

She waited in an ante chamber off of the ballroom they were using for the bindings for fifteen minutes before Orion and Walburga came in and shooed all of family that was waiting with her to find their seats. Walburga twittered around, patting Hermione in various places while Orion took her hands in his.

“They are waiting for you, Dearest. Are you ready?”

“As ready as I will ever be I suppose.” She said breathlessly.

Walburga left without saying a word still looking glazed and confused, as she would until September first after Reg is safely on the train to Hogwarts. Orion tucked Hermione’s arm into his as Walburga walked out of the room ahead of them, making her way to her seat. Orion leaned down to kiss her cheek. Once they were alone he turned Hermione to face him still holding her close.

“You know Dearest, I quite think of you as my own as if I got to hold you in my arms after you were born, and even though I’ve only had the pleasure of your company for six months I have grown very fond of you, no matter your beginnings. You may not believe it but you have opened my eyes to what a better world would look like. Don’t count on a huge epiphany with change for the world, but I have come to regard family as something to be protected and cherished opposed to duty and burden. For that I am eternally grateful. You are the daughter I never realized I wanted.”

Hermione’s eyes were threatening to leak as she took Orion’s offered handkerchief to dab at them before all of the hard work of the beauticians went out the window.

“I was really worried coming back in time and having you as my father. Sirius’ home life was not something that I had ever wanted to experience and relive, but for him and everyone else I sacrificed my original timeline. I had been under the impression I would be abused, verbally and maybe emotionally. I really had no idea the depths of Walburga’s depravity to her own children, and without me, that treatment would have continued because you wouldn’t have cared enough to pay attention to your family. When I came home to talk to you both about the emotional blackmail she was sending to Sirius and you took my side, I was happy. I was so happy that if I could change nothing else, I changed their lives. You surprised me the most though. You made me feel like a cherished daughter who you were proud of. It reminded me of my birth father, who never treated me with anything other than being one of the most important people in his life. Thank you for being a good father to me in this timeline.”

Now it was Orion’s turn to wipe away the damn piece of dirt that got in his eye. He pulled her in to a tender hug while fighting tears staring at the ceiling as Hermione’s head rested on his chest, right above his heart.

With a great tremulous breath, he pushed Hermione arm’s length away and gave a quick inspection to make sure their moment left no lasting effects. Taking her hand in his and threading it through his arm, he turned to the door as they opened and led her through to the ballroom doors. For the moment before the last doors separating her from her husbands to be opened, Orion leaned over and whispered in her ear.

“If you ever need me to protect you from your husbands, I would be delighted to assist. I am sure their bodies would never be found.”
“And even if they were, it wouldn’t connect back to you, right?” She said rolling her eyes. He was exactly like a mob boss.

“You are more a Black than you realize, Dearest.” He chuckled giving a nod to the attendants at the double doors leading into the ballroom.

The occupants of the room held a collective breath and stood as the stunning bride made her way into the room and down the aisle. It was that very moment that her three wizards turned from the officiator to see their wife to be. Hermione would forever remember the way they looked at her for the first time that day.

Lucius stood tall in the middle position of the semi-circle with an awed gaze that burned fiercely with passion as he wore the black dress robes tailored to hug his body. It made her heart squeeze and thump erratically. Theo, with eyes darkened with desire and pride stood to Lucius’ right wearing identical black robes, though thinner and wiry, he wore them well, defining every plane of his body. Avery was standing to Lucius’ left and his black dress robes seemed to stretch across the broad pectoral muscles she knew were well developed. His gaze trapped her, holding her hostage as his strong feelings washed over her wave after wave. She hesitated, only for a moment, as her heart’s confused pattern vacillated between pumping erratically and stopping all together.

Orion’s hand was steady as he continued leading her down the aisle while she beamed at her wizards, barely noticing the hundreds of other guests earning quiet chuckles from the more understanding of the group. The walk could have taken hours or minutes but soon enough she was standing with Orion in the center of the semi-circle facing them as the bonder and officiator stepped to her right. Orion inclined his head to his new sons-in-law and took his place among the watching family and friends.

He started the ceremony in Latin, the spell caressing the quad like an old lover, visibly binding them with ribbons of different colored lights. She wished so bad that Harry and Ron could be there to stand among her family and wish her well. And as crazy as it was that she was marrying three people who in her time became Death Eaters, it just felt right. They loved and cherished her just as much as she did them. She desperately wanted to believe that her best friends would understand that.

As the bands tightened around the wizards and their witch, the air grew warm and charged with powerful energy, the magic being fueled by the unique bond that tied the quad together. And with a detonation like a non-lethal bomb, everyone except the four were knocked backwards out of their chairs blinded by the white blast of light. When the wave of raw energy settled and the light receded there was a moment of complete silence before everyone started talking over each other excitedly. It was a well-known fact that the more powerful the magical discharge, the more powerful the union.

Hermione and her wizards were laughing and smiling through the congratulations they were receiving. Enjoying the feel of their new bond.

**HGHGHGHG**

It was nearing midnight when the four newlyweds made it to the Malfoy villa in Capri, Italy. Pieces of clothing littered the hallways, leaving a trail to the master suite.

Hermione was laughing as she was hanging upside down on Avery’s shoulder in black lace knickers and its matching bra. She smacked his well-defined arse, yelling to let her down as he laughed and pinched her supple derriere in return, making her jerk in his hands and the three men stare at her body in appreciation. She lifted her head and was rewarded with the sight of a naked
Theo’s abs and more bared flesh lower. She reached out to skim her fingers over his tattoo that had started to glow after the ceremony as all of theirs did. Theo hissed in a quick breath at the feel of her hands on his body, needing more than just a simple brush. Lucius stepped ahead to open the doors for them, not wanting anything to impede their progress. Avery tossed her onto her back on the huge bed in the center of the room. A sexy naked Lucius climbed over her kissing her already swollen lips, nipping them, sucking them, worshiping them. He unhooked her bra and slid the straps off of her shoulders and down her arms tossing the garment across the room. Avery had taken her leg and was sucking her toes. She never thought she would like someone to pay attention to her feet, but the way that Cadeus did it made her beg for more, or she would if Lucius wasn’t in possession of her lips.

Theo pushed Lucius to her side to take his place between her legs.

“I have wanted to do this since the first time I saw you like this.” Theo murmured on the skin of her hip. He kissed a trail across her belly and down to the lace of her knickers. He gently clamped them between his teeth and sliding his hands under her arse lifted her enough so they would slide off of her easily. Avery helping as they reached her ankles and his kisses ran up to the back of her knee once they were no longer in the way. Lucius guided her hand to his large erection, covering her hand with his to show her the way he liked to be touched. Firmer than she would have suspected. He gasped into her mouth as her touch inflamed him. He let her hand do the work as his hand found her breasts pinching the nipples a little harder than she was used to, though it turned her on, sending a shot of pure need straight to her core.

She was wet, and when Theo flung her knickers over his shoulder, he was back at her center licking and sucking on her sensitive clit. Avery was kissing her thigh with his fingers probing her center with Theo. They each had a finger in her, moving in tandem, driving her wild.

Avery pulled her up and flipped her over so she was on her hands and knees on the bed in front of him. Theo slid under her to continue his tongues’ onslaught on her bundle of nerves. Avery moved around to lay in front of her so that she was staring at his erection.

“Why don’t you have a taste Kitten?” he smirked at her with pupils blown wide in desire. She ran her tongue along his slit and tasted the salty stickiness that was his pre-come. She engulfed his head in her mouth as she ran her tongue around him sucking lightly. With every movement, her mouth moved further and further down his hard cock coating him in her spit. He was groaning loudly and she was humming her approval at Theo’s ministrations. Avery’s eyes rolled into the back of his head as it clunked heavily onto the headboard in ecstasy.

Lucius took Avery’s former position behind her, putting his hard cock at her ready entrance and pushed into her with a snap of his hips. He paused for only a moment for Hermione to adjust to his intrusion and began a swift hard pace. His hands were on her hips bringing her back to meet his thrusts, taking her mouth off of Avery’s dick and pushing her back down on it as he pushed her forward with his thrusts.

She shattered around him, moaning through her orgasm on Avery’s cock, taking him down her throat as she relaxed enough to do so.

“Fuck! I’m coming!” Avery said putting his hand on the back of her head, gently grabbing her hair as he came down her throat. She swallowed to avoid choking as Avery went limp beneath her.

Lucius kept up his pounding thrusts as Theo was still sucking and licking her over sensitive clit, reaching up and using his fingers to twist her nipples prolonging her exquisite pleasure. Lucius came with a roar, slowly coating her walls with his seed. He slumped over her for a moment to catch his breath as he pulled out and laid on the bed next to Avery throwing an arm over his eyes in
gratifying exhaustion.

Theo flipped her onto her back once again and took her lips between his nibbling at the swollen flesh. He ran his hands over her body stopping to tweak her nipples and to glide over her ribs and stomach. He gently grasped her hips as he rubbed his erection over her tingling flesh thrusting her hips closer to his to rub in just the right way. He grasped his cock and lined it up to her waiting quim and thrust. He sat back on his heels pulling Hermione closer and her lower body up off of the bed. Avery scooted down the bed to sit next to the two lovers and circled his fingers around her hooded nub. The faster Theo would thrust the faster Avery’s fingers moved building her once again to an orgasm. She exploded around Theo at the same time that Theo came, throwing his head back in gratification.

The four of them tiredly laid down on the huge bed and promptly fell asleep for a few hours until once again they were ready to enjoy the pleasures of their bodies once again.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione woke when the warmth next to her disappeared and she grew cold. Sitting up in bed, she noticed Theo and Lucius still sleeping deeply, snoring loudly in the quiet night. She looked around the room hoping for a clue to where Cadeus had gone. The bathroom was unoccupied; she found out as she looked there first. She turned around, brows furrowed as she caught sight of the balcony door cracked open about an inch. She reached down on the floor and put on the first thing that would cover her nudity. It just happened to be Lucius’ white oxford. She buttoned two buttons over her breasts and slipped out onto the balcony.

Avery was leaning against the railing with a tumbler of what she thought might be fire whiskey. Hermione slipped her arms around his waist and leaned her cheek on his broad muscular back.

“What’s the matter Love?” Hermione asked softly.

“I am worried about Monday. I don’t want you to go after all.”

“I feel a pull, an obligation to go. To be honest I fear that if I don’t control the method, I might get pulled back without a way back to you. At least this way I have the means to do what is necessary and should be able to come back.”

“I feel it too. It doesn’t mean I like it though.” He said running his hands over her cold arms that still encircled him.

“I love you, Cadeus.” She said for the first time.

“I love you too, Kitten. More than you could ever know.” He took his final sip of his drink and set it on the table next to them and led her back into their room, stripping as they went.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione had gone to the kitchen in the early morning trying not to wake her wizards from the deep sleep that they were enjoying. She had started to get hungry several hours before but could not wait any longer detangling her body from their longer limbs. She was making bacon sandwiches for the guys as she ate a large bowl of fruit.

Lucius walked in and placed a kiss on her shoulder. She could feel his stubble scratch against her neck making her shudder.

“Good Morning, Pet.”
“Morning, Lucius.” She mumbled.

“What would you like to do today?”

“We could tour the city or go to one of the beaches.”

“Which would you like to do first?” He inquired.

“The beach and shopping later.”

“Sounds great, Pet.”

“Here.” She said sliding a plate of bacon sandwiches toward him at the bar as Theo walked in mussed and disoriented.

“Morning.” He mumbled barely loud enough to make out. He kissed Hermione’s cheek before helping himself to a large cup of coffee and sandwich. Hermione chuckled understanding completely.

It was another fifteen minutes before a flawless Avery graced them with their presence. It was obvious that he had showered before he came down and pulled the plate of food in front of him ignoring Lucius’ glare. Sending Hermione, a wink and an air kiss. She rolled her eyes and left Lucius to tell Theo and Avery what they were doing that day, making her way up to the shower.

She was in the shower only moments before Theo joined her under the hot spray. He took the loofa out of her hands and squeezing a generous portion of soap onto it, he meticulously washed her body. When she was as clean as she would get, she grabbed a second loofa and mimicking his earlier motions, she washed him from head to toe reciprocating the gesture. It was sweet the way he tenderly touched her as if she was the most precious person in the whole world. He had a knack for making her feel appreciated. She avoided getting the top of her hair wet because the Black circlet was still in her hair as Theo shampooed his hair while bumping bodies as they showered together, laughing as they slipped around each other.

After stepping out of the shower he dried her body with one of the fluffy towels that sat waiting for them. He picked her up and smoothly sat her on the marble countertop so he could squeeze the water out of the ends of her hair for her. She stared at him while he was busy with his self-appointed task. His fingers grazing her cheek and neck in a sweet caress as his eyes flicked up to meet hers. He leaned in and pressed his lips against hers in supplication, intending to take it further. She opened her mouth in invitation as his tongue swept in tasting her, grazing her tongue. He pulled back running his thumb over her bottom lip watching the appendage as it trailed over her swollen lips as she bit down on the lip in question feeling the desire he sparked so easily in her stomach.

She ran her fingers through his hair smiling as he leaned into her touch closing his eyes for a brief moment. He helped her hop off of the counter and lead her through to the opulent bedroom. Wrapping towels around their bodies as they went.

Avery was wearing his blue swim trunks with a white shirt sitting at the table on the balcony drinking coffee and reading the Daily Prophet. Hermione dug through the suitcase that Kreacher packed for her looking for the bikini that she had bought just for this occasion. It was white with orange ribbons. She put a white wrap dress over top and grabbed her flip flops from the side of the bag. She had hidden them there not wanting anyone to find her muggle purchase until it was too late.
“Anything good in the Prophet?” She asked Avery.

“We made the front page.” He was smiling widely with a sparkle in his eye betraying exactly how happy he was to be a married man.

“Surely there has to be better or more important news than our marriage for the wizarding world.” She said incredulously.

“Perhaps, perhaps not.” Theo muttered with a shrug. Her wizards were so used to being the center of attention from the media. It was part of life for the rich and famous.

Lucius showed up ten minutes later having taken a shower in one of the other bathrooms to give Theo and Hermione some privacy. Or so they told her. She thought it was the sweetest gesture and Lucius silently vowed to never to lose at Wizards, Giants, Elves (rock, paper, scissors) again.

“Ready, Pet?” Lucius asked holding out his hand out to her. She took it lacing her fingers between his as he led her out of the door, Theo and Avery trailing behind.

**HGHGHGHG**

They had spent the day on the beach deciding they could come again at any time in the future to enjoy the sights and shopping as they only had that one day there. It was around five at night when a distraught Cassandra Trelawney stumbled onto the beach in front of the party.

Hermione grabbed her arms to steady the woman and Cassandra grabbed her forearms back.

“I keep seeing you my dear, but younger and with a green eyed, black haired boy with a scar on his head. He keeps saying the same thing over and over. ‘Hermione, May 5th, 1933. Wool’s. Do not miss it by even a day.’ At first I dismissed it, not knowing a Hermione but as my granddaughter came to visit this morning she was talking about the unusual marriage bonding ceremony between four powerful houses. Imagine my surprise when she told me your name was Hermione. I knew that even if you didn’t believe me, that I must deliver this prophecy.”

Hermione looked at her with confusion and wonderment. She knew that this woman was a celebrated seer and also she had a knack for giving real prophecies. She hated divination and believed it to be guess work and an imprecise branch of magic, giving them power by self-fulfillment. But how else would she know about Harry? And Wool’s was the orphanage that Voldemort was born at and where he grew up. The year 1933 would make him seven years old. What happened after May 5th? Why was it significant? Hermione’s mind went around in circles trying to figure out the answer.

“Thank you, Mrs. Trelawney. I appreciate all of the effort you went to let me know what you saw.”

“Of course my dear. I would love to do a reading for you someday.”

“I will think about it.”

She smiled at Hermione. “I will see you soon dears.” And with a pop she was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

Italy was a part of her life that she would never forget. She learned a lot about herself and her wizards there. What they liked, what they didn’t, what she was comfortable with and them as well. Also, the mind-blowing sex. She craved them even now, although she had been with them all day. She laid in her lonely bed in the dorms that she shared with the other girls despite being married.
She was nervous about the morning; she didn’t know what she should expect. Maybe it just wouldn’t work and that would be that. Maybe the bond would prevent her going.

Hermione fell asleep thinking about her meeting with Dumbledore and the premonition from Trelawney.
Chapter 13

Chapter Summary

Time Travel. Mission Save Arianna

Chapter Thirteen

1972: The Headmaster’s office

Hermione was nervously fidgeting while waiting for Orion to join them in the Headmaster’s office Monday morning. It was not an unusual occurrence for him to be a little tardy after all, he was a busy man but as the minutes ticked away on the clock a sense of foreboding settled into the pit of her stomach. She laced her fingers with Avery’s as she ravaged her bottom lip mercilessly with her teeth, a nervous habit she picked up as a child. Avery gave her hand a comforting squeeze and a wink making her smile but it wasn’t a comforting or relaxed smile of someone who was at ease. It was the kind of smile that one might send to a crazy aunt who forgot to pluck her mustache or a homeless person on the street, harmless but kind of constipated.

She wasn’t the only one on edge as Lucius and Theo shifted from foot to foot as the silence stretched uncomfortably on after they rejected the offer of a cup of tea from the twinkling Headmaster. Hermione had warned her husbands that Dumbledore had a bad habit of slipping potions into unsuspecting people’s cups and to politely decline any such future offers along with any treats and candies he shoved at them.

As soon as Hermione had walked into the Headmaster’s office flanked by her wizards, she had begun preparing for the journey. Her beaded bag was checked no less than fifty times, making sure she could locate any food that she would need if she were to be stuck in that time. She would never forget what it felt like to have little to no food and limited means of procuring any. In that moment, she felt like Scarlett O’Hara; She was determined that she would never go hungry again. She smiled to herself at the unlikely comparison believing that she had little in common with the fictional southern belle. Reaching in to the purple velvet bag, she drew out the Time Turner, staring at it as it dangled from her fingers. She looped the delicate chain around her neck, letting it settle between her breasts over the robes she was wearing, fingering it nervously, almost compulsively. She was drawn to it and could feel the magic swirling around her with tendrils softly trailing her body as if it were saying hello to an old friend.

She recognized the pull, the desire emanating from the residual magic, dark seductive magic twining with pure light magic in a primordial dance for dominance. She wasn’t drawn to it in the way that one would assume. Power and influence had little to do with it, consequentially it was her thirst for knowledge that ultimately secured her interest. That and it was a one of a kind Time Turner. She shifted her attention to the white-haired wizard in front of her.

“Sir, the seer, Cassandra Trelawney found me in Capri and delivered what she felt was a prophesy.”

“And you don’t agree.”
“I don’t believe in it. We make our own destinies. The thought that everything is predetermined is mental, I believe that our choices define the path of our lives. It was very convincing in that some of the details made me hesitate but without context there is no way to understand or act with such little evidence. I’ll keep what she said in mind and if I have a need for the information, then I will be able to make a rational and logical decision.”

Professor Dumbledore had that maddening twinkle in his eyes as he observed her ridged posture that her skeptical thoughts made her adopt.

“Very well. I have done the calculations for the Time Turner. Seven turns for the large ring, two for the middle and five for the smallest. I think you should set them before I give power to the artefact.”

Hermione started carefully to spin the rings the exact number of times her headmaster had said. When she was finished, she met his blue eyes and with a reluctant nod. She let go of Avery’s hand not sure what would happen, letting her fingers trail along his longer more powerful digits. The four of them had said their goodbyes earlier that morning before they made the trek to the Headmasters office. It was clear that her wizards had no desire for her to go and after lengthy arguments and flat out bribes, she implored them to trust her, that she would find them. She would come back to them, no matter the cost. And it scared her how very much she meant that. What would she not be willing to do to get back?

Merlin’s book didn’t describe the exact spell needed for the transfer but Future Dumbledore had assured her it was more about intention then the actual spell. There was no spell on earth that could do what they needed. Love was a force of nature, just like magic, and sometimes when the need is great enough the two mixed. Dumbledore had made the supposition that even though muggles could not use magic, sometimes the things they could accomplish because of it was like magic. It was proof to his mind exactly how powerful a force love was.

Hermione stood in front of the man who used people for ‘the greater good’ showing that once and for all that the path to hell is paved with good intentions. He wields his influence and brilliance as if it were a sword, convincing himself that he is using it for good and not evil, allowing him to justify any and every action. And yet he was the only person capable of stopping wizards who otherwise would have had a free reign of terror. The reason such evil villains feared the man in front of her was that not only was he powerful but he had studied just as dark magic as they and yet he is seemingly unchanged. That is not true, he just is able to hide his wounds better under the guise of respectability and his reluctant defeat of his former associate and lover. She shook her head. Who was she to judge. Look at what she was willing to do to end this war. He was a general in a war that very few understood. Who else but Dumbledore would have been able to find Voldemort’s Horcruxes? She may not like his methods but they were efficient. There was no denying that.

Holding his wand, Future Dumbledore summoned the pensieve from the cabinet that housed it and set it on top of the papers that littered the desk. He began to draw out memories one after another combining them in the basin he was depositing them into. Swirling them together with the tip of his wand and a pained look on his face.

“Et omnis voluntas mea. Immolatio.” (The will to give my all. Sacrifice. -Google translate) And with a flick of his wand he imbued the memories with his magic, separating it from himself in thin silvery strands. Future Dumbledore trembled at the pain of it, collapsing into his chair when he was finished, a pleased look on his face.

“Sir, are you okay?” Asked Hermione.
“Yes, My dear. I think it is ready. Put the Time Turner in the mixture.” He was panting softly. He looked like a man who went through the deepest recesses of his personal hell and came out a lighter, freer man. “It is up to you now, my Dear.”

She had laid the pendant in the silver substance watching as it was sucked into the very essence of the time turner making it glow slightly. When she pulled it out, it felt warm and familiar. Comforting.

She placed it back around her neck gently as if it would shatter at any moment even by the gentlest of touches.

It was then that Orion, the usually impeccably dressed wizard stepped through the floo in a sorry state of dishevel. He did not apologize for his appearance nor his tardiness but his eyes had a wildness to them that was previously absent. It was clear to everyone in the room that something happened to shake the normally stoic wizard.

Hermione walked up to him with concern.

“Are you okay? What happened? Is Reg okay?” She was working herself into a panic.

“It’s Walburga. She is dead.” Orion uttered with little emotion on his face and in his voice. He fell to his knees and covered his face with his shaking hands.

“How?”

“She fought off the Imperius curse and attacked Reg. If I hadn’t left the documents about the new time travel laws on my desk this morning, I would never had heard their struggle in the library. She had him pinned down to the floor with magic, choking him with a whip that she had already used on his body until his lips started to turn blue and the carpet underneath him could no longer soak up the sheer amount of blood he was losing. She had gone completely mad, ignoring my yells, crying about blood traitors. She wouldn’t stop, so I killed her. It was the only way to stop her.”

“Is Reg okay?”

“He is fine. I took him to St. Mungo’s and I didn’t leave until he was stable. I need to go back in case he wakes up. The Auror’s have been called. They are at Grimmauld Place as we speak going over the memories I have submitted.”

“What will happen?”

“I don’t know if I have enough influence and money to keep me out of Azkaban. I need you to take care of your brothers if that happens to me. Promise me!”

“I promise.” She turned to the headmaster. “This will have to wait, Sir.” Her wizards let out audible sighs of relief and stress. The situation was untenable.

Hermione reached down to help Orion to his feet. He was unsteady causing her much smaller frame to collapse to her knees under his heavier weight but with determination she pushed back to her feet, her wizards moving to help her support her grieving father in her stead, pushing her gently out of the way. Orion stumbled before Lucius could get a firm hold on the side that Hermione just vacated and fell into Hermione knocking her into the corner of the Headmaster’s desk. She fell onto the stone floor on top of the time turner that was set to go. The room went silent as a crunch was heard, fear on the faces of her husbands’, immobilizing them for the few precious seconds before she disappeared in front of their eyes. Hermione saw their hands reach for her, inches and decades now between them.
1881: The Dumbledore’s Bedroom- Mold-on-the-Wold

Hermione landed with an oomf. It surprised her because usually when she time traveled in the past, she would be in one time then appear in the next seamlessly, well, except a heaving stomach each and every time. She was momentarily disoriented when she traced the line of a wand tip pointed between her eyes and up over strong masculine hands sprinkled with auburn hair. Her slow unbelieving trek from wand point to the non-twinkling light blue eyes of a man who looked remarkably like her Headmaster had her gasp in surprise.

“What is a Black doing in my house in the middle of the night?” He angrily snarled at the young girl on the floor of a dark bedroom.

As she looked around, she noticed a young dark haired woman on the bed looking at her in curiosity. In her arms was a tiny bundle wrapped in a handmade lace and sheepskin blanket held protectively against her chest. It took Hermione a moment to register that not only was it dark outside the room but the occupants were obviously newly awoken.

“I… um…. Sir,” She cleared her throat at a complete loss at what the correct and least dangerous response she could give was.

“I’m not here to hurt or attack your family. Call me Hermione. What is the date?” She asked him tentatively.

“The date?! Are you completely daft girl? How did you get past my wards? Did Arcturus put you up to this? That bastard has been pushing my buttons for years!” He yelled at her as she flinched at his furious tone.

“I am a time traveler sent by Albus Dumbledore.” She thrust her chin up in defiance. She was a badass and refused to be intimidated!

“Albus sent you?” Asked the soft voice of the woman on the bed.

“Yes, ma’am.” Hermione said still staring at the man holding the wand.

“Percival, lower your wand. It is June thirteenth, Dear. Percival!” She glared at her husband.

“Kendra, you cannot trust anyone from the Black family! They would harm you just because you are non-magical.”

“That is a rather interesting story, Sir. I was adopted into the Black’s using a blood ritual. I am originally muggle born.”

“Don’t lie to me girl! You are wearing the marriage crown of all the Black daughters. They would not let a muggle born wear it, even using those rituals.”

“It’s a circlet… hmmm do you really think so? Maybe it is because I married three heirs of the sacred twenty-eight. Lord knows my family is prejudiced enough.” Hermione thought out loud. If she had not married into three powerful families would they have let her wear the circlet? She shook her head. It doesn’t matter. Back to business.

“June thirteenth of what year?”

“1881.” Kendra answered.
“Oh my goodness. Then you’re holding a baby Albus. No way! Can I see him?”

“Stay right where you are girl!”

“Percival, if you do not lower your wand this instant, I will not be held accountable for what my next actions will be!” The woman on the bed warned in a low voice. He narrowed his eyes at Hermione reluctantly lowering his wand.

“Do you want to hold him?” Kendra asked her.

“May I?” She smiled softly.

Hermione got up off of the floor that had numbed her legs from staying in such an awkward position for so long. She grimaced and slowly made her way to the rocking chair that was next to the bed facing the window. Kendra gently laid a sleeping Albus into the crook of her arms.

Hermione ran her finger lightly over his little nose, noticing how soft his skin felt. He had one tiny red curl at the top of his head making her lightly chuckle.

“Albus, you are going to do some pretty amazing things when you grow up. But I think we should have a little heart to heart right now. Manipulating people is not a good thing even for the right reasons and just because you will be incredibly powerful doesn’t mean that you can take over the world. Just say no to the people who try to convince you to do things ‘for the greater good’. ” She leaned down and placed a tiny kiss on his finger that had curled around her finger as she stroked his cheek.

Percival and Kendra were watching this new comer with confusion. She was gentle, loving, and kind with their new born son as if he meant a great deal to her.

She felt a deep stirring in the pit of her stomach. A longing for her husbands’ rose over her so powerfully that she could feel the pull that felt like a rope that secured her behind a speeding train. She was elated and comforted, as she felt the tether that kept her connected to them. She gently laid Albus back into his mother’s arms before fading away completely right in front of their eyes.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

1885: The Dumbledore’s Livingroom- Mold-on-the-Wold: Four Years Later.

One second she was staring down at a new born Albus and the very next moment she was staring down at two young boys. She glanced around the room she was standing in. Green curtains hung from ceiling to floor for each of the four windows in the room. A divan and chair in a horrid shade of gold paisley were pushed against the walls, leaving a rather large clearing in the center with wooden hand carved magical creatures scattered about. A rather large goat was being chewed on by the younger of the two boys as the dragon the eldest was holding dropped to the floor with a thump now forgotten.

“Papa!” The eldest boy yelled in startled terror. He was obviously a young Albus with his auburn hair swept to the side of his face out of his blue eyes.

She heard someone running and stomping through the halls from the back of the house and as Percival ran into the living room reacting to the panic in his son’s voice he flung himself past the door and into the room looking around for anything that might be amiss.

“Oh, it’s you.” He deadpanned, narrowing his eyes at her in distrust, again.
Hermione broke out in uncontrollable giggles. It had obviously been four years since he saw her last and he had not changed his opinion of her one inch. It amused her to think that had he been born a muggle, he would have become a conspiracy theorist.

He raised his wand pointing at her from across the room. She rolled her eyes and squatted down next to a very confused Albus.

“Hi Albus, I’m Hermione. Have you been a good boy for your Mummy and Daddy?”

He nodded his head emphatically. She patted the top of his head and swooped to give a toddling Aberforth a kiss on top of his brown hair.

“Where’s Kendra?” She asked not looking at Percival.

“In bed with our new daughter.”

“Ariana? When was she born?” She asked with a smile.

“This morning.” He shouldn’t have been so surprised to know that she knew the name they had given their daughter mere hours ago and yet he couldn’t help his incredulity.

“And the year? Just to be certain. Actually, I should keep a record on what year I have been to.” She reached into her beaded bag and pulled out a quill, parchment, and ink then started writing where and when she had been so far. Percival had gotten close enough now to look at what she wrote. His wand arm falling to his side. She looked up at him poised to write, eyebrows raised in question.

“1885.”

“Can I go up and see them?” She asked.

“Follow me.” And with a last pat on Albus cute curls she followed Percival from the room. As they were headed to the stars she felt the longing and the pull of her husbands’ calling to her.

“Oh bother. Percival I’m traveling again. Before I go because I may not get another chance, you need to…” And just like that she was gone again.

**HGHGHGHG**

1891: Diagon Alley- Flourish and Blotts: Five Years Later.

“Move… Damn it!” Hermione stomped her foot down unintentionally hard as if she had forgotten that she already stepped up the last stair, startling an elderly matron who dropped the small stack of books she had been carrying.

“Oh I am so sorry!” Hermione exclaimed bending down to help the woman pick up her purchases.

“It’s quite all right Dear.” The old woman was trying very hard not to chuckle at Hermione and it showed.

“Could you please tell me today’s date?”

“Oh twenty-eighth eighteen ninety-one. Are you okay?” Hermione had gone pale. This was the day Ariana was tortured by the group of muggles. She twirled around headed for the door when she ran head first into Percival’s chest falling on the hard floor hitting her funny bone.
“Why am I not surprised?” Percival sneered. He obviously still disliked her, she shook her head. At least she could count on him acting like a Malfoy. After all she was sure they were related.

“Percival! We need to get to Ariana right now!” Hermione whisper yelled as Percival stared at her in confusion. She had never yelled at him before, even when he knew he was acting like a huge prat.

Hermione took Percival’s arm attempting to drag him from the store.

“Black spawn, I came with Albus. Let me go. You find Albus and I will go to Ariana.”

“Percival. No matter what you find, Do Not Kill Anyone! And the name is HERMIONE” She called after him, her eyes were wild in fear of being too late.

He gave a sharp nod. He could always wait until she disappeared to do what was needed. He rushed out of the door just as Albus who was holding a book about Divination rounded the corner. His mouth dropped open as he watched his father run out of Flourish and Blotts leaving him behind.

“Father?” He yelled.

“Hi Albus. Divination is a wooly subject, you are better off thinking about Arithmancy. Do you remember me?” Hermione asked handing him the first Runes for beginner book she found.

“No. Should I?”

“I’m not sure. You were very young the last time I saw you. Four or five perhaps. Call me Hermione.”

“That’s a very pretty name. I remember this, I think.” Albus reached up and gently ran his finger along the circlet in her hair.

She smiled at him and grabbed his hand towing him behind her. She steered Albus to the front of the shop and paid the keeper before guiding them both to the apparition point near the Leaky Cauldron.

She pulled Albus into a fierce hug and apparated them both into his living room where she had watched him playing with his toys on the last visit. She vaguely noticed the unfortunate looking furniture and let out a sigh of relief at having made it to a place she had only visited once before. Letting Albus go, she started to move to the back garden. After all she spent months apparating Harry and Ron all over the country, maybe she should put it on her resume in the future. Great with apparating to places she barely remembers. She snorted.

They were both drawn by the loud noise of a yelling man who was striking the fear of Merlin into the recipients causing Hermione to pick up speed, bursting through the back door with little to no grace. She took stock of the scene before moving any further and noticed that Ariana had a bruise on her face and her pretty blue dress had been ripped in several spots but otherwise seemed unharmed as she stood shivering in Kendra’s arms. Hermione let out a breath of relief and ran to the young girl falling to her knees in front of her as she lifted her hands to cup her face.

“Thank Merlin!” she whispered. She removed one of her hands and drew out her wand from one of the pockets in her robe and pointed it at Ariana’s dress.

“Reparo.” She said softly as the ripped dress became whole once more.
Once Percival was done yelling at the muggle boys, he whipped his wand out, intending on delivering some vigilante justice. He never promised not to hurt them, just not to kill them.

Hermione came up behind him and pushed his arm down so that his wand pointed at the ground and raised her own.

“Obliviate.” She cast the memory charm on each of the boys, carving out their memories of the young witch behind her. Once she stowed her wand back in her robes and made sure Percival’s was out of sight, she once again turned her attention to the boys.

“You boys ought to be ashamed of yourselves! Perhaps your mother’s should hear about what awful behavior you have exhibited. I wonder, do you think they would be impressed by your lack of gentlemanly manners?” The boy’s eyes grew wide and lost the unfocused haze that had clouded them only moments ago.

“No Ma’am! We are sorry!”

“If you step one more toe out of line I will march each of you straight to your mother’s by the ear. Are we perfectly clear?” Channeling her inner Molly Weasley was quite the stress reliever, there was no doubt that it was also incredibly effective as she watched the boys cower before her rage.

She could feel the now familiar longing for her soul to join her husbands in 1972 and knew she didn’t have much more time before once again moving forward through time.

“Go to your homes!” When no one moved so much as a muscle she yelled “Now!” They scattered down the street to avoid the scary family they had just received a dressing down by.

Hermione turned to the four Dumbledore’s.

“Move to Godric’s Hollow. Do it today if you can, whatever it takes.”

Hermione Black disappeared in front of their eyes once more.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

1897: The Headmaster’s office: Six Years Later.

When time slowed down and reversed, flowing the way it was supposed to, she awkwardly looked at the man who was standing behind a desk that she identified as the Headmaster’s of Hogwarts. He had black hair and green eyes that were looking at her in confused wonder. She blushed, smoothing her hands down her robes, setting herself to rights before she once again looked up into the face of a very startled Headmaster Rivelle, Dippet’s predecessor. The youngest Headmaster Hogwarts had ever had.

“Good morning, Sir!” She said cheerfully. “What year is it?”

“It is 7pm, It is not morning!”

“Oh. Well, good evening then. Year?”

“1897. And you are?”

“1897? What is significant about 1897?” she muttered to herself before the office door opened showing a very surprised Albus Dumbledore.

“Hermione?”
She turned her full happy smile on the teenaged Albus, throwing her arms around his neck drawing him into a fierce hug.

“Albus! How are things? How is your family?”

“Good, good!” he smiled back at her.

“I don’t mean to interrupt such a happy prelude but again I ask, who are you?” The dashing young headmaster interjected.

“Hermione Black, a time traveler.”

“That is impossible.”

“I assure you it is not.” She turned away from the sputtering Headmaster and concentrated on Albus who had not moved an inch since opening the door to find Hermione standing with his Headmaster looking as if she hadn’t aged a day since the last time he saw her five or six years ago.

“I’m not sure how long I have, but why don’t you introduce me to your friends and show me around?”

“I did not give you leave Miss. Black!” Headmaster Rivelle grumbled.

“It is Mrs. Malfoy/Nott/Avery if you want to get technical.” She said over her shoulder as she walked out of the office and down the stairs leaving the wide-eyed man behind her. Albus chuckled at the cheeky woman before addressing his Headmaster.

“Professor, I can assure you she means no harm and she will not be here long. She has been jumping forward in time ever since I have been alive.” He followed Hermione out of the office before he could be stopped and caught up to Hermione at the bottom.

“So Albus, what are you going to show me first?” she looped her arm though his and they walked together down the hall.

“It’s Sunday, most of my friends are in the Gryffindor common room. Have you ever been? I suppose not. If you are a Black, you were probably in Slytherin.” He said, watching her out of the corner of his eye. She laughed uninhibitedly.

“I was a Gryffindor! Don’t look at me that way!” she chuckled as he gave her an unbelieving look and led her to a portrait of a group of rowdy wizards playing exploding snap.

“Jack of trump.” He said as the portrait swung forward amidst the tenor peals of laughter emanating from the boisterous artwork as they teased the young Gryffindor about his visiting ‘girlfriend’.

Hermione tried not to laugh as Albus turned a bright magenta muttering about nosey paintings that could easily be used as torches. She patted his arm as they climbed through the portrait hole.

“Hermione, this is Elphias Dodge, Elsie Prewett, Ambrose Weasley, and Amanda Westwood. Friends, may I present the amazing Hermione Black, a dear family friend.”

“A Black? I thought your father hated Arcturus.” Ambrose asked in confusion sending her a small wave anyway.

“She is not what I would call a typical Black.” He winked at the group leaving more questions than
“And who is this absolutely beautiful Aphrodite?” a deep masculine voice asked from just behind her shoulder.

Hermione turned around coming face to face with the man who could pass for Cormic McLaggen’s twin in the future. ‘Merlin! Would she never be free of that family’s pursuits?’ she thought viciously.

“Let me guess, a McLaggen?” she tried very hard to keep her lip from curling Malfoy style. Albus looked at her in curiosity, his head tilting like puppies do in all of the commercials that she had seen over summer vacation with her parents.

“Corbin, at your service milady.” He grabbed her hand bringing it to his lips to plant a kiss on it. Keeping it in his possession and squeezing as she attempted to pull out of his grip.

“I’ll pass along the sentiments to one of my husbands.” She smiled a sickly sweet smile in his direction.

“One of your husbands?” He paled and dropped her hand as if it had burned him. Her smile grew wider.

“Hermione, I want to show you the new potions lab!” Albus cut in pulling her away before she had a chance to turn her wand on the flirting seventh year boy.

They had barely passed back through the portrait when she felt the lonely pang deep in her stomach that was starting to pull her through time.

“Albus, it was lovely to see you and I am sure we will see each other again. Good bye for now!” She let go of his hand as she dematerialized in front of his eyes, leaving him standing alone in the corridor.

**HGHGHGHG**

1899: Bathilda Bagshot’s house- Godric’s Hollow: Two Years Later.

She stumbled upon impact into a well-toned and defined chest that reminded her of Avery. She flicked her eyes up into the deep blue inquiring eyes that were framed by long honey blond hair and was struck immobile as she tried to come terms with the reality that she was in the arms of Gellert Grindlewald, pressed flush against his body.
Chapter 14

Chapter Summary

More Time Traveling and Gellert Grindewald.

Chapter Fourteen

1899: Bathilda Bagshot’s house- Godric’s Hollow

Hermione was in the arms of the second most feared villain in the twentieth century. She brought her hands up to his chest and tried to push out of his embrace but he just held her closer, gently sliding her hair behind her shoulder and leaned in close to her ear.

“Now that I have you, Schätzchen, what should I do with you?” (German endearment meaning treasure.)

“Let me go!”

“And if I refuse?”

“Hermione?” Albus had walked into the room with his eyes twinkling at her for the first time in his timeline.

“Hello Albus. Can you tell your friend to let me go?”

“You break my heart, Schätzchen!” Grindewald said in mock hurt. Hermione rolled her eyes. She was sure she wasn’t his type at all.

“Gellert, this is the time traveling friend of the family I told you about.”

“Ah! The elusive Hermione Black! It’s an honor to meet you.” He pulled back so that he could smile his devastating smile at her while looking her over.

“Pleasure.” She stated drily. He pulled her closer, forcing her face into his shoulder as he kissed the side of her temple. She continued to struggle, trying to get to her wand and hex the bastard for putting his hands on her in the first place. It was immaterial that he had stopped her quick decent to smack face first into the floor. He lost the right to any gratefulness when he decided to hold her against her will.

“That is quite a trick if you can cross my wards without even trying.” He boasted still holding her body to his as Albus stood leaning on the door frame not helping her at all.

“I’ve crossed stronger wards than yours and I’ve set wards that you could never dream of breaking.” Hermione said muffled in Grindewald’s chest.

“I have never met a ward I couldn’t tear down!”

“Do you have a back garden we could experiment in?” She challenged.
“Right this way.” He took her wrist wrapping his fingers completely around it, with his middle fingers slightly overlapping and tooted her behind him, Albus trailing in their wake.

“Hey Albus,”

“Yes?”

“What year is it?”

“1899.”

“Of course it is. I should have known.” She mumbled with a smug look on her face. It was the year Ariana was supposed to die. Luckily that didn’t seem like it would happen. She considered that a win for team Hermione.

Hermione remembered the house as they walked through it. It looked the same now as it would that fateful Christmas Eve in 1997. She kept getting flashes of Nagini and Harry’s broken wand. She shook her head. She was made of sterner stuff than to freak out over it now, a whole year later. Bathilda Bagshot was most definitely still alive and humming from where ever she was below them.

They passed through the back door into the hedge lined garden, Grindlewald letting go of her wrist and crossed his arms waiting for her to start.

“Go on then, Miss-My-Wards-Are-Better-Than-Your-Wards.” He snarked at her.

“Very well.” Hermione looked around a moment spying a curious blue crystal globe that sat in one of the hedges. She picked it up and put it on the grass next to her, pulling her wand out as she went.

She cast the series of wards that had protected the trio all of those months on the run in her original time, silently, so as to not give away the game. As the sphere vanished from their sight and Grindlewald’s eyebrows drew together and his lips tightened into a frown not recognizing half the spells she had used.

“Astonishing!” Hermione turned around to see Albus looking at her in awe. Albus Bloody Dumbledore was looking at her in awe. It was a very disconcerting moment.

Hermione gestured to Grindlewald signaling that he could begin ripping down her wards and approached Albus who was watching Grindlewald with a tender indulgence. It was clear to her that he was in love with the golden-haired man. She engulfed him a hug, even though he was much bigger than she was now.

“Tell me about your sister. How is she?”

“Ariana? Fine I guess, she was sorted into Ravenclaw and will be in her fourth year. she chose Care of Magical Creatures and Ancient Runes as her electives. Aberforth takes his O.W.L.s this year and as you know he was also sorted into Ravenclaw. He chose Care of Magical Creatures and Divination. Mum is Mum, still keeping dad in line and Dad still takes jobs from the curse breakers from time to time to keep him busy, but it’s not like he needs to work. I plan on taking a year of travel abroad with Grindlewald in a few weeks.”

“You have got to be fucking kidding me.” She said

Dumbledore’s jaw dropped not having heard her curse at him before.
“Excuse me?”

“I believe the lady asked if you were fucking kidding her.” Grindlewald’s laughing voice floated from where he was working on the wards.

“I heard her.”

“Are you in the belief that you can use the phrase ‘for the greater good’?” she pointed her finger at his chest and poked him for each word in the phrase that she uttered.

“Um yes? Muggles are like children who need guidance, its only right we rule over them. For their own sakes.” He stopped there noticing the fury pouring off of Hermione as Grindlewald started using darker spells in his attempt to break though.

“I am going to give you one chance to change your minds, the both of you, before I lose it.” Her hair was sparking wildly in her anger.

“Why ever would we change our minds?” Wondered Albus.

“Because I have lived among muggles and they are nothing short of amazing! To do what they do without magic. Taking this route ‘Magic is Might’ will get you killed.” She knew this particular slogan was Voldemort’s motto but as her fury was gaining ground the origination didn’t matter. It was the thoughts behind it that fueled her temper and the men in front of her were too inexperienced to know that they needed to cut her off early before she started yelling.

“Who would stop us?” Grindlewald declared cockily.

“I would.” She answered grimly.

Grindlewald scoffed still absorbed in trying to break down her wards as Albus looked at her in confusion. She wouldn’t really lift her wand against him, would she?

She could feel the familiar sensation in her stomach signaling her next jump in time.

“Merlin help you Albus if you don’t see reason!”

And with that parting warning, she was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

1907: An Egyptian Tomb: Eight Years Later.

She was disoriented landing in the dark. It wasn’t the kind of dark that one would experience at bed time or right before the dawn. This was the kind that wizards found in sealed caves and tombs. The complete darkness where no light has pervaded in thousands of years or longer.

Her wand was luckily already in her hand as she had nearly just hexed Albus. That prat! She thought for sure he would go down a better path if things had been different, and if she found out that he continued his mad scheme she would make him suffer.

“Lumos.” She murmured to the darkness, lighting the tip of her wand. She found the wall mere steps in front of her covered in ancient hieroglyphics. She heard the muffled sound of voices but couldn’t make out in which direction they were in. she only had two choices. Left or right. She chose the right hoping she would run into the owners of the voices.

She was not correct in her choice however and that became apparent as the noises grew ever
fainter. Deciding to turn around she ran smack into a wall. It moved into place after she had crossed the thresh hold. It was a magical tomb after all.

She suddenly felt trapped and started hyperventilating. She took the next left hoping it would lead her to where she wanted to go.

Luck was on her side as she breathed raggedly in relief. She was standing at the entrance of a tomb that a team of wizards were working in. She spied Albus Dumbledore bent over a battered table studying the decaying remains of ancient parchments in front of his nose.

She looked around hastily noting with quite a bit of satisfaction that Gellert Grindlewald was nowhere to be seen.

“Albus Dumbledore! How are you?” She asked leaning on the doorway in imitation of the way he refused to rescue her from Grindlewald’s arms previously.

His head snapped up in startled recognition, although that was the only emotion she could see on his face. He was angry with her. Oh, well.

“Hermione.” He said in greeting.

She raised her eyebrow in silent question.

“I’m good. I am helping the Egyptian wizards to take down the wards in this antechamber.” He finally said gesturing to the team of wizards behind him.

“And your family?”

“Ariana got married two years ago to Corbin McLaggin and they just had their first child, Cole.”

“Tell her congratulations for me!”

He nodded at her request.

“How is your friend? The one that I saw last time?” She asked.

“We went our separate ways several months after you left. My heart wasn’t in it anymore.”

“Wonderful! I am glad to hear it.”

“You know; he was never able to break through your wards. Bathilda told my mum that he comes over once a year and spends a whole night trying to break them.” He said mischievously.

“That should keep him out of mischief then at least for several years.” She sniffed in disdain. As long as he didn’t get access to the Black family library he wouldn’t break them. The Black family wards were legendary.

“What year is it?”

“1907.”

“Damn! At this rate I will have to jump at least seven more times before I make it home to my time.” She said grumpily. She really missed her husbands and although she knew women technically couldn’t get blue balls, she was experiencing some withdrawal. She was a woman with needs.
Hermione walked up to the doorway that the team of wizards were still trying to open, feeling out the wards. She chuckled into the silent room.

“I can’t be that easy, could it?” She said out loud to herself.

“What are you talking about?”

“Dragon’s blood. Just a daub.”

She turned back around to a skeptical Dumbledore and patted his cheek for a moment before walking back to the door that she entered from. She could feel the pull of time quicker than the last and turned around.

“Until next time.”

He didn’t even look up from his parchments knowing she wouldn’t be there.

**HGHGHGHG**

1915: A Tent on the building site of Nurmengard: Eight Years Later.

“Schätzchen, I didn’t expect to see you again.” Grindlewald looked up from the open parchments strewn across the large table he sat at, smiling as he realized who stood before him.

“Indulging in nefarious schemes, are we?”

“Touché.”

“Where am I?”

“My home base of operations.”

“And where might that be?”

“Around.”

“You’re verbose today.”

“What wards did you use in Godric’s Hallow?”

“Tell me yours and I’ll tell you mine.”

“Really?”

“No.”

“You are a very cruel woman.”

Hermione rolled her eyes.

“Is Albus here?”

“Why would Albus be here? We haven’t talked in years.”

“Really? What year is it?”

“1915.”
“What are those?” Hermione gestured her wand at the large rolled parchment in the center of the table he sat behind.

“Blue prints.”

“For what?”

“The most magically secure base in the entire world.”

“Nurmengard, then.”

“Is there nothing you don’t already know about me?” He winked at her making it sound dirtier than it really was.

“Sure. I don’t know what your favorite color is.”

“It’s blue.”

She shrugged her shoulders.

“Don’t you want to know why it’s blue?”

“Not really.”

“That’s the color you are wearing.”

“Excuse me?”

“You look lovely in blue.”

“You are utterly ridiculous.” She rolled her eyes again.

He laughed at her.

“You bring out the boyish side of me, Schätzchen.” He drew out his wand and with a flick of his wrists, the table cleared itself moments before an older witch came in the tent levitating various platters and dishes of food, sending them to gently land on the table.

“How many settings today Sir?” asked the matron.

“Two, Dearest. Thank you.”

She summoned two place settings and left the tent without looking Hermione’s way once. She didn’t miss noticing that his wand was now the Elder wand and flattened her lips in disapproval.

“Join me.” He invited as he pulled out a chair indicating she should sit.

“For your cause or for dinner?”

“For your cause or for dinner?”

“Both, always both.” He smirked. “But I was referring to just dinner at the moment.”

Hermione sighed. Why the bloody hell not? She thought. She shrugged her shoulders and sat in the chair he had held out for her. He may be a complete ponce but at least he had impeccable manners.

She heaped the food on her plate, making sure to at least take a portion of what she didn’t recognize in a bid to try new cuisine. Grindlewald’s eyebrows rose to his hair line when before she took a single bite, she cast many detection charms, making sure she wasn’t being poisoned. After a
“Why did you think Albus would be here?” Grindlewald asked curiously.

“I always appear where Albus is. This is the first time that I haven’t. But I have a rather interesting theory as to why.”

“What is your theory?”

“Even if I told you, you wouldn’t understand.”

“Try me. I am rather gifted, you know.” He said slightly insulted by her offhand comment.

“Fine. Do you know anything about the Threads of Fate?”

“Threads of Fate? Sure. The bonds that bind people together. What of it?”

“It bonds soul mates together but only for a purpose and always with a price.”

He nodded his head in acknowledgment as he continued to eat.

“The Threads of Fate bonded me to three powerful wizards in the year 1971.”

He stopped eating to stare at her. She was from a future that was more than fifty years. Oh, the things they could do together. A mischievous gleam entered his eye.

“You married them?”

“That was what my bond to them required.”

“This is very interesting, don’t get me wrong but what does this have to do with Albus.”

“I’m getting to it. He once told me he also was bonded by the Threads of Fate.”

“Really?” he asked sarcastically. “Why would he share that information with you?”

“He has his reasons.”

“He also sacrificed his magic to power my Time Turner.”

He couldn’t imagine anyone sacrificing their magic for someone else to go back in time.

“Why would he do that.”

“He had his reasons.”

“Right, I get it. So why do you think you are here?”

“I think you and he are bonded.”

“Impossible.”

“No, I think however improbable it is, I think that is exactly what has happened. Or will happen in the future. The Threads of Fate are not held by liner time laws, I assure you. If that were the case, my husbands wouldn’t be able to pull me back to them.”

He was shaking his head in denial as she took another bite of the rapidly cooling food in front of
her allowing her information to sink in. She felt like it was important that Grindlewald understood what was going on. Something deep in her gut pushed her to tell him these details.

“I don’t like men that way.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes, I am bloody well sure!” he snapped.

“It doesn’t have to be that type of bond.” She said doubtfully. She was pretty sure it did have to be that type of bond.

She felt the pull on her stomach. She wiped her mouth with a napkin and stood up, only half finished with what she loaded on her plate.

“Thank you for the meal.” And she was gone.

**HGHG**

1926: The three broomsticks-Hogsmeade: Eleven Years Later.

One moment she was sitting in a tent with Grindlewald eating dinner and another she was standing in the busy three broomsticks in Hogsmeade. She looked around in fascination, it looked nothing like in her time. Instead of many smallish tables there were several long wooden tables that took up the entire room with bench seating surrounding them. Men sat at the tables were talking loudly and unreservedly until the closest of those sitting next to where she appeared noticed that a woman had entered their domain.

She ignored the growing silence when she saw Albus and Percival having a drink towards the back and smiled. They had noticed her quickly and were staring in shock. Ladies didn’t frequent bars.

“Percival, Albus.” She said in greeting as she sat to Percival right.

“Are you mad, woman?” He barked at her.

“Not any more than I was the last time you asked Percival.” She signaled the barmaid and ordered a butterbeer.

“This is an establishment for men.”

“For now.”

“What is that supposed to mean?”

She ignored Percival and turned her silver gaze to Albus.

“How are things going?”

“Good. I am the Transfiguration teacher at Hogwarts.”

“That’s excellent! Congratulations!”

“Yes, well the ministry has been trying to get me to take a job there, but I like teaching.”

“That’s great Albus.”
“What am I chopped liver?” Percival muttered earning a displeased look from Hermione.

“What’s the date this time?”

“December 1926.”

“REALLY?” she shouted. “What day?”

“The thirty first.”

“Oh Merlin! I have got to go! See you next time!” She pulled out a coin and left it on the table next to the barely touched butterbeer that had just been delivered to her and ran out of the bar. The second she hit the cold air she apparated, not even making a sound.

She reappeared in front of a worn, dingy brick building that had seen better days. The iron gate twisted to form the institution’s name, Wool’s, a muggle orphanage in London.

She pushed the gate open enough to fit through and tapped on the door, waiting for someone to invite her in.

The door was opened by a young woman with mousey brown hair tied back in a severe bun.

“Can I help you?” She asked Hermione.

“Yes. Did a young pregnant woman give birth here today?”

“There is a woman in labor who came off of the street a half hour ago.”

“Is her name Merope by chance?”

“She didn’t give us her name.”

“I am her sister and I have been looking for her. Would you lead me to her?”

“Right this way Ma’am.”

The young girl led her through several rooms on the first floor, finally stopping in front of the last door at the end of the hall, furthest away from the kitchen and knocked lightly as if she didn’t really want to disturb the occupants.

The door opened to a pinched looking face, cold with anger.

“I told you girl, not to disturb us!”

“I’m sorry Ma’am, this woman claims to be the young woman’s sister.”

“Why didn’t you say so?” she said.

The young woman sputtered in indignation before being pushed back by the pinched woman and indicating for Hermione to move into the room. Then she turned and slammed the door in the young woman’s face. Hermione seethed at the injustice but she had to prioritize her time, Merope was more important at the moment.

Merope was on the bed writhing in agony speaking in parseltongue at the midwife. Hermione approached the bed and sat on the bedside near Merope’s head and clasped her hand.
“Merope.” She smoothed the hair on her head as Merope met her eyes.

“You know me?” She whispered in between contractions.

“I am a witch. I know of you, Merope Gaunt Riddle.” Hermione leaned in close and whispered back as Merope’s eyes widened.

“Don’t you think I am a blood traitor?” She asked sadly.

“No, I don’t.”

She smiled at Hermione, the first real smile she showed in days if not months.

“Thank you.”

“Okay young woman, you need to push.”

Merope bared down hard, sweating and grunting with the effort. Hermione’s hand was being crushed in the surprising grip of the laboring woman. After a half hour of pushing the midwife let out an indrawn breath loudly.

“I can see the head. A head full of black curls. One last big push.”

And with a scream, Tom Marvolo Riddle was born.

He was a beautiful baby and the lady cooed at the newborn, cleaning him up as the midwife finished up with his mother.

Blood began to pool around Merope’s hips on the bed turning the sheets dark red, almost black as she began to lose what small color she had left, nearly bleeding out before their very eyes. She was hemorrhaging and the midwife could not find the origination of the bleed but if she wasn’t healed fast, she would die. The midwife was unequipped and under educated for these types of complications. So, Hermione decided to take over. She wasn’t amazing at healing and had absolutely no experience with birth, but she couldn’t sit there and watch as Merope died. It went against everything she believed herself to be.

Drawing out her wand, Hermione cast a quick diagnostic charm and upon finding the internal tear, used a spell to knit the flesh back together. To Merope’s ears, it sounded like a beautiful song, silent tears streamed off her face sliding into her hair. Hermione silently thanked Professor Snape and his Potions book Harry used in their sixth year. Even if she didn’t appreciate it at the time.

She quickly obliviated any memory the midwife had of Hermione’s use of magic and put her wand back in her pocket. The other woman was still cooing and bathing Tom with her back to them. Hermione walked over and ran her finger on his cheek, noticing how sweet he was as a baby. Boy how things would change!

“You are a beautiful baby, Tom.” She said thoughtfully. The pinched looking woman swaddled Tom and put him into Hermione’s arms. She was lightly bouncing him as she started walking back to his mother who was holding her arms up to receive him. She had taken only one step before she felt the pull of the future. She panicked, making a leap at Merope to deliver her child to her, but before she could land, Hermione and Tom were gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

1937: Staff room- Hogwarts: Eleven Years Later
“FUCK!” Hermione yelled into the Staffroom at Hogwarts that was currently full of teachers having their mandatory bi-weekly meeting. Albus stood up quickly taking in the fact that Hermione was cursing and holding a baby.

“What did you do?”

“I saved a woman’s life and inadvertently stole her child.” She squeaked out, utterly terrified.

“When?”

“Well, that depends. What year is it?” she was staring to panic.

“1937.”

“Fuck me! Eleven years passed.”

“That is not the Gaunt baby. Tell me that isn’t the Gaunt baby!”

“You know who he is?”

“His mother has been searching for you for years.”

“Do you know where I can find her?”

“Riddle Manor, probably.”

“Thank you Albus.”

“Of course.”

“Who was that?” asked Terrence Ollivander.

“The most amazing woman in my acquaintance.”

Hermione flashed him a smile as he winked. She walked through the corridors of the school, walking as fast as she could to get beyond the wards. The second her feet cleared them, she apparated to Riddle Manor and knocked on the door.

A cleaned up, beautiful, and strong Merope Riddle answered the door.

“Merope I am so sorry! I didn’t mean to take him in time with me, I can’t really help jumping, but I expected to have enough time to get him to you. If there is anything I can do, please let me know.” Hermione handed her Tom and backed up, waiting for the fury of a worried mother to crash over her. But it never came.

“Thank you for bringing my son back. I have to admit I thought I would never see him again and I hated you, oh how I despised you. But I can see it was all a big mistake and you must have taken good care of him although it looks like he had been born only moments ago.”

“It was and He was. Only minutes ago. I am a time traveler from the future and I have been jumping forwards years at a time. I can’t control it.”

“How much longer do you think you have here?”

“There is no way to tell but a few more minutes I think.”
“Why don’t you join us for tea?”

“Um, okay. Thank you.”

Hermione followed Merope into the sitting room as she summoned the tea. Hermione couldn’t help but wonder why she was at Riddle Manor when all of the memories that were given to Harry stated that Tom sr. had abandoned his family before Tom was even born. Merope was supposed to be this weak pathetic woman that couldn’t live on without the love of her life.

The woman standing in front of Hermione cooing at her baby was anything but pathetic and weak.

“I am glad to see you looking so well, but I thought the baby’s father left you.”

“He did but after you left with Tom, I went a little crazy. I hexed him and told him how he should treat me and what I wouldn’t tolerate. Apparently, he really liked that side of me.”

“Good for you. So, you took him back?”

“I did. And we have been looking for Tom ever since.”

“I can’t express to you exactly how sorry I am.”

“I understand. Although we will never be friends.”

Hermione nodded and felt the pull of time beckon to her and after a quick good bye, Hermione disappeared as quickly and silently as every time before that.

**HGHGHGHG**

1943: Quidditch Stands- Hogwarts: Six Years Later.

It was a breezy but sunny day when she appeared in the empty seat next to Albus in the Quidditch stands of Hogwarts. She could see the teams in the air flying in formations that had been practiced a hundred times.

“Another goal for Hufflepuff! 360 to 150. Better luck next year Ravenclaw, Diggory is on fire!”

“Hello Albus. How is the family?”

“Hermione, Good to see you. I was quite relieved when I heard the Riddle kidnapping was all a big misunderstanding.” He stated trying to hold back his amused grin.

“I was absolutely terrified Albus, Don’t you dare laugh at me!”

“We have to find humor in all of our situations do we not?”

“If you say so.” She said grumpily.

“What year is it?”

“1943.”

“And HUFFLEPUFF CAUGHT THE SNITCH!” The announcer yelled to the cheering crowd.

“How is your family?”

“Mum died two years ago and Dad has not been the same since. Aberforth works on a hippogriff
farm part time and to the shock of my father opened a bar in Hogsmeade. Ariana has three children and two grandchildren. I am obviously still a teacher.”

“What is Grindlewald up to these days?”

“Last I heard, he built quite the impressive magical fortress at Nurmengard and he staffs it with the most brilliant wizarding minds, funding all sorts of magic and innovation.”

“Has his war time escapades stopped?”

“It seems to be so.”

“I am very happy to hear that.”

The students were filing out of the stands heading back to their respective houses to join in the parties that would no doubt be thrown that night. Hermione gazed at them longingly. It was getting to be a burden jumping from time to time and she missed her husbands’ desperately. It seemed like she had been gone for weeks when really it had been little more than eight hours since her journey began. At least she was getting closer and closer to her time period. Only twenty-nine more years to go.

“Could I interest you in a drink?” Albus inquired.

“Sure, why not.” She walked back up to the castle arm in arm with Professor Dumbledore.

He escorted her into his office and conjured two glass tumblers and pulled out a bottle of Ogdon’s finest pouring two fingers for each of them.

When Hermione felt the tingle that signaled the pull of time travel, she downed her drink and set it on the table beside her. Before anyone could blink, Hermione was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

1945: Nurmengard: Two Years Later.

“I love how we keep meeting like this Schätzchen.” Grindlewald purred from behind her.
Chapter 15

Chapter Summary

More Time Traveling.

Chapter Fifteen

1945: Grindlewald- Nurmengard: Two Years Later.

Hermione looked around the semi-dark room in which she appeared. It was an empty grey/blue room with a cement floor feeling much colder than she expected. Every time she breathed out a puff of frozen mist hung in the air. Giving her wand a flick, she cast a silent warming charm around her body. She startled as Grindlewald started to speak, realizing she wasn’t the only person in the room. The Elder wand tip lit at a muttered command from its owner as he stepped toward her from the shadows.

“Grindlewald.”

“You say that like it’s a curse word, Schätzchen.” He mumbled moving her hair off of her neck to plant a kiss.

“Oh, hell no!” Hermione yelled at him, smacking him away before she drew her wand. “Did you forget that I was married?”

“No, but I was hoping you would.”

“Excuse me!?”

“You are so sexy when your hair sparks like that.”

“Am I going to have to hex your balls off?”

“Okay, Maus.” He put his hand up in the air in surrender and huffed his disappointment. “Maybe next time.”

“Or never.”

“I love it when you play hard to get.”

“You are completely ridiculous.”

“So you say…”

She took a moment to compose herself so that she wouldn’t hex Grindlewald. What a weird thought, shouldn’t she want to hex him for being an evil wizard? But according to Albus he had not made any moves towards creating an army. Another win for Team Hermione.

“Grindlewald, what year is it?”
“Call me Gellert and I will answer any question you want.”

She scowled at him. What an outrageous flirt.

“Gellert, what year is it?”

“1945.”

“And have you stopped your shenanigans?”

“What would you classify as shenanigans?”

“Evil plots to take over the wizarding and muggle worlds.”

“Yes, I have stopped all shenaniganizing.” He rolled his eyes. As if she should take him at his word.

“I am glad to hear it!”

He chuckled at her frustration. And waved at her to follow him.

“Follow me, there is something I would like to show you.”

Grindlewald took her through several hallways before stopping in front of a dark grey steel door. He looked back at her from time to time to see if she was still following her. He turned forward each time smirking, enjoying her naiveté.

“I made this with you in mind.” He knocked on the door in a pattern she vaguely recognized as a muggle song and shrugged. She was curious to find out what this was, it’s not like he could prevent her from being pulled through time. She thought confidently.

When the door opened, she walked into a huge chamber that was nearly empty except for a pedestal in the center of the room displaying a time turner. Not like the ones Dumbledore made for them or like the ones she used in her third year. No, this one was different.

“A time turner?”

“Not just any time turner. This time turner will key you into a specific person’s essence and lets you travel anywhere on their timeline. Past, present, and future. I actually got the idea from you when you said you always pop in to where Albus is. Brilliant, right?” He looked very proud of himself. And Hermione had to admit that she was very impressed but refused to indulge his ego.

“Does it actually work?” She asked skeptically.

“Probably for everyone but you.”

“Why not me?”

“I think it is because you have traveled in time so much. The result would probably be similar if I tried to use it on any perpetual traveler of time. But I haven’t done enough experimentation to say definitively.”

“Have you tried to use it on my timeline?”

“Yes.”
“Why?” She said in outraged. The sheer audacity of this man was astounding.

“I have my reasons.” Grindlewald said with an enigmatic smile. The bastard was using her own ambiguous phrases against her. Dropping the question for now, Hermione fumed.

“Have you used it on anyone else?”

“Yes.”

“Who?” She asked in curiosity.

“Myself.”

“And?”

“I still haven’t talked you into having an illicit affair with me.” He looked crestfallen. She sniggered and smacked him on the back of the head, harder than if she was only joking around with him. She wanted it to hurt.

“And I thought you were being serious.”

“I was.”

“I doubt that very much.”

“Are you hungry?” He asked her abruptly changing topics.

“No, I ate that meal with you in your tent mere hours ago.”

His eyes widened in wonder. He wanted her more than ever.

“Have a drink with me?”

“Tea would be nice.”

“Wonderful, follow me.”

But before he could take more than a step to place his hand on her back to usher her out of the room, she was gone.

“Hurensohn!” (Son of a bitch in German) He yelled, throwing hexes around the room hitting walls and guards, wishing he had something to break.

**HGHG**

1949: Transfiguration Classroom - Hogwarts: Four Years Later.

“I guess that means no tea.” Hermione said out loud to Albus’ second year Transfiguration class.

“Welcome Hermione!”

“Thank you, Albus. What are we learning today?”

“Beetles to buttons. Care to demonstrate?”

With a swish of her wand the seven beetles on the desk in the front of the room turned into buttons. Albus clapped and twinkled in happiness.
“Now students, you have the rest of the period to practice.” When he was finished addressing the class he happily turned to the sporadic interloper on his life.

“How are you doing Hermione?”

“Great, slightly tipsy from the fire whiskey you gave me.”

“Merlin, Hermione that was four years ago.”

“Not for me.”

“Professor, Tom did it on the first try!”

“Great job, Tom. Ten points to Slytherin.”

Hermione turned so fast that she hurt her neck, but she paid it no mind. Sitting only feet from her sat the second year, twelve-year-old Tom Riddle in a green and silver tie. Still a Slytherin, there was only so much a girl could do. The difference in him was noticeable, He seemed to be a happy although arrogant child, a dark-haired Draco Malfoy perhaps, waiting for praise from his professor. Had he been on his original timeline, Dumbledore would not have acknowledged him but Albus never had to go to Wool’s and let Tom know he was a wizard. Tom had known his whole life.

Tom was watching Hermione with curiosity. She wondered if he knew that she had essentially kidnapped him for eleven years. She gave him a little wave anyway. Why not?

“Albus, what year is it?”

“1949.”

“Does Tom know about me?” She asked in a hushed whisper.

“Yes, we talk about you from time to time when he comes to visit me for tea.”

“He visits for tea?” she asked incredulously.

“I figured if he was special to you, so much so that you would drop what you were doing to be at his birth, that I should get to know him too.”

He paused for a moment to assign that week’s homework and dismiss the class. When they were alone he turned back to her.

“And what do you think of Tom?” She asked.

“I think he is a brilliant young man who will grow up to be one of the most formidable wizards of our time.”

“That is the truth. Let’s make a pact to keep him on the straight and narrow, yeah?”

“Like you did with me? I’ve never been simultaneously yelled at and poked before. It was terrifying.”

“I’m glad I had such a powerful effect on you.”

“Not only me! I’ve gotten more owls about you from Gellert in the last four years than I have ever got from him. And that is really saying something.”
“What did he want?”

“Nothing less than details of every meeting you and I ever had that I could remember. My father absolutely refuses to talk about you, so Gellert has to rely on my accounts alone.” Dumbledore said watching her closely as she shrugged her shoulders. His father was an odd duck; Albus could never figure out why he disliked Hermione so much.

“Grindelwald cannot keep his comments to himself whenever I am around. He is such an impossible flirt!”

“When was the last time you saw him?”

“Four years ago.”

“What happened?”

“He showed me one of the rooms in Nurmengard. It held a single time turner.”

“Well, whatever happened in that time, he became obsessed with you. Take care if you are around him again.”

“Thank you.”

“Anytime.”

Then she was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**


It was useful that when Tom and Albus had tea together in the transfiguration teacher’s office they always set an extra place for her. Just in case. She had appeared next to Tom startling him so bad he dumped his cup of tea on his robes.

“Siccarì.” She waved her wand drying his robes easily.

“Thanks.” He said with a smile.

“No problem.” She looked at him out of the corner of her eye. He was probably in fifth or sixth year by the looks of him.

“Care to join us?” Asked Dumbledore.

Hermione sat next to Tom as Dumbledore handed her tea. Tom had been watching her ever since she popped in. It made her feel a little uncomfortable. She had messed with his timeline so thoroughly that she had no idea how to act around him. Was he the evil megalomaniac that she spent nearly her whole childhood fighting? Or was he more like a normal person who had good parents?

“So, what year is it?” Hermione asked the room at large as she took her first sip of tea.

“1952.” Tom said quickly beating Albus in answering her.

“Tom, tell me about you. What is going on in your life?”
“Oh, Um, Well I sit O.W.L.s in a few weeks and I have been studying for that.”

“Good luck! I am sure you will do excellently. How is your mother?” She asked tentatively.

Tom smiled widely as Dumbledore chuckled.

“She still hates you. Every time I go home she asks me if I had seen any kidnappers recently. She wasn’t this bad until my second year when I came home with the tale that you just popped into class despite the wards that prevent that around Hogwarts. I was curious and she went a bit mental, shattered every vase in the sitting room. Scared my father something terrible.”

When both Tom and Dumbledore started twinkling at her, she became unreasonably annoyed. How dare they twinkle at her for the one mistake that she made that mortified her. Something that she desperately wished she could change. No mother should have to go through what Merope did. Hermione cleared her throat in a bid to sound normal and continue with her interrogation.

“Who are your friends Tom?”

“Cygnus Black, Magnus Prince, Philip Greengrass, and Aldric Prewett.”

“Prewett? Aren’t they usually Gryffindor’s?”

“Um hum.” Tom agreed while taking another sip of his tea.

“I have something for you Tom.” She pulled her beaded bag towards her and pulled out an old large book. When Dumbledore saw the priceless volume she held, his eyes widened in surprise. She handed it to Tom and he caressed it in reverence.

“Sacrifice and Love: The Compendium by Merlin.” He read out loud.

“That is an incredibly rare book. How on earth did you find it? I was not aware of any copies surviving The Purge that was right before the time that the Statute of Secrecy was instituted.” Albus inquired.

“An insightful yet manipulative wizard gave it to me stating, ‘I believe this could be of great use to you someday’. He was terribly dramatic.” She had set the teacup on the table to accompany her statement with air quotations and an eye roll. It was quite fun talking about Dumbledore to the man himself without his knowledge. She sniggered in amusement.

Although, there was no doubt that the book had been pivotal in her current situation and thought it would be a good gauge in the future to Tom’s state of mind.

“Give it a read Tom and we will discuss it the next time I see you.”

“Thank you!” His eyes were shining with the anticipation of reading the rare tome. Tom reminded Hermione of herself with his enthusiastic desire to absorb knowledge.

Tom quickly finished his tea and excused himself. Hermione would bet every ounce of food in her bag that he was off to devour the contents of that book. She just hoped he took the theories to heart.

Albus studied her over his half-moon spectacles in silent speculation.

“I am terribly dramatic, am I?” he asked in a teasing voice.

It made Hermione laugh fully and unreservedly.
“How did you guess?” she panted between laughing breaths.

“You stared at me the whole time you were quoting. Dead giveaway!”

“I’ll have to work on that!”

The suddenness of the pull of the bond took her by surprise as Hermione and Albus’ tea cup was pulled through time.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: The Great Hall- Hogwarts: Two Years Later.

Hermione crashed to the floor as she had been in a seated position in Albus’ office moments before. The tea cup was knocked out of her hand and smashed on the stone floor. Looking straight up she noticed the clear evening sky above her and the smiling face of Albus hovered over her, moving into her eyesight. He held out a hand to pull her up and help her stand, as she brushed off her robes taking in the scene of shocked students looking up at her from their house tables while eating dinner. She had just appeared in the Great Hall during dinner.

Hermione flushed red in embarrassment and Albus led her over to the teachers table and motioned for her to sit in the empty chair to his right. She briefly looked around the Hall at the unfamiliar faces until she saw the penetrating gaze of Tom Riddle resembling the man who held her captive on his estate in less than twenty years in the future. Perhaps she didn’t notice it the last time because he seemed so happy. She wondered what changed.

Hermione leaned over to Albus.

“It’s 1954. Headmaster Dippet looks a bit annoyed at you, Hermione. You didn’t do anything to him, did you?” Albus cut her off, knowing exactly what she intended to ask. He was smirking at her in challenge as if to say ‘deny that is what you wanted to ask, if you can’.

“Not this time, but there is always the possibility in the future.” She smiled mischievously. Deliberately ignoring the clear challenge in his gaze.

“What is wrong with Tom? He looks upset.” Hermione said dropping her smile as her brows met in a frown.

“A group of pureblood fanatics have been going around and killing pureblooded women who they believe have married below their stations. Merope and Tom sr. were murdered several weeks ago and with the Ministry’s incompetence, no leads have been followed or updated. He is justifiably angry.” There was a disturbed fury bubbling just beneath the surface that he held in tight control. He was angry on Tom’s behalf.

“Poor Tom.” She said with worry in her eyes as she watched Tom get up and leave the hall. “I am going to have a talk with him. I’ll see you later, Albus.”

“Sure, sure.” He waved her off, focusing back on his food, deep in thought.

Hermione left the teachers table at a near run hoping to catch up to Tom. She hurried when she saw the back of him turn the corner to go down into the dungeons.

“Tom. Can we talk?” she called out. He stopped without turning around and waited for her to catch up. When she did, he caught her wrist and towed her to the nearest empty classroom. Incidentally it was the very same classroom Avery went down on her in. She rubbed her thighs together in a bid to
ease the ache in her core signaling that she was missing the attentions of her husbands.

“You weren’t there. Why weren’t you there?” He said in a cold dangerous voice.

“Why wasn’t I where?” She asked as an icy sliver of fear clenched in her stomach. She knew that voice. It was the voice of Lord Voldemort, not the Tom Riddle she had started to get to know during her travels through time.

“Why didn’t you help them? My parents are dead and you weren’t there. WHY?” He yelled spittle flying from his accusing, angry mouth.

“My traveling is not keyed to you, Tom. I did not know that it had happened until just right now.”

“How could you be at my birth and ask about me from Professor Dumbledore and yet not be there for this? You are from the future. You KNEW this would happen. Why couldn’t you warn me or her?”

“I did not know this would happen. In my timeline, your mother died of a hemorrhage when you were born. I prevented that so that you would have a happy childhood.”

He looked like he had been smacked in the face.

“So she was just destined to die?”

“Sometimes things happen that are out of our control, Tom! But it is not your fault.”

“If I had joined their freakish group none of this would have happened.”

“What do you mean Tom? Whose group and why is it your fault?”

“Six months ago I was approached by Filmore Rosier because I was a half Gaunt on my mother’s side. They had heard how powerful I am and wanted to recruit me for their club. It’s supposedly a group of wizards who want to rule over muggles and muggleborns. I didn’t want to have anything to do with it, after all my father was a muggle and he was a good father to me. He didn’t deserve to be treated like an animal because he didn’t have any magic! Anyway, when I refused, they tried a new method of persuasion.”

He pulled a crumpled and well-worn piece of parchment from his robes. It was slightly heavy on the one side that had a small golden pin stuck to it in the shape of the Slytherin ‘S’.

*If you want to see your filthy blood traitor of a mother again, you will accept our generous invitation. All you have to do is activate the enclosed portkey Friday at 10pm.*

- *The Knights*

“I ignored it. I didn’t think they would actually hurt my Mum. She is dead scary when she gets angry, I thought she would be fine. But she wasn’t. They killed her. The next day, I received this.”

He pulled out another parchment, this one was as pristine as the other was wrinkled.

*The next one to go is your precious Professor Dumbledore.*

*Saturday 6pm. Come alone. Your letter is your portkey.*

- *The Knights*
“Show these to Dumbledore, He will help you.” She approached him slowly and wrapped her arm around his shoulder in an effort to comfort him. As Lord Voldemort, he would never want or need this comfort. She thought that the side-effects of Horcrux making were more varied and deep than any of the books detailed. The difference between a seventeen-year-old Tom Riddle and a seventeen-year-old Lord Voldemort were miles wide.

“I don’t want to drag him into this. He is the only one I have left who gives a damn about me.”

“That’s not true Tom. You have your friends and I care, but I am limited in what help I can be. I will only say this once though Tom, please do not accept their invitation. Fight against them and what they did to you and your family. If you join them, you and I will be on opposites sides of that war. I want better for you than that. Please promise me that you will not join them.”

“I promise.” He looked sad and angry but slightly calmer than when he entered the room.

“Don’t forget to tell Albus. There is no one better equipped than that man to help you.” She said rubbing circles on his back.

The pull was stronger this time, stronger than she had ever felt but it felt wrong somehow. As if her link to her husband’s grew necrotic. It wasn’t the gentle disappearance with loving undertones like normal. This was a forceful and pervading disease attacking the bond to her wizards. She fell to her knees in front of Tom in agony, feeling the bond dying. It felt like her soul was being torn apart over and over again. This pain was far worse than any Crucius that Bellatrix could throw at her.

Tom was trying to talk to her but her head was swimming and he was going in and out of focus, she couldn’t hear a word he said. And just as she leaned over to empty her stomach on the stone floor, she was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954/ Between Time: Nurmengard- The Time Room: The same year.

“I am so glad you finally decided to join me.” Grindlewald said from his position in a blue wing back chair as he took sips of tea. She was disoriented and dizzy, on her knees on the floor, facing Grindlewald. She managed not to vomit, although she will never understand how she did it. She looked around the room confused and saw light grey walls and floor, cleared of all furniture except that which Grindlewald was using. For the first time since she bonded to her wizards, she could no longer feel their connection.

“Grindlewald. What did you do?”

“Again, I thought we already had this discussion. My only requirement is that you call me Gellert. That isn’t so bad, is it?” He ignored her question as usual, leading the conversation where he wanted it to go.

She narrowed her eyes and reached down for her wand and finding an empty pocket, then started to look in the area around her on the floor, hoping that she would find it quickly.

“Looking for this?”

Hermione looked up at him in horror when she realized he was twirling her wand between his fingers. She watched her wand flow between his fingers while he was wearing a smug, triumphant look. How did he get it without her noticing?

“What did you do?” She demanded again, more forceful this time.
He ignored her until she gave him what he wanted.

“What did you do, Gellert?” She commanded, voice heavy with sarcasm and frustration.

“See that wasn’t so hard?”

Her hair started to spark in her anger.

“Oh, Schätzchen, you know how that drives me wild! I did what I always do. I found a way to get what I wanted.”

“And that was me?”

“Yes.”

“I thought you liked men.”

“I. Do. Not. Like. Men!” He yelled. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes for a moment to calm himself down. “Yes, I find you alluring, however that isn’t the only reason why I want you. You know the future in a way that I can’t. My time turner is limited. When I tried to travel to the future it wasn’t what I thought it would be. Talking to myself was like talking to my mirror image and everything in the background was blurry. Anytime I make adjustments to it, the damn thing gets worse.

I created this room specifically to pull you and hold you. There is no way you can leave Nurmengard unless I walk you out through the front gates. You are mine. You might as well get used to it now.”

Hermione looked at the man standing in front of her in horror. He was no longer the impressively handsome man of his youth. He was a mature older wizard in his eighties. As much as he had flirted with her in the past, she assumed it was harmless as he grew older and she didn’t. Oh, how naive she was. She thought in bitter self-reprisal.

**HGHGHGHG**


Lucius, Theo, and Avery were anxiously waiting for their wife to reappear in the Headmaster’s office. Every time she jumped through time, they could feel the pull of their bond and rejoiced. She was that much closer to home.

They had been sitting in the same position nearly all day, except that tense hour where the Aurors came to collect Orion. He was to be held in Azkaban until his trial in two weeks. It didn’t matter what they offered them, their money and connections of the powerful young men did nothing to aid their father-in-law. This was too big a transgression to hide or bribe away.

It was decided that they would wait until Hermione returned to tell Sirius the news about his family. After all there was no good way to break the death of a mother to her child. He needed his sister.

The House elves kept them fresh with tea and food. At first the boys refused tactfully, and after both Dumbledore’s promised not to mettle with any food or drinks via themselves or otherwise, did they acquiesce and take refreshment.

Future Dumbledore kept throwing 1972 Dumbledore worried glances throughout the day.
“It will turn out okay. After all, we’ve been through it once before.” Present Dumbledore said.

“Do you even remember why we sent her back? Because I do! I remember everything.”

“I think that is because you are from the same future as Hermione that no longer exists. But no, I no longer remember the details. But I remember other things. I remember how I knew her my whole entire life.”


“That’s because the four of you share an indestructible bond.”

It was at that moment when the three men on the chair facing their two headmasters, present and future started gagging and clutching their hands over their tattoos, obviously in indescribable pain.

“What is happening?” Choked out Avery.

“Let me see!” Said future Dumbledore as he hurriedly approached the boys writhing now on the floor.

Avery ripped his robe and oxford open enough so that Dumbledore could see the golden tattoo slowly turn black.

“It has begun.” He said grimly. “Peppy!” 1972 Dumbledore summoned his personal house elf.

“Headmaster.” He said bending at the waist to deliver a deep bow.

“Bring Professor Riddle to my office please.” He didn’t notice the flinch from each and every other person in the room.

“Who is Professor Riddle? You don’t mean Tom Riddle?” Lucius asked in horror.

“Yes, Professor Riddle is your Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher that has taught you since your first year.” Realizing this was a change that he wouldn’t remember, he trailed off looking thoughtful.

“Is he a good teacher?” Asked Future Dumbledore dubiously.

“Exceptional! One of the most gifted wizards we have ever employed.”

“Hermione is an incredible but terrifying woman.” Future Dumbledore muttered as the three younger wizards nodded in affirmation.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

1954/ Between Time: Nurmengard- The Time Room

Hermione was furious. Her hair was sparking wildly and her resting bitch face turned into I will kill you with my eyes alone face. It was usually very effective with Harry and Ron when they refused to revise for their end of year tests but it seemed to have the opposite effect on Grindlewald. She was convinced that it turned him on when she threw daggers at him with her eyes.

She had been stuck in that terrible room for several days now. Grindlewald had brought her in a huge feather bed, food, and a stack of books with the command that she would have to ‘earn’ them. Earning them turned out to be easier said than done.
The books and food she earned easily, all she had to do was call him Gellert. The bed however was proving to be a much harder conquest. He wanted her to tell him what she had changed in the past and why. She, of course, refused.

Her head popped up again when she heard the unlocking of the door and stood facing down the evil wizard known as Gellert Grindlewald with no fear.

“Good Morning Schätzchen!” He winked at her.

“Do you know what this is?” He continued, ignoring the heavy scowl on her face, holding up a small vial filled with glittering ruby colored potion. She shook her head in the negative.

“This is a very rare, very special potion created with the use of the Philosopher’s stone made by Nicolas Flamel. This Schätzchen, is the Elixir of Youth.”

She looked at him through unimpressed eyes as he uncorked the vial and tossed the contents to the back of his throat and swallowing loudly. She watched as the age fell away from him and in a blink of an eye, he appeared to be as young as he was the first day he met her at Bathilda Bagshot’s house when he was seventeen.

“Have you decided to be a good girl today? Or will you face your first punishment?” He asked as he stashed the vial in his pocket.

“Go to hell!”

“Ah, that is exactly what I was hoping you would say.” He said with a leer.

He moved closer to her, intending on grabbing her arms when she pulled back her arm and punched him in the face. He held his nose between his fingers shooting her nasty glares and yelling obscenities. Bringing up the Elder wand to fix the damage her small fist caused, he muttered the incantation. She shook out her right hand pretty sure she broke her thumb. When she got back to her husbands she would need to take a self-defense refresher course. That was nearly as satisfying as punching Malfoy in her third year.

“Imperio.” He brandished his wand at her. “Enough of this, Schätzchen! Come here.”

She walked towards the blond wizard unable to throw off his curse as tears coursed down her cheeks.

"No need to cry, Schätzchen! I will take good care of you." He murmured as he lowered his lips to kiss the sensitive spot just below her ear, running his fingers down her arms, moving closer to her body so that her breasts were pressed against his chest.
Chapter 16

Chapter Summary

Nurmengard

Chapter Sixteen

1972: Headmaster’s office: The Present

Tom Riddle strode into the Headmaster’s office with an arrogance and superiority that could put any Malfoy to shame. His dark blue teaching robes flowed around his legs as the rest was tailored to perfection. Tom was a tall, well-built man who was comfortable in his own skin and power. He was certainly the most handsome man that had taught at the prestigious school.

He met the eyes of the Dumbledore’s nodding obliquely in their direction, tossing in an ‘Albus’ in his deep resounding voice.

“It has begun Tom. Do you have it?” Asked 1972 Dumbledore.

Tom pulled out an unusual looking time turner, one that Future Dumbledore had never seen.

“It’s a time turner but it is unlike any I have yet come across.” Future Dumbledore said.

“You wouldn’t have. This is the only one in existence. It is Gellert Grindlewald’s invention. With the help of his researchers, he created this time turner that can go forward and backwards in time. However, it can only be keyed to one person at a time, and you should not use it on yourself as Grindlewald learned to his ultimate detriment. This is what we will use to save Hermione.” Riddle informed the room.

“I suspect you have a plan?”

“Of course!” He looked deeply offended at the mere thought of coming across as incompetent.

“One on her husbands are going to travel on my timeline to the past and let the bond pull him to the last known time Hermione was in. Then he is going to inform the both of us, Headmaster. And we are going to save her.”

“Why would you want to save Hermione?”

“She is important to me.”

The men in the room’s eyes went wide, all except 1972 Dumbledore that is. None of them had ever heard of Lord Voldemort saying that anyone was important. It was clear in that moment to Future Dumbledore that Hermione achieved something he didn’t believe possible. Tom Riddle was living as a well-adjusted, accomplished man who worked on the side of justice and morality. What a change!

“Our tattoos turned black. Doesn’t that mean we lost her?” Asked Avery.
“If you lost her, as in she died, your tattoos would disappear. It is black, which indicates that she is stuck somewhere between time.”

“It felt like my soul was shattering.” Avery muttered

“I’m sure freezing in time would hurt. Did you expect anything less?”

“I didn’t even know this could happen.” Theo said petulantly.

“Didn’t you research this bond at all?” He asked disdainfully. “And to think I wasted all of those years teaching you, idiots.”

“That technically wasn’t them, Tom. Just placeholders if you will.” The Dumbledore’s twinkled

“How in bloody hell are they going to pass their N.E.W.T.s?”

“Hey! we are proficient in Defense; I’ll have you know!” Lucius sneered disdainfully but still with a modicum of caution.

“Wonderful! I vote for you to go back Mr. Malfoy.”

“Me? Why me?”

“Why him?” Asked Theo and Avery simultaneously. All three of them felt that they should be the ones to go.

“Because I will recognize him easily as a Malfoy.”

“Great. At least I will be doing something.” Lucius stated. He just wanted to know why Riddle wanted him to go.

Tom took off the family ring that he always wore and pressed it into the hand of the younger man.

“Give this to my younger self and tell me that Grindlewald is keeping Hermione trapped in the Room of Time. This room must be destroyed. Also tell Dumbledore that I must go with him. It will make all the difference.”

“Does it house time turners like the time room in the ministry?” Asked Avery. “What? My cousin is an Unspeakable.” He said to the censure of the room.

“No, this room is much like our very own Room of Requirement. It gives you the year you ask for. In Hermione’s case, she is in between them all.”

“Like the RoR; would the room even open if it is already occupied?” Asked Theo.

“Not unless you ask it for exactly what it is already being used for.”

“That sounds impossible.”

“Only one-person past or present knows what exactly the room was asked for. And that man is Gellert Grindlewald.”

“When do I go?”

“Whenever you are ready.”
“I am ready now.”

With a nod, Tom handed Lucius the unusual time turner and he slipped it over his head. When it was laying against his robes, Tom took it in his fist and murmured an incantation too low for anyone else to hear. As he let it go, the thin copper rings began to spin and with Riddle’s ring clenched in his fist he reached out to the bond desperately hoping to find Hermione.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: Hogwarts Abandoned Classroom

His feet hit the stone floor with a jolt, for a moment he was discombobulated as he regained his equilibrium. He heard Riddle yelling something in the same room that he was in and shook his head to clear it. He saw Hermione on the floor clutching at her stomach looking as if she were going to be sick. He ran to her partially in relief that he found her and partially in terror because he didn’t know what was wrong with her. He began screaming her name as she disappeared right in front of his eyes. He was so close to her he could taste it. Right now, it tasted of bitter hope as she was snatched from beneath his very nose. He screamed in frustration unmindful of the young dark haired wizard watching him.

“Who in bloody hell are you?” Asked Tom Riddle.

“I’m Lucius Malfoy, Abraxas’ son. And that woman that just disappeared is my wife.” Lucius thrust the ring that had left marks on his palm he had clenched it so tightly into Tom’s chest.

“Everything okay in here Tom?” asked the voice of Albus Dumbledore.

“Wonderful just the person we need. Professor Dumbledore, Grindlewald has Hermione locked in a time room that she cannot escape from.” Lucius said in a rush.

“Her time travel will just take her to the next time when it is ready.” Dumbledore said patronizingly.

“Not this time, Professor. He made that room specifically for her, to trap her for Merlin knows what. I came back because our tattoos turned black and without intervention she would be lost to me, to us.”

“Whose intervention?” Asked the skeptical Dumbledore.

“1972 Dumbledore’s and Tom Riddle.”

Tom’s eyebrows rose to his hairline still looking at the ring that was shoved under his nose. He recognized it because he was wearing the same exact ring at that very moment. It was the Gaunt family ring.

“Professor,” Tom held up the ring and his right hand, showing the identical rings. “I’m inclined to believe him. You didn’t see Hermione leave this time. It was nothing like you told me. She was in terrible pain. If Malfoy here believes we need to save her, then that is what we should do.”

“Tom, you are a student! You are going nowhere.”

“I have more right then you. Technically Hermione was my mother for eleven years.”

“It was only a split second. You were in 1926 then you were in 1937. She was not your mother.”
“She is the closest thing I have now!” Tom beseeched the older man to understand as he tried to calm the rage that came from being excluded.

Tom grew quiet and his eyes held a look in them that would frighten the most dangerous of men. It was hard to tell exactly what he was thinking but he radiated anger, and the men in the room were familiar with this man’s harshly lashing magic when he was angry. Different or not, he was a formidable wizard.

Lucius blinked rapidly. Did that make him a father to Tom now that he considered Hermione a mother substitute? He shook his head to let go of that disturbing thought and addressed both men.

“Both of you should come with me. Tom Riddle made it very clear he needed to be there and the room must be destroyed.”

“Destroyed? That room is a marvel. How could we destroy it?”

“Professor, can you not imagine one scenario that would be devastated by someone’s return to the past? Hermione is a special case, her heart is made out of pure gold and she would give anyone a second chance to do the right thing. What do you think would happen if you went back in time, Sir?”

Albus Dumbledore was looking at the young wizard over his half-moon spectacles in consideration. After only a moment more, He nodded his head.

“We will leave tomorrow afternoon.”

“Yes, Sir.” Said Tom Riddle.

“Why don’t you sleep in the Slytherin dorms tonight Mr. Malfoy. The castle will provide your bed for you.”

“Thank you, Sir.” Said Lucius, unexpectedly tired from his travels.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: Nurmengard- The Time room

“I won’t do anything to an unwilling woman, Schätzchen.” Grindlewald whispered less than a centimeter from her neck. He released her from the unforgivable and backed away wearing a smug grin. “By the time I am finished with you, you will beg for me. And how pretty you will look begging on your knees for my cock. I can barely stand the anticipation.”

“If you are waiting for me to willingly beg, you will be waiting forever.” She growled at him, putting as much space between them as the room would allow, wiping away the tears that had streamed down her face when she thought he was going to use her body against her will.

“Luckily we have forever. I can make as much of the Elixir of Youth as we need.”

“You plan on forcing me to take it? Do you even know what the side-effects of such a potion are?”

“I can’t have you holding out on me and dying now can I. I will keep you as you are right now. With such a luscious body that could tempt a saint, how could I be expected to do otherwise?”

“Hell will freeze over before I give in to you, Grindlewald!”

His demeanor grew cold as her rejection washed over him. His lip curled in mocking superiority as
he played the game of cat and mouse with her around the room.

“Why did you return to the past and what did you change?”

“I’ve said it once; I’ll say it again. I will not tell you anything!” She sneered in true Malfoy fashion.

“There will come a day, Hermione Black, that you deeply regret rejecting me.” And he stormed out of the room in a fit of rage taking all of the food and books with him and leaving the bed warded against her use.

“FUCK!” She screamed into the empty room.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: Slytherin Male Dorms

Lucius woke up disoriented. He was in the Slytherin dorms but not his bed, which was weird. He didn’t think he drank with the guys last night. It took only a moment more before everything came rushing back to him. He scrambled out of the dormitory casting hygiene spells as he went. He found Riddle in the Great Hall eating next to Cygnus, Hermione’s uncle. He paused on the threshold wanting to be remembered as leaving a good impression on his wife’s family. He did a once over, tugging his robes into place and smoothing his already perfect hair. When he took the empty seat next to Riddle the dark haired girl across from him looked up in annoyance, she was working on beautification spells at the table. He took a drink of pumpkin juice and promptly spit it out at realizing he was sitting across from his abusive, murdered mother-in-law.

Riddle turned and gave him an incredulous look, asking silently if he was alright. Not expecting this type of consideration from his father’s master, he decided to forego breakfast completely.

He made his way out to the lake, waiting impatiently to go to Grindewald’s stronghold, Nurmengard. He had no idea how long he stood staring at the lake when he noticed a presence behind him.

“You know, even though Hermione and I have had little to no contact, I feel connected to her as if she were family. What she means to me, I can’t possibly describe. For years just talking about Hermione in my home was tantamount to admitting to a murder. My mum went completely mad whenever she was mentioned, and you know Professor Dumbledore told me how she looked when she reappeared with me in her arms eleven years later. He said that she looked as if she had been tortured by an unforgiveable for hours on end. We each have speculated that it was the single thing in her life that she was ashamed of, and it wasn’t even her fault. How could she fault herself with taking me through time when she had no control over it? I knew that my Mum understood that, she was grateful that once Hermione jumped in time, she found my Mum straight away. She could have hidden me or taken me back to Wool’s, where I was born. But she didn’t. She faced the wrath of my mother. That was a very brave yet foolish thing to do. My Mum was one scary witch.”

“Hermione has a heart of gold; she will probably never forgive herself for your mother’s eleven years’ worth of agony. Although she loves well and freely, she is the most terrifying witch I have ever met, and I have met many. Trust me. Your mother, though no doubt formidable, wouldn’t hold a candle to Hermione’s fury. I know of no other person man or woman who could have changed time so well.”

“She changed it?”
“Oh yes, she changed it for you, for Professor Dumbledore, for all of us really.”

“Why?”

“Because the future that she came from was so bad that there was no other option but to change it. Sometimes it is the smallest things that makes a difference.”

“Do I make her glad that she changed it, since one of the things she changed was my childhood?” Tom silently noted the way Lucius said the future she came from not the future they came from.

“I don’t know because I haven’t talked to her about it but I imagine she will be, once she returns. I understand what you were trying to say to Professor Dumbledore about Hermione being the closest thing to family. She cared enough to change things and be there in your life. I have a feeling that she will always be your family, if you want it.” He didn’t know that for sure as he was not privy to her traveling experience but he knew Hermione and if this bloke is changed, she wouldn’t ever abandon him. When he left 1972, Tom Riddle was a respected member of the faculty and not an evil overlord. She would consider that a win. “And that makes you my family too.”

Neither man looked at the other, they stood there by the lake side by side in contemplative silence.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: Nurmengard- The Time room

Grindlewald strode into her room toting a whole bedroom suite, a variety of clothes, more books than she could reasonably study, and hundreds of thousands of flowers clustered in large vases. The flowers took up every available surface including the floor. She decided to stay seated on the hard floor exactly where she had been for two days off and on. The bedroom suite included divans, chairs, tables, dressers, a vanity, and curiously a grand Piano. It was curious because though Hermione loved classical music, she was pants at playing it.

“What do I have to do to earn this?” Hermione asked acerbically gesturing to the array of things he brought with him.

“This is just a token of my esteem.”

“Why do I have such a hard time believing you?”

“That hurts, Schätzchen!” he put his hand over his heart in a manner much like Sirius’ when he got caught bullying Snape.

“I’m sure.” She deadpanned.

Grindlewald plucked a red rose that was in the tall ivory vase that sat on the floor at the base of her bed that she was apparently allowed to use now. He caressed the bud against his lips staring at hers. Slowly moving across the room, to stop near her feet.

He squatted down in front of her, his eyes twinkling, reminding her of Albus. A wave of homesickness rolled over her bringing a cloud of melancholy in its wake.

“You could let me go.” She said void of hope. This was the same thing she said every time he came.

“I could but then who would provide me with children?”
“You have the Elixars of Life and Youth. Why do you need someone to provide you with children?”

“That wasn’t a no.”

“That was a solid hell no!”

“Not as solid as yesterday.” He grinned at her. No doubt hoping to wear her down.

At the table setting he had brought with him, he had placed dinner. Their dinner. She internally groaned realizing that Grindlewald intended to eat with her. Yay, a new form of torture to try out.

He sat her at the table as usual, using the impeccable manners that she had once been so appreciative of. It truly annoyed her now. His breathing annoyed her. Had she a wand, she would have not regretted the barrage of curses and hexes she would have doubtlessly sent against him. The way he was smirking at her made her think that he knew exactly what she was thinking and that it amused him. He poured their wine and started to eat, closing his eyes in ecstasy. Ignoring her completely.

“You will never guess who my spy at Hogwarts saw this morning.” Grindlewald asked without opening his eyes.

“Albus?” she snarked.

“A blond haired man who looked remarkably like Abraxas Malfoy who was attached at the hip to the Head Boy, Tom Riddle.”

“Abraxas Malfoy was at the school? I wonder why.”

“Don’t play dumb, Hermione. It doesn’t suit you. I said he looked like him not that it was him.”

“And why would that interest me?”

“When he was showering, one of the Slytherin Prefects saw a peculiar tattoo.” He watched her closely looking for a reaction, but Hermione was pretty good with covering up her emotions with annoyance when it really mattered. After all Professor Snape did say she wasn’t as deficient in the art of lying as the other Gryffindors. And coming from that man, it was a compliment of the highest order.

She shrugged her shoulders, taking another bite of food.

“No? Well it was a tattoo that depicted a time turner on his ribcage. Still not ringing any bells? Mr. Riddle called him Lucius.” He waited and smiled wide when he saw the tic in her eye jump rapidly as she tried to come off as nonchalant.

She was afraid for the first time she had been Grindlewald’s captive. She would take any torture a thousand times if it meant the safety of her loved ones.

“What do you want?”

“Aha now we get to the heart of the negotiations. I want what I have wanted for days. What did you change in the past?”

Hermione thought about what would get him off of her back the most without dragging Lucius or Tom into things. Hoping that Albus was as strong magically now as he was in the other timeline
because she was going to send Gellert Grindlewald his way, with the hope that he beats him in this time too.

“Albus. If I had not interfered, the both of you would have taken over the continent making your way into Britain. That is why I had such strong negative reactions to your philosophies that day at Bathilda Bagshot’s in Godric Hallow.” She lied. If she was going to make it convincing she was going to have to do the thing right. At that time, it wasn’t difficult to believe that would have happened without Hermione or Ariana’s influence. It could have very well happened and Albus knew it.

“See that wasn’t so hard now was it?”

“Excruciating.” Hermione snarked.

“Now I just have to get you to admit you are mine and then we will be happier than anyone alive.”

“If I could get home to my husbands, then I would live up to being the happiest person alive.”

He lifted his right hand as if to back hand her but after pausing a moment he lowered his hand, his anger sliding off of his face, replacing it with lust.

“We have to work on your seduction techniques.” He purred at her.

“I’m sure my husbands can teach me whatever it is that I am lacking.”

“Not if they are dead.”

“Are you going to kill them?”

“Are you going to come to me while they are alive?”

This was the moment that she realized exactly how much she was like Harry. She wanted her husbands to live but she made a promise to come back no matter what. So she moved on to plan B. Search through her beaded bag after Grindlewald left and see what can help her out of this mess. Luckily he didn’t confiscate anything other than her wand that first day.

“I will not come to you whether they are dead or alive.”

“We will see.” Grindlewald said looking at Hermione in narrow eyed consideration.

**HGHGHGHG**

1954: Nurmengard

Lucius, Tom, and Albus apparated just outside of the prestigious wards that surrounded the mighty fortress, Nurmengard. It was as if they had been expected. Security surrounded the trio and ushered them through the front gates and into a cold barren white room with four metal chairs. Three facing one. They were sat and magically bound to the chairs before Grindlewald himself came strolling though as if he were attending a soirée. He stopped short when he saw Albus, many emotions passing over his eyes before taking a deep breath and pushing them away.

“To what do I owe the pleasure of your company Albus?” He asked

“You know exactly why I am here, Gellert.” Albus told him gravely, no twinkle evident anywhere. “I’ve warned you for years to let your obsession for her go. Why did you imprison her?
“She is not imprisoned; she is being held until she sees reason.”

“What is it you want her to come to terms with?”

“Her marriage to me.”

Lucius struggled against his bonds, fury rising within him so harshly that the sticking charm failed to hold him and having more anger than sense, tackled the blond haired homewrecker. It was the second time since Hermione had been there that Grindlewald felt the bridge of his nose crack.

“Howensohn!” (Son of a Bitch- German) Grindlewald yelled.

Albus looked amused as hell as Lucius brought his hand around Gellert’s throat before Gellert blasted him across the room with a spell straight to his chest. Lucius gasped for breath as he hit the solid metal wall covered only in white paint behind him.

“Ficken bastard!” Grindlewald conjured a mirror and used ‘Episky’ setting his nose back to rights leaving the twin trails of blood to dry over his lips.

“If I didn’t want to kill you before just for being Hermione’s husband…” He spat at the struggling young man. He shook his head trying to regain his composure.

Albus noticed that Gellert was looking everywhere and anywhere but at him. What did that mean?

1954: The Time room

Grindlewald had been summoned only ten minutes after he came into bother her that day. She felt it would be safe enough to go through her bag, counting on being able to hide whatever she needed to quickly.

She pulled out so many books that she had been lugging around since her Horcrux hunting days, a tent, a ton of food, mangled but dead Horcrux receptacles, a small bit of Polyjuice potion although she doubted that was still good, dittany, clothes ranging from 1998 to 1971, some of Harry and Ron’s clothes which she put up to her nose and took a big smell, smiling at their familiar comforting scents, some of the Christmas gifts she got for Christmas, including the magically enhanced sword in its encasement, two vials of basilisk venom, a half vial of the Mopsus potion, several healing potions, and odds and ends that wouldn’t be useful in any situation other than boredom.

She put everything back except the basilisk venom and the Mopsus potion. She wondered what it would take to destroy the room then immediately discounted the idea, she would surely die with it. She took another look at the Mopsus potion. It could give the drinker either telekinetic powers or seer like powers in the short term. If it gave her the seer like powers, it would be less than useful. It wasn’t likely that it would aid her in her current situation. She held the venom in her hands thinking furiously. What if she used the venom only on the door? If it was strong enough to destroy a Horcrux surely it was strong enough to destroy a door.

Sliding the beaded bag back onto her shoulder she headed towards the door, hoping she wouldn’t be discovered.

1954: Nurmengard- The holding room
Tom had been sitting in the chair unbound and in possession of one of the guard’s wands that he had stolen while they were being manhandled into the room. He barely held himself back from rolling his eyes at the explosive scene where Lucius lost all control and went muggle on Grindlewald.

Albus was not the only one who noticed Grindlewald’s actions toward his former accomplice, Tom was certain there was something that Grindlewald didn’t want them to know and it involved the powerful transfiguration teacher. Waiting for the most opportune time to cast a spell, Tom shrewdly listened as Grindlewald pushed every button Lucius had.

Tom had the cold type of fury. The kind that with the intention of burning down the world he would stay and watch for enjoyment, if it so pleased him. Grindlewald had the woman he considered family and he would allow no one to harm her or keep her from him.

Grindlewald spoke rapidly to his personnel and throwing the lot of them satisfied looks, walked out the door.

Tom, not wasting time to check on Lucius or Albus, stunned the guards. Using a well-placed disillusionment charm, he followed Grindlewald silently through the maze of hallways that made up the impenetrable fortress.

“Did you think I would be so easily fooled? That I wouldn’t notice I’ve been followed?” Grindlewald stated as he turned about face.

Tom prepared to answer when the warm voice of Albus Dumbledore spoke from behind his shoulder.

“If I had intended to hide, you would have never noticed me Gellert.”

“Maybe that would have been so fifty years ago but after lying stagnant at that school of yours, I doubt you would be much of a match for me.”

“Why did Hermione’s arrival in Godric’s hallow change things between us?”

“One day we were friends and the next day you bailed on me. Maybe I should ask you.”

“That is not what I am talking about and you know it.”

“She intrigues me.”

“The day she set unbreakable wards was the day I lost you.”

“There was never anything between us.”

“But there could have been.” Albus said persuasively, hoping that the boy he fell in love with all of those years ago was still in there. “You must let Hermione go.”

“And what are you going to do about it if I don’t?” Grindlewald sneered.

“Where is the boy that wrote love letters to me?”

“I am no longer that boy.”

“Perhaps, perhaps not.”

Grindlewald drew the elder wand at tauntingly pointed it at Albus’s face while Albus reluctantly
drew his wand.

Tom rolled his eyes at the hesitant Transfiguration professor. If Tom left it up to him they would never find Hermione.

“Imperio.” Tom lifted the disillusionment spell on himself while Albus looked at him in shock.

“Tom, using that curse could send you straight to Azkaban.”

“While you were standing there, talking about your feelings, I got shit done. After we get Hermione back, then you can ask him why he threw you over.” Tom stood in the corridor with mounting impatience. He would let nothing stand in his way. He turned to the cursed man.

“Take us to the Time room which holds Hermione.” Tom ordered in his cold authoritative voice. Grindlewald was clearly trying to throw off the curse and had a weaker man been the caster he would have, but he didn’t know Tom. Tom was the most magically gifted man since the founders, and currently he used his considerable powers in the name of saving Hermione.

They walked through the labyrinthine halls and stopped in front of a blank wall. With minimal urging, the blond man began to walk back and forth when a putrid smell emanated from the wall itself, and melted before their eyes. They stood before a jubilant Hermione who was holding two nearly depleted vials of Basilisk venom.

She took in the scene before her. Albus was stationary, having frozen mid step towards the previously blank wall with a comical expression of surprise. Grindlewald was still walking back and forth between them. Tom was holding his wand in a defensive position with a look of relief and amusement on his face. He should have known Grindlewald wouldn’t have been able to keep her.

“Lucius said we needed to destroy the room. Think you can handle that, Sir?” Tom asked letting his amusement color his voice.

Albus gave Tom a withering stare and beckoned Hermione out of the room. She scrambled to obey with pleasure, throwing her arms around Tom and planting a kiss to his cheek. Tom had always felt like she should have been family but couldn’t place the roll she would take, until now. She was like an older sister who had to grow up fast and raise her little brother after their mother died. She was a sister and yet a mother to him. He wrapped his arms around her in relief. He wasn’t sure what he would have turned out to be if they were unable to save her or if she, Merlin forbid, died.

Turning to Grindlewald, arm still wrapped around Hermione, Tom ordered the man take them to the room where they had been questioned.

As they walked, they passed the room in which held the time turner that was Grindlewald’s creation.

“Wait! I don’t think we should leave that here with him.” Hermione stated as she let go of Tom and knocked using the muggle tune that Grindlewald had used when he showed her the room and was let in. She quickly retrieved it meeting no resistance and was back beside Tom in moments.

“Here. Don’t use it unless the need is great enough.” Hermione thrust the thing in his hand and he gently took it between his fingers, and put it in an inner pocket of his robe close to his body.

When they got back to the original room, they found Lucius holding court over several henchmen who had been tied up and unconscious, using one particularly large one as a foot stool, as he rolled several wands between the palm of his hands.
It was at that moment of distraction that Grindewald threw off Tom’s Imperius curse. Sending spells over his shoulder and running for the door hoping to seal them in, not wanting to let Hermione slip through his grasp once again.

In the hallway it was Grindewald who faced the full fury of Albus Dumbledore. Both with wands at the ready, both determined to win.
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

Nurmengard

Chapter Seventeen

1954: Nurmengard- Hallway outside of the holding room

“You could have let us go quietly, Gellert.” Albus said quietly.

“You couldn’t have left without my expressed permission. Anyone can get in but only those I allow, can leave.”

“Is that how you have some of the most brilliant witches and wizards here? You force them to stay against their will?”

“It’s for the greater good.”

“I should have known. That a few unbreakable wards wouldn’t have changed your mind.”

“No but it did make me more cautious. I couldn’t believe that she erected wards I couldn’t break, that I still can’t break to this day! To have that kind of power…. I had to have it.”

“And that’s the crux of the situation. You wanted her power, not her.”

“It was the same plan I used with you. You wield incredible power too but alas, in the end I had to choose. She intrigued me more.”

“You made me believe we had something together so that you could manipulate me into having my power at your disposal?”

“You make it sound so deplorable.”

“That is because it is.” Albus flicked his wand at Grindewald sending his first wave of spells in a tightly controlled fury. Albus was so quick with his wand work that it seemed as if he were casting multiple spells at the same time but Grindewald was just as skilled, blocking them and sending back dangerous ones in return. The air was heating around them, making the floor crack underneath their feet. The air was filled with a myriad of colors as the spells rebounded between walls and their shields.

**HGHGHGHG**

The second that Lucius realized he was in the same room as Hermione, he leapt from his seat, engulfing her in a hug. Had the large henchmen he had been using as a footstool been conscious, he would have at least grunted in pain at having Lucius walk on him. As it was his flesh made a small squelching sound as Lucius’ foot landed on the unconscious man’s face.
“How very Gryffindor of you for rushing over, Lucius.” Teased Hermione.

“The damn tattoo has made me delusional, I am sure.” He grinned, capturing her lips in a quick kiss.

“Well, it didn’t make you a better strategist. That’s for sure.” Smirked Tom. “Where did you learn to throw a punch? You should get your money back but at least you broke his nose.” Hermione and Tom chuckled at Lucius’ dark look.


“As he walked in I got a small glimpse of a wand I was very familiar with. I had a feeling my wife would want it back.” Lucius kept his hands on Hermione as they slowly traveled her body with interest flaring in his eyes.

“My wand?” Hermione held out her hand as Lucius pulled it from his sleeve. Reluctantly relinquishing his hold on her waist. Hermione squealed in happiness.

“You don’t think I would have attacked someone just because of my feelings, do you?” He rolled his eyes as Hermione planted a kiss on his smiling face. He earned a surprised and appraising look from Tom that he completely missed. Having put all of his attention on Hermione’s lush lips again. Leaning down he was surprised when Hermione quickly turned to the heavily warded door and started to tear them down. She ignored Lucius’s tiny pout as she wiggled out of his arms. He would have to wait for a more appropriate time.

Tom Riddle’s eye brows rose at the complexity and power that her spells emanated. He began tearing down the wards that he was familiar with, and upon noticing a pattern within Hermione’s casting, began tearing the more complicated ones down right alongside of her.

“Even at seventeen, you are ridiculously competent.” Remarked Hermione to a smiling Tom. Lucius walked up behind her and pulled her into his chest as she continued to cast. His talents lied elsewhere but being the Heir to one of the oldest wizarding families, he was quite accomplished with wards. Especially blood wards.

“And they are down.” Mumbled Hermione, throwing open the door open.

Albus and Grindlewald were in the middle of a fierce duel, both battling for their very lives as lethal spells flew back and forth. Watching this pair duel was like nothing she had ever seen before. Neither one was moving much or talking but she could see the drops of sweat running down each respective face. It was painfully obvious to her that they were evenly matched and she struggled with what her next move would be.

There was a kind of honor at stake that forbade her interference. However, this duel was more important that one man’s pride. So, who should possess the Elder wand? Should she disarm the blond wizard? Should she allow Tom who was newly reformed to have the constant temptation? Lucius, could he handle being its master?

She felt, in that moment exactly how Harry must have felt over the years. Which choice would be the one to bring them all down and undo all of the good change she had wrought? She recognized that she only had a few more moments to decide before the choice would be taken out of her hands completely.

Nodding to herself, she made her choice and sent a silent apology to her husbands. May they forgive her someday.
Hermione took the split-second chance to step between the duelers giving Albus a chance to disarm his opponent while Hermione acted as a human shield.

All four men saw her intention two seconds too late as Hermione crumpled into a heap upon the floor having taken a spell straight to her chest. Albus quickly disarmed and bound Grindlewald, letting him stew under a silencing charm while he ran to Hermione’s side, his face a mask of pure agony. Lucius’ keening yell startled Tom into action as the three men raced to her side.

Lucius picked up her head and rested it on his lap as Albus and Tom sounded like they were singing their counter curses. Hermione was on the floor panting through the pain, still conscious, still alive. Their voices were fading in and out as she looked at agonized Lucius’ face.

“When we get you home, I am never letting you leave the house again. How many times do I have to face losing you before you listen?” He angrily said as he tenderly stroked her hair.

Hermione lifted her hand to caress his face, memorizing it as she felt the unmistakable pull of time. She wrinkled her brow in confusion. If one of her husbands was there, then why was she being pulled. She thought maybe he would be pulled too, but as she laid on the hallway floor she knew that he wasn’t feeling what she felt. He wouldn’t be able to ignore it.

“Lucius…” she began and then she was gone.

**HGHGHGHG**

1966: Headmaster’s office: Twelve Years Later.

Hermione was on the floor of the Headmaster’s office clutching her chest and gasping for air. She heard the uplifting trilling song of Fawkes as he took wing and landed beside her, letting his pearly tears drip onto her chest.

“That’s not going to work, Fawkes but luckily I have had a decade to find a way to heal her.” Albus walked in from his personal private chambers regulated to the Headmaster. “Go get Tom.” He bid the loyal bird and with a flash of fire and feathers he was gone. Albus kneeled beside Hermione, nonverbally casting powerful enchantments and charms. She felt the alleviation of weight that had settled on her chest the moment she was hit with Grindlewald’s spell.

“Albus, did you disarm and defeat Grindlewald?”

“I did.” He stated grimly. He would never forget the things that Tom and Lucius had yelled at him the second she had disappeared. Even though it was not his fault that she stepped in, the two angry wizards had laid the blame at his feet. He hadn’t been strong enough and because of that, Hermione had suffered. He had been humbled in the wake of their grief and fear.

“Where is he now?”

“Nurmengard. An entire stronghold as a prison. It was one of my more inspired ideas.” Albus stated as Hermione nodded, a relieved smile blooming across her face.

“Did Lucius make it home?”

“Yes, although he was absolutely furious with the both of us. Once you get home and he welcomes you, he may kill you.” He cracked a smile at his half joke. Lucius wouldn’t really kill her, but he might make her squirm for a while. Albus was relieved that she had responded so well to the healing and counter curses. She seemed to be on the mend.
“What year is it?” She asked breathlessly.

“1966. I have been Headmaster for one year.”

“Congratulations!”

“Thank you. It seems I can always count on you to appear at pivotal moments in my life.” He said as she chuckled weakly.

“Can you help me to the chair Albus? I seem to be a bit dizzy.” She had nearly made it into the chair when Fawkes arrived in a swirl of flame, Tom holding lightly onto one of his tail feathers looking as menacing as she ever had known. He stalked to the chair where she had unceremoniously plopped in surprise, ignoring the Headmaster’s stealthy and speedy exit.

Tom was tall and broad and as handsome as anyone could imagine. He looked intense and unamused as he grabbed her hand and forced her back into a standing position, walking around her, inspecting her body for damage. When he finally made it back so that he was standing face to face, he drew her into a fierce hug, letting out a gust of air that he must have been holding.

“I thought that I would never see you again. I thought you would surely die while between times. I studied and traveled, learning as much as I could so that when the day comes that the DADA position was again open, I would qualify as the best candidate for the position. I wanted to ensure that I would be here in Hogwarts for you while you were growing up, just as you had been for me. I wanted to be the biggest and best influence in your life. I still do.”

“Tom…”

“Shhh. Listen. I don’t love you the way Lucius does or your other husbands no doubt. But in many real ways you are mine. My family. The only one left that I have. Albus and I haven’t really spoken since that day and until the moment that Fawkes landed in front of me, I was convinced that I was alone and would always be. I am happy that you are alive, more than I can ever express.”

“Tom you shouldn’t make your life about me. You should find what makes you happy, find a nice witch if you want, travel the world, create new spells, whatever takes your fancy.”

“I’ve done most of that but Hermione you need to understand something. When I lost my parents, I was alone in a sea of people. The only moments I have not felt that way were when I was with you, looking for you, or doing something for you.”

“Tom, I have spent nearly my whole life wondering what you would have been like if you were happy. That is what I want. I want you to be happy.”

“When you get back to your time, don’t forget me. That would make me happy.”

“I don’t think I could forget you if I tried Tom.” She said laughingly while holding onto him in support, realizing that she would have fallen to the floor long ago if she hadn’t been in his embrace.

He settled her gently back into the chair and summoned the usual tea accouterments. He offered her the first cup, adding the honey just the way she did the last time she had taken tea with them in the transfiguration teachers office.

“You can come out now, Albus. I know that you have been eavesdropping this whole time.” Tom said offhandedly placing a cup of tea on the Headmasters desk.

“Am I forgiven then?”
“If you put her in danger ever again, I’ll make good of my threats from that day.”

“Noted.”

“What exactly happened after I left?” Hermione asked curiously.

“Nothing worth repeating.” Tom stated, taking another sip of tea while ignoring Hermione’s angry face. He seemed to be immune to it and it drove her crazy.

She gently set the tea cup on Albus’ desk and gave Tom’s hand a squeeze, quickly letting go as the familiar feeling of being pulled from around her middle warned her of her impending jump.

“Find something to live for, Tom.” She stated as she disappeared.

“I already have.” Tom whispered.

“Too right.” Albus said.

“Shut it you.” Tom narrowed his eyes in annoyance.

“Would you still be interested in the DADA position?”

“Are you seriously offering it to me?”

“Yes.”

“Then yes. I will be happy to take the post.”

“Good, good.”

**HGHGHGHG**

1972- The Headmaster’s Office: The Present.

Hermione ended up on Avery’s lap when she appeared in the Headmaster’s office again. She was overjoyed at having finally arrived back home and threw her arms around his neck, leaving kisses peppered all over his face.

“Thank Merlin!” Lucius yelled from where he had been pacing ever since he returned to his proper time mere minutes ago.

“You didn’t have to wait eleven years to find out if she was okay. So, I don’t want to hear it.” Tom said to Lucius.

Hermione jumped up from Avery’s lap to tackle Theo, claiming a kiss on his lips. He was happy and excited. She was finally home! And she was pressed very provocatively against his whole body, remembering clearly the night before last where they had worshiped each other’s bodies.

Lucius helped her back up before enveloping her in a huge hug whispering naughty promises in her ear, sexy punishments that awaited her for scaring him at Nurmengard.

She was twirled away from his arms by the agitated DADA Professor and slammed into his chest. His arms wrapped tightly around her as he laid his cheek on the top of her head.

“I’ve looked for you. If this is your time, then how come you didn’t go to school at Hogwarts?” Tom asked her.
“This is the time I will be in from now on but it isn’t my original time line.”

“Oh?” his voiced was muffled into her hair.

“It was 1998.”

“Bloody Hell! Why did you come back to this time?”

“You.” She whispered.

He pushed her far enough away from his body so that he could see her face.

“What does it have to do with me?”

“Everything. In my timeline, you were a dark Lord who killed everyone and everything. I came back to this time to destroy you.”

“Instead you saved me.”

“And that is the biggest accomplishment of my whole life.”

“If you were not already married, I would have kept you in a heartbeat.” He teased only half joking.

“Over my dead body!” Avery growled as Tom pulled Hermione back into his embrace, Laughing in relief.

The Dumbledore’s sat quietly behind the desk. Only one of them had the memories of Hermione’s time traveling through his life. The other was as much an outsider as any stranger. Future Dumbledore was sad and happy all at once. Happy that Hermione had changed so much and saved so many lives, but sad because he didn’t belong there anymore. He felt adrift, his anchor who had been previously dead was now lounging in Nurmengard prison. 1972 Dumbledore had been quick to bind them to Grindlewald this time, using him as their anchor. He was acting off of something that Lucius said about his tattoo that bound him to Hermione and the insinuation that Dumbledore himself would become a time traveler. Tom looked at Future Dumbledore over the top of Hermione’s chocolate colored curls.

“What are you going to do now?”

“Spend the rest of my life with Ariana and her family.” Future Dumbledore said looking at the back of Hermione’s head. “Thank you!” He said earnestly to her.

“You are very welcome!” she said slightly muffled in Tom’s chest. She was pushing against him but he only held on tighter.

“Tom! I can’t breathe!” she yelled as best as she could. With a sigh, he let her go, all three of her husbands’ glaring angrily at him. He smirked at them, daring them to say what they were thinking. Reformed or not, they knew better.

“What are we going to do now that all of that nonsense is finally behind us?” Asked Hermione

“I have a few ideas.” Avery said lustily.

“First you need to tell Sirius about your parents.” Future Dumbledore said.

“I completely forgot all about that!” Hermione felt like the worst person in the world. Who forgets
“It’s okay Hermione, we will make sure of it.” Lucius comforted as Theo slid an arm around her waist despite Tom’s watchful, narrowed eyes. It was obvious that Tom was extraordinarily protective of her. It fit with his personality though. He was a possessive person. Theo knew they would eventually clash and the duels would be epic, as long as they could keep it from Hermione.

“I am going to find Sirius and I think I should do it alone. Is there anything that happened between the time I left and arrived?”

“The Aurors came and arrested him and no matter what bribe we offered they still took him to Azkaban.”

“Of course they shouldn’t accept your bribes!” Hermione looked scandalized. Tom smirked at her innocence. She seemed so young to him now.

She left the men in the room to their own devices as she left, heading towards Gryffindor tower on the hunt for Sirius Black. Shaking her head as she went, muttering about entitled rich people under her breath.

Meanwhile back in the Headmaster’s office Tom Riddle turned to the three grinning idiots that got to be her husbands and pinned them down with his glare.

“If I for one moment think that you are not treating her the way that I expect her to be treated, I will make sure by the end of your lives that your most fervent wish is to have the Dark Lord version of me instead. Understood?”

“Yes, Sir.” They mumbled, not willing to admit that he still scared them shitless. The Dumbledore’s sat twinkling together behind the desk eating something that suspiciously looked like popcorn.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione finally found Sirius with James, Remus, and Peter in one of the empty classrooms. Sirius was standing opposite of Severus while the rest of the marauders were lounging in the empty seats, watching it all go down.

They must have been at it for a while because the lounging boys looked bored as hell while Severus and Sirius looked tired but otherwise unharmed.

“Sirius, can I talk to you? It will take a while. Hi Severus, James, Remus, Peter.”

“Hi.” Came the collective return.

“Okay.” Sirius said trying to fix his clothes nervously. Hermione had never sought him out before and she looked upset.

Hermione led him to the ROR and made it look like his bedroom at Grimmauld, not knowing what would be the most comforting.

“Sirius, I talked to Father this morning. Mother fought through the Imperius curse that he had on her and she hurt Reg badly. He will be okay; he is in St. Mungo’s. But father had to do something pretty drastic to save him. Mother died and because of that, the Aurors took him to Azkaban to await trial.” She led him to a few seats that had been left to the dust and sat, rubbing his back while he sat there unblinking looking as if they were talking about the weather.
“Who is going to take care of us?”

“I will. You and Reg are my family!”

He nodded numbly not knowing what to think.

“Don’t for one-minute think that just because I am married that you lose me. You are gaining three new brothers. What could be better than that?”

“Can we go see Reg?”

“Of course. I can’t imagine anyone would even try to stop us. Why don’t you gather what you need and tell your friends what you want them to know and meet me in the Headmaster’s office.”

“Okay.” He said but he didn’t move for several minutes but when he did, he threw his shaking arms around her neck. Hermione was cooing in his ear, trying to soothe him in his distress that he learned to internalize after a lifetime of dealing with Walburga. She held his quaking body until he pulled away from her, leaving the room and Hermione behind.

**HGHGHGHG**

Lucius, Avery, and Theo were getting antsy. They were once again left behind in the Headmaster’s office waiting for Hermione. They understood but hoped that she wouldn’t be making a habit of it. Plans had started to circulate in their brains of ways to keep her with them and occupied in the most delicious manner. Once they graduated from Hogwarts, they were considering ways in which to keep their witch in bed. Perhaps they could implement a rotating schedule. Hermione would definitely kill them if she ever found out.

Tom had left quickly after Hermione, stating that his fourth-year students would set the room on fire if left unattended. Future Dumbledore and 1972 Dumbledore were having a quiet conversation, no doubt catching up on current events now that Hermione had changed things.

The floo flared emerald and a face emerged asking for admittance into the Headmaster’s office. Future Dumbledore had made himself scarce, leaving the three students alone with their Headmaster. He was bid to come through and with a flash of bright purple fabric swirling about the room, Cornelius Fudge stepped through.

“It’s a nasty business, Albus. We are going to have to try him in a full Wizengamot trial. There is no way around it.”

“I will personally see to his defense, Mr. Fudge. We owe that much and more to the Black family.”

“Are you saying that we should let him off because of who they are, Headmaster?”

“Not at all. I ask only for a fair trial for the man. I will leave it up to the Wizengamot to decide the matter of guilt.”

“We would like to question Regulus Black and his next of kin is Hermione Black. I am here to secure her agreement.”

“No.” Said Lucius.

“No? who are you?”

“I am Lucius Malfoy, one of Hermione’s husband’s and Regulus is my brother-in-law. I say no,
you may not speak with him until he has been released from St. Mungo’s into Hermione’s care. After that you may again attempt to petition her. Until then, if I see you anywhere near my family, I will not hesitate to use my considerable influence to keep you out of any important Ministry positions for the rest of your political career.”

“Mr. Malfoy that is hardly necessary.”

“Isn’t it though?” Asked Theo with the same fierce look on his face.

Fudge looked around at the four men in the room not finding a friendly face among them.

“Well I’ll be off then.” He said stiffly to the room as he left the same way in which he appeared.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

Tom had been grumbling about the fourth years who actually did manage to set fire to his classroom in the five minutes they were left unattended before class began. This was one of the most trying classes he had as a Mr. Murray was prone to producing explosions with no effort whatsoever. He had never met a person so magically volatile that they couldn’t even preform basic charms. That boy was a menace.

Tom had walked half the class to the infirmary for various fire related incidences and gave the hapless Mr. Murray a months’ worth of detentions. Honestly he expected better from Gryffindor house.

As he was making his way back to his classroom, he was slammed into from the side by young Mr. Black who had tears streaming down his face. Knowing this was Hermione’s little brother, he always had a soft spot for him and treated the boy and his friends with an amused tolerance. He mused that since Sirius was Hermione’s brother, then he was Tom’s family too. He smiled gently and handed Sirius his handkerchief.

“Are you alright Mr. Black?”

“Yes, Sir. I think. Hermione is taking care of it.”

“Then you will be fine. Hermione is one of the most amazing witches I had ever had the pleasure to meet.”

Sirius looked up at his professor with shining eyes. Anyone who loved Hermione was good in his book.

“I’m sorry for running into you Professor Riddle.”

“It’s quite alright.” Tom chuckled as Sirius took off at his break neck speed. “I wonder what happened in Black’s life that Hermione came back to be in it. It seems like she is collecting the motherless.” He mumbled to himself slightly jealous that he was not her sole focus.

**HGHGHGHGHG**

Seven Wizards stood in a loose circle wearing silvery grey cloaks with the hoods up, casting their faces deep in shadow. They were in a forest in the dead of night, obviously in the throes of an argument. It wasn’t long before one of them got overly frustrated and yelled at his brethren.

“Between Dumbledore and Riddle we cannot risk our resources attacking Hogwarts!”
“If we all attack we can take over the castle. We have the man power for the first time since Dumbledore shut us down all of those years ago!”

“Do not forget it was you, Rosier, who pushed to have Riddle join us! You are the reason that Dumbledore found out about us in the first place!”

“I thought he could be trusted, he is half Gaunt and a Slytherin! He is fucking gifted and one of the most powerfully magical people I had ever seen!”

“You are on time out, Rosier!”

Two hooded figures next to the man indicated as Rosier elbowed him out of the circle, closing the gap on their ostracized brother.

“Fuck you! That was eighteen years ago! You can’t punish me now for it!” Rosier shouted at the backs of the robed men. They ignored his ranting by continuing their conversation that had started it all.

“Our whole army would fall in the face of those two wizards alone! You are an idiot to believe otherwise. We have to be subtler than Grindlewald was at Nurmengard and he was the epitome of subtle, only being defeated once the power duo decided to move against him. Have any of you found out why they interfered when they did?”

“No.” was the murmured answer.

“There is no way we can take both of them down. Neither can be turned. If we don’t want to repeat what happened the last time Dumbledore interfered, we have to leave Hogwarts alone. Before we make any move, we need to find the catalyst of Grindlewald’s downfall. I have a feeling it is the key to everything.”

“I need to go report to our Master. The Knight who provides the information will be rewarded one unconditional boon. Until next time.” The hooded figures apparated out of the clearing at their dismissal.
Chapter 18

Chapter Summary

The calm before the storm

Chapter Eighteen

Regulus had been asleep for the last hour in his newly renovated room at Nott Cottage. The house was a gift from the father of the groom, for the four newlyweds to live in until such a time where one of the heirs took over the family manor.

Hermione had brought Regulus home from the hospital that day and was extremely worried about his lack of communication. Not that she blamed him, but he wasn’t speaking at all. Every time she went in to check on him she would brush back his black waves and kiss his forehead. Finally, after several hours of this Theo decided to step in.

“Let him sleep.”

“It seems like forever since I’ve seen him last. If I wasn’t traveling through time, I could have been here.”

“No. You would have been at Hogwarts. Let’s just be glad that Orion had to go back home. Come to bed.” Theo had come with her leaving Lucius and Avery at Hogwarts until Saturday morning. Theo reached out his hand and pulled her to him as she slipped her smaller one in his. He tenderly kissed the corner of her lips dropping small kisses up to her ear. “Come to bed.”

She followed Theo out of the room and into the Master across the hall. He slowly peeled her robes off of her. Sucking in a breath through his teeth as he saw her golden sheer knickers.

“Merlin!” he breathed before shrugging out of his shirt and leaning in for a kiss. Hermione hooked her fingers in the elastic resting on her hip, intending on sliding them down her legs.

“Leave them.” He ordered grasping the tongue of his belt. Hermione pushed his hands aside sliding the belt smoothly from the loops of his trousers. Allowing the belt fall to the floor with a loud clink. He made quick work of shedding his trousers and pants. Not letting her take her time any longer.

He pushed her over the side of the bed, chest to the blanket, feet still flat on the floor. He gave her a playful smack on the bum making the tender skin redden before fading entirely. He got on his knees behind her pushing her thighs apart with his shoulder.

“Arch your back.” He directed watching as her arse rolled in front of his face. “Amazing.” He mumbled to himself.

He leaned forward and licked her slit, spending a little extra time on her clit, then dipping into her tight channel. Licking her honey that had gathered there.

“You’re fucking amazing Honey!” He said reverently as he stood up behind her. He started teasing
her with his cock, slowly pushing into her. Keeping his eyes tightly closed in ecstasy.

“Theo!”

“That’s right Honey! Tell me what you want.” He whispered to her.

“I love you.” Hermione declared. He stopped thrusting for only a moment, tightening his lips that began to turn up in a huge smile. He would never get tired of hearing her say that to him.

He flipped her over so that she was on her back and her legs were wrapped around his hips, arse hanging of the edge of the bed. The bed was at the perfect height. He entered her warm pussy again with his fingers dancing over her nub.

“Come with me.” Theo begged, sweat dripping off of them both.

With a loud cry Hermione came undone around him. Her head thrown back and hands clutching the quilt. Theo came a moment later his lips claiming hers as he rocked his hips against hers. His seed dribbling down her bum as he pulled out of her. Grabbing her wand Hermione cleaned them both quickly before collapsing back in bed. Theo pulled her tight to his body, letting his hands run over her until they both fell asleep.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione wrapped her cloak tighter around her body, the feeling of coldness seeping down to the very marrow of her bones. Only a small part of the gut wrenching cold was actually from the temperature. How did Sirius survive twelve years surrounded by dementors?

She was led to a small room off of the atrium of the impenetrable fortress.

“Sorry Miss. It is unusual for our prisoners to have visitors. It’s not really done. You must have some powerful friends.”

She smiled wanly at one of the only human guards in the place and sat in the chair provided. Orion was led in a few moments later, hands and legs shackled in magic retardant iron, his wrists raw from chafing.

“How long has he been restrained like this?” Hermione asked indignantly, gesturing at his mangled limbs.

“Since he has been here.”

“It’s been four days!”

“I just do what I am told.”

“This is unacceptable!”

“Take it up with the Ministry.”

“I intend to!”

“Dearest, let it go for now.” Orion asked in a soft voice.

“Okay…” Hermione still looked incredibly peeved. “You may go.” She gestured to the guard.

“How is Regulus? No one will tell me anything!”
“He is alright. Still a bit bruised and tender but I have him set up in a room with me at Nott Cottage.”

“What about Hogwarts?”

“The Headmaster has been kind enough to allow me to take the N.E.W.T.s early so that I can take care of Reg.”

“That won’t be necessary, Dearest. I do need to call in my favor now, however. I am sorry for what I must ask you to do.” Orion looked incredibly pained at what he felt he needed to do.

“I did make an unbreakable vow. I will follow through.” Hermione said through tight lips. She was chanting ‘It was worth it’ in her head over and over.

“In my office at Grimmauld place, there is a hidden vault entrance in the wall with the portrait of a woman wearing a pink gown. If you walk up to her say; ‘The end is neigh and before I fall, I will rise’. She will grant you safe passage. Follow the tunnel until it’s end, then smear your fresh drawn blood on the stone archway. It will magically open for you as I have already keyed the wards to include you. When you are inside, do not touch anything, and I mean anything except the Black family ring. Do not show it to anyone, do not talk about it, not even to your husbands. I will explain when you bring it to me. The vault will seal automatically at your departure. When you have the ring, you must bring it to my trial on Monday after next because I doubt even you dearest could convince them to let you see me again in the meantime.”

“It’s not a horcrux is it?” Hermione asked mildly revolted. Why else would the ring be such a state secret?

“No, not a Horcrux but it also isn’t magic that should be handled lightly. You must keep it with you at all times. Wear it on a chain and for the love of Merlin, do not put the damned thing on.”

“So it’s a nasty bit of magic?”

“Yes. But it will be necessary. Also, I need you to send a letter to Cygnus. Write this exactly: ‘What’s lost is broken and time will not heal our wounds. Put her to sleep.’ He will understand what it means.”

“What does it mean?”

“I am afraid that if I tell you, that it would put you in grave danger. It would better for you not to know.”

“Father, it’s not that I don’t trust you after the Horcrux hunt and all but this is a little shifty.”

“What Horcrux hunt?” He asked in confusion and curiosity.

Since Hermione had changed the course of Tom Riddle’s life obviously, there wouldn’t be any Horcruxes. Orion would have no way of remembering the timeline before she left. Damn. It was going to be ridiculously difficult to figure out what he remembers. She vaguely wished that she would have a special compartment in her brain for what had taken place in this timeline. Double damn.

“At least you are still the man who protected his son. So, whatever I had changed in time, I did not undo all of the good I did with you.”

“There are times when I remember things that did not happen. I vividly recall Christmas morning
and you were so happy to receive an ancient heavy locket. I don’t remember why. But I remember the whole scene. It never happened.”

“Oh but It did. I changed time enough to make that obsolete. So, I need to get the Black family ring. Okay I can do that tomorrow.”

“NO! Go tonight! As soon as you leave here!” He yelled in a panic as the guard rushed in to subdue his prisoner.

“It’s fine! I’m fine.” She yelled at the guard.

“I think your time is up.”

“Five more minutes?” she asked. The guard nodded his head in reluctant agreement and backed out of the room.

“Dearest, tomorrow you have to see all three of you fathers-in-law to remove the circlet. The longer it is not removed the worse the effects last. The circlet will eventually make you incredibly sick. It was meant to be a good faith gesture of trust to the new family.”

“Okay.”

“Sirius has to stay at Hogwarts. Don’t let him go to Walburga’s funeral tomorrow.”

“No matter what she has done, right or wrong, that is Sirius’ decision to make!”

“Normally yes but if he goes and I am not there, I cannot protect him.”

“Protect him from what?”

“I can’t say.”

“Can’t or won’t?”

“Both.” They stared at each other for an angry moment, both too stubborn to yield. “Do not touch anything else in the vault no matter what you see. Wear the ring on a necklace around your neck. Do not let Sirius go to the funeral. Bring the ring to the trial. Send that letter to Cygnus. Keep yourself safe. Don’t go anywhere alone.”

“Times up.” The guard said as he sauntered back in wand at the ready forcing Orion to his feet and away from Hermione.

“I love you Hermione, my lovely daughter. Remember what I said.” The door slammed shut cutting off anything else he might have said. A lone tear slowly ran down her face before she wiped it away. The first guard, the one who led her to this god forsaken place, ushered her out the way she came. Shoulders heavy.

She read a story once that described a mercenary who fought in wars for money. He was the best. He worked in that manner for years and years until one day when he was on the edge of another battle field, he got inexplicably weary. No matter how much he talked to himself, no matter what allies fell before his eyes, he could not lift his sword.

He was the only survivor and suffered seven years as a prisoner of war. When he finally returned home, he had asked his father if he knew why to that day he couldn’t lift his sword. And his father had said: You are world weary, my son, the sword is too heavy.
The mercenary said; But I lifted and practiced and used my sword up until that very moment. How would it be too heavy? And his father said; it is not the weight of the sword that prevents you. It is the weight of death that you must bear when you wield it. Your soul cannot bear one more death by your hand. To do so would irreparably damage it. Your conscience and mind are protecting you from further harm.

Hermione felt like she finally understood what that meant. She had been fighting so hard for so long that the thought of fighting once more made her sick to her stomach. She was not wand weary but she was tired. She just wanted the fight to be over. She would do whatever it took to make that happen and Merlin help the man or woman that stood in her way. Hermione twisted on the spot apparating away with plenty of determination.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione walked through the door to Orion’s office at Grimmaulds Place looking around in curiosity, having never been in there alone. She ran her fingers over the spines of the books on the shelves. Books that she would love to get her hands on.

She came to a stop in front of the painting Orion had indicated. It was a blond woman who had unruly curls that were trying to escape their pins in her coiffure. She looked familiar as if Hermione had seen her face many times before. She wrinkled her brow in concentration.

“Hello Dearest. That’s what he likes to call you any way. He told me that you would come by someday and that I would need to answer all of the questions you have for me when you leave the vault. Happy day!”

“What in bloody hell is that supposed to mean? What am I going to see that will set me off?”

“That depends.”

“On what?”

“See for yourself.”

“The end is neigh and before I fall, I rise.”

“Exactly my dear. That’s the spirit!” The portrait widened until it looked to be about the size of a doorway. It was a mahogany colored door with a brass knob. “The key is on the table behind you.”

Hermione turned around and right behind her there was a small round table that had not been there before. Upon the table was a key and a bottle, both had little tags. The bottle said ‘drink me’ and the key said ‘two’.

“What’s in the bottle?”

“No Idea dear. I am just a painting.”

Hermione gave her an unimpressed glare, showing her opinion. She knew how nosey paintings could be. With a shrug of her shoulders and more trust in Orion than when she first arrived in 1971, she drank the whole of the small bottle in one go.

She began to shrink and only stopped when she was half as tall as the table.

“When will this wear off?” Hermione asked the woman in pink.
“When you eat the cake dearest.” She gestured to the table that she had just shrunk beneath.

“I really understand how Alice must have felt in Wonderland!” She lamented.

“Accio cake!” the cake shot into her hand and she gently put the small petit four in a box that she conjured and stuck it in her beaded bag.

She walked to the painting and turned the knob slipping the key into the lock turning it until she heard a distinct click. She pushed the surprisingly real door open that was only a little bit bigger than she now was. The door led to a drafty stone walkway that slowly wound down in a lazy spiral. She followed the walkway, watching the stone path light up after each step. She felt the hallway level out as she neared the end. Coming face to face with a stone barrier.

She pulled a small potions knife out of her bag, stabbing the side of her middle finger. Then squeezed her finger until a good amount of blood beaded up on the tip. She swirled her finger over the stone, tracing her name in her blood. The stone was porous and it sucked her blood in the moment it touched the surface. It left behind a line of bright green, a color reminiscent of the killing curse. It glowed for only a moment before the stone rearranged themselves into an archway that reminded her of Diagon Alley.

The moment she stepped into the vault she froze. The room was bigger than the Room of hidden things, a lot bigger. She looked around at all of the things that were piled around her, keeping in mind Orion’s insistence that she not touch anything. She followed the winding path that led to the heart of the labyrinth and froze a mere ten steps in. Memories crashed around her as fear flowed over her. On a dressmaker’s form, there was a long silver hooded cloak. Where the face of a person would be sat a silver mask. A silver mask that she had seen before. In fact, it was the very mask that Antonin Dolohov wore at the battle in the Ministry, fifth year.

She stood there a moment longer wondering why the hell it was here and if it did indeed belong to Orion. He was going to be hearing from her about it. She continued to walk through the room keeping an eye out for the ring.

She spotted it, letting out a relieved breath as she picked up the pace. The ring was sitting in a wood lacquered box on a stone pedestal. She plucked the ring from the box not knowing if she was supposed to touch the box or not and deciding to leave it. She unclasped the gold chain from her neck and slipped the ring on to it, letting the ring settle between her breasts.

Hermione looked up before turning around and froze once again. On the wall behind the pedestal was a collection of paintings.

“Oh it’s you.” Said a grumpy voice from the frame. Hermione squinted her eyes trying to see it clearer.

“And you are?”

“Of course the meddling little Black wouldn’t remember me. After all of the times she barged into my life uninvited. Well, what a selective memory she has.”

“Percival, is that you?”

“Who else would it be?”

“What are you doing in the Black vault?”

“My mother was a Black. This was a gift to my grandparents.”
“So Arcturus is your cousin?”

“Unfortunately. We don’t get on.”

“That is an understatement.”

“Why are you here? Only the head of the family can touch the things in here.”

“My father sent me to get the ring.”

“Ah! Got into a spot of trouble has he?”

“It’s complicated.”

“It always is with you, isn’t it?”

“Hey, I did wonderful things for your family!”

“Perhaps.”

“You, ungrateful bastard!” Hermione turned around intent on leaving that place and the stubborn old goat who resided in the oil painting.

“You know; you look so much like my grandmother. The only difference really, is your hair color. I find that curious. Don’t you?” Hermione paused and slowly turned back around.

“Is there something you want to tell me?”

“Not really. But I am sure there is something you want to know.”

“And that is?”

“Information is currency, Hermione. I want an exchange.”

“What could a dusty portrait want?”

“Out of here.”

“I can’t touch it.”

“But you are a clever girl.”

“Well, Percival, I will discuss your release with Orion and your children. If everything works out maybe you will get out of here.”

“Your mother is squib born.”

“Excuse me?”

“I was watching when Orion had your bloodline detailed. It’s curious that you had two sets of parents. Don’t you think?”

“Orion already knows.”

“Oh yes. He knew the very day you stepped foot in this house. Why wouldn’t he accept the magically gifted child of his beloved little sister?”
“My mother was a Murray.”

“Not for the first ten years. But then again, your mother is not a stranger to a well done obliviate.”

“Are you telling me Jean Granger is actually a Black?”

“You are a clever girl aren’t you. That made you a half-blood and a Black long before you were adopted by the house.”

“I don’t believe you.”

“How else would I know about your real parentage?”

Hermione shook her head and whipped around running back down the path she had followed in on.

“Did you really think Orion would have accepted a Muggleborn girl, adoption or not?” He yelled after her. Hermione ran as if the hounds of hell were at her heels. The moment she stepped through the archway, the stones rearranged to seal it once again. Hermione didn’t look back once.

The pathway lit up as it did before with each step she took. She didn’t slow down even when her legs began to shake and burn from the exertion. Wouldn’t it make a lot more sense that Muggleborns were actually squib-born? Magic had to come from somewhere. With that being said, the pureblood war was thrown into a new light. The unbroken lines of magic resulting in ‘purebloods’ warring against their squib-born relatives. What a sobering prospect.

When she once again stood in front of the painting of the pink clad woman, she brought out the tiny fondant covered square and popped it into her mouth. She grew by degrees, not even realizing the change until she once again felt normal.

“Is it true that my biological mother is the squib born sister of Orion?”

“And I thought Percival was going to abide by Orion’s wishes this time. He will never leave the vault at this rate.”

“So it’s true?”

“You will have to ask him.”

“Oh, I will.”

Hermione stormed from the room with fire in her eyes. The ropes of exhaustion that had held her captive, fell away leaving a burning determination behind.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione woke up disoriented in a bedroom that she nearly didn’t recognize. As the room gained focus around her she noticed the strong arm wrapped around her waist. She was wiggling too much for the owner of the arm and as a result he tightened his hold on her, pressing her bum into his erection.

“Shhh Honey. It’s too early! Go back to sleep.”

“What time is it?” Hermione asked as she recognized Theo’s voice and relaxed into his embrace.

“Eight thirty Pet.” Came the amused reply from Lucius who was standing in the doorway.
Hermione sat up letting the sheet fall to her bare waist and stretched her arms above her head.

“If you keep doing that we will never leave.” Lucius’ voice took on a husky tone. “It would be absolutely worth it.”

She turned her head to watch Lucius walk into the room, shedding clothes as he went.

“I’ve missed you Pet.” He murmured seconds before he claimed her lips in a searing kiss. She felt fireworks explode in her belly as his lips dominated and manipulated hers.

She felt her hair being lifted from her shoulder as another set of lips sucked on the tender skin of her neck. Their roving hands leaving her nipples hard as pebbles and her center wet.

“Oh fuck yes!” Avery said from the doorway. Hermione could hear the rustle of clothing being removed and the soft clink of his belt buckle being undone. She moaned in overwhelming bliss as Theo’s fingers rolled her nipples between his thumbs and forefingers. Lucius still in possession of her lips, bruising them in his thorough dominance. Avery finally joined them on the bed, his hands spreading her thighs and moving between them. The first lick was like a lightning bolt through her core.

Her lips disconnected from Lucius’ as she arched her spine dragging in a huge breath of air. Lucius wound his fingers through her hair forcing her face back to his. He looked in her eyes for a moment, watching the result of the overwhelming stimulation on her face. Her eye lids were heavy and she fought closing them wanting to watch Lucius watch her. She wanted to drown in the feelings that they brought out in her.

Theo pushed her down to lay on her back, Lucius following sucking on her lower lip. Using the flat part of his tongue, Theo laved the tips of her nipples even as his fingers once again began to pinch them.

“She whores.” Avery said. Hermione could hear the rustle of clothing being removed and the soft clink of his belt buckle being undone. She moaned in overwhelming bliss as Theo’s fingers rolled her nipples between his thumbs and forefingers. Lucius still in possession of her lips, bruising them in his thorough dominance. Avery finally joined them on the bed, his hands spreading her thighs and moving between them. The first lick was like a lightning bolt through her core.

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“Lucius, I want to taste you!” She whispered against his lips, causing him to moan as he sucked her tongue into his mouth. The vibrations turning her on even more. The sexiest thing in the world was knowing how much her wizards wanted her.

Avery should get a medal for his amazing tongue skills. Hermione thought wildly. She was so close. He was frustrating her, bringing her to the edge and leaving her there, backing off just enough. His tongue was soft and lightly flicking her clit rapidly then he moved to her bared lips sucking and kissing them, only to return to her sensitive pearl with a flat yet firm tongue. Circling, retreating, then capturing.

Lucius was on his knees in front of her, offering his velvet cock for her to taste. She took him into her mouth, coating him with spit from tip to base. She licked the salty bead of pre-come off his slit, making him flinch and his cock to bounce. He followed this with a throaty groan. He sounded as if he were in his death throes, so vocal was his pleasure.

She exploded against Avery’s mouth, moaning around Lucius’ cock. Coming had relaxed her whole body, allowing her to take Lucius deeper down the back of her throat. With one final suck, he coated the back of her throat with his seed.
Theo rolled her onto her side lifting her leg over his as he prodded her sodding entrance with his erection. Pushing in slowly and letting her body try to suck him in. Once he was fully seated he began to move faster, snapping his hips furiously.

Avery was leaving a trail of kisses up her spine, making her shiver and moan. He turned her head back and claimed her lips.

“You are so beautiful, Kitten. I want to watch you come this time.”

Her lips were red and swollen. He pressed his fingers to her lips.

“Taste how sweet you are.” He whispered, pupils blown wide as he watched her suck her own honey off of his fingers.

Lucius had moved from his position next to her head, using a strip of silk to capture her hands and gently pulling them above her head. He secured them to the headboard before moving to the edge of the bed behind Theo. He took her foot that was draped over the straining sweating man and began to place kisses along the arch.

“Oh MY GOD!” She screamed as her walls began to rhythmically squeeze around Theo, riding out the waves of her second release. Making him moan as loud as her.

“That’s right, Kitten. Just like that.” Murmured Avery. She opened her lust filled eyes to look into his, watching the deep emotions flit across his face. His fingers tracing her lower lip.

Theo’s thrusts began to become erratic the closer he got to his own release. Lucius was kissing the back of her knee, causing her to suck in a quick breath of air. Her hips thrust against Theo’s, her small bundle of nerves rubbing against his groin making jolts of residual pleasure shoot through her body. She clenched around Theo, forcing him to come deep in her willing body.

Avery rolled her to her back getting up on his knees next to her hip and rolling her once more and pulling her onto her knees, chest on the bed, arse in the air. He shifted kneeling behind her gripping her hips with both hands he started caressing the curve of her arse, from waist to thigh. He leaned over dropping kisses along her lower back, licking her while leaving a wet trail as he went. He lightly blew, watching goosebumps raise over her skin. He straightened back up admiring the delectable sight she made.

He grasped his erection with one hand, lightly stoking himself and teasing her clit at the same time. Lucius was stroking her arms that were still tied to the headboard kissing everywhere his fingers touched.

“Oh, I like that!” She moaned.

“Do you like it when I fuck you like this, Kitten?” Avery asked burying his length deep in her pussy. Pausing for a moment before slowly drawing out then forcefully thrusting in once more.

“Yes! Don’t stop!” She begged.

“Don’t worry, Kitten. I have no intention of stopping.” Both of his hands were again on her hips, pulling her back to meet his powerful thrusts. Fucking her faster and faster. He was no doubt leaving finger shaped bruises on her delicate body.

His balls were smacking against her clit with every plunge. Putting her in the exact same predicament as when he used his tongue, not enough stimulation to force her over the cliff. He knew her body better than she did as he reached around her using his fingers to rub her to
completion, even if it meant giving up his driving pace. He rocked into her as she came for the third time, her pussy tightening so much that the tight rings inside her body were preventing his own orgasm.

Once the aftershocks slowed he began to once again thrust, his cock rock hard.

“Fuck, Kitten.” He growled picking up the pace before spiraling out of control. He threw his head back, mouth open, and face relaxed as he slammed into her a final time. His seed coating the walls of her tender pussy, warm spurts shooting deep into her core.

“You are so beautiful, Honey.” Theo said with a half-smile and semi erect cock after watching the show. Lucius was untying her wrists from the silk cloth, rubbing feeling back into them.

“I need to take a shower.” Hermione mumbled into the bed, utterly spent.

“I’ll help you Pet.” Lucius grinned wickedly.

He picked her up bridal style carrying her to the en-suite bathroom and placing her on the counter top to turn on the water. He picked her up once more walking both of them under the warm spray. He gently set her on her feet and brought his hand up to run his fingers through her hair ignoring the cold metal of the circlet. He massaged the shampoo into her hair then rinsing it as she was running the soapy loofa thoroughly over every inch of her body.

Once she was rinsed, Lucius turned her so that she was facing him and pushed her against the marble of the wall. He grabbed her thighs and picked her up. Bracing her against the wall as his hard cock prodded her swollen lips. He took one of her nipples in his mouth, sucking it until it was hard again. Her head fell back against the wall as he buried his dick deep inside of her body. He lifted his head from her chest to watch her face.

“I love you.” He said simply and tenderly.

Hermione lifted her head off the wall to look into Lucius’ face bringing one of her hands up to cup his face.

“I love you too, Lucius.” Hermione watched as the words she said to him made him come undone in a mind-blowing orgasm. She never felt more powerful or loved in her whole life.

After their impromptu romp, they had to start their shower all over again, shampooing and washing each other with a reverence found in those deeply in love.

**HGHGHGHGH**

Hermione was sitting in the incredible gardens surrounding Malfoy Manor with her husbands and their families. Her new in-laws. They were drinking tea and making small talk trying to avoid making Hermione uncomfortable by bringing up Orion’s circumstances and Walburga’s funeral that would be held later that day.

Regulus sat on her left as the siblings were surrounded protectively yet unconsciously by her husbands. He was quiet and reserved, only nibbling on the tasty treats that had been provided for the occasion. Hermione kept shooting him concerned glances out of the corner of her eyes, brows furrowed in worry. He still hadn’t said a word.

“I believe it is tradition for the bride to be relieved of her headdress by her fathers-in-law.” Announced Lady Malfoy in an attempt to move things along so as not to hold up the newlyweds.
Lord’s Nott, Malfoy, and Avery surrounded their daughter-in-law with smiling, pleased faces. The amount of prestige their houses would receive because of the incredible power that they could wield, magically and politically made the three powerful paterfamilias gleeful.

Together they slid the beautiful headpiece out of her hair and into her hands.

“Thank you!” She said sincerely, affection showering everyone near enough to receive it. This was her new family. She thought that despite everything, Harry and Ron would be happy for her.

**HGHGHG**

Tom was walking through the empty halls, patrolling as usual for a Saturday night. Students tended to stay in their respective dorms being too afraid of the stern Professor to venture out against the rules.

He tended to use that time to think. His life had been quiet for the last six years as he waited for Hermione to come back into his life. The parchment clutched in his tightly closed fist had invited him to the family tea earlier that day, but with his Professor duties he was unable to attend. It infuriated him that she was finally back and yet she was so far away from him. Would he be waiting his whole life just for glimpses of the woman he considered his closest family?

He stopped in his tracks. His eyes narrowed. He would not allow that to happen. Plans began to swirl around his brain.

When he got to the Astronomy tower he noticed a small huddled child sobbing. His brows furrowed. He recognized that dark hair.

“Where are your friends?”

“I like to come here alone. Usually it’s Hermione that finds me though.” Sirius wiped his tears away with the sleeve of his robe.

“You miss her.” He stated sitting on the floor next to the Black heir, Hermione’s brother. For a moment Tom was jealous of Sirius. He didn’t have to work for her attention like Tom did. He quickly shook off the dark thoughts. Both of them were here and Hermione wasn’t. It was irrational to be jealous of a boy who missed her just as much as he did. He put an arm around Sirius’ shoulders.

“She wouldn’t allow me to go to my mother’s funeral.”

“Did you want to go?”

“Yes. No. Maybe. Maybe I just wanted to tell her what a horrible mother she was.”

“Maybe Hermione had a really good reason for not allowing you to go.”

“Yeah. I know.”

“School will be over in three months. You will see her so much you will get sick of her.”

“I hope so.” Sirius’ lips turned up in amusement and nodded.

“Are you alright?”

“Yeah. Thank you Professor.”
“Any time.” Tom said standing up and dusting off the back of his robes. He left the much calmer boy staring out into the grounds surrounding Hogwarts and Hogsmeade.

He was walking back to his quarters determined to put a huge dent into the bottle of Ogdon’s Finest when he heard scuffling and angry whispers coming from a rarely used classroom.

“If you know what is good for you, you will go!”

“I don’t want any part of what ever this is Rosier!”

Tom’s eyes narrowed. What was the Rosier child doing? Using a nonverbal disillusionment charm he eased through the opened door.

“When my father sent you the letter you were supposed to activate the portkey and meet with them. You are pureblooded. Do your damned duty to your bloodline!”

“Like I said I will not join this, whatever the hell it is!”

“Then your family will suffer. Here is your last chance.” The young Evan Rosier handed a folded parchment to George Macmillan a seventh year Hufflepuff. Tom was impressed with Macmillan’s bravery as he refused to take the proffered parchment.

Silently releasing the disillusionment charm he snatched the letter from Rosier’s grasp. He unfolded it slowly watching the blood drain from Rosier’s face as Macmillan inched from the room while he went unnoticed.

*Join or your mother is next. Sunday Midnight.*

*The letter is a portkey and will automatically activate.*

*The Knights*

Tom’s blood ran cold for a moment before turning into molten lava pumping though his body setting his rage aflame. Between Dumbledore and himself he was certain that he took care of this shit. The retribution would be swift and all-encompassing in its deliverance.
Hermione walked into the courtroom flanked by not only her husbands but her fathers-in-law as well. They made quite a powerful entourage as the crowd stared and parted allowing the group to move where they would. It took only a sharp look from one of the Lords to send any overly curious onlookers to scurry on their way.

“Sit here, ‘Mione.” Theo said pulling her down to sit next to him in the front row.

“I have something that I must get to my Father.” She whispered to Theo. He quirked an eye brow in question.

“It’s a long story.” She mumbled. Theo turned in his seat and quietly passed on Hermione’s request to his father.

“He said you will be able to talk to him for a moment only after he is secured to the chair.”

“More chains.” Hermione said bitterly. Avery put his arm around her drawing her close to his hard body.

“Everything will be okay, Kitten.” He whispered in her ear before he tenderly kissed her temple.

They had been sitting for no longer than five minutes when the doors opened and a guard led a heavily manacled Orion flanked by several Dementor’s into the courtroom. The Dementor’s stayed next to the door hovering silently. Once Orion was in the chair and the chains had wrapped securely around his magic suppressing iron that held his limbs, Hermione jumped up ready to meet her father.

Lord Malfoy led her down, ignoring and glaring simultaneously at the disapproving Wizengamot. Once Hermione reached Orion, she lightly ran her fingers over the chaffed flesh of his wrist. A sob caught in her throat.

“I brought it.” She said quietly trying to control her emotions.

“I need you to put it on me. My left middle finger will do.”

Hermione carefully pulled the long chain over her head and opened the clasp. She slid the ring off and into her palm. She pushed the ring on the finger he had indicated but it wouldn’t go past the second knuckle.

“That’s good enough, Dearest. I love you. Go sit now.”

Hermione nodded, unable to talk past the lump in her throat. Lord Malfoy led her back to her seat,
his hand resting reassuringly on the middle of her back.

“The trial against Orion Arcturus Black for the murder he has committed of his wife, Walburga Arina Black is in session. How does the defendant plead?”

“I plead not guilty to murder. I plead guilty to protecting the life of my son. I am only guilty of choosing my child’s life over my wife’s.” He said with his chin held high.

“So, you admit that she died by your hand?”

“Yes.”

“That is called murder, Sir.”

“She was choking the life out of my son. Was I supposed to sit and watch? Let it happen? So, that she would be here charged instead of me?”

“There is always another option, Lord Black. You are a wizard of no little skill. Couldn’t you have restrained her?”

“I would like to see any of you make rational decisions when the life of your child is held in the balance.”

“So, you agree you had other options?”

“I agree that I had to stop her. And that is exactly what I did.”

“I see. Was your relationship with your wife strained?”

“In what way? It was an arranged marriage. We tolerated each other.”

“But something happened a few months ago. After that you could barely tolerate her.”

“I walked in on her abusing my son. The same son. I stopped it then.”

“How?”

“I, as you put it, restrained her.”


“I tried to make her see reason.”

“So, you could be rational that time but not this last time?”

“She wasn’t choking him to the point his lips had turned blue that time.”

“What happened after that?”

“My daughter came home and together we gave Walburga an ultimatum.”

“And that was?”

“Many things but the one that made her amiable was the money. She would have died before she would be cut off from my incredible wealth.”

“She is your wife. Was she not automatically allowed access?”
“She had her personal vault of course. Per the pre-nuptial agreement, she received an annual allowance from the Black vaults. However, I gave her much more freedom in spending than her vaults allowed.”

“How much would you say she would spend per annum?”

“Thousands of galleons. On clothes and charity.”

“Charity?”

“We donated profusely to many charities. It is how she spent her free time.”

“A woman who devotes her life to charity is not very likely to abuse her children.”

“What are you trying to imply.”

“The only other witness of who hurt the child is dead.”

“No, my son is alive and he is not two. He is more than capable of telling the court who hurt him.”

“Maybe, if your daughter wasn’t preventing our inquiries.”

“This is news to me.”

“Are you not telling her what to do? Why did she go visit you in Azkaban? She had to pull a lot of strings to make that happen.”

“My daughter has showed that she would never aid and abet a crime. She has done much for the wizarding world.”

“Oh?”

A voice from the other side of the Wizengamot chimed in. The Minister of Magic, Jenkins, stood and spoke to the panel. Albus Dumbledore sitting quietly next to her.

“That is actually the truth. She is to be rewarded the Order of Merlin First Class in two weeks.”

The Minister said.

“For what?” The inquisitor Selwyn said.

“That is confidential.”

“Even for the Wizengamot?”

“Yes.”

Eyebrows rose throughout the room. They had never heard of someone receiving an Order of Merlin that was confidential. Hermione kept her chin high and glared at the Wizengamot. She had no love for them after their treatment of Harry in 1996 and the Muggleborn trials headed by Umbridge in 1997-1998. Not even including the complete lack of trial for Sirius for the death of his friends. Among so many others. The room was quiet for a few more seconds before the inquisitor spoke once more.

“We are not here to discuss the outside actions of your daughter.”

“Of course.”
“Do you still claim innocence?”

“I claim right of the Lord’s.”

“That practice is out dated and no longer used. You have a trial by Wizengamot.”

“Trial by Lord’s is an ancient practice. It is my right as a Wizarding Lord to request it. And I call upon it now.”

“I second it.” Said Lord Nott who stood from his seat.

“And I pass the motion.” Lord Malfoy stood beside Lord Nott. Both of their family rings gleamed in the artificial light of the courtroom.

“This cannot be happening! Trial by Lord’s was abolished a hundred years ago.”

“No, it just hasn’t been called upon in a long time.” The courtroom erupted in chaos. Everyone was trying to talk at the same time, arguing over the validity of the Trials.

Hermione leaned over to Lucius.

“What is a Trial by Lord?” She whispered.

“Trial by Lord’s is pretty much a jury of your peers who will either absolve you or pass judgment. It is rarely called for because the judgments can be incredibly harsh. Their rules and laws are much stricter than the Wizengamot. But in this instance, they would be the fairer jury. The Lord’s take motivation and protection into account. Since Regulus is one of only two remaining heirs to the Black family, they will look upon Walburga’s crime more harshly than his stopping her. Also, the use of an unforgivable on your wife is not considered a crime.” Lucius explained. Hermione looked completely repulsed by the casual indifference of the treatment of women.

“I didn’t say that I believe it, ‘Mione. Anyway, The Ministry of Magic has to uphold any judgments passed by the Lord’s. It’s in one of the many charters that protect the Pureblood families and their traditions.”

“Is that why he needed his ring?”

“Yes. He can’t request a trial without wearing it.”

“Okay. Why would he insist that I not put it on? He said it was seriously dangerous magic.”

“I don’t want to even imagine what would happen if someone other than the Lord or his heir put on a family ring.” He shivered in revulsion. “It wouldn’t be pretty.”

“The magic of the rings are unlike most family heirlooms.” Theo whispered.

“They hold a special bond within them. The rings can and have rejected heirs before. They presumably choose the strongest magical male in the family. That’s why all male children are treated as heirs although the ring rarely choses anyone other than the first born, it has happened. In those cases, the wearers get incredibly sick or even died. I don’t think I have ever heard of a woman trying one on but I can imagine it wouldn’t end well. The rings are tailored to the male lines.”

“So sexist.” Hermione mumbled, sickened by the whole idea.

“Well it might be the only thing that saves Lord Black. He is not the one at fault here.” Theo said.
The courtroom finally settled down.

“With respect for the Charters of Wizarding Lords, we recognize their authority in this matter. However, you have three days. No more, no less. The Wizengamot steps down for this session.”

The Wizengamot members rose from their seats and filed down the pathways to the door. As soon as the door opened the rest of the Lord’s began filing in, obviously knowing they were going to be called. The Lord’s took the vacated seats of the Wizengamot.

The spectators in the crowd watched wide eyed as the richest and most powerful men in the country filed in. The Lord’s ranged from as young as seventeen and as old as one hundred and sixty-seven.

**HGHGHGHG**

Tom Riddle was a fair-minded man. He acted with a rational detachment that was the cause of several heated debates between the Headmaster and himself over the years. Tom felt that type of coldness worked in his favor, terrifying grown men and students alike. Albus on the other hand was worried that detaching himself from his ‘humanity’ would be to the ultimate detriment of the powerful young wizard. In this particular case, Tom found it nearly impossible to hold his face in a stone like blankness as he held Evan Rosier by his hypnotic eyes alone. The fury pounding through his veins demanding a sacrifice, and who better than the family who brought about the death of his own. He felt the world bow at his feet as the swift feeling of vindicated justice crashed over him. He once told the elder Rosier to just give him a reason to retaliate and it would be swift. His death, however, would not be. Rosier deserved no less than his full creative attention. His hand was still clenched around the letter Rosier tried to force on Macmillan.

Evan Rosier was shaking where he stood, while a small yellow puddle grew around his feet. Tom sneered in disgust. Just another reason why the pureblooded trope was complete horse shit.

“Is this what seven years of magical education taught you? You naive little idiot. Let me tell you something about the world. There are people with political power, men like your father, who do as they please because they feel they deserve it. They get away with their narrow-minded misdeeds because for the time being, they wield the power but political power can only be held as long as the wind blows that way. On the other hand, there is magical power. Power that can force all other factions to their knees and is usually the cause of upsetting the balance in government. Your father is playing a dangerous game. He wants to compare his political power to the full force of my magic? So be it. Who am I to dissuade him? I want you to give him a message for me. If he disbands his little pleasure group now, I will not come after his family. If he does not, I will personally see to the end of his entire bloodline. Do not think for one moment I am not capable.” He threatened, his anger under tight control.

“Yes Sir!” He squeaked. It was well recognized that Professor Riddle was a man who has seen and done things that if he ever sat in front of the Wizengamot would no doubt end up with a lifetime sentence in Azkaban or with the Dementor’s kiss. The rumors that flew around the DADA Professor were serious. It was no doubt the most interesting and well taught subject at Hogwarts. That was the thing. He was the best because he had intimate firsthand knowledge. On top of that, Rosier’s father was constantly telling him to avoid the powerful Professor at all costs. Tom Riddle smirked as he watched the memories float to the front of the unsuspecting student’s mind. Was Tom a master Legilimens? Hell yes! Did he conform to the Ministry’s acceptable use policy? Not since he mastered the spell nonverbally. It really wasn’t his problem that some wizards were too weak to learn Occlumency.

“Do you need me to repeat my message?” His silky voice dripped with disdain, his eyes showing
exactly what he thought of the young wizard in front of him.

“No, Sir. I… I… got it.” He stuttered breathlessly. He didn’t move a muscle. He didn’t dare do anything Professor Riddle didn’t expressly order. He was humiliated and embarrassed. He hadn’t pissed his pants since he was four at Nott manor when Theo and Lucius locked him in the Gallery of Lord’s under the agitated eyes of the deceased Nott paterfamilias.

“Get out of my sight!” Tom growled. Rosier ran past him faster than Tom would have predicted. He waved his wand, vanishing the evidence of Rosier’s cowardice. Disgusting. He once again turned to the letter that was clenched tight in his fist. Fucking Hell. He would have to go straight to Albus. He shook his head. At least they were in agreement to keep Hermione out of the loop. They decided a long time ago that she was theirs to protect and as such they both took the job seriously. Hermione had so much on her plate already. This was a school matter. That’s what the two wizards had convinced themselves of anyway.

**HGHGHGHG**

Albus had been sitting behind his large desk, staring into the flames of the open floo network with a look of disquiet on his face. He had just returned from his seat on the Wizengamot. Orion’s decision to go the old route worried the Headmaster. The Lords were not known for their consistency, one of the reasons it was not used anymore. There was nothing more he could do.

He was startled out of his quiet reverie when the door to his office slammed open, and a furious Tom Riddle stormed in throwing a piece of parchment in his face. Albus picked it up and smoothed it out, his eyes immediately jumping to the signature.

“Where did you come across this?” Albus asked in a hard angry voice. Tom was not the only one to assume they had successfully disbanded the group years ago.

“Young Rosier was threatening Macmillan and I saw the whole thing. I gave him a message to give to his father.” Tom stated darkly.

Albus looked at him over his half-moon spectacles. He was worried about the young man, knowing he was walking a tight rope between what was right and what was wrong. Albus had a feeling that Tom would have to continuously make the choice over and over to stay on the side of the light. Without Hermione, Albus decided it would only be a matter of time before the wizard in front of him fell. He made a decision then and there. He could no longer keep Hermione in the dark. By telling her what was going on he would be betraying Tom and that wouldn’t be without consequences. It wouldn’t be the first time the two powerful wizards were on opposite sides of a feud. Albus would do what was necessary. After all he owed Hermione more than he could ever repay. He had a feeling she would prefer to stand with Tom than be blissfully unaware.

“I will take the portkey.” Albus said.

“Absolutely not! First of all, there is no reason to go alone. Second of all, I will be taking the portkey and you will stay to protect the castle like a good little Headmaster.”

“So, you are not intending to go alone?”

“I can handle myself, old man!”

“You are just as stubborn as you always were. We both shall go.”

“And Leave Hogwarts undefended? I think not!”
“Undefended? Minerva will be incredibly insulted to hear that. After the last Quidditch match I thought you learned your lesson about baiting the unpredictable Scot” His smile was only half hidden by his white beard.

“I allowed her one free shot.”

“Tom, I was there and witnessed the whole thing. I think you should cede defeat when it comes to Minerva. She reminds me of Hermione. Terrifying, the both of them.” Albus said with a shiver. Tom smiled fondly. It was one of the things that he loved and admired about Hermione.

“Sunday it is then.” With an incline of his head, he left the Headmaster’s office. The smile dropped off of the heavily lined face of the Headmaster the moment the door closed behind Tom. Hermione was in the midst of the trial of her father, which all of a sudden didn’t seem so odd. Someone was definitely pulling the strings of this trial.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione was nervous for her father. He seemed confident but she felt the cold waves of intuition that had kept her alive for far too long. Something was going on. She could feel it deep in her gut. After retrieving the Black Family ring, she had sent an owl to her Uncle Cygnus saying exactly what Orion had bid her say. The response she got in return was disquieting to say the least. The note itself was innocuous, it was the signature that made dread settle in the pit of her stomach. – Lord Black.

The implications were obvious. He believed Orion’s fate was sealed. Hermione had been in the wizarding world long enough to realize something wasn’t right about this whole thing. In her time, Lucius Malfoy got away with more and worse and his only punishment was donating millions of galleons to the Ministry. In this time, it is an undisputed fact that Orion Black was the man with the power. So why couldn’t he bribe his way out of this? Not that she was condoning bribery, but the complete lack of it was a warning sign. Someone was intending on using this trial as the paterfamilias downfall. Who else but Cygnus would gain? Sirius was too young and she was a woman. The wizarding world was woefully lacking with regards to woman’s rights.

Orion was still chained to the chair in the center of the courtroom with the Lord’s sitting in the recently vacated places of the Wizengamot members. Where the Wizengamot got down to business with a detached efficiency, the Lord’s were by their very nature slow in public action. They waited with bored indifference while their peers got settled in.

There was a flash of fire in front of Hermione’s face. A single Phoenix feather with a tightly rolled scroll attached, leaving her in no doubt of her correspondent. She smiled slightly. Albus. The arrival of her message did not go unnoticed by Orion’s new jury. Many looked on in interest, wondering what could pass the incredible wards of the ministry. No one looked surprised however, everyone knew who she was.

Hermione,

Do you remember the circumstances surrounding the Riddle’s deaths? We have recently uncovered their organization’s survival despite our efforts. Having believed that Tom and I eradicated the problem eighteen years ago, it came as a complete shock to find certain events trying to repeat themselves. I fear your father’s trial is little more than removing an obstacle. He has been marked for elimination. I believe the Knights are more powerful than we could ever have known.

Forever yours
The fear in Hermione’s stomach doubled and writhed. Without a word Hermione looked at the gathered Lord’s noting which ones met her eyes and with a well-placed nonverbal, the letter erupted in flames making several grown men flinch.

“Hermione?” Theo asked in concern at the retribution set on her face.

“This was all a set up. I bet Walburga was released from the Imperius by someone who knew he needed to return to get papers for the Wizengamot.” She whispered. They could feel her draw power, wrapping it around her like a voluminous cloak. Lucius took in a swiftly indrawn breath. She was preparing for battle. Her husband’s slid their wands out, gripping them tightly in clenched fists. They would follow her to hell and back.

The room fairly crackled with the cumulation of power that the world hadn’t seen since the days of the founders. Those in the room could taste the acrid metallic air that surrounded them, threatening to choke them with little more than a thought. The wizards in the room feared for their lives. As well they should. The Lord’s waited in uncomfortable silence until the doors opened once more. Cygnus flanked by Antonin Dolohov and Hrodolf Lestrange sauntered in, not noticing the thick corrosive layer of magic that was waiting for the merest hint of direction to be unleashed.

Orion’s gaze hardened at the sight of his brother walking with the last two missing Lord’s. His eyebrows raised as a thunderous look overtook his face when Cygnus sat in the Black family seat that should have remained empty. After all Orion was wearing the ring. Who needed enemies with family such as this?

“Et tu, Brute?” Hermione whispered not missing the satisfied amusement of her Uncle. Her mouth flattened into a thin grim line. Her hair sparking wildly in her cold fury. Her husbands were too tightly wound to make a reply, unconsciously feeding even more power into Hermione’s summoning.

Lord Potter, Harry’s grandfather stood up gaining the attention of the gathered Lord’s.

“Gentlemen, we have been called here by the right of one of our own. The crime he has been accused of is a serious matter. The murder of his wife, Mrs. Walburga Black.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Scabior had been feeling itchy ever since that Monday morning he woke up with a migraine. Something just wasn’t right. The whispers that circled around the dregs of the school and beyond were disquieting to say the least. Normally such goings on would not concern the scrappy fourth year but the conspiracies surrounded Hermione. He couldn’t allow anything to touch her. He didn’t even think this time before heading to the Headmaster’s office. There was only so much he could do without help.

He only made it a corridor up before passing his DADA Professor. He had taken a grand total of three steps before being grabbed and flung into the nearest classroom. His terrifying Professor chased out the snogging Hufflepuff’s that had been occupying the room before setting wards around the door that Grindlewald would have killed to learn. Wards unconsciously taught by Hermione.

“What do you know about Hermione?” Tom asked as he narrowed his eyes. Scabior was a natural Occulumens. He was lucky that the boy had been in deep thought about Hermione as he passed. It was rare for Tom to get anything from him at all.
Scabior wasn’t outwardly moved by the intensity of Tom Riddle. He had too much experience dealing with the seedier side of the wizarding world. His sharp blue eyes calculating the odds that not only would his Professor listen to him but also be moved enough to aide Hermione. The indecision was warring in his eyes until he came to a decision. If only half of the stories of the man were true, he would be in a prime position to help her. Mind made up, Scabior met Tom’s eyes.

“I have heard that there is a secret group that goes by the name, The Knights. They want a pureblood society and until now they lacked the means of moving on it politically with any success. Lord Black has been blocking their attempts for years. I heard that several years ago, a person intimately close to the family Imperiused the Black Matriarch causing friction in the house. They needed to wipe out Lord Black’s entire line which includes Hermione and her younger brothers.”

“Why would you care?” Tom asked curiously. He knew the type of family Scabior came from.

“Hermione is not like anyone I have ever met, Pureblooded or not. She is kind and happy. I never want to see her like my mother. I need to protect her.”

Tom smiled. Scabior had a lot more in common with the DADA Professor than he could have ever imagined.

“So, the Knights want to destroy Orion’s children? How?”

“I heard they will take down Lord Black at his trial and when his children become Cygnus’ wards they will be imprisoned or worse. The word in the underground is that there is a bidding war going on about who will knock up Hermione.”

“She is protected by her marital status to Nott, Malfoy, and Avery.”

“Except no one wants her to have that much power. They will try to fake her death.”

Tom’s heart lurched in his throat and dropped to his stomach. Hermione.

**HGHGHGHG**

Sirius and James had found an amazing hidden passage out of the school coming out at Honeydukes at the end of their first year. They had been using it the last few months to keep Remus in chocolate, especially after the full moons that seemed to be more difficult for him than others. That day, they had noticed Remus was nearly out of his favorite dark chocolate peanut clusters and decided to make their trip. To Sirius it was also a way to ignore the uncertainty of his father’s trial that was taking place.

However, once they had filled their pockets with chocolate and emptied of galleons they decided to take a walk around the small quiet town under the cover of James’ amazing cloak. They had meandered to the edge of the town munching on their own treats while gazing on the Shrieking Shack in interest, never having seen it before. Once it had started flurrying and the temperature dropped, the boys decided to head back to Hogwarts. They only made it several yards back the way they came when they heard the low rumble of men talking in the trees.

“The Black Bitch………..Next……..Under……Belongs” Said a man who was clearly boasting. They could only hear bits and pieces of the words he was saying.

“Grab…Sirius…Heir.”

Sirius turned to James the whites of their eyes showing in fear. Without saying a word to each other
they quietly back tracked onto the road, tiptoeing the whole way to avoid detection. They ran all the way to Honeydukes not even caring if the cloak covered them well. Shoes and trouser bottoms attached seemingly to nothing.

It wasn’t to be an easy getaway though. One of the men had heard the crunch of snow and followed the footprints at a slow pace. Once he got to the sweetshop, he watched as the door was flung open seemingly by its own accord and continued following. It took less effort than anyone would have believed to stun the proprietor and follow the squeaking shoes down to the cellar. The boys, not seeing that they were followed, threw off the cloak, and began lifting the loose stone that hid the secret passage.

“I don’t think so boys.” The man sneered. With a flick of his wand the stone slid back into place on the floor, sealing the boys out.

“Well, well. What do we have here? A Potter and a Black. This must really be my lucky day! Ten thousand galleons for the Black alone!” He rubbed his hands together before sending ropes at the two second year troublemakers.

Sirius and James may have been young but they were mischievous and on their way to being powerful in their own right. Fearing what was coming, the boys dodged, jumping to the side while watching as the ropes fell uselessly to the floor. Sirius scooped up the discarded cloak and rushed the would-be kidnapper, James following closely behind. The attacker’s first mistake was underestimating the young boys. His second was locking his knees. With a well-placed shoulder, Sirius toppled the man. His wand clattering to the floor, sliding under the boxes of product. They didn’t wait for the man to jump to his feet before rushing again into the shop front. Horror overtook them when they saw the shopkeeper on the floor unconscious. Spending little more than a moment frozen with incredulity, the boys ran full out, heading to the gates of Hogwarts and yelling for help. They ultimately sat at the gates huddling under the cloak, shivering in fear, waiting for anyone to notice that they were missing and needed to be found.

It was lucky for the two miscreants that Headmaster Albus Dumbledore was completely out of popcorn and had gone to the three broomsticks to pick up another batch of Dolly’s specialty. He had started when the door to Honeydukes seemingly opened of its own accord before a burly man rushed in after. He had stealthily moved from the warmth of the pub to the sweetshop and had no more than reached the door when it was flung open once more, James and Sirius running as if death chased them. And he supposed death was following them. Mere moments later the man who had rushed in, careened out. He stopped point plank, his arms akimbo as he found a deadly wand centered between his eyes. Following the line of the wand he saw the infuriated Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore.

**HGHGHGHG**

The doors to the courtroom were opened once again to admit a Lord that had never sat in his family seat in all of the years that he had donned the family ring. He was powerful and skilled, his very presence making lesser men quake. Tom Riddle walked in as if he owned the place, sitting in the Gaunt family seat casually winking at Hermione the moment he caught her eye. Pride swelled up in his chest as he breathed in the potency of her magic, letting it wrap around him like a comforting blanket.
Chapter 20

Chapter Summary

Trial by Lords

Chapter Twenty

Holding a man at wand point is not something that the remarkable Headmaster was usually engaged in but he felt he would be entirely justified in this instance. Not only was he bound to protect his students but he was rather fond of them. What enraged him wasn’t only the fact that his students had nearly been kidnapped but the fact that it was one of his trusted Professors’. This he could not allow. He had trusted the man. Professor Hornby was an extremely well liked teacher and over the years he had counted him as a friend. This betrayal of everything decent burned in Albus.

Professor Hornby took the headmaster’s hesitation with a smirk and quickly cast a nasty hex. Dumbledore was not the most powerful wizard for no reason. Before the other man could blink, his spell had been blocked and was on the receiving end of a very nasty binding jinx and a powerful stupify.

Albus removed the unconscious man from the streets of Hogsmeade and left him, bound on the floor of the shrieking shack.

Dumbledore strode purposefully to the gates of Hogwarts, slowing enough to notice the shimmering disturbance of James Potter’s cloak.

“Help will always be given at Hogwarts to those who ask for it.” He muttered quietly, opening the gate wide enough for two twelve-year-old’s to pass. Once the shimmering had passed the boundary, he closed the gate with a snap, swirling in a rush of fabric. No one noticed the Headmaster at the gate, nor his hasty apparition. He landed grimly in front of his bound professor no twinkle in sight.

**HGHGHGHG**

Tom Riddle’s annoyance with the pomp and circumstance in front of him was obvious to everyone, he didn’t even bother to hide it. He rolled his eyes, slouched, and overall made every Lord in the place uncomfortable with the feeling that Lord Gaunt felt the whole thing was a waste of his time. And it was. He made his views excruciatingly clear after thirty minutes of hearing Orion’s testimony. Orion had never been friends with the famed Professor Riddle and shock filled the room with his endorsement.

Several lesser Lord’s followed his example allowing that Orion had done what he had to do to protect the family line.

“I don’t even know why Cygnus is here! He isn’t a Lord; he isn’t even a direct heir any longer. I vote we throw him out.” Riddle said in complete disdain.
“I second.” Came from the surprising voice of Lord Abbott. It was surprising because he held no love for the Black’s but what the gathered Lord’s didn’t know was that Hermione and her adoption into their line ensured the unlikely alliance. Tom sent a nod in his direction. The Lord in question raised a questioning eyebrow. It seemed he wasn’t the only unlikely ally.

“And I pass the motion.” Lord Malfoy said.

“I will be regent if anything happens to Orion, I deserve to be here.” Cygnus scowled.

“I think you are confused about something. Anyone can be regent of a family. In this case Orion named Mrs. Um Malfoy? Nott? Avery? Black? months ago. Anyway, you will not be the boys’ guardian.” Lord Selwyn said. He was the Goblin liaison in the Ministry and all family guardianship legalities have to go through him before they are submitted to Gringotts.

Cygnus’ face turned red as he spun around pointing his wand at Orion. He froze a second before taking one step closer when he felt a wand at his neck. Tom Riddle’s wand.

“Call off your watch dogs, Black, before I do something that you will deeply regret.” He said calmly clearly in complete control of the situation. Lestrange, Rosier, and Dolohov jumped to their feet the second Tom’s wand met flesh. They were a little slow on the up take. They made terrible representatives of Slytherin and henchmen.

Tom looked over at Hermione being forcefully held back by all three of her husbands. Tom rolled his eyes. She needed to have more faith in him.

“Cygnus, why don’t you tell all of us why you are really here. I am sure your peers would be ecstatic to find out that you have been recruiting their children at Hogwarts. On top of that, your recruiting methods include threatening their mothers.” Tom said loudly.

“What is he talking about Cygnus?” Asked Slughorn who was munching on some crystalized pineapple.

“I have no idea.”

“Don’t be modest. Some of them already know. You became the leader of the Knights after Arcturus died. You have used the same scare tactics to get young pureblood heirs in your little club. Why don’t you tell them that you actually go through with the threats? That you are the real murderer here. Tell them that it was you who overrode Orion’s Imperius and set Walburga on her own son, Regulus, in the hopes of lessening the competition for the title of Lord Black.”

“That is absolutely ridiculous.” He sputtered. His face was beet red and he was sweating profusely. Droplets forming microscopic rivers under his stuffy formal robes.

“Well there is an easy way to check. I happen to have a small bottle of Veritaserum right here. How lucky.” Tom pulled out a huge bottle of clear liquid that was stoppered and sealed with red wax. The label said ‘Orion’s Trial’. Tom was smiling as if Christmas not only came early but his birthday too.

“Preposterous! That is not necessary.” Cygnus roared.

“Really so you confess?”

“What? No!”

“I vote we give Cygnus the Veritaserum.” Tom said tauntingly.
“He is not a part of a Lordship.” Lord Burke stated. “Therefore we have no jurisdiction to dose him.”

“But his answer affects this outcome for Lord Black.” Lord Weasley said.

“I know for a fact that my son was threatened. I would like to hear what he says under Veritaserum.” Announced Lord Parkinson. Choruses of assent flooded the room. Tom saw Hermione relax a bit into her seat as her swirling magic receded infinitesimally. He smirked in amusement.

Lord Malfoy flicked his wand and sent a nonverbal ‘petrificus totalis’ at the younger Black. Tom broke the seal and forced three drops of the clear liquid into Cygnus’ mouth. Waiting a moment longer than necessary, Lord Malfoy grudgingly released him from the spell.

“We will start on something relatively easy. What is your full given name?” Tom asked.

“Cygnus Nigellus Black.”

“Do you know of the organization that styles themselves as the Knights?”

“Yes.”

“Are you the leader?”

“No.” Cygnus said flatly as Tom’s surprised face melted into a dangerously contemplative one.

“Do you know who is?”

“Yes.”

“You should ask the questions that revolve around Orion’s trial.” Lord Rowle stood up, clearly disapproving of the whole thing.

“Did you override Orion’s Imperius on Walburga Black to kill her son Regulus Black?”

“Yes.”

“Who is the leader of the Knights?”

“Lord Nott.”

“No! That’s a lie!” Lord Nott yelled in panic.

For a moment, the whole room was silent. Hermione and Theo looked horrified, frozen in shock. Hermione’s gaze met Tom’s. Lord Malfoy had stood up and disarmed and bound the man who was indirectly an in-law. There was nothing worse to a Malfoy than loss of honor. Even if it was self-serving. A man’s word was his bond.

“I move to dismiss the charges against Lord Black.” Tom yelled above the scandalized arguing. The room quieted for a moment before the chains retreated from the chair and Orion stood, the manacles falling away as he was pronounced innocent. Hermione tore away from her husbands to wrap her arms around Orion’s neck and sob into his shoulder. He slowly patted her back until she calmed down.

“I was so worried.”
“I know dearest.” He kissed the top of her head before she disentangled herself from Orion and wrapped herself around Tom.

“It’s okay, Sweet.” He murmured to her as she kissed his cheek.

“Thank you, Tom!”

“Of course? And to think you doubted me. I’m wounded.” He smiled as she lightly hit his chest.

They were so caught up in the moment, the happiness, the relief that they didn’t realize they were being watched.

**HGHGHG**

Nurmengard was a huge monstrosity of a prison. It had taken the small band of men two weeks to get there without drawing any attention, they didn’t want anyone to know exactly who was responsible for Grindlewald’s escape. Earlier in the day they had relieved the first group of men from their surveillance during the last three months.

Their leader had determined that while the country was up in arms about the Black trial they would take the opportunity to make their move. Filmore Rosier was finally going to earn back some of the respect the family was due after the Riddle debacle.

“Umbridge, Carrow, take the rear. Marchbanks, Burbage you are with me.” Rosier watched for a few minutes making sure that Umbridge and Carrow got into place before moving to the side of Nurmengard.

It wasn’t necessary to fell the wards before moving in because they had an inside man. A prison guard, Henrich Weber had always been Grindlewald’s man and when he was contacted by a fellow believer, he jumped on the chance to free the unfairly imprisoned martyr. They only needed a way in and a way out. He could provide that but they could only leave with the same number of people they came with. That meant someone would have to stay behind and take the place of Grindlewald.

As the group of men approached the boundary, Weber allowed their entry. They had exactly thirty minutes.

Rosier walked in with purpose, following Weber through the maze of hallways until they opened a plain grey door and strode through. They quickly came to a stop in front of Grindlewald himself. It was obvious that he was held inside an invisible box with little creature comforts. It was obvious that someone incredibly powerful warded the blond man in, there were very few wizards with such capabilities. The three men began to slowly tear them down with the aide of their inside man, granting passwords and credentials at all of the correct intervals. The guards used the same sequences to feed the man, three times daily. The Knights had been taught how to tear down wards by one of the most accomplished ward layers in the world. Cygnus Black.

**HGHGHG**

Tom was helping Hermione get Orion back to Grimmauld Place as Lord Malfoy delivered Lord Nott into Azkaban. A scarlet feather burst into being in front of him. Tom wouldn’t readily admit that he had been momentarily startled. It wouldn’t do for Hermione to think less of him. He carefully took the letter, unfurling it from the calamus, and reading it quickly before bidding Hermione good by with a kiss to her forehead and a pat on her curls.

He apparated outside of Hogsmeade, landing just beyond the Shrieking Shack. The air was still and silent, the only sound was a crunching of snow under his dragon hide boots. He swung the door
open to find a nearly out of control Albus. Such was his fury over the fact that the Alchemy teacher would pervade the oath of his post so badly.

“Allus?” Tom asked calmly.

“He tried to kidnap James and Sirius today in Hogsmeade.” Albus ground out, steely eyed. Tom’s right eyebrow rose in question.

“What were they doing out of school?”

“Is that really the important issue right now, Tom?”

“I have the Veritaserum that you requested.” He pulled out the huge beaker of the clear potion and placed it in the Headmaster’s hand.

Albus dosed Professor Hornby and waited a moment before beginning his interrogation.

“Who sent you to kidnap Sirius Black and James Potter?”

“No one sent me.”

“Why were you trying to kidnap them?”

“My Lord has offered a substantial reward for the Black Heir’s death.”

“And Potter?”

“I couldn’t leave him to tattle, now could I?”

“Who is the man you refer to as My Lord?”

“The leader of The Knights.”

“What is his name?”

“Cygnus Black.”

“No.” Tom said shocked. “He was under Veritaserum only two hours ago and named Lord Nott. How is that possible?”

“He had been training himself to repel Veritaserum for years. I am too weak.”

“You are a Knight and planned on collecting a reward?”

“Yes.”

“Who else is a Knight?”

“There are so many. We are always heavily cloaked when we meet the inner circle. I know very few, and even less of the ones that you want. You want the Original Seven.”

A flash of silver appeared out of the corner of Tom’s eye, too quick to stop. Professor Hornby hunched forward, silver blade sticking out of his back. His eyes were glassy and unfocused, blood trailing from his mouth and nose as he coughed horribly before going still.

Tom chased the phantom man out of the room and lost him among the trees hearing the telltale crack of an improper apparition.
Meanwhile Albus was inspecting the silver blade sticking out of the Alchemy Professor’s back. It had an ornate handle. It was a picture of a stag and a bear standing proud on opposite sides of a divide with the initials CB engraved.

“Cygnus Black?” Albus muttered quietly shaking his head. There was something not quite right about that silver knife.

**HGHGHGHG**

“My Lord, did you see the same thing that I did in the courtroom?” The silver cloaked man whispered across the table to the heavily manacled man.

“It is like the universe wants me to kill her. My biggest blockade and the single most important person to my arch enemy, Tom Riddle. And yet she is too important to kill. We need to capture her quickly and hide her away. I have so much riding on her capture. Make it happen.” Cygnus Black said with hard grey eyes narrowed in slits. “While we are at it, we need to take out my nephews. I expect good news in the days coming.”

“And Lord Nott?”

“It was so perfect. Lying under Veritaserum is much harder when a Potion Master makes the brew. I nearly destroyed everything.”

“It’s a good thing we have been dosing ourselves for years, My Lord.”

“It’s lucky that I was the only one questioned.

“Yes, My Lord.” And with a bow. Cygnus’ visitor left, walking through the open doors. The Dementors parting like the red sea before him.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione had finally gotten Orion settled and talked him into taking a nap while she went to Nott Cottage to check on Reg.

“Thank you, Mrs. Malfoy for staying with Regulus while I was gone.”

“It wasn’t a problem at all, my dear. He is such a sweet quiet thing.” She gave Reg a soft smile. “I will be terribly put out if you don’t come visit me soon!”

Regulus nodded his head and met Hermione’s eyes, his eyes dancing with amusement and tenderness. It seemed he got along well with Mrs. Malfoy. Once she left, Hermione turned to Regulus.

“Do you want to go see our father?” Reg’s eyes grew wide with fear. It was obvious that he wasn’t ready for that yet. “Do you want to stay here with me, Theo, Lucius, and Cadeus?”

He nodded vigorously.

“You can stay, but Reg, I have to go back to Hogwarts on Sunday night. Will you be okay to go to Grimmauld or do you want me to see if you can stay with the Malfoy’s?” Who knew that one day the Malfoy’s would be a trusted and safe haven. Third year Hermione would be absolutely horrified and would ceaselessly try to throw off whatever curse she was hit with. It nearly made her to chuckle until she realized that Draco may one day be her son. Oh hell no! She would make sure he would never be that pampered little brat. Regulus brought her attention back on him as he
shivered his shoulders clearly not intending on talking.

“Hey, Pet! Hello, Regulus. How are you feeling now that the trial is over?” Lucius walked into Reg’s room with a few books from the Manor that his mother sent over. Reg smiled vaguely in his direction looking over the books with enthusiasm.

“We will leave you to it, Reg. If there is anything you need…Just let me know.” Hermione said before kissing his head.

“How are you doing?” Lucius asked Hermione worriedly. “I know Theo is a mess. He has locked himself up at Nott Manor, refusing to speak to me. I think he feels guilty.”

“This is not his fault. I wish he would let me in.”

“Avery is with him.”

“But he won’t talk to us….”

“Give him time.” He pulled her in for a hug, using the index finger on his right hand to tilt her chin up. He looked at her a moment with heat in his eyes.

He slowly brought his lips down to hers drawing a deep breath in through his nose before deepening the kiss. His tongue traced her lips before dipping into her mouth lightly touching her tongue. Her reaction was quick and fierce. She felt heat pool in her belly as she was surrounded by his smell. He was an incredible kisser. She tried to assert her dominance but Lucius Malfoy would never allow that. He was a man who thrived on control and even while moaning into her mouth he still endeavored to take it back.

“Would you like to take a walk with me through the garden?” He whispered on her lips.

“A walk?”

“With me.”

“Okay.”

Lucius pulled her from the room and walked through the corridors, summoning their cloaks as they went.

While they were away, snow had quietly settled over the garden. Hermione looked around with a smile on her face with her cheeks and nose bright red. Lucius was watching her reaction to the winter wonderland when a snowball exploded off the back of his head. He ducked in time to miss the second but it hit Hermione in the shoulder.

She whipped around with a calculating look in her eye and with a flick of her wrist, Lucius and Hermione were surrounded in a snow fort a blood red flag flying proudly over top. Lucius went to work on making snowballs while Hermione began to lob them over to where Avery and Nott were hiding.

“I’m glad Theo came! I thought he was hiding from us.”

“I guess Cadeus talked him into coming. Theo is the one who started this. I would recognize his signature snowball anywhere.” Lucius said with a pout trying to smooth his hair back into perfection.
Hermione giggled at his disgruntled face. He looked up from his snowballs and winked at her. She smiled wider as she heard Avery just outside of their snow fort.

Hermione took over creating snowballs while Lucius took the opportunity to lay down heavy suppressive fire, snowballs exploding in Avery’s face. Meanwhile Theo had snuck around behind their fort and with a well-placed spell opened a hole in their defenses. The weight of the collective snow was so heavy, Lucius and Hermione were soon waving the white flag, making Theo the undisputed winner.

Theo pulled Hermione to her feet and kissed her lips tenderly, wrapping his arms around her.

“I’m sorry I left.”

“I understand why you did Theo but you should know you can trust me. I want to help you. I am worried about you.” She said as the guys smacked the snow clumps off of each other harder than necessary. She shook her head. They were ridiculous.

Once they got back to the house, all four of them stripped down to their under clothes, leaving the sopping laundry in the capable hands of the house elves. They ran through the halls semi-nude, each hoping to be the first to the shower. Avery claimed it first despite Theo’s pouting and pulled Hermione in with him. Immaturely sticking his tongue out at the other two.

“Hello Kitten!” He leaned in to place a sweet kiss on her lips before twisting the knobs to start the hot water.

“Mmmmm. Cadeus.” She said as she reached to bring his lips back to hers. It didn’t take much for Avery to finish stripping them before backing her under the spray.

She wasn’t even completely soaked before he had her up against the wall, legs around his hips with his hands on her arse. Their kissing got heavier and much hotter as one of his hands slipped between their wet bodies and his thumb found her hooded button.

“Oh my God.” She moaned, ripping her lips from his. He trailed kisses down the column of her neck sucking on her pulse point. He smiled with pride when he saw the mark he left on her skin, imagining the jealous faces the others would make.

Hermione wiggled until he let her down and she slid to her knees, hand rubbing up and down his thighs. She watched as his cock bobbed, sticking the tip her tongue out to slide along his slit, lapping up his salty pre-come.

She raised her hand and circled the base of his dick while still teasing the head. He was engorged and turning a purple color. She lifted her other hand to fondle his balls, occasionally dipping behind them to message his perineum.

Avery was in heaven. Hermione’s hot little mouth was sucking him hard, just the way he liked it. He was watching her through heavy lidded eyes, groaning when his head hit the back of her throat. He knew he wouldn’t last much longer and pulled her up to stand while he went down on his knees, throwing one of her legs over his shoulder in the process.

He spread her lips and admired the glossy slickness of her arousal. She was so wet already. He breathed her in and licked her pussy, knowing exactly how to make her scream. He flicked her clit until she was beside herself before sucking the hard bead into his mouth and lightly running his teeth over it. Hermione was shaking. He knew she wouldn’t last much longer either. He pulled her down to her hands and knees entering her from behind. They took a moment to appreciate the
feeling of bliss from their joining before Avery started to move. He steadily worked up to a fast pace, balls slapping her clit with every thrust.

“Fuck!” Avery shouted as he felt Hermione orgasm around his dick, pushing him over the edge. He slowed as he came, the last bit of friction milking his cock of his seed. She had a greedy little cunt. He smiled as he moved her wet hair out of her face. They soaped each other up still sitting on the tiled floor.

When they finally exited the shower, Lucius and Theo were sitting at a table next to the fireplace, chatting while drinking fire whiskey. They sent roguish grins at Hermione as she walked into the room, towel clad.

**HGHGHGHG**

Tom walked into Nott Cottage, bright and early the next morning. He waved off the house elf who was wringing her hands and made his way upstairs to find Hermione. The first room he opened he saw Regulus sitting up against the headboard reading. Tom walked in and sat on the bed as Reg lowered his book.

“How are you holding up?” Tom asked.

“I don’t know.” Regulus’ voice croaked from disuse and lifted his eyes to Tom’s and smiled.

“I’m sorry that happened to you.”

“She was murdered”

“I know. But your father was protecting you.”

“I can’t explain it.”

“Do you want to?”

“What do you mean?”

“I could look. But you have to trust me.”

“How would you look?”

“I am a Master Legillimens.”

“What’s that?”

“I can slip into your mind and look at your memories.”

“I want someone to know. So yes. Let’s do it.”

With the wave of his wand Tom sank into Regulus Black’s head.

Regulus was giggling on the bed under the covers with a grumpy Hermione while Sirius ran around the room in his exuberance for Christmas. Hermione smiled tenderly at him before pulling him closer and cuddling, ignoring the other. She closed her eyes and sighed.

The scene faded out before another memory took its place but this one was distorted as if it had been tampered with.
He had been hurt. Moving was excruciating and he could no longer produce tears as he sat on the floor in front of the fireplace. With a flash of emerald green flames, Hermione stepped out. She healed his injuries and stayed with him, protecting him. She would move the hair out of his face before kissing his temple and surrounding him in her arms.

Tom moved on to the next memory going deeper as he searched for Walburga’s death. He was gentle on the boy, moving in and out of the streams of memories as a swimmer moves through water.

He paused, sinking into the memory that caught his attention. Regulus and Orion were sitting in the Black library. Orion was teaching his son the inner workings of politics and finance before the room exploded with a white light. Orion jumped up and ran to the door. Once the light receded, the only difference in the house was a girl with long chocolate curly hair was clutching her belly, a girl who had appeared out of thin air. She fell to her knees only moments before losing her stomach on Orion’s one of a kind tooled leather shoes. Tom felt Regulus’ confusion.

This must be the memory of Hermione arriving back in time. Tom thought as he turned his attention back on the scene in front of him. Regulus had been standing behind Orion after he had abandoned his seat. He leaned down and moved the hair off of her face as Orion vanished her mess.

“Mobilicorpus.” Orion cast the spell to levitate her up the stairs, Reg following along behind. Orion put her in the extra bedroom and sat on the chair in the corner, eyes calculating. Calling for Kreacher, together they cleaned her up before Orion dismissed them both from the room. But Regulus couldn’t forget the girl who effortlessly entered through their wards.

As that memory came to an end another was pushed towards him.

Walburga was sobbing and using a carving knife to cut lines into her inner thigh while Reg walked into the room.

“Get out!” She shrieked. A panic stricken face turned towards his shocked and horror filled one. Her hands hastily shoving the robes over her naked legs to hide the evidence of her self-mutilation.

“Mother what are you doing?”

“I’m fighting as best I can. I can’t hold on for much longer. I am getting so weak. So very weak. I need to send you away before something happens.”

He couldn’t answer. All of his attention was focused on the red river flowing down her shoe to drip onto the floor.

The memory moved on as Tom entered a memory that was dark. It was night and Regulus had obviously been woken up by a deep sleep to a woman smothering him in a tight embrace.

“Regulus. I am sending you away tomorrow. It is too dangerous for you here. I love you, my beautiful wonderful son.” She kissed his temple before moving back out of his bedroom door and Regulus fell swiftly back into his dreams.

The memories shifted a bit as Tom found the one he had been looking for. Regulus and Walburga were in the sitting room while Kreacher popped out with six or seven bags full of Regulus’ clothing and necessities. They had been moving his things over to the impressively protected Black Cottage. Like Grimmauld Place, it was protected with the Fidelius charm. He would be safe there. She grabbed his face and looked him over carefully in an effort to remember him, how he was right
now.

“I love you Regulus and I love Sirius too. I was never more happy and proud then when I thought about my boys. Go. I am losing control. Bye Baby.” She whispered the last before shoving a pinch of floo powder in his hand. It was in that moment you could see the light in her eyes die as her hands crept around his neck. Next thing he knew, there was a belt and she was hitting him over and over.

There was yelling and something hit the side of his mothers’ face making small drops of blood dot his face. For a moment, his mother was back staring at him in the eyes with pain and confusion.

“I love you so, so much honey. I’m sorry.” She whispered so only he could hear.

There was a flash of green light and Walburga’s face relaxed in relief as she fell on top of him, dead. The weight of her body was aggravating the wounds on his body. He was sobbing and yelling for her as Orion moved the corpse of his mother and pulled Regulus into a gentle hug. He didn’t know what was worse. Knowing that his mother loved him or thinking she hated him. Both made his insides feel the white-hot zing of lightning through his body. And Sirius never knew how much she fought for them, never knew how much she loved them both.

Tom Riddle slowly backed out of Regulus’ mind sat on the bed still staring into his eyes. He pulled the young man into his arms, bile rising in his throat.

“Your Uncle Cygnus is sitting in Azkaban. He confessed to your mother’s murder under the Veritaserum that I administered. I need to find Hermione.”

“She is still in bed with my brothers in law and judging from their failure to silence their room last night, they will be sleeping for quite a while.”

Tom grimaced. He really didn’t want to know that.

“Come down and have breakfast with me while we wait.” Reg said hopping up from the bed, obviously feeling better than he had in a long time. Tom followed Reg into the dining room where the elves were already starting to lay out breakfast. Reg dug right in helping himself to a large pile of pancakes and bacon.

“Morning Son, Professor Riddle.” A deep voice said in the doorway. Tom looked over the rim of his teacup and smirked. Orion Black in the flesh.

“Good morning, Father.” He said with his eyes wide with shock. His father does not talk at the table. Well, that was until Hermione came anyway.

**HGHGHGHG**

Gindlewald was in the tent provided for him enjoying his first hot bath in years. He groaned as he settled his body into the soapy water. He leaned his head back against the rim and closed his eyes, seeing the same thing behind his lids that he did every time. Hermione’s face when his curse hit her in the chest. He replayed watching her collapse in horror over and over. It was a nightmare for him. It wasn’t until that moment that he realized that he had real feelings for the powerful witch.

Now that he was free, he would make the most of his second chance and convince her that she needed him too. If it was the last thing he did, Hermione would be his.

“My Lord, it is time.” A voice from the tent flap said. Grindlewald waved the man away. This was his time and he would stay as long as it pleased him.
Chapter Twenty-One

When Hermione finally entered into the dining room that morning, she was elated to see Reg talking to Tom while Orion sipped tea as he listened to the banter of the younger men.

“Good morning.” Hermione muttered. That was as happy as it got in the mornings.

“Are you always this cheerful in the morning?” Tom asked her.

Hermione glared at him warning him not to say another word. She narrowed her eyes. She was going to find out today, what kind of man Tom was. Was he a brilliant wonderful man who would feed her and leave her alone until she woke up, or was he suicidal? She kind of smiled when he pushed toast under her nose. Smart man.

Once she polished off the toast and three cups of tea, she felt much more human and it showed. Her eyes flicked to each man in her life with a peaceful smile on her lips.

“That is absolutely terrifying.” Tom sat stunned.

“What is?” Hermione’s brow wrinkled in confusion.

“You in the morning. If I dropped you in the middle of a battlefield in the morning before feeding you, I would find nothing left of your enemy’s bodies.”

“Oh, what poppycock! I’ll have you know that me and the boys slowly starved for months on the run, fighting against you and your army.”

“And look where we are now. You have changed everything. I would be a fool not to be trembling in my boots.” Tom smiled, trying desperately not to laugh in her face. After all, she had only eaten two pieces of toast. Grabbing her plate, he added two more pieces for good measure, sliding it back in front of her.

“As you should be.” Hermione mumbled. A defiant and satisfied look gleamed from her eyes as she picked up another piece of the offering.

“As amusing as this is, I will be taking Regulus home today. It is about time the four of you returned to Hogwarts.” Orion stated behind the Daily Prophet.

“Reg, do you want to go to Grimmauld?” Hermione asked gently. She had a feeling he wouldn’t want to go. He shook his head violently.

“Father, I think Reg should spend some time with Lady Malfoy. She has been feeling unwell and I think with someone to look after, she would get better in no time.”
“We couldn’t possibly impose.”

“It’s not an imposition, Sir. My mother wrote to me only yesterday to say how much she adored Regulus. She wouldn’t think of it that way anyway. We are family now.” Lucius said.

“As if you weren’t before.” Hermione muttered quietly. She had views on purebloods and their inbreeding.

An owl started pecking on the window grabbing everyone’s attention. Avery got up to let him in. Several owls unexpectedly flew in landing in front of Hermione. She picked up the thick envelope from Hogwarts first, pushing the toast to the owls before they flew back the way they came.

“Why is Hogwarts sending you a letter?” Theo asked. Tom narrowed his eyes. What had that meddlesome old fool done now?

She ignored everyone and set that letter aside tearing through the rest of the letters quickly, her facial expression darkening exponentially with the letter from Hogwarts.

“Tom, can I talk to you in the other room?” Hermione asked tightly, obviously angry. He gave her a curt nod and followed her out. Once they were in the drawing room and the door was shut behind them, Hermione laid some of the most powerful privacy wards he had ever seen. He was impressed, although he shouldn’t have been. It had just been so long since he saw her in action.

“What is it?” He asked in a low menacing voice. He had a feeling he really wouldn’t like this conversation.

“I want the truth. Are you a master of the Dark Arts?”

“Excuse me?” he asked perplexed. Where did that come from?

“I asked you if you were practicing the Dark Arts! Don’t you dare lie to me!”

“No! no, of course not! I know some, I dabbled when I was in my DADA apprenticeship. But I don’t practice it. What the hell was in those letters?”

“From various sources, I have been told that you should be in Azkaban! That you were merely a façade of goodness. I did not go through every fucking thing in my life for you to turn now Tom!”

“I am not ‘turning’ as you so eloquently put it! Yes, I could be in Azkaban twice over. I used the Imperius on Grindlewald when we pulled you out of Nurmengard and although I don’t regret disbanding the Knights, I used Crucio on the group. I admit, my need for revenge got the better of me. I am not proud of it. They killed my parents and many other families.”

“Tom…”

“NO! You asked so now you need to listen. Your good opinion is the only thing that matters to me. You are all I have left. Do you think I would jeopardize that?”

“You have to understand Tom; I know exactly what you are capable of under the right conditions. I will never stop making sure you stay a good man. It is my first and most important priority.”

“I am your most important priority?” He asked smiling, all of his anger melting away. This was a testament to how much she cared about him.

“Of course that is what you would pick up from what I said.” Hermione muttered, obviously
annoyed.

“But you love me anyway.” He said smirking, pulling her into a hug.

“So you say.” She said, softening slightly. She hugged him back for a few moments before tearing down her wards and opened the door coming face to face with five curious men.

“What the devil did you use on the door? Even I couldn’t get in?” Orion asked impressed.

Hermione shrugged.

“Something I picked up in Germany.”

“Really?” Tom asked skeptically.

“Really. It was one of the spells used to create the time room in Nurmengard. Absolutely ingenious. I doubt it ever occurred to Grindlewald to use it as a privacy ward.” She smirked. The men looked at her with utter astonishment and pride.

Perhaps he had done Tom an injustice. Thought Albus Dumbledore and he stood before the restrained Alchemy Professor. Staring distractedly at the man manacled to the stone wall, he sunk back into his thoughts as he fiddled with the handle of his wand.

Knowing young Mr. Lupin would soon need the shack, Albus moved his prisoner into the castle dungeons. Not the portion where students could get to but the holding cells that can only be accessed by the Headmaster unless they were escorted or had his expressed permission. It was dank and moist. These particular chambers had not been opened for a hundred years. It was probably even longer than that since it had been cleaned. Either way he decided it was a Hogwarts matter of staffing and moved the Professor in the dead of night. It wouldn’t do to be caught holding a prisoner for a non-ministry sanctioned questioning.

He had known that the Knights still operated on some level. But he also knew that the leadership had changed. He had collaborated with his future self and they had come to the consensus that it felt familiar. Not taking any chances they decided to test Tom and solidify his alliance or guilt.

He had begun circulating rumors about Tom and his darker nature around the school via the portraits to the students who inevitably wrote to their parents. What he didn’t count on was the level of respect that Tom already garnered and most families thought it made him more qualified to teach the students DADA. He expected more backlash to be honest. That was last year right before Hermione came the first time and in all that time, not one word of dismissal. How was he supposed to figure out what side the man was on if he couldn’t force a reaction?

He sighed, perhaps he should have just asked but that wasn’t an option either. Tom was a master Occlumens. He wouldn’t have been able to be sure.

Albus flicked his wand, casting a nonverbal ‘enervate’ at the unconscious professor.

“Welcome back, Michael.”

“Albus.” He sneered. No point in being polite now.

“I was recently told via owl that Cygnus Black is suspected to be under the Imperius. What do you think?”
“Like I said before. Anything that I know is small potatoes. You need to find one of the Seven.”

“It warms my heart to see that we are on the same page.”

“What?”

“I need to find one of the Seven. So, start talking.”

“I don’t know who they are.”

“But you know who does.”

“I made an oath.”

“Isn’t it proper redemption to give your life for such a worthy cause?”

“Look at the Great Albus Dumbledore willing to sacrifice my life for some information.”

“You already gave up your life when you decided to join the Knights.”

“And I am not worthy to be saved?”

“You have shown no remorse, no pity, no regret. You tried to kidnap two charges under your supposed protection. Your intention was to kill at least one of them. So no, I am not worried about saving you. I will give second chances to those who work for it.”

“You wouldn’t believe me anyway.”

“Try me.”

“What happens to me if I tell you?”

“I will hand you over to the ministry to receive a trial.”

“I want to make a deal. No time in Azkaban.”

“I can’t guarantee that.”

“That’s a lie and we both know it. I’ll take house arrest or deportation.”

“If I deem your information worthy.”

“Deal. Make an unbreakable vow.”

“No. but I can give you my word.”

Professor Hornby thought for a moment, indecision warring on his face. Dumbledore saw the moment he resigned himself to his fate. All of the fight left his body.

“Orion Black.”

“Orion?”

“He knows who all of the Seven are. I think he stumbled upon it by accident but I don’t think he left with his memories intact. If he did, then he is one of them now. That is all I can tell you without breaking my vow.”
Albus slipped easily into the Professors unshielded mind and saw the proof of his statement. Dumbledore’s shoulders slightly slumped. This was more convoluted than he thought.

**HGHGHGHG**

Grindlewald stood in front of a full-length mirror, adjusting his clothes here and there in nervous anticipation. He was thirty-five with blond curly hair that had been cut to his shoulders. His once strong frame was now slightly skeletal, prison life not being especially kind. He would no doubt quickly return to become as handsome as he ever was and smirked at his mirror image.

He smoothed his hands over the trousers on his right thigh. A red and blue phoenix in flight had appeared last year which resulted in a very interesting visit by not one but two Albus Fucking Dumbledore’s. He was forced to the ground as the two wizards held him to the floor, searching his body, finally finding his new tattoo on his thigh. The elder of the two Dumbledore’s pricked his finger and smeared it on the phoenix. At first it hurt. If he hadn’t known that his leg was not being consumed by flames, he would have been convinced that it was on fire. After several painful minutes, the feeling of his flesh being devoured by molten lava abated. It still tingled uncomfortably but he was able to ignore it.

“My Lord, my men have told me that she has not yet gone back to Hogwarts but that she was expected back tomorrow morning before classes start.”

“Thank you, Burke.” Grindlewald said off handedly, smiling to himself. If he wanted to get his hands on her, he would have to make a grab for her before she was under Albus’ nose.

He had been pleasantly surprised when the group called the Knights released him from his captivity but as the leader pushed back his hood it all made sense. Together the two men laughed. They had the same goal after all. Hermione Black.

**HGHGHGHG**

Tom stalked the halls of Hogwarts, his black mood apparent to any and all that saw him. The students avoided him, and not very covertly either. Watching as the students practically killed themselves in an effort to get out of his way made his already dark mood, impossibly darker. Even the griffin that guarded the entrance to the Headmaster’s office jumped out of the way as quickly as possible, not even waiting for the password. Black eyebrows drew closer together as his lips pinched in further displeasure, slamming the door open as he swept into the office.

“Tom! How happy we are to have you back! I heard about the trial. Good show!” Dumbledore said over his shoulder. He was standing behind his desk with his back to the room. He had been rummaging in the cabinet but drew his hand back and turned when he could feel the anger rolling off of his DADA Professor.

“I am not back, not yet. I have some things to do before I return.”

“Tom?”

“Do not ‘Tom’ me! We had an agreement old man! You were supposed to be on my side! I did not force your hand in the agreement when we vowed we would protect Hermione without her knowing so that she could live a normal life. You have betrayed me for the last time! “

“Calm down, Tom.” Albus said calmly as he took his seat behind his desk with his signature twinkle. Tom narrowed his eyes at the amused manipulator.

“Did you know that Hermione was told some very interesting things about me?”
“Oh?”

“The whole school seems to think I belong in Azkaban. Why would that be Albus?”

“I have seen you use an unforgivable before.”

“You know damn well that I used them only twice. Once to get Hermione out of Nurmengard and once when we broke up the Knights the first time. I refuse to disappoint Hermione by becoming something repugnant to her. Yet here I find my good name being dragged through the mud! I was mortified... mortified Albus, when she asked me about it. She looked so disappointed, so betrayed! I would never become what she most fears! I will not become the Dark Lord of her nightmares.”

Tom raged at the still twinkling Headmaster.

Albus leaned back in his seat, obviously comfortable, folding his hands neatly over the top of his knees.

“You know that she willfully changed your life. Do you know why?”

“She wanted a better life for me than that of an unwanted orphan and everyone she loved would live if I did not become the Dark Lord.”

“Why does it bother you what the students and teachers think of you. They think that you are fearsome and powerful. What is wrong with that?”

“Hermione may not realize how much of a hold she has over me but I know that you know the depths that I would go for her. So, what is this really about? Why have such things spread when you know what I have been through?”

“I did not spread these rumors Tom.”

“Fine. The other you, the Albus Dumbledore from 1997 then. Why did he spread such things and don’t act all innocent with me! I know exactly what you are capable of.”

Albus sighed and the twinkling disappeared altogether.

“You may want to sit down Tom.”

Tom sat stiffly in one of the chairs that was indicated.

**HGHGHGHG**

Lord Burke sat in his study chair with a glass of fire whiskey with a full decanter on the side table to his right. He was shaken. The whole Lord’s trials and his hand in all of it was too heavy to bear. He wasn’t exactly sure how he ended up in this place, a captive in his own home but Hermione Black was not the only person completely unsettled by the sham of a trial for Orion Black. It was even more unsettling that Cygnus, a previously thought to be an upstanding wizard was gunning for the family seat. A man who was willing to orchestrate the downfall of his own brother-in-law and the death of his sister.

On top of all that Lord Nott was imprisoned for something that didn’t sit well with him. He knew Lord Nott wasn’t involved. Lord Burke was one of the Original Seven and he was strenuously opposed to what they did to Orion. He was one of the nobility, one of their own. When did things get so out of hand?

He stared into the glass, still more sober than he preferred when his son, Dorian, sauntered in
followed by Grindelwald. He was forced into offering his home and his hospitality by the leader of the Knights. The man who effectively unseated the British Lord from his own home. It churned in his stomach like spoiled milk. He knew better to complain now. He had been on the receiving end of his Lord’s displeasure one too many times during his life to fight openly against him now.

That didn’t mean he didn’t intend to take the necessary steps to protect himself and try to do the right thing. It was he, who forced Rosier into having his son recruit in the school under the noses of the two men who could stop the oncoming war. If anyone could put a wrench in the Leader’s plans it would be Albus Dumbledore and Tom Riddle. He chose Rosier for the simple reason that like his father, the son lacks the fine art of finesse and subtlety. It confounded him that either one got into Slytherin.

“What can I do for you gentlemen?”

“We need Hermione to be lured away from her husbands for only a few minutes. Couldn’t my Uncle bring her into the shop for a bit?” Dorian asked.

“I highly doubt her protectors would let her anywhere near Knockturn Alley.” Lord Burke was wary. He couldn’t outright deny the man accompanying his son.

“I need only a few minutes. Whether we capture her or not.” The Blond German stated. Lord Burke nodded in resignation. They expected his compliance and he would give it.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione and Lucius had decided to stop at Diagon Alley to pick up an early birthday gift for Reg, to help him acclimate to his new home, Malfoy Manor. They walked into the Magical Menagerie to see about a pet. Hermione found the ugliest kitten that was ever born. The second Hermione saw the orange kitten with a smooshed face and a bottle brush tail, she had already decided. She would not leave until she secured the kitten’s ownership. Now they had a bad-tempered kitten and still hadn’t found a gift for Regulus. Lucius sighed. How had she talked him into shopping? The second she mentioned her intention of a quick shopping trip that day, he had been abandoned by his wives’ other husbands. Those bastards would pay.

Hermione smugly cuddled baby Crookshanks. She was deliriously happy she had found him this time around. She glanced at Lucius out of the corner of her eye. He was still sore that he was the one coerced into shopping today. She nearly snorted out loud. Never had she known Avery and Theo move as fast as when threatened with a shopping trip. Lucius called for their House elf who took the new kitten and all of his belongings back to Nott Cottage.

“Young Mister Malfoy! How fortuitous to run into you here! I was just saying to my brother Aetes, one of the owners of Borgin and Burkes as you know, that his latest acquisition would prick your interest. It is a parure of the French magical crown. A young man recently sold it to help family finances and I know you have expressed interest in expanding the Malfoy family jewels.” Lord Burke imperiously remarked.

“A parure? Hermione, do you mind if we stop over? Such things are so rare.”

“At Borgin and Burkes?”

“Uh huh.”

“Will you be quick.”

“I will be as quick as I can.”
Hermione sighed. She didn’t want to go at all but it was the first thing that interested Lucius since they arrived in Diagon Alley, not including the Quidditch shop. Against her better judgment, she hesitantly nodded her agreement. She really hoped she wouldn’t regret this.

Lucius and Hermione walked to Borgin and Burkes with Lord Burke. By now, Hermione was used to the stares that they received and ignored them as best as she could. Hermione was looking in the shop windows that they passed when she caught sight of a familiar head of red hair. Coming out of one of the shops she saw Molly Weasley with a toddler on her hip. It must have been Bill! His red hair curled slightly around his ears, his button nose slightly red from the cold, holding a lolly. Hermione wanted to nip over and get to know them once more.

Lucius stared at Hermione watching the Weasley’s absolutely perplexed. She had a wistful look on her face that was hard for him to ignore. She must know them in her original timeline. He shrugged, thoughts of expanding the consequence of the Malfoy family taking over his thoughts, relegating the Weasley’s to the back for later.

The bell on the door chimed as the three of them walked into the warm shop. Lord Burke and Lucius walked up to the counter as Hermione decided to have a look around. The last time she was in there, she had been tossed out. That was sixth year after trying to figure out what Draco Malfoy had purchased.

She walked to the back of the store where the encased bookshelves were kept. She perused the books, reading the spines with a slightly nauseated look. Grindlewald stepped out of the shadow and into the light, his blond hair a striking brilliance in the field of grey surrounding them. He stepped on a board that creaked, startling Hermione. She spun around, wand raised. She was shocked. The man before her was supposed to be imprisoned in Nurmengard. Why was he in Knockturn Alley? A middle aged Gellert Grindlewald was annoyingly smirking at her.

“Expelliarmus. It’s been a long time, Schätzchen and I have waited for this moment for oh, so long. I dreamt about you every night.” Grindlewald walked up to her and whispered into her ear, his breath tickling her loose hair on her neck. He slipped her stolen wand with his into an inner pocket of his robe, hiding it from sight.

“Grindlewald. My husband is in the front of the shop.”

“I am aware. I have already erected the necessary wards so that we wouldn’t be interrupted.”

“How did you escape Nurmengard?”

“It’s so wonderful how you worry for me. It’s such a turn on.”

“I am not worried for you. I am upset that you escaped!”

“Schätzchen, you don’t have to hide your true feelings for me. We both know how much you have been pining for me. If you just gave in to what we both want, we could be deliriously happy.” He ran his finger from her ear past her shoulder and down her arm. Her body broke out in goose pimples causing Grindlewald to smile in pleasure. She took a step back trying to escape but only managed to trap herself further. She was backed into the book case. For every step back she took, Grindlewald moved forward. His hands rested on the glass, either side of her head.

“I think you are delirious alright. I have told you more times than I can count that I love my husbands.” She hissed.

Grindlewald leaned in, his lips barely an inch from hers.
“I told you Schätzchen, that when I am finished with you, you will be begging for me.”

“And I told you Grindelwald, if you are waiting for me to beg, you would be waiting forever. And I meant it.” She snarled. He leaned back, a pinched look on his face.

“Back to that, are we? Call me Gellert.”

“I don’t want you to be confused and think we are friends.”

“You know exactly what to say to make me try harder.”

“I don’t want you to try harder I want you to forget about me.”

“You are not an easy woman to forget.”

“Try.”

Grindelwald shut his eyes in imitation of deep thought before his eyes popped open, amusement dancing in their depths.

“Mmmm. Nope didn’t work.”

Hermione made a sound of disgust and turned her head away, physically unable to look at him any longer. Grindelwald gently cupped her chin and forcefully turned her face to his once more.

“Don’t hide from me,” He murmured. He moved in closer so that his body was flush with hers. It trapped her there, her arms and legs pinned.

“I’m not hiding. I am just one thousand percent done. Let me leave.”

“You haven’t seen me in eighteen years. Didn’t you miss me?”

“It has only been two weeks for me. And no, I didn’t miss you at all. In fact, I’m still bloody furious with you!”

“You’re angry? Why?”

“Are you completely daft? You kept me captive in a room without a bed for longer than I care to dwell on.”

“There was a bed in there.”

“I couldn’t use it. You took my wand from me.”

“Yes, I did do that. Forgive me just this once.”

“You have got to be kidding me! Let me go!”

“This time I will let you go but if you don’t come to me in a reasonable amount of time, I will come and get you. This is your first and only warning.” Grindelwald leaned in and captured her unresponsive lips. The second her shock wore off she began pushing on his chest. Without a wand, he had the advantage. He seemed to move impossibly closer as she struggled. She stopped and went stiff as a board waiting for him to finish.

“You taste divine, Schätzchen!” He leaned back to look at her, a dazed contented smile on his lips.
“Are you finished?” Hermione deadpanned.

“Not quite.” He leaned back in to softly kiss her lips but she hadn’t been idle during his pause, she brought her knee up forcefully, connecting savagely with his groin.

“Don’t ever touch me again, Grindlewald!” she viciously whispered as he clutched the family jewels.

Hermione searched his jacket and pulled out both wands. She narrowed her eyes as she ripped the wards to ribbons around them, she could still hear Lucius bargaining for the jewelry with Burke. Grindlewald was in too much pain to fully appreciate that his amazing wards were torn down in seconds. Once he was able to stand without gasping, Grindlewald leaned in close being very careful to protect himself from her.

“Remember Schätzchen, you will always be mine.”

“You are delusional!” She fumed.

“My wand.” His waited with his palm up.

“Why shouldn’t I break it and toss it away right now?”

“Because, Maus, I would hate to have to punish you when all I want to do is make you feel so damn good.” He snatched it out of her hand and frowned. He started re-erecting the wards but his eyes went wide as she prevented him. Incredible.

Knowing this was a circular argument, Hermione sent him a scathing look that could and has frightened Death Eaters and pushed his chest as hard as she could. As satisfying as it felt to push him, he didn’t even move. Their eyes were locked and both were prepared to fight off the other. She spun on her heel, her wand still in hand. Grindlewald watched as she walked away from him to the front of the store to where her husband was bargaining for the jewels.

Hermione angrily stalked to the front of the store and stood stiffly next to Lucius as she waited for him to finish. He looked at her in askance. She just shook her head. She was confident the Burkes were in on getting her in the store to meet Grindlewald.

**HGHGHG**

Once Hermione and Lucius got back to Nott Cottage, she found Avery and Theo and dragged them to the master bedroom. Lucius was following along with a very confused look.

She set up some wards before turning and meeting their questioning stares.

“I saw Grindlewald in Borgin and Burkes. The Burkes lured us there so that he could talk to me.”

“What did he want?” asked Theo. He took her hand and pulled her onto his lap as he sat on the bed. “And where the hell were you, Lucius?”

“Lucius was in the front of the store where they intended him to be. As for the other, me. He told me he missed me, that he wanted me to come to him. I don’t know. He sounded completely off his rocker.”

“I think we should tell Professor Tom or Dumbledore.” Avery said. “I won’t lose you. I refuse. We all thought we had lost you when our tattoos turned black. He was behind that attack and I don’t think we should underestimate him.”
“Avery is right. If he wanted you bad enough, it is possible he would stop at nothing to get you.” Theo agreed.

“When will this be over?” Hermione lamented.

“When his is dead, I suppose.” Tom said from the doorway. “By the way, I heard everything.”

“Why are you even here?” Asked Theo angrily.

“Theo! Don’t be rude! But yes, why are you here Tom? Not that we are complaining.”

“I am leaving to go back to Hogwarts and I wanted to make sure you got back safely from Diagon Alley.”

“How did you rip down Hermione’s wards?” Asked an awestruck Regulus who rounded the corner with an apple hand pie half devoured.

“I have ripped down intricate wards with her before. The way someone casts and dissolves spells tells a lot about how they create wards. Once you get an idea of what they are, tearing them down is a simple matter of will.” Tom explained as Hermione nodded in agreement.

“It is so much more than that.” Lucius disagreed. “I was there when we brought the Nurmengard wards down and I still cannot tear hers down.”

“Well, there is also the point that I am just that awesome.” Tom smirked.

Hermione shook her head. Boys. My horse is better than your horse. A time old tradition of pissing males. Better get the ruler out. She rolled her eyes and scoffed. She drew the attention of all five men. She had only a moment to protect herself from the mass of ‘rictusempra’ spells that were cast by her traitorous family.

She laughed as she deflected some right back while avoiding others but was hit square in the chest by Tom’s. The bastard was good.

“Okay, Okay. I give up!”

“I hope that isn’t how long you would last in a real fight.” Theo joked.

“I don’t care if you spent eternity in that damn place. She is not yours to have. She is mine!” Said the heavily cowled man. His silvery cloak dragging a trail of dust on the floor. From his voice alone one could tell just how young this man was. A mere child compared with the powerful wizards that completed his circle.

“This is madness.” Grindlewald spat.

“No, madness is a life without her. I have already bought and paid for her, the sheer fortune I spent is lying in the Black vaults as we speak. Not even you may touch her Grindlewald!”

“Why am I here then. It looks like you have everything under control.”

“Except I will never truly have her while her husband’s live. Your whole life will change if they die.”

“That is something we agree on at least.” Grindlewald admitted.
“No one moves an inch out of line unless I specifically order it.”

“Yes, My Lord.” Murmured all except the petulant Grindlewald.
Chapter Twenty-Two

Hermione laid in her bed in the Slytherin dorms thinking about all that she had been through before she was forced to get up for the day. Her first day back to classes was sure to be a trial. Sleeping alone had proved much more difficult than she had anticipated. She was starting to get used to the furnaces that her husbands turned into at night. Now she was cold. It could be that she was in Scotland in the end of March or it could be that she didn’t cast the warming charms right. She snorted. She doubted it was faulty casting. Maybe she would slip into the boy’s dorms and slip into bed with one of the guys tonight. It was something to think about later. After breakfast.

By now the entire school would know that the brilliant Hermione Black was taking remedial everything. Having missed everything since the Christmas break, Hermione was woefully behind. It was lucky for her that Tom, no, Professor Riddle had offered to help her catch up. She would be spending every night in the foreseeable future in the DADA classroom after dinner. Too bad it couldn’t be in the library. At least she could get to know Tom better. He was absolutely fascinating as a good guy. He was without a doubt the most brilliant wizard she had come across. Except Dumbledore of course.

Hermione sighed. She would have to get up and go to breakfast. At least she would see Lucius, Avery, and Theo there. She dragged herself to the showers and got ready for the day, thinking of the sexy shower scene only days earlier.

Getting to the Great Hall for breakfast turned out to be more difficult than she anticipated. She was waylaid by a variety of people. From first years to seventh years from every house. She was never this popular in her own time. Did being pureblooded make that much of a difference? She shook herself. No, things were much different in this time. She was more outgoing, more friendly, more everything. It wasn’t her blood that made the difference, it was her.

Theo stopped her wandering mind when he swung her in his arms in jubilant celebration.

“My father was released this morning. He is home at Nott Manor. He’s furious of course and he isn’t talking to any of the Lords at the moment. Once they duel it out, they will forgive each other.”

“Oh, I am so happy to hear that Theo!” Hermione said with a big smile. While Theo still held her to his eye level, Hermione cupped his face with both of her hands. She slowly brought her lips to his, taking time to savor his taste. Her stomach was a mess of butterflies. Theo let her down, forcing her body to slide down his. It was not on accident. She could feel his erection on her stomach.

She gave him a coquettish look, making promises for later with her eyes. He smiled arrogantly as if he knew exactly what he was doing to her.
Avery was frustrated. He hated sleeping alone. He missed running his hands over Hermione’s curves while waking up, he missed kissing her neck and the way she moaned every damn time, he missed the way she smelled after her shower, but what he missed most was having her time.

He was resigned to being grumpy all day and he wasn’t the only one. He noticed how black Lucius and Theo’s moods were when they got up for the morning. None of them could wait until they had Hermione all to themselves.

He was walking to potions, anticipating seeing Hermione there when he caught a glimpse of her hair turning into an abandoned classroom. What naughty things was she doing? And which of her other husbands was she doing it with? He hoped they were up for a threesome.

He came to a complete stop when he rounded the door and stepped into the classroom, facing not Hermione but Antonin Dolohov, Dorian Burke, and the odd Alchemy Professor that Hermione liked. She thought he was dotty but kind. Merlin, was she off.

“Someone is going to have to attend his classes for the day.” Said the Professor.

Avery didn’t even have a chance to raise his wand before three ‘stupify’s’ hit him in the chest.

Dumbledore was once again standing in the holding cells of the dungeons. He had released and banished his ex-Professor Hornby several days prior and had the cells scoured. With the new information, he had gleaned from various sources and Tom, he would soon have use of it again in the very near future. What made the headmaster the most uneasy was the fact that Orion Black would never willingly submit to interrogation, no matter how it was presented. But the fact remained, it needed to be done. Albus needed to find out exactly what the man knew. Not only was Hermione’s life at stake but his students as well.

The Knights were a large group of witches and wizards led by the original founders referred to as the Seven. Right after he and Tom saved Hermione from Nurmengard, they had laid waste to the group believing that they had destroyed them before they could get bigger and more terrible. For many years that was exactly the case. He knew they cowered in inactivity because he had been watching them. It was five years ago when he started to notice them again. They went from their normal low activity to none at all in the space of two days. After another two years, he started to hear rumors about the Seven. So, what had changed in the space of two days that would allow men in an organization that he had personally disbanded, go against him so quickly? Not to mention what Tom had done that day. They should be way too scared to ever think of starting it back up.

When Tom had come into his office all angry about the rumors he had spread, Albus was relieved, more than he would ever say. He had come to think of the boy as family. It would have devastated him to have to fight against Tom. But if it wasn’t Tom, there was only one answer. It just so happened that a break out was staged at Nurmengard recently. If it was Gellert, then how did he start the lines of communication? Gellert had been locked in Nurmengard for the last eighteen years. On top of that, Albus was sure that Gellert was harmless even as recent as last year. The year Dumbledore’s future-self came back. Albus shuddered. He hoped he would never become that version of himself. Regretful and mercenary.

To say that Tom was displeased with him was an understatement. Not only had Albus doubted his loyalty but he had been keeping things from him. Things that could potentially hurt Hermione. It was the Headmaster’s intention however, not to allow it to get so far. Albus loved Hermione too.
She was like the crazy aunt who stole his boyfriend once. Although that second part did happen, he didn’t hold Hermione responsible for Gellert’s actions. It wasn’t her fault that she attracted the powerful and hungry.

With a final sweep though the empty cell, the weary headmaster swirled around in a cloud of purple velvet and silver stars that made up his robes. He stopped only having taken one step towards the doorway.

“Good Evening, Tom.”

“Headmaster. What a macabre sense of humor you have.” Tom Riddle snarked as he stepped out of the shadows of the corridor leading to the cells. “Was there a particular reason you have summoned me here of all places?”

“I believe that Hermione can get into the Black vaults. There is a certain painting there that I need to talk to. I need her to retrieve it and bring it to me.”

“Albus, those are Lord Black’s vaults. She wouldn’t be able to touch anything without being harmed.”

“This painting technically belongs to me. It shouldn’t hurt her. Well, maybe verbally but that is just the type of relationship they have.”

“Pardon?”

“Perhaps you will get to see...” Albus chuckled.

“I think this is a bad idea.”

“Noted. It is your job to convince her during your remedial lessons.”

“I do not know how we were ever friends Albus.”

“If it weren’t for Hermione, we wouldn’t be.”

“And in all your omniscience, did it ever occur to you that she saved you just as much as she saved me?”

“That, Professor, is an absolute fact.”

**HGHGHGHGHG**

Hermione trudged into the DADA classroom in despair. It didn’t matter that she wasn’t behind in her lessons per se. It was just the fact that if she were to be at the same pace as everyone else she would be behind. According to her standards, anyway. She was never less than a week ahead. Even in second year when she was petrified by the basilisk she was still ahead. Hermione could barely admit it to herself. She was pouting.

“Well, don’t you look depressed. What’s wrong?” Tom asked closing the door to his private chambers softly.

Hermione mumbled something intelligible, lower lip trembling and her eyes filling with tears.

Tom looked panicked. Hermione didn’t cry. Not even when she was held captive or being out dueled. Not that he had ever seen the latter. He was starting to get absurdly worried.
“Say that a bit louder, dearest.”

“I am on pace with the rest of the class.” She yelled obviously tormented.

He really did try to hold back his laughter. It was her fault after all, being so amusing. A man could only hold so much of that in, he was bound to break at some point. He burst out laughing. His low timbre resonating around the room. Hermione blinked in bewilderment. Her surprise turned to wonder as she stared at the man that had once for her been the root of her deepest fears. He was now smiling and laughing. Not in a mockery of humanity nor was he perversely pleased at the death and torture around him. This was a fully realized, throaty laugh in which he conveyed his good humor. She was in awe. It made him damn near perfect in her eyes. In that moment, she felt like a proud mother who had been waiting for this day for so long. She could finally breathe. This was the proof she had been waiting for. Proof that he could never become Lord Voldemort even if he wanted to.

“What? Can’t bear to be laughed at? I am sorry Dearest but you left me no choice. What a silly thing to be upset by.” He was still chuckling as he pulled her into a hug and kissed the top of her shiny brown curls.

Hermione wiped the last vestiges of her tears and smiled tremulously. She had wrapped her arms around his waist and tightened her hold. He was family now. Harry and Ron would never believe it. She couldn’t wait until they were born. She was going to love them and spoil them so much. She had a feeling Tom would too. He would love who ever she did.

The day she gained Sirius and Regulus as brothers was a happy day for her, without a doubt. But they were still responsibilities that she took on. She was their older sister and protector. With Tom, she was the protected, spoiled one. It felt good. So good to finally let go. It was different with him than with her husbands. As powerful and capable as they were, she was equal. They had to share in their responsibilities.

“Miss Black, are you still in there?” He asked still chuckling.

“Yeah.” She mumbled. “It was my bogart in third year, you know.”

“What was?”

“A failing grade and Professor McGonagall told me I didn’t belong.”

“That is not about failing. That is about finding out magic is real and being afraid it will be taken from you. Why would you fear that, being from the illustrious Black family?” His brow was pulled together in a contemplative frown.

**HGHGHGHG**

Scabior had been on the way back to the Slytherin dorms when he saw Hermione deep in thought in the hallway. He smiled at her.

“Hello, Hermione.”

She looked up startled, as if she were a deer caught in the light.

“Oh, hello, um, hi. I was just…” She trailed off looking angry, gesturing behind her vaguely.

Scabior looked at her in puzzlement as she walked away.
“Bye.” He called out uncertainly, watching her as she sped down the corridor without looking back. That was not only odd but completely out of character for her to act so… wonky. What the hell was going on? Turning about face quickly, he nearly sprinted to the DADA classroom. After all Professor Riddle helped her before. He knocked loudly, unsure if the Professor was still in. When the door opened, his moment of relief turned into full blown panic. Hermione was staring at him in curiosity from one of the desks.

“Merlin!” He breathed.

“Mr. Scabior. Come in. What can I do for you so close to curfew?”

“Well, I wanted to ask you about Hermione but now I think we have a bigger problem.”

“Why is that?”

“Because if Hermione is here, she cannot also be the person who I just passed in the hallway. She was acting so odd that I thought something must have happened.”

Tom whirled around and had his wand pointed directly between Hermione’s eyes.

“What did I say to you when I told you my parents died.”

“That it was my fault.”

He lowered his wand in relief and concern.

“This is the real Hermione Black.”

Scabior was not happy with the wand pointing at her head nor the answer to his Professor’s question. Hermione could never be at fault for something like that. He began to glower at the Professor. Tom smiled in amusement.

“Don’t worry, I didn’t mean it.”

“You did at the time.” Hermione chimed in smirking.

“I was seventeen and grieving.”

Scabior looked between them in confusion. It was something he obviously wouldn’t be privy to. He shrugged his shoulders.

“If Hermione is here, then who did I pass in the hallway?”

“That is the question isn’t it. Where was she headed?”

“The Charms corridor. I was on my way to the Slytherin dorms.”

“Both of you stay here. I will be right back.”

Tom strode from the room and walked towards the Charms classroom. On the next floor down, he saw Lucius heading towards the dorms.

“Lucius, come with me.”

“Sure. Where are we going?”
“We are going to capture the person who looks like Hermione but is not.”

“Intrigue. Excellent!”

Tom rolled his eyes and continued on his way, Lucius following along in his impressive wake.

Tom opened each door in the hallway. Once he opened the second to last door he paused in confusion and horror. A cauldron full of polyjuice potion and a small vial of chocolate brown curly hair sat in the center of the room. Tom was starting to piece things together from the rather odd day he had and turned to leave the room when Lucius closed the door in his face.

“Lucius! What the hell are you doing?”

All he heard was laughter as Lucius Malfoy walked away.

He slowly turned around and looked closer at the supplies in the room. There in the large beaker half hidden by the lace wing flies was quite a bit of assorted hair. Malfoy blond, Black, and dirty blond. If he had to make a guess, he would say they belonged to Hermione’s husbands. How long exactly had she been with a fake version of her husbands? It made his blood run cold.

Believing that whoever just locked him into the classroom was after Hermione, Tom began to windlessly tear down the locking wards that were set on the door. It was a handy skill he picked up in France during a six-month apprenticeship to a Dark Arts Master. It was that particular Master that convinced Tom that he didn’t really want to go down that path. Being locked in the Bastille without a wand was terrifying. He learned how to get out though. He had never had a more effective teacher.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione and Scabior had been chatting about various things while they waited for their Professor to return. It was the most relaxed Scabior had been all year. They both turned expectantly to the door when it suddenly opened by a smooth looking Lucius Malfoy.

He walked into the room, striding straight to Hermione. She smiled at him and lifted her left hand to his cheek.

“Did you write that letter to your mother you wanted to send?” She asked in a cheerful voice.

“Yes, all finished. I am sure she will be deliriously happy that I have written to her so soon after returning.”

He was momentarily shocked to find her wand pointed at his face and a furious look on her face. Scabior drew his wand the moment he noticed Hermione’s defensive position. What a protector he turned out to be. Scabior thought.

“What is this, sweetheart?”

“Strike two.”

“Excuse me.”

“Incarcerous.” Hermione said calmly as the conjured ropes wound about the imposters body.

“What are you doing?” Lucius asked in outrage.

“You are not Lucius Malfoy. First of all, he was watching the Slytherin quidditch team practice.
tonight and he already sent his mother a letter this morning as she requested. Secondly, Lucius never calls me Sweetheart. If you are not Lucius, and you’re not, then I suspect polyjuice. Seeing how my copy was walking the halls not that long ago. So, who are you?”

“It doesn’t matter who I am. What does matter is who is after you, Hermione Black. I am only the tip of a very large iceberg.”

“I guess we better start chipping away then.” Hermione said coldly.

**HGHGHGHG**

Orion was staring at the Headmaster incredulously.

“You cannot be serious.”

“My sources are very good. I have complete faith that this is true. We need her to do this.”

“You want to use Hermione as bait? That would mean that I put my own child’s safety in jeopardy!”

“I believe she will be perfectly safe if we can access your repressed memories.”

“She is going to hate us and kill us if we don’t tell her.”

“Yes.”

“What a glowing recommendation.”

“One of the most amazing things about Hermione is her ability to forgive.” Albus said smiling. Orion nodded. Unless you did something to her loved ones, then look out.

“I didn’t want to believe that Cygnus would do this to us, his own family.”

“I don’t think he did. I think your memories were erased to keep you safe. I think Cygnus tried very hard to keep you out of it.”

“To keep me out of it?” He raged. “How could I stay out of it when he sells Hermione to the highest bidder?”

“Yes, that is an answer I am searching for myself. I am not sure that is exactly what happened. I think we are missing a critical piece of information. That is why I asked you here. Tom felt that if I explained to you what was going on and what the stakes were that you would be amiable to Legilimency.”

“Tom said that? Why?”

“Let’s just say he was less than pleased at my alternative plan.”

“You wanted to involve Hermione.”

Albus nodded.

“Let me guess, Tom doesn’t know about your ‘bait’ plan.”

“And I would like to keep it that way.”
“Promise me she will be safe.”

“I promise.”

“So be it.”

“Legimens.” Albus said as he met Orion’s eyes.

**HGHGHGHG**

“Did you think that a locked door could hold me?” Tom whispered in Lucius Malfoy’s ear. Tom had finally caught up with the imposter outside of his classroom. He shuddered to think what might have happened to Hermione if he hadn’t been so quick. Tom noticed that the door to his classroom was open and he heard Hermione’s voice go deadly serious. Still training his wand on Lucius, Tom peeked into the classroom where he saw a second Lucius Malfoy being held at wand point by Hermione and Scabior.

Tom grabbed his Lucius Malfoy by the scruff and pushed him into the classroom.

“Well Darling, it looks like we have a problem on our hands.” Tom said as his Lucius twisted in his grip trying desperately to get free.

“Tom, you have been keeping things from me.” Hermione said exasperated.

Tom’s eyebrow rose in question.

“Don’t look at me like that. I’m sure you and Albus think that I need protection because I have you both. Let me tell you this, Tom Riddle. There is nothing I cannot handle. Don’t tick me off further by insulting my intelligence.” Hermione’s eyes were bright and furious her hair sparking wildly, making her captive Lucius recoil in fear. Tom was obviously repressing laughter. Hermione narrowed her eyes before exchanging the point of her focus to the new Lucius.

“How do you feel about Crookshanks?”

“Good?”

“Incarcerous! How many damn Lucius’ are in this fucking castle?!” Hermione yelled.

“That my dear is a wonderful question.” Said Orion Black as he stepped through the classroom doorway with the twinkling Headmaster.

“Father what are you doing here?” Her eyes flicked to the Headmaster who was openly gloating at a petulant Tom Riddle.

“Meeting with the headmaster.”

“I see that but why?”

“Two reasons. First he wanted to see how friendly I was to his cause and secondly, how angry I would be if he used you in a plot.”

“Now, Orion, you are completely off base here.” Albus said slightly panicky. That traitorous bastard. He had no plans to keep that secret.

“Don’t treat me like one of your fawning idiots, Albus.” Orion muttered innocently. Oh yes, he knew what he was doing.
“I thought you were talking to him to avoid bringing Hermione in.” Tom was struggling to reign in his temper catching on to what Orion was trying to convey.

“I do not need to be coddled.” Yelled Hermione. “You do realize that if we all worked together we could be so much more effective.” The three men continued to ignore her.

“You forewarned Orion.” Albus said shrewdly to Tom.

“He is an ally of mine.”

“Since when?”

“Since I knew he was Hermione’s father and she held him in high esteem.”

“She does?” Orion asked with a soft smile at the very girl in question. Hermione glowered even as she began shaking in fury, Scabior looked confused as hell, and the two Lucius’ were sneering in disdain.

“How touching.” The Lucius who was still held by the scruff of his neck by Professor Riddle. His hair began changing and his voice deepened. As his brown hair shortened and his hazel eyes went back to normal, Orion’s eyebrow lifted.

“Dorian Burke. Does your father know that you are trying to lure unsuspecting students out of the castle?”

“I know of the perfect place to interrogate them.” The headmaster twinkled dangerously.

“You now why doesn’t that surprise me?” Orion asked tersely.

**HGHGHGHG**

To say Grindlewald was angry was an understatement. He saw everything draped in red. His plan dissolved around his ears merely because one of Hermione’s lackeys noticed her supposed suspicious behavior. And after all the work and effort he put into capturing her three husbands, he was completely enraged. He seethed as he stormed down the hall. Scabior was the name, wasn’t it? It was a good thing that he had been standing disillusioned outside of the classroom or he would never had known about the alliance of Riddle, Dumbledore, and Lord Black. At least he had captured two out of three husbands before the complete fuck up of his minions. Well, the leaders’ minions.

The Nott heir proved much more difficult than he anticipated. But he did get something he didn’t count on. He stuck his hand in his robe pocket and fiddled with the Time Turner he was so well acquainted with. After all it was his personal creation. Once he cleared the castle wards he apparated to the home base of the Knights.

He plastered a cruel smile on his lips as he opened the door where the leader of the Knights had been staying.

“Were you successful?” The young leader asked.

“You know I wasn’t. You also know what I found.”

“It is not time yet. All three of them must be disposed of first. I want nothing to get in my way when I finally take her. It will also clear the way for me to take over the British Ministry. I love how my plans just come together.”
“It was never a matter of it coming together. It was always a matter of execution. You have always been out maneuvered. Always by Hermione Black.”

“And once I have her bound to me, nothing will be able to stop me.” The young man said turning around in his chair. Grindlewald gasped, staring at the mutilated face that the man kept hidden in disgust.

“What the hell happened to you?” Grindlewald whispered in horror.

“If we are lucky you will never know.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Three men, one boy, and one furious time traveling witch, stood in front of the manacled imposters hanging on a wall in the holding cell somewhere in the bowels of the castle.

Albus and Tom stood in the back sporting identical signs of various spell damage. They were giving the witch a wide berth, she was a force to be reckoned with. You would think that by now they would know better than to exclude her from anything. It took only a few minutes of trying to protect themselves from the angry end of her wand to be reminded of that fact. It didn’t help that said witches’ father stood off to the side with a smirk and silent promises of retribution to either wizard who didn’t take his daughters’ punishment stoically, like men.

Hermione stood waiting for the second Lucius to turn into his real form, still agitated. Sparks shot out of the tip of her wand, landing on the floor, leaving tiny black dots on the stones.

Long blond hair began to recede to chin length black hair. Heavy black brows drew over brown eyes as Hermione gasped her acknowledgement.

“Antonin Dolohov.”

“I am flattered Pchelka, it seems you have the distinct advantage of already knowing who I am. I must say I am flattered.”

“Don’t be. Where is Lucius? The real Lucius?”

“I wouldn’t know. I only needed to occupy the Defense Professor. I will be greatly rewarded.”

“I hate to break it to you, but I highly doubt you will be able to be cognizant enough to receive anything, let alone a reward.”

Tom damn near laughed. If he hadn’t been pouting about her raising her wand against him, he would have. Although seeing Albus in the same predicament as himself gave him a warm fuzzy feeling.

“Tell me, Mr. Dolohov, was it? What did you hope to gain by turning into my son-in-law?” Orion asked in a low voice.

“Me? Nothing of consequence.”

“You were at my trial of Lords as Cygnus’ henchmen.”

Dolohov’s lips twitched.

**HGHGHGHG**
1952: Nurmengard- 20 years in the past

Grindelwald was pleased. He had spent the last seven years of his life and several of his most
talented wizards to create the room. A Time room which was a marvel and the world would laud
his efforts. They would fall to their knees in supplication and wonderment at his brilliance. He was
absolutely sure from running test after test, that it would hold Hermione. He couldn’t allow her to
jump through time any further. He was already an old man and she was so young. If only there was
a way for him to get younger. He sighed.

He was startled out of his contemplations by a sharp crack in the room. He came face to face with
himself, middle aged.

“How? What the… What is going on here?”

“I need an Elixir of youth and the letters from Albus.”

“A what, what?”

“Oh yes. Damnit. I forgot that you were told about the Elixir, by me.” He sighed. “You need to
hunt for Nicolas Flamel and hold him until he uses his brilliant little stone to create the Elixir of
youth. He will be able to give you three vials. Only three. And if you don’t mind, the letters from
Albus about Hermione.” He stated holding out his hand.

His past, older-self looked at him in calculating contemplation.

“Do we ever get her?”

“Not yet, but maybe soon.”

“Maybe’s.” He shook his head in derision. “I have a plan that is near fool proof.”

“Then by all means but I wouldn’t hold my breath.” He muttered as the sheaf of parchment was set
in his hands.
Chapter 23

Chapter Summary

The Leader of the Knights

Chapter Twenty-Three

1952: Nurmengard

“As I said, I have created something that you will be interested in. I have invited you here to research it and find out everything that it can do.” Grindlewald said smoothly to Nicolas and Pernell Flamel.

“Why us? I am sure there are better qualified candidates.” Nicolas said.

“None that can offer an acceptable exchange.”

“I should have known it was too good to be true. What do you want?”

“The Elixir of youth.”

“You are mad! That doesn’t exist, it is a theory at best.”

“I know that you can make it with that brilliant stone you have created.”

“It has never been attempted with the Philosophers stone.”

“Well, would you look at that, a perfect lab for experimentation.” Grindlewald slyly cooed. He opened a door that they had been standing in front of for the duration of their argument.

“You have no intention of letting us leave do you?”

“Of course you can leave, when I have the Elixir in my hands. I’m not a monster.”

“We must agree to disagree.”

Grindlewald ushered the couple into the room but held Pernell by her bicep.

“I firmly believe in incentive. So, with that in mind, I will take Pernell and see to her comfort and when you make the Elixir, I will bring her back.”

“You can’t do that.”

“Watch me.”

Grindlewald forced the elderly woman from the room and dragged her, with her head held high, down several hallways until they reached the time room.

“This will be good practice for when I invite Hermione. You don’t mind being my test subject, do
you? I didn’t think so.” Grindewald asked Pernell.

He shoved her through the door the moment it appeared and cast his wards, preventing her escape. Once the door was sealed the protestations of the elderly woman were cut off and Grindewald smiled as the room held its first prisoner.

“I wonder what my older but younger looking self is up to…” He muttered to himself.

**HGHGHGHG**

Theo and Hermione were studying together in the library or so they said. Hermione for once couldn’t put the proper focus on her work, her mind kept going in circles about what she could have done to prevent current events. She felt ineffective and helpless. She wanted to go out and search for Lucius and Avery and bring the captors to justice. Her leg bounced in nervous energy and worry. What if something happened to them? She shook her head vigorously. She wouldn’t fall into the trap of imagining something worse was happening than reality. No news was good news. Right?

“Hermione, Honey, stop. We would feel it if they were in trouble just like we have with you. Where ever they are, they are fine. We will find them.” Theo said, sliding his hand over her knee to stop her incessant shaking.

“We won’t. We are stuck here. I always hated it when Harry ran off ahead on his own leaving me behind and absolutely nothing has changed. I am still left behind.”

“You cannot be serious. From all of your Hogwarts stories about you, Harry, and Ron, I feel like you are Harry and I am you. I am always left in the dark.” Theo was flabbergasted. Did she honestly not see that she ran off half-cocked every time?

Hermione stared at Theo for the moment and thought back on all the stuff that happened while she had been in the various timelines. He was right. She was Harry Potter. She chuckled and shook her head.

“I am sorry Theo.” She said wrapping her arms around his neck and pulling him close so that she could rest her forehead on his.

“If you two love birds are finished, the Headmaster just got a report from one of his spies that Lucius and Avery were taken to Burke Manor. Follow me, we are meeting in my classroom.” Tom said impassively.

**HGHGHGHG**

Lucius was lying on the stone floor of what could only be described as a dungeon.

“You have got to be kidding me.” He said aloud.

“If I was kidding you, I would have started with a joke.” Avery bad-temperedly sneered.

Avery and Lucius were separated by a stone wall with a small barred opening at the very top.

“Can I be correct in assuming, that you don’t have your wand either?” Avery asked.

“Right in one.”

“Damn.”
“I guess it is time to test out what having this bond truly means, huh.” Lucius smirked.

“What do you mean?”

“Two out of four of us, that we know of, are being held here. Let’s draw on the bond. Let’s bring down this wall.”

“That would scare our captors shitless no doubt.”

“Stand directly below the opening and put your hands on the wall.” Lucius said, already placing his hands as indicated. He braced himself against the wall so that he was lightly pushing against it.

“I’m ready.” Avery called.

The air crackled and shimmered with the conjuring of magic from the very air around them. At first the bond was slow to respond but as the power was focused into the stone under their hands, it flowed faster and easier. Lucius started to chuckle humorlessly when he realized that not only were they going to take down the wall, but the entire Manor.

The whole building shook. House elves and humans alike were running for their lives. The Lord of the Manor stood in the courtyard, watching as his ancestral home shook with the fury of the wizards being held captive below.

“How are they doing that?” The young leader asked awed. It felt the way Hermione always felt when she was doing magic. He could smell the metallic bite of magic in the air. He lowered the hood of his cloak that he always wore to hide his disfigurement. A once beautiful Gellert Grindelwald stood tall and proud. The last visages of a once powerful wizard.

“I imagine it is the binding. It’s not well known or documented but in all the stories, the bound laid waste to their enemies. It was the reason that they are coveted by Lord’s and governments.”

“Incredible.” He breathed.

“It would be, I am sure, if it wasn’t my home they were destroying.”

“Stop being such a twat, Burke. I’ll build you another house.”

“Sir!”

“Enough!”

“I am not a twat.” Burke mumbled petulantly.

Meanwhile back in the dungeons the rubble that used to be a stone divider rained down upon the floor around the two powerful wizards. They looked at each other and smiled.

“Let’s get out of here and see who we should thank for their hospitality.” Avery said.

“Absolutely. It would be rude of us otherwise.”

“Unquestionably.” Avery agreed.

Avery and Lucius walked through the broken structure and with not even a speck of dust on their robes, they emerged from the ruins as avenging Gods. Gods who deign to interfere in the inconsequential lives of their worshippers. This is how legends were made.
“Lord Burke, we meet again and so soon after our last. I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised as it was you who made Hermione available to the advances of Grindlewald.” Lucius’s velvet voice was dangerously low. “How very loyal you appear to be.”

Lord Burke was trembling in his dragon hide boots and looked back for support from his leader. A leader who had left him to his fate the moment the dust started to settle. Lord Burke was all alone.

“I think you should come with us, seeing as how your son was one of the bastards who stunned me.” Avery said with a hard, steely glint in his eyes.

Lord Burke stood shocked for a moment before trying to apparate away. It was too late however, Lucius Malfoy had grabbed Lord Burke in the same manner that Tom Riddle had forced the imposter Lucius into his classroom, by the scruff of his neck.

“I think not.” He said before the two men and their new captive apparated right outside the boundaries of Hogwarts.

**HGHGHGHG**

1952: Nurmengard

“It is finished, let me see my wife.” Nicolas Flamel said.

“Of course.” He pushed Pernell in the room and stepped through the doorway.

There were three vials filled with ruby colored liquid on the table in the center of the room. Nicolas was talking low to his wife, obviously asking her if she was okay. Grindlewald pocketed the potions and left the room. He could hear the yells and accusations of unfair treatment by the alchemists’. He ignored them, still smiling as he walked into his personal chambers.

“Finally! I thought he would never finish.” The middle aged Grindlewald said, holding out his hand to accept the potions.

“Here it is.”

“There are three. I need two.”

“No. Why two?”

“I have my reasons.” He plucked two out of three vials out of his own hand. “Do not take yours until Hermione can watch.”

“Why?”

“Trust me.”

He shrugged. He could trust himself if no one else.

Once he put the vials in an inner pocket of his robe he pulled out the time turner. He looked at it in concern. Where it was once shiny, beautiful, and new, it was now tarnished and fragile looking. It looked pristine when he had put it on in 1972. What changed?

His head snapped up in sudden realization and the blood drained quickly from his face. He was traveling his own timeline. How could he forget something so important? And that bastard knew the whole time. He knew that coming back would weaken him. So why would his future-self sabotage this effort and still encourage the trip?
There was only one reason he would do that. He must have a plan that could not be tampered with. With a grim look on his face Grindlewald downed the contents of one of the vials and grasped the time turner. He should have known. If he was two people in the same place and time, then something had to happen. He had a feeling this jump would be unlike any others.

He set the empty vial on the side table and ignored his past counterpart, striding from the room and fortress. When he crossed the wards, he closed his eyes and took a deep breath before sending the rings into motion.

Time slowed down to a near stop before rushing ahead at an unbelievable pace. His body lurched as time froze and slowly regained its normal cadence. He gasped as the time turner crumbled to dust through his fingers, the wind carrying the microscopic pieces to its final resting place on the earth.

Grindlewald’s lips thinned in resignation and anger. He didn’t even bother to look at his once proud fortress that became his prison for so long. With a flourish and a twist, Grindlewald apparated away.

He appeared with a soft pop in the garden of Lord Burke’s estate. He walked to the door and knocked, knowing that the occupants already knew of his arrival.

“May I help you?” Lord Burke asked with an imperiously raised eyebrow.

“But of course, Burke, we are after all good friends.”

“And you are?”

“Gellert Grindlewald at your service.” He said with a slight bow and a twist of his lips. It was not his service that would be provided.

Lord Burke’s eyes went wide in shock.

“Tell me good man, what year is it?” Grindlewald asked with a smile.

“1967.”

“Excellent.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione felt them the moment they apparated to the gates of Hogwarts. She jumped up from her seat in Transfiguration and ran out the door without so much as a by your leave. Who could stop her from gaining the coveted reunion of her husbands? Albus Dumbledore was already on the grounds walking briskly to the gate. Hermione over took him quickly as she began yelling their names.

Lucius and Avery smiled at her, still clutching Lord Burke in their grasp.

“Is it really you?” Hermione asked them.

Avery pulled the neck of his shirt to the side so that Hermione could see his golden tattoo.

“Lucius?”

With some difficulty and help from Avery in holding the prisoner, Lucius unbuttoned his robes enough so that she could see his tattoo gleaming on his ribs. She smiled jubilantly. They were safe.
The longing in her eyes to hold them was only muted minutely with relief.

Dumbledore finally reached the gates with twinkling eyes.

“What have you got there Messrs. Malfoy and Avery?”

“A valuable hostage.”

“I have just the place to put him.”

Hermione gave Albus major side eye but said nothing. Might as well show Lord Burke what became of his son.

Dumbledore had made a habit of moving his captives at night allowing him much more freedom in his interrogation methods, but that was not possible in this case. In the bright but cold morning that only the beginnings of spring could be, Dumbledore led three of his students and a captive inside the illustrious establishment. Students milled around the halls on their way to their common rooms or classes as the small group thread their way through the crush. Students stopped and stared, most not knowing that anything had happened the previous night. It was not made public knowledge. After all, what would wide spread panic achieve? Nothing that they were interested in.

Once they finally made it to the holding cells, Lord Burke took a quick shocked breath. His son, Dorian was manacled to the wall.

“Father?”

“Merlin.”

“See how kind we are? Reuniting family. Wasn’t that kind of the Headmaster?” Lucius whispered in Lord Burke’s ear. The Lord in question however started to shake. He had a feeling that he and his whole family had been abandoned by Gellert Grindlewald. Rage as such he had never known rose in his throat. For all of the years and suffering he deserved more loyalty from the man who claimed to be his leader.

“I can see you would like to have a chat. Mr. Malfoy, would you be so kind to escort our guest to my office? Hermione, I know you would be more than accommodating in serving us refreshment?” Albus asked. Hermione smirked. How much like Albus was she going to be? Should she or shouldn’t she drug the tea? She got a mischievous look on her face and nodded. She was sure she picked up a bag of sherbet lemons before she returned to Hogwarts.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione had snuck into the boy’s dorms around one am. It was just too cold for her alone. Usually, she would choose to climb in with Theo as he barely moved at night but she had slept in his bed the night previously. She quietly walked to Lucius’ bed and slid her cold feet against his legs.

“What the fuck!” He yelled. It was a good thing Hermione erected silencing wards.

“Shhh.” Hermione whispered. “I’m cold.”

“No shit.” He grumbled unhappily even as he drew her closer to his body. She ran her fingers under the edge of his boxers, slowly tugging them down.

“I was so worried.” She whispered.
Lucius smiled into her hair and leaned into her hand that just closed around his cock.

“Merlin woman, faster.” He demanded as his hand closed over hers and began pumping at the speed he wanted. He leaned closer to her and caught her lower lip between his teeth, lightly tugging it. She moaned as his hand left hers and ran over her thighs and arse.

Hermione let go of his erection and pushed him onto his back. He let her, laying back, arms behind his head. She straddled his hips and using her hand to guide his rigid cock into her sopping entrance. She slowly lowered her body, arching her back as she went. Her head was thrown back in ecstasy, teeth biting her lower lip. He watched her as her breasts bounced near his face. He couldn’t hold out any longer. He needed to touch her, to feel her. Bringing his hands up to capture her hard nipples, he rolled them mercilessly between his fingers. Just the way she liked it.

He dug his heels in the bed and met her thrust for thrust. His hand trailed down from her breast, over her rib cage and waist. His fingers dug into the flesh of her hips, pulling her down harder and faster. He growled in frustration and flipped them over, so that she was beneath his body. Her hair was spread out on his pillow and her eyes were half lidded with desire.

Lucius was looking at her possessively. He grabbed her ankle and brought it to his shoulder, running his fingers up her leg until he felt the soft skin of her inner thigh. He kissed her ankle, staring into her eyes the whole time. She smiled and huffed a small laugh until his fingers found her clit and began to slowly tease her with light circles.

“Lucius, Please!”

“Please what Pet? What do you want?”

“I want you to move, I want you to make me come.”

“Your wish is my command.” He murmured as he started to thrust into her once more.

His fingers danced over her swollen hood as he lifted her other leg onto his shoulder. He was gripping the tops of her thigh, pulling her back to match his rhythm.

Lucius watched Hermione as her body began to tremble uncontrollably. She was so close.

“Oh God!” She screamed as her pussy clenched his cock. Moving his hands to the bed, he forced her knees to her chest and picked up a driving force as he moved faster and deeper.

His hair was tickling Hermione’s nose. She smiled before gathering the shiny strands in her hand then clutching his shoulder with her other hand. Her nails lightly dug into his skin as she felt her body responding to him again. He groaned loudly as her walls fluttered, her second orgasm taking them both by surprise.

With a few more thrusts, faster and more erratic than before, Lucius came with a loud ‘fuck’. He rocked into her slowly as his seed coated her walls, spurt after spurt.

Lucius gently lowered her legs on his left as he pulled out of her body and collapsed behind her. She rolled to her side as he pulled her close, her arse nestled against his groin. He was tracing lines on her shoulders and the back of her neck. She fell asleep with his hands all over her. She felt like she could take on the world and smiled as her eyes fluttered shut.

Lucius woke the next morning in a panic. He was being suffocated. Hermione’s fucking awful cat was staring at him with his beady yellow eyes. He and that cat had a mutual agreement to hate each other that started the moment that Hermione and Lucius returned home from Diagon Alley that day.
he was purchased. Lucius hated him then and it went both ways, he had the scars to prove it. He had strenuously opposed the beast to be brought with them to Hogwarts. He was obviously out voted.

Crookshanks had a tendency to wait until he fell asleep to crawl over him. His goal was to be near Hermione but somehow the cat always slept on his face. The damn thing constantly chose his face to suffocate. Every morning, Lucius would awaken, heart pounding, the cat staring at him with his mocking eyes just daring him to make a noise of protest. He desperately wanted to kill that cat. Their animosity grew. In only one point did Lucius and the cat see eye to eye, and that was Hermione’s happiness. Not wanting to hurt Hermione in anyway, the two came to a shaky truce. The fighting would commence only once she was distracted or in this case, asleep.

Hermione mumbled in her sleep, turning over and nestling her face in Lucius’ chest.

“Do you have any idea how long it took us to take down your wards? What the hell were you doing that you didn’t want us to know about?” Avery asked mutinously throwing open the bed curtains. He stopped, shocked, then began smiling conspiratorially at the naked couple, waggling his eyebrows suggestively.

Hermione groaned at the light that poured over them and Crookshanks. Lucius glared at the fur ball. How did that fucking cat get past the wards anyway?

“I always key him in.” Hermione said.

“Did I say that out loud?” Lucius grumbled.

“Yes, you did.” Theo said cheerfully.

“Hey Crooks.” Avery said affectionately, scratching Crookshank’s favorite spot under his chin. The cat purred contently as Lucius sat up rubbing his face. It seemed as if the cat were mocking him, impossibly purring louder than he had ever heard before. Lucius rolled his eyes. Damn cat. Theo leaned down and kissed Hermione’s temple before absently scratching the cat’s head as if he were a dog.

**HGHGHGHG**

Grindlewald was angry. He had worked so hard for so long and nothing had changed. His face was still a mess, Hermione was still out of reach, and his empire was crashing to the ground around him.

He allowed his greatest ally to be captured to give himself time. He couldn’t afford to be caught in the hopes that when he went to the past to retrieve the potion and correspondence things would have changed. Needless to say, they didn’t. He was beyond furious.

It was time to move on to Plan B. Kill Orion Black.
Hermione stood in the center of the Great Hall surrounded by examiners and her DADA Professor, Tom. Usually each examiner would take one student and many of the practicals would be done at once. Hermione had been concerned when her name was skipped but she calmed down rather quickly thinking they may have put her last name as one of her husbands. When Theo’s name came, and went she began to squirm. Once she was the last one left, she had resolved to say something. She didn’t have to. Apparently, the examiners wanted to all be present for her exam. She was the famous Hermione Black who had three husbands and a secret Order of Merlin first class. She was starting to understand Harry better and better.

She took a deep calming breath before the testing started.

“Mrs. Black. Um, can I call you Mrs. Black?” An elderly man who had introduced himself as Aloysius Prewett at the start of exams three days prior asked.

“Yes, Sir.”

“Excellent!”

“Now, Mrs. Black, can you preform the shielding spell.”

With a nod and not a single sound, Hermione nonverbally cast a strong Protego maxima. A large semi-opaque silver barrier surrounded her body.

The examiners were smiling.

After several run-of-the-mill seventh year spells, Mr. Prewett addressed her again.

“I have no doubt you could do this all day my dear. So, what we are all here for is to see exactly what you can do.”

“Well, Sir, I am well versed in dueling and protecting spells. If you start naming them I can show you as long as I know them.” Eyebrows rose throughout the room. Tom stepped forward.

“How about a duel with me?”

“Ha! I would have an unfair advantage. I know the way you duel inside and out.”

“That was true, eighteen years ago.”

“You think you could surprise me?”

“I think I can win.”
“I think not, Tom Riddle.”

Hermione lifted her wand and began casting nonverbal spells rapid fire. The examiners moved back as one of Tom’s spells were deflected and hit near their feet. Hermione snorted and cast her shielding charm. It held under his barrage of fire while she cast powerful protection wards around the examiners. Their astonishment only grew as she held off a man who was not only a Master in his chosen subject but also one of the most highly regarded DADA Masters in the world. It was no secret that Professor Riddle was considered one of the most powerful wizards. They watched as this girl no older than eighteen not only held her own but seemed to be toying with her Professor.

Hermione blocked another spell of Tom’s before sending ropes to bind his arms. Tom avoided them and sent back a black vapor that wrapped around her protection spells looking for any cracks. The smoke was followed by ropes of white and blue lightning. It shattered her shield in seconds. Hermione smiled and whirled out of the way before casting a complex and dark spell. It wrapped around him as a lover would and as it squeezed, it cut into his skin. The more he struggled and fought, the deeper it burrowed.

Mouths dropped to the floor. Though considered a dark spell it was often used in herbology on certain plants that strangled their hosts. When such plants are babies and transplanted, they need help latching. To use this spell in such a manner, surprised them. Her imaginative use of all sorts of spells had them watching as if they were following a ping pong match. Hermione and Tom were evenly matched.

Tom was having fun, without a doubt. It had been a long time that he could duel to the best of his ability. It was always her. Ever since he was a child. She was the only one who he could count on not to try to manipulate or coddle. She wanted him to learn well, even though in her original timeline he was a monster.

Tom cast a curse he had only used once and to great detriment of his former Master. It was a spell that acted a lot like a boggart, but it made the recipient believe they were living it. Not just watching it.

The spell took shape around her. She was in the Malfoy Drawing room and she was surrounded by hundreds of people wearing Death Eater robes and masks. There was one, a tall snake like man with red eyes glowing, staring in amusement at Hermione who was on her knees with her naked chest pushed into the floor. A black gloved hand held her down between the shoulder blades, long blond hair escaped the dark cowl and tickled the back of her neck. Her battered body was covered in blood, semen, and her own excrement. There was laughter and derision at the young debased woman. It died down as Voldemort stood and walked so that his robes barely touched her nose.

“Lick my boot, Mudblood.” He said quietly. He lifted his robes so that everyone could watch as her tongue ran along the finely tooled leather.

Trembling, the woman moved, her tongue sliding along the side of the sole, tears running down her cheeks dripping muddy brown flecks onto the floor.

“You didn’t think that you would be able to change anything, now did you? All of that effort into my life and you still are here on your knees before me. Did you think that you would save your precious Harry Potter? Did you think you could save the wizarding world from me? It is a shame that your blood is so filthy. Such a talented little Mudblood. At least my loyal followers are getting some repayment out of your body. Who had you this week? Lucius? Yes, he does like to watch them struggle in pain. Don’t worry Poppet, I’ve heard there wasn’t a woman he couldn’t make scream.”
Hermione thrashed and screamed on the floor as Bellatrix Lestrange Crucioed her. She gulped great lungful’s of air as the curse was lifted.

“If Lucius doesn’t meet your needs, maybe you need something a little bit better. How would you like me to teach you, Poppet? I will break you properly.”

The real Hermione gasped on the sidelines of the horror that she was forced to watch. Her deepest darkest fears surrounded her, showing them to every single person in the room. Tom was staring at the scene in front of him with deep abhorrence and disgust. He couldn’t tear his eyes away from Hermione’s abused naked body.

“Expecto Patronum.” Hermione yelled. She dredged up the happiest memory in her repertoire.

It was the moment that she had seen Tom Riddle in his Second-year transfiguration class. He was more like Draco Malfoy than an evil Tom. It was the moment when she realized she saved Harry.

Her otter chased away the scene and gamboled around her in protection. Hermione shoulders were back and her chin was up. She dared anyone to say anything about the horror that was her deepest fears. They didn’t though. They stared at her in open mouthed wonder as not only had her fears been unconscionable but also that she expelled it with one of the most powerful patronuses that they had ever seen. Hermione didn’t take pride in that, Harry’s had been so much more powerful in his third year than hers had ever been. It was one spell that didn’t come to her easily.

“That was me wasn’t it.” Tom choked out. As he moved close enough to whisper to her without their audience over hearing.

“Yes.”

“Did I really do all of that?”

“Not to me.”

“But I did horrible things.”

“Yes.”

“Merlin, no wonder you were so desperate to change things. That was horrendous.”

Hermione lifted a trembling hand to his shoulder and squeezed.

“I will never regret the sacrifices I had to make to get here, to a place where you are like this. This version of you is worth saving. If I had the choice to be in my original timeline and kill you or to weave through time and ensure that this you was created, I would choose this every time.”

Tom looked at her in awe. She was everything he aspired to be.

“That was incredible. We expect to see great things from you in the future Mrs. Hermione Black.” Aloysius said.

Hermione nodded her head to the examiners and Tom. She turned with a face devoid of emotion and walked calmly from the Great Hall. Her husbands had been waiting for her and smiled as she downed the wards that the examiners had placed. She ignored her husbands for the moment as she stalked up to the room of requirement. She didn’t realize it but Tom had followed her from the Great Hall and beckoned to her husbands to follow them.
Hermione bid the room to give her comfort, to provide safety and it delivered. The small group entered Hermione’s sanctuary, the Gryffindor Common room. The Slytherin’s looked around in shock. Their attention was immediately drawn to the small woman who stood in the center and started screaming. It was a release. Screams of fear, pain, regret, loss, and love ripped from her throat. Her magic tumbled around her body preventing those that came with her to interfere. They didn’t need to watch or stay but they did. If Hermione wanted them, they would stay. It was apparent to each man that Hermione was finally grieving her life. The life she left behind in 1998. She was strong and this was a further sign of her fortitude.

Tom covered his mouth with his hand as tears gathered in his eyes. He watched as this woman let down her defenses and broke. She wasn’t mentally broken. She broke only for the moment and when she was done, she would pick up the pieces of her soul. She would be whole once more. But for now, she shattered, pieces of herself scattered around the room. Her magic went wild, destroying the Common room that she had once found so much comfort in.

Tom looked around as Hermione’s keening died into a whimper. Pictures of a girl who was obviously Hermione and two boys. One was small and skinny with crazy black hair and glasses. He had a curious lightning shaped scar on his head. The other was obviously a Weasley or a Prewett, so red headed was he. They looked happy and close. Every picture featured the boys in various places and ages.

When her magic disappeared and she was crying normally, Lucius walked up behind her and pulled her back to his chest. She collapsed and he helped her sit on the floor, resting between his knees. He murmured into her ear, loving words as she quivered in his hands. Avery and Theo were petting her arms as if she were a cat. Tom watched as they surrounded Hermione and gave her every piece of themselves.

Tom recalled that in her fear scape, Lucius was there. He had been the one to abuse her, the one who violated her. How could she let him touch her so intimately and lovingly after that? It occurred to him that these were not new fears. They stemmed from her original timeline. If that was the case how could she do anything with Malfoy? Why wasn’t she repulsed?

“Because he is a different man than he became in my timeline.” Hermione answered him aloud despite her trespassing into his mind. How did she do that anyway? He knew for a fact that a victim had to look the Legilimens in the eye to be read.

“We have a connection from the spell you cast Tom. That was an interesting spell you used.” She choked out.

“I had no idea your fears were so deeply ingrained. Usually it only shows what it’s like to live in a fear. The fears are usually superficial.”

“You know I lived through war and you still thought I would only harbor superficial fears?”

“Yes, No. I knew you had been through a lot. I thought you would easily block or get out of it. I haven’t dueled with anyone in a long time who I was an equal to. I didn’t hold back because I thought you would conquer it like everything else.”

“I did.”

“But look what it did to you.”

“I will be fine.”
“I know. I’m sorry.”

“You are forgiven.”

He walked over to her and pulled her head into his waist and hugged her fiercely. He was berating himself even more now that she had forgiven him. He didn’t deserve it.

“No one deserves forgiveness, it is either given or not. It is to heal not only you but me as well. We are family Tom, and family forgives each other.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Grindlewald’s spies had told him all about Hermione’s DADA practical. He sat in stunned disbelief at the scene that had just been given to him from one of the examiners. His pensieve sat swirling showing pieces of the horror within. His guts twisted with disgust. Her fears were deeply disturbing. What the hell had she been through to have those kinds of fears? It made him even more determined to have her. She obviously feared one of her husbands if not more. Why did she marry them then? He wondered. He could protect her and keep her safe.

He picked up his silver cloak and after exiting his room in the newly refurbished Burke Manor, he raised wards. He didn’t trust anyone. His stomach was still churning as he entered an alley way next to a Gentleman’s club in Diagon Alley. Orion had a habit of coming to the club every Thursday. He had been doing it for months and Grindlewald had been watching. He knew the Black Paterfamilias was powerful and that he would only have one chance to kill him.

The pop of someone apparating filled the air as Orion materialized in front of Grindlewald’s hiding place. With the precision of a well-practiced killer, Gellert Grindlewald caught Orion unawares. A jet of bright green light hit the man square in the chest, the light leaving his eyes as he fell to his knees before toppling over.

Grindlewald didn’t wait to see the life drain from Orion’s eyes. He apparated back to Burke Manor where a bottle of Burke’s best port was waiting for him on the mantle.

He celebrated his soon to be father-in-law’s death with a smile, his hopes soaring among the clouds. Now it would be easier to pick off the bastards who dare touch his love. He only had to wait two more weeks then they would leave Hogwarts and the meddlesome duo, Tom Riddle and Albus Dumbledore.

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione sat in a chair in the headmaster’s office with Sirius as they were given the news of their fathers passing. Hermione dropped her head in her hands and sobbed. She was still raw from her fear scape earlier in the day. Her husbands were standing behind her chair in shock. The great Orion Black was now dead. One of Hermione’s greatest and most powerful protectors. She as regent of the family was vulnerable. There were many who desired her; her power, her family seat, her wealth. The entirety of her being was coveted by men who were already powerful in their own right. Not the least of whom was gathering followers and probably had a significant hand in Orion’s death. Who else would have been able to kill Orion Black? Hermione suspected it was Grindlewald, her personal tormentor.

A rolled parchment secured with a black satin ribbon, the kind that Lucius often wore in his hair, appeared on Hermione’s lap. With a trembling hand she picked up the scroll and tugged on the end of the bow. It sharpened and took its debt of blood before magically dissolving leaving the unbound parchment.
Hermione unrolled it and read aloud.

My Dearest Daughter,

Please do not mourn too long at my passing. Living and dying are all part of life and mine has come to an end. I do want you and your brothers to know that I loved you all very much. Hermione, when you came into our lives, you changed everything. Literally. I remember things. Things that did not necessarily happen and I could not be more grateful to you and everyone who made it possible for you to become my daughter.

I send this letter because I worry for all of your safety. It is no surprise that many want me dead, nor that one of them finally succeeded. I have made you, Hermione Jean Granger Black my inheritor in regent. Only you would wield the power necessary for our family’s survival and still pass it to Sirius once he comes of age. The Malfoy’s, Nott’s, and Avery’s will help you, among others. Protect them all, it can only be you.

I don’t know what is coming but as regent you have full access to the family vaults. Use it well.

Love,

Your Father.

P.S. Tell your brothers how much I love them and always have. I have faith in the amazing men they are and will be once they are grown.

Sirius stood and walked to Hermione. He collapsed to the floor, burying his face in her lap. She ran a shaky hand through his black locks.

“It will be okay. We will figure this out.” Hermione said.

**HGHGHGHG**

The sun was shining and the early summer day was beautiful as they laid Orion Black to rest in the family cemetery. The Black siblings were surrounded with friends and family as the ministry appointed undertaker extolled about Orion’s life. All the tears that they had to give have already been shed and dealt with. Regulus had a horrible guilt that Hermione tried to assuage him of. He felt it was his fault. If Regulus had gone to Grimmauld with his father, he reasoned, Orion wouldn’t have gone to the club. He would have been forced to go home instead. Hermione knew better. This murder was premeditated. Orion was purposely targeted. Whoever did it, and she had a pretty good idea who, would have found him eventually regardless. That didn’t stop the youngest Black from beating himself up over it.

Sirius on the other hand was stoic and serious in the face of this loss. He grew up a lot more than Hermione thought him capable of at this age. He always had that laissez faire attitude in her old timeline. She couldn’t help but be impressed with him. She wound her arms around her two brother’s shoulders. Where Reg leaned into her for comfort, Sirius wrapped his arm back around her waist and pulled her to lean on his shoulder. It was very sweet.

After the casket was laid in the ground and covered in dirt, the funeral attendees started to leave, whispering their condolences and mutual sorrow. Orion had been a well-respected member of the wizarding aristocracy. His loss was felt keenly through the ripple of the wizarding world. It wasn’t general knowledge but Orion Black wasn’t just a bigoted entitled wealthy dark wizard like she had always thought. In fact, she rather thought that she was responsible for some of his change but the reality of the situation was thus, he had his hand in various charities long before she came along.
Where Walburga’s funeral was attended out of duty, Orion’s was for the mourners. For all of the people whose lives he had changed.

Theo, Avery, and Lucius left the three siblings to their grief and with a brief touch or kiss they told Hermione they would be waiting in Nott cottage for her return.

Once they were alone Cygnus, minus his family stepped out of the shadows. Having been released recently from his cell in Azkaban, he looked shabby and weak. A man who was only a small portion of what he once was.

Hermione flinched when she felt his heavy hand rest gently on her shoulder. She pushed Sirius and Regulus behind her. Her heart rate sped up so fast she was breathing harshly with adrenaline coursing through her veins. The look on his face was an omen for what he intended. He was not there to comfort his niece and nephews. That much was obvious.

With a barely obvious jerk of the head the Black’s were surrounded by supporters of Cygnus.

Hermione gathered and pulled the magic from the center of her being and pulled some more until she felt herself draw from the shared well of her marriage. Sirius and Regulus deserved so much more than family like this. No wonder the Black family was screwed up. It was a cycle of madness that kept repeating over and over and would continue to do so until the whole family was wiped out. Well not today. Thought Hermione. This would not be that day.

She reached up to her hair slowly keeping her eyes on her insane Uncle. She pulled out two of the magical pins holding the whole mass of her curls off of her neck and with a nonverbal ‘portus’, thrust them gently into the hands of her brothers.

In less than a second after she pulled her hands away, they disappeared, leaving Hermione alone in a ring of wizards who intended to capture or worse. She was after all the only obstacle between Cygnus and Sirius. If they were stupid enough to engage her, then she would do what she had to do. It wouldn’t be the first time.

They stared at her for a moment before jumping into action. Seven wizards intent on capturing her began throwing spell after spell. She was good and she could hold them off for a while but not indefinitely.

With a pop, Tom Riddle apparated into the center of the circle surrounding Hermione.

“Oh Shit.” He shouted surprised, raising shields around them quickly.

Whatever he was expecting, it wasn’t that. Hermione could hear the frustration rip from Cygnus’ throat as more and more wizards popped in to help Hermione fend off her attackers. With Tom beside her, together they drove them back. Dumbledore apparated in quietly and took in the scene. He watched Tom and Hermione as they moved in sync. Lazily he erected anti-apparition wards and sat back to watch the show. There were now over thirty wizards watching the duo spank the would-be abductors. Too bad all his popcorn was at Hogwarts.

It took less time than she would have believed to round up the perpetrators and have them bound.

“I can handle this from here. Go to your brothers. They are probably hyperventilating by now. Go comfort them.” Tom dismissed her and then waved a useless Dumbledore over to help transport the villains to the proper authorities.

Torn between following through with their incarceration and comforting her brothers, she stood frozen for several minutes. It was Lady Malfoy, her mother-in-law who pulled her into her warm
embrace and apparated them both to Nott Cottage where her family was waiting for her. Hermione slumped in relief. She was ridiculously tired.

Regulus and Sirius jumped on her the moment they noticed her, sending all three of them crashing to the floor in one big doggie pile. Hermione chuckled weakly and met the furious eyes of her three husbands.

“Why the Hell did you not make a portkey for yourself?! Had Professor Riddle not laid wards that prevented our leaving our own house, you can bet we would have been there immediately to drag you out of there.” Theo bellowed.

“Had I left, I would have let them get away to try again when I was less prepared.”

“You were prepared for them?”

“Well no but I had it under control.”

Avery left the room in a rage. He couldn’t even look at her he was so angry. His deep fury was augmented and fed by his fear and feelings of helplessness. He would be having a word with Riddle in the very near future and if he ever prevented him from going to his wife again, he would suffer the consequences.

Lucius and Theo were obviously angry as well. She should have portkeyed out. It was what any sensible person would do but not Hermione. Ever the warrior she stayed and fought. They recognized at least that this was what made Hermione, Hermione. She was strong and capable but fear was a strong motivator for their anger.

“You may be strong and powerful but you are not invincible! What if they had more wizards than you could have handled. What if they had killed you before help could arrive? You always fearlessly run into a situation without us.”

“I did not run into that situation. They came to me!”

“But you could have left with Sirius and Regulus and you didn’t. We keep having this same fight over and over Hermione.” Lucius yelled. He sighed and ran a trembling hand through his hair. “I know you will always fight for what you believe in and for the people you love so I will only say this. I want to be there for every fight and altercation. You are my wife and I deserve the respect of being treated as your equal. Do not try to save me or protect me. I want to do that for you!”

“I cannot promise that. How would you even get to me or know for that matter if I am in danger.”

Lucius took a small necklace out of his pocket and dangled the deep red solitaire stone in front of her. It was beautiful and she eyed it warily. Why did Lucius Malfoy of all people have a gold and red necklace? She assumed everything they wore would be emeralds and silver.

“It doesn’t look like much, but this has been in the Malfoy family for hundreds of years if not thousands. After the scare where our tattoos turned black, we decided to come up with a way that you could summon us to you, anywhere or anytime. When my mother heard what we wanted, she told me about this. It is a Merlin made artefact that spouses can use to go to each other. Back in the day, kidnapping the families of your enemies was the common practice. All you must do is wear it. Would you do that for us, Pet?”

Hermione understood exactly where they were coming from. She knew she should feel bad for trying to keep them out of everything but all she could feel was relief. It was a difficult thing for her to accept that treasure but as she looked in the pleading eyes of Lucius, she gave in. Harry
hadn’t wanted to include Hermione or Ron in the Horcrux hunt but they came anyway. This was the same thing.

She nodded slowly and watched as relief slumped their shoulders in unison. Theo smirked happily and Lucius walked behind her and clasped the jewel around her neck. Planting a kiss to the nape of her neck after the golden chain was settled against her skin.

**HGHGHGHG**

Grindlewald stared in the windows of Nott Cottage and his face turned a mottled red. His witch was being fondled by those boys she called her husbands. He was enraged but held himself in check. It wouldn’t do to show his hand before the cards were even dealt. He gestured quietly to his army that had the place surrounded and they began to take down the impressive wards. Tonight, would be the night he made Hermione his, forever.
Chapter 25

Chapter Summary

The Final Battle

Chapter Twenty-Five

Lady Malfoy and Regulus left moments before the wards fell around them. At least they were safe. There was so much chaos and confusion when wizards streamed in. Although taken by surprise, Hermione, Lucius, and Theo fought valiantly against their many attackers.

Hermione watched in horror as Sirius was led away, out of her sight. Spells to subdue were sent her way but the more sinister spells were cast at her husbands. As powerful as they were, they couldn’t fight off the hundred or so wizards that had taken the cottage. Once the barrage of spells calmed down, Avery was led into the sitting room, disarmed and furious.

Lucius and Theo were pinned face down, a knee in between each of their shoulder blades. Hermione’s hands were bound behind her back, forced to stay on her knees by the heavy hands on her shoulders. The invading wizards froze as their Lord and Master waltzed in as if he had all the time in the world.

“I have to admit, Schätzchen, I never anticipated that it would take two hundred and fifty wizards to get to you but here we are.”

“Grindlewald, I should have known. If it’s not my deranged family, it’s you.”

“At least you thought of me.”

“What happened to your face?” Hermione asked.

His face darkened as he glowered in displeasure.

“It is a side effect of taking the Elixir of Youth. The drinker gains youth but loses beauty. That’s fine though. It’s not like you are the vain sort.”

“Have you seen my husbands? They are all drop dead gorgeous. I may not be supercilious but I would be lying if I said looks didn’t matter at all. You have to be at least attracted to a man.”

“Are you trying to say you aren’t attracted to me?”

“Oh, I am definitely saying that. Even young and unblemished I never had a thing for you. If I were to have a thing for anyone who wasn’t one my husbands, it would have been Tom. Instead he is my older brother.”

“Well how about this, I will take great care of your brother and when you come to your senses, you can come and get him.”

“Get him where?”
“Burke Manor of course.” He gestured to someone outside. Hermione assumed they were the men holding Sirius.

“Let him go.” She yelled desperately.

“What are you going to do for me if do?”

Hermione bit her lip and furrowed her brow.

“I’ll go with you.”

“Like Hell you will!” Avery shouted before he was elbowed in the stomach. A silencing charm was immediately cast, much to his consternation.

“As much as I am pained to part from you, I think you need to want it more. I always feel like I am the only one working on this relationship.”

“That’s because you are. You are delusional.”

“Well that is not going to get you what you want, now is it?”

“Please, Gellert, leave Sirius out of this. He is only twelve.”

“See all you needed was some motivation. I love it when you say my name like that Schätzchen.” He smirked at her and ran his finger over her bruised bottom lip with his thumb. “I tell you what. If you come to me tonight at Burke Manor alone, I will forgive everything. I will let your brother into the care of the Malfoy’s. Hell, if you promise to be mine in every way, I will even let your husbands live.”

Grindlewald walked out of Nott Cottage smugly. He had her, now he just had to be patient a little while longer and stay away from the annoying twosome, Riddle and Dumbledore.

Hermione watched as Grindlewald took Sirius and left. Tears were streaming down her face. She would do whatever she needed to protect Sirius. Grindlewald crossed a line. She may have set herself on a suicide mission but by God, she would make sure her loved ones were safe. A plan formed in her mind. Her husbands were really going to hate this.

Hermione stood as the last wizard left the premises and found her wand laying among the ruined furniture. She lifted the spells holding her husbands to the floor.

“You can’t go Kitten. We will find another way.” Avery said.

“Lucius gave me the pendant. You could come to me any time.”

“You are not actually thinking of doing this, are you?” Avery stood staring at her incredulously.

“I have a plan but I need to go to Grimmauld Place first.”

“Why?” He demanded.

“The Black Family Vaults.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione walked alone into Orion’s or rather her study once more. She stood in front of the woman in the painting.
“Hello Regent Hermione. Welcome.”

“Oh um, Hello. What did Orion call you?”

“I am Lady Lola Lestrange. The last female to be born of the line.”

“May I ask why you are in Grimmauld Place, the House of Black?”

“Of course. I became the lover of Arcturus, whose marriage had been an unwanted, arranged affair. Having a mistress was common in those days, even if the lady in question was high born. No, the scandal was that I was so much younger than he was. I was only sixteen when I caught his eye. I was two years younger than his oldest son, Orion. I died in childbirth just two years after we promised ourselves to each other. I was twenty-years-old. My only child, was adopted by my lover’s wife. It was quite the scandal. My daughter’s name is Cassiopeia Jean Black.”

“Are you saying that you are my biological grandmother?”

“Does it matter?”

“I guess not. I need to get into the vault.”

“Of course you do, or you wouldn’t be here, having this lovely conversation with me.”

“Will you let me in?”

“Only with the passphrase.”

“Fucking Hell. I don’t have time for this. What was it?” Hermione mumbled to herself. Something about the end and rising.

“If you need a reminder, go to your desk and ask the journal.”

“What do you mean ask the journal?” Hermione hesitatingly asked, looking at the desk as if it had fangs.

Lady Lola gestured for her to take a look. Hermione hoped with every fiber of her being that it didn’t resemble Riddle’s diary. She was to be mildly disappointed however. It was a near perfect replica and on top of it sat something she hoped never to see again. A blood quill.

With a look of disgust, she picked the quill up gingerly as if was about to attack at any moment. She opened the journal and began to write:

Hermione Black, Regent.

_ Good Afternoon Regent, How may I help you today? _

What is the password to the vault?

_ The end is nigh and before I fall, I rise. _

You are not a Horcrux are you?

_No. Does that displease you, Regent? _

No. I just wanted to make sure.
Very well. Is there anything else?

No.

Consult me whenever you have a need.

Hermione hissed through her teeth and massaged her hand. Stupid blood quills. She shut the journal. It was awfully polite for an inanimate object. Hermione kept shooting it suspicious looks as she made her way around the desk to stand in front of the painted curly blond woman in her pink dress.

“Well Dearest?”

“The end is nigh and before I fall, I rise.”

“Ah, there we go. Don’t forget the cake this time.” Lady Lola said as a table once again appeared behind Hermione.

“Where’s the key?” She asked as she pocketed the green petit four.

“Where ever you put it last time.”

“I still have it?”

“It disappears with use. The key that was given to you had a number written on an attached parchment. You have to use it that many times before you are given another. It has always been like that.”

Hermione rummaged around in her beaded bag and sure enough, she found the key wedged in Hogwarts a History. It was the very edition that her parents bought her when she started at Hogwarts. She palmed the key before lifting the bottle of shrinking potion. She tossed the entirety of the contents to the back of her throat remembering how uncomfortable it felt to shrink.

With a shrug, she unlocked the small door and walked through. She smiled as the path lit up around her. She felt the cool dampness seep into her as she followed the stone corridor down its winding path. Once she met the stone barrier, she pulled out her wand and cut open her palm. She pressed the offering into the stone, which pulsed and sucked in her sacrifice. The stone rearranged itself to form a doorway reminiscent of Diagon Alley.

Using her wand to close the wound on her hand, she wiped the excess blood on the thigh of her robes. Walking into the vault for the second time, she was more in awe. Perhaps it was because she didn’t know what she was looking for per se or maybe it was because she wouldn’t die a most horrible death from touching the contents. Whatever it was, she gaped in open mouth wonder at the vast amount of riches that laid before her.

She slowly followed the path that she had taken before. It didn’t take long before she was where she had meant to be.

“Percival?”

“Oh now you remember me. I feel honored at finally having your attention.”

“Stuff it! You’re lucky I don’t burn you.”

“You wouldn’t dare.”
“Would you like to test that theory?”

He grumbled.

“What was that?”

“Fine. What do you want?”

“Oh how magnanimous you are Percival. I need you to tell me what I am supposed to do as regent if the young heir has been kidnapped.”

“Oh ho, you lost him already, did you?”

“Just answer my question or you will never see the light of day again. And I mean that!”

“Fine. No need to get huffy. So, sensitive it’s no wonder. What would possess the Black Patriarch to name a woman Regent? Really, what did he expect?”

“Percival!” Hermione yelled.

“Sorry. Right well, unless he is wearing the family ring I would venture to say there wasn’t much that could pull him home without engaging in a fight but if we are talking about the Knights that would be a different story.”

“Why would that matter.”

“Because Orion was involved with the Knights. They tried to obliviate him after he stumbled into one of the meetings but they weren’t particularly skilled. His memories are in the pensieve to your right in the mirrored cabinet.”

Hermione looked around and slowly approached the indicated cabinet. It looked exactly like the one Albus had in his office at Hogwarts. She opened the doors and the huge stone pensieve pulled out with shelves filled with vials of silvery memories. Some were clearly labeled, obviously, the newer ones. There were many at the top that looked older than the cabinet. Her fingers itched. Had she more time, she would be watching all of the memories. Some of them had to be hundreds of years old. She was in heaven.

“Which one is it Percival?” She asked.

“Which ones.” he emphasized. “The ones labeled O-68-I. There should be three. Look at the one with a butterfly in the corner of the label first, then the one with a bell, and finally the one with a house last.”

“Right, because labeling first, second, third would be way too obvious.”

“And you yell at me for the sarcasm.” He mumbled grumpily.

Hermione rolled her eyes and dumped the contents of the butterfly vial into the pensieve. She took a deep breath and sank her face into the surface.

Orion was walking along a small path in the dead of night. It must have been late fall because he pulled out his wand and muttered a warming charm. Orion was furious. It was the second time in as many months that Cygnus had blown him off. He should cut off his allowance, he whispered angrily. This is not what he planned on doing on a Thursday night, Dante was waiting at the club for him, promises of some high stakes card games.
He pulled a small scrap of parchment paper out of his pocket and brought it close to his face, casting a nonverbal lumos.

Hermione read over his shoulder.

Burke Manor. The grove. Midnight.

-Cygnus

Hermione rolled her eyes. Why were they always so blah? If she ever needed to send menacing messages, she was determined to write them in limericks. It would at least be entertaining.

As he approached the grove, he heard the quiet mumblings of a small group of people who were determined to be quiet.

There were seven wizards, cloaked in silvery robes. He was admitted to the circle and unceremoniously shoved to the middle. He controlled his surprise as the wizards pushed the hoods off their heads, grinning with conspiratorial looks. The Lords Burke, Yaxley, Rosier, and Lestrange were easily recognizable but his eyes were almost immediately drawn to Cygnus who was standing smugly with a challenging glint in his eyes. It was the other two that took him a moment to place. Antonin Dolohov, a first-generation English family whose parents fled their own war-torn country. He was a newly wealthy pureblood with an insignificant but pretty title. The other was a young blond man whose face was ruined. He might have been classified as handsome once. It was this man who addressed the very confused Orion Black.

“Join us Lord Black in our endeavor to raise the prestigious Magical blood above that of the common muggles. It is we, who should rule the world. How the Muggles cope without magic is beyond me.”

“How exactly are you planning to achieve this?”

“We are going to start a war.”

“I am sure there are many ways to get what you want that avoid war. Most of the wizards here are Lord’s that sit on the Wizengamot.”

“Perhaps, but the muggles need to know exactly where they stand.”

“And where is that?”

“Beneath us as slaves.”

“I respect what you are doing as far as bringing magic out of secrecy but I don’t believe we should enslave the Muggles.”

“My own Paterfamilias a Blood traitor.” Sneered Cygnus.

“Cygnus!” He boomed.

“What a pity. I was hoping for a good alliance with Hermione’s father.” Grindlewald said.

“Hermione? I only have two children and they are both sons.”

“You will. She just hasn’t been born yet.”

“Who are you?”
“I am Gellert Grindlewald and I am going to be your son-in-law in the future.”

“That is presumptuous.”

“Your daughter is an amazing woman.”

“How would you know?”

“She is a time traveler.”

“My daughter?”

“Yes.”

“Incredible.”

“I feel terrible about this but since you aren’t with us, you are against us. Obliviate.”

The memory went white and Hermione was back on her feet in the Black Family vaults.

Okay, so the first memory was of the failed induction. She sighed. On to the next. After she replaced the first memory back in its appointed bottle, she unstoppered the second and watched it swirl as she added it to the basin of the Pensieve.

She took a deep breath before putting her face back into the liquid.

*Orion* had stopped over to talk to Cygnus about the gaps that began forming in his memory. After all, if anyone could figure out what was wrong, it would be his brother-in-law. Cygnus had a talent for retrieving memories. He was often called by St. Mungos for his expertise.

“What better way of showing our dedication to the cause than making an example out of the squib born of the pureblooded families?” Cygnus boomed.

*Orion* paused just outside the door as the cheering died down and Cygnus’ voice raised authoritatively once more.

“Come brothers, join in the movement against the lesser race! Cull the family trees.”

*Orion* was horrified. His younger squib sister was twenty-four and entering university. What Cygnus was proposing would put her in the line of fire. He couldn’t allow that!

He pushed open the door and the room slowly went silent. As he looked around he started getting flashes of his missing memories. The same group of men over and over. He had thought something was wrong with him health wise. He felt betrayed as he realized the root of his problem was Cygnus. He looked up at his brother-in-law and his already aimed wand.

“Obliviate.”

Everything went white but unlike last time, there seemed to be things moving around the edges. Things he couldn’t quite remember. Things that centered around Cygnus.

Hermione found herself once again in the Black vaults, mildly trembling. Her mother had been targeted. Without wasting another second she quickly put the second memory back and dumped out the third into the Pensieve. She pushed her face back in.

“I don’t know why Jean! I can’t remember.” *Orion* shouted at a young Jean Murray.
“Slow down Orion, it will come to you.”

“It was a mistake bringing your memories back.”

“How can I protect myself if I don’t know the truth?”

“Maybe you were better protected before.”

“Don’t be an idiot. Just because you close your eyes doesn’t mean the threat will go away.”

“He knows you were placed as a Murray. He searches for you even now.”

“Then I will have to change my name.”

“It’s not that simple.”

“No?” She thrust her left hand under his nose. “He asked me. It only took him three years but he finally did it. We were going to marry in May but in light of what is going on, we can push the wedding up.”

“This is madness. It will never work.”

“You are always so pessimistic, Orion. On a more pleasant note, what are you going to give me for a wedding gift?” She asked jokingly.

“A well placed obliviate.”

“Don’t even joke about that.”

“It would be the kindest thing I could do for you. It would protect you and any children you bear with that Muggle.”

“He has a name.”

“You are too good for him.” Orion pulled her into his arms and kissed the top of her curly head. He left her on campus and walked to the apparition point three blocks away. It was ridiculous that he had to walk so far to find it.

He was nearly there when a red spell missed his face by mere inches and the brick of the building next to him sent chips flying. He turned around as fast as he could and raised his wand. He immediately set up the famous Black family wards to hold his attacker in place.

He stood face to face with Cygnus.

“You should have known I would follow you here Orion.” Cygnus sneered.

“I did, I also knew you would follow me and not her first. Stupify.”

Cygnus lost his sneer as he barely managed to deflect Orion’s spell. It was never any secret that Orion was the better dueler.

“Stupify. Stupify. Stupify.” Orion shot them rapidly. He knew that Cygnus would weaken quickly. It was on the last casting that Cygnus went down.

As Orion walked up to his brother-in-law, he drew an empty vial out of an inner pocket of his robes.
“Incarcerous. Enervate.” Orion had Cygnus bound and awake on the ground, while crouching over him. “Legilimens.”

As adept as Cygnus was with memories, one would think he would have learned Occlumency or Legilimency. It was to his detriment that day. Orion easily flowed through the younger man’s thoughts until he reached the ones about Jean. He withdrew them and placed them in the vial in his hand. Once it was capped it went back in the depth of his robes.

“Let’s see what else you have been up to.” Orion muttered as he sunk back into Cygnus’ mind.

Cygnus was on his knee before Grindelwald and he was holding a wand that was a family heirloom. An heirloom that had been missing since Orion’s father, Arcturus, died. The wand was supposedly made to strengthen the Black family. Only a true Black could wield the wand. It was an Aspen and Ash wand with a Dragon heartstring core. The woods were wound around each other creating a spiral effect. It was a wand like none other and it was now in the hands of Grindelwald. He wouldn’t be able to ever use it to its full potential, if at all. It was a temperamental wand.

He pulled out of Cygnus’ head and gave his brother-in-law a hard stare. After a moment of thought Orion lifted his wand.

“Obliviate.”

The memory faded to black.

Hermione pulled herself out of the pensieve and stood blinking, deep in thought. It was clear that she needed to get that wand from Grindelwald, but how?

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione had spent the last several hours enjoying the company of her husbands. She liked to think of that as the quiet before the storm. It was a very subdued time. None of them wanted to be separated but knew they had little choice in the matter.

While Hermione had gone to Grimmauld Place, Lucius had informed Albus and Tom what had happened. They also gathered every ally they had, pulling strings and using favors to build an army big enough to go against the size they believed Grindelwald’s forces had swollen to.

Hermione watched as grown wizards mobilized around her. It was a sight she wouldn’t soon forget. It reminded her of when Grimmauld Place was the Order’s safe house and the combatants came in and out for meetings and safety. It was a happy and sad moment for her. Sad because she had to once again lift her chin and fight until she had nothing left to give. She was happy because this was it, the last battle. She could feel it. Harry would never have to be a warrior at eleven-years old after a childhood of neglect at his Aunt and Uncle’s hands.

The moment came when she had to leave and she begged herself not to cry. She prayed hard that everyone would make it out alive. She refused to give that hope up.

Hermione stood up from where she was sitting on the sofa in the sitting room of Nott Cottage. The wizards surrounding her froze, at least four of them with mutinous looks on their faces. None of them wanted her to go but they knew she would never abandon Sirius, not even for a moment. She had never abandoned a single person she loved.

Lucius pulled her into his body and took her lips desperately in a fear fueled kiss. It said everything he could not bear to say out loud. ‘I will always love you’.
Avery was shaking when he walked up behind them and pulled her back into his chest, Lucius still kissing her. Theo threaded his fingers with hers and as soon as Lucius came up for air stole her lips away.

Hermione let out the breath she was holding and stepped back from them. She turned and put her arms around Tom’s neck and whispered into his ear.

“Take care of them for me, all of them, if anything happens to me.”

“Nothing is going to happen, Hermione.”

“Just in case.” She planted a light kiss to his cheek. “If something happens to me find a new reason to keep you from turning into a Dark Lord. I really couldn’t bear it if after everything I still lost you.”

“I will never let you down and I will spend the rest of my life proving it to you. When we come back from this, I will show you a memory that is absolutely precious to me. It is the only memory that works for me to cast a Patronus.”

“I look forward to it.”

He kissed the top of her curls and backed away first needing her to see his strength and belief that everything would be okay.

Hermione grabbed her beaded bag and with a last look around, she twisted on the balls of her feet, apparating to a grove that she had seen once in a memory.

The nights were starting to get slightly warmer as April turned into May. Hermione shuddered. May second was the day Hermione and the boys broke into Gringotts and rode a dragon to its freedom. May second, the day that changed her life. That day may have been exactly twenty-six years in the future but it felt the same. Immediate war was looming then, just as surely as it was now.

She jumped as she stepped on a small twig that snapped under her feet. Within moments, she was surrounded by silver cloaked wizards that ‘escorted’ her to their leader.

“Schätzchen, as always, you look ravishing.”

Hermione couldn’t tear her eyes from the large steel cage holding Sirius. It was only big enough for him to sit with his back against the bars and his knees pulled to his chest. Hrodulf Lestrange was grinning and petting his hair as Sirius sat stiffly, not moving an inch.

“Let him out of that cage.” She croaked, still staring at Sirius.

“Not quite yet Schätzchen. We have a few things to address first.”

“What do you want?”

“An unbreakable vow that you will be mine and only mine for as long as we both shall live.”

“And if I agree, you will let Sirius go?”

“Immediately.”

“I accept.”
“Burke, be our binder.”

“Yes, My Lord.” Lord Burke said looking slightly nauseated.

“Do you, Hermione Black, vow that you will be faithful to Gellert Grindlewald for life?”

“I will.”

“Do you also vow to stay with Gellert until death parts you both?”

“I will.”

“Do you vow to live with Gellert Grindlewald for as long as he wishes it?”

“I will.”

The three ribbons binding her to the vow wrapped around their hands. Grindlewald looked happy and smug as Sirius watched in horrified fascination. Look at what Hermione was willing to do for him, the brother she loved so much. He began to weep as the cage dissolved leaving him free to go.

Hermione stood up and walked over to Sirius and put a small ruby brooch into his hand. She kissed the tears off of his cheek before whispering ‘portus’ sending him to safety at Malfoy Manor. As he disappeared in front of her eyes, tears streamed down her face. When had Malfoy Manor become synonymous to safety?

“Now that that is taken care of, we should plan our wedding night, Schätzchen.” Grindlewald leered at her as he sauntered ever closer to Hermione. He should have noticed something was off from her willingness to go along with things, but Grindlewald was so wrapped up in his delusion of her love for him that he never saw it coming. Or so she thought.

Curling her hand around her crimson jewel, she desperately sought her husbands. It was the signal they had been waiting for as hundreds of wizards began filling the copse of trees, wands at the ready.

As the wizards fighting on her side began casting, innumerable wizards stepped out of the shadows of the forest. Grindlewald was prepared for a fight. He would have been a fool to think that the Great Hermione Black would yield without a fight.

The fighting began in earnest as casualties began piling up on both sides. Hermione had found a nook in one of the Ash trees behind her. It was a good thing the bowtruckles seemed to like her. They could be nasty buggers when angered.

She was shooting curses at any of the enemy that she could see, the poor buggers going down without a clue to their attacker. Across the clearing she could see Grindlewald. He was using the Black family wand. She tried summoning it, but Grindlewald kept it in his grasp, erecting wards as quickly as she could tear them down. She needed that wand.

She erected her infamous wards and grabbed her beaded bag. What the hell did she have in there that could possibly help? Her stomach clenched as she grasped and pulled out a tiny vial. The silvery potion sloshed in its tiny bottle and Hermione looked as it doubtfully. The Mopsus potion that she had co-won with Theo on the very first Potions class she had on her first day at Hogwarts 1971.

Bottoms up. She thought as she drank the contents of the vial. She needed to hope for the best. Quickly she took down the wards and waited for the potion to kick in. She could feel it burning
through her body. It was like alcohol on fire, as it burned, so did the efficiency. She had only a few moments.

She could see the path his wand would take and tore down his wards. It felt like her mind split into two. As her wand kept his wards at bay, she lifted her left hand, palm up and wandlessly summoned the Black Family wand. The wand seemed to sail across the divide in slow motion as she dispassionately watched as he tried to reclaim it. It was futile though, her telekinetic abilities granted by the Mopsus potion would only last a few seconds longer. In any case, it only enhanced her wandless abilities. Had she not been capable, she would not, at that very moment, have the wand in her hands.

She felt drained as the last of the potion drained away. She looked at a shocked Grindlewald as he was trying to come to terms with just happened. She knew she had a choice to make. If she captured and imprisoned him, there would always be the fear of his escape. If she killed him…

He must have seen the choice she had made in her eyes.

“I have always loved you, Schätzchen.” He mouthed.

She wasn’t surprised when the green jet of light hit him in the middle of the head. What did surprise her was that she didn’t cast the final curse. Turning around she saw Tom, standing not two feet behind her, with a desperate look on his face. He went down on his knees and flat on his face before she could even scream.

She blasted a path to his side and sunk to her knees beside him.

“If you fucking die on me Tom Marvolo Riddle I will invent a new time turner, go into your past, and crucio you until you go barmy!” She screeched as she flipped him over and cast enervate. She nearly passed out from relief when his eyelids began to flutter.

“I’m not dying woman. Get a hold of yourself.” He mumbled weakly as she let out a breathy chuckle. “I really wouldn’t dare. I fully believe you would do exactly what you said.”

“Have you seen my husbands?”

“Last I saw, they were driving back the right flank and doing a bang up job of it too.”

“Maybe if we are really lucky we will all make it out of this alive.”

“Maybe.”

Hermione grabbed a hair pin and set it in his palm. He looked up at her.

“I can still fight.”

“You are such a liar. Go to Malfoy Manor. Tell them that Grindlewald is dead. Portus.”

She stood quickly so that his grasping hands couldn’t pull her with him. She turned around the moment he was gone. She had three husbands to find.

This was easier said than done. The fighting had all but died as the news spread of their fallen leader. Hermione walked back to the clearing where she and Grindlewald held their last battle to find Albus on his knees sobbing over the still form of Grindlewald.

She rubbed his back, trying to console him. He never said it to her, but she knew that even after all
that time, he was still deeply in love with Grindlewald. After another small pat on the shoulder, Hermione left Albus to grieve for his loss.

Hermione finally found the last pocket of resistance that was surrounded but a small force of allied troops, her husbands included. She could feel them drawing upon the well of their shared magic as they performed incredible feats, that put awe on the face of every wizard regardless of side.

Watching as her husbands’ easily restrained the five wizards left of the inner circle. Once they were bound, the other wizards stepped in, transferring their charges to Azkaban. Hermione ran into the clearing and into Avery’s arms.

“Oh Thank Merlin!” He yelled and laughed at the same time. Lucius and Theo each joined their hug making a Hermione filling to the surrounding man flesh. Arms, hands, and lips were everywhere. Not knowing what part belonged to who, the four of them celebrated their win. Finally, it was over.

The threats had been taken care of and neutralized. All that was left was living the life she had and she was really looking forward to it.

The four of them apparated to Malfoy Manor where chaos reigned. It was set up as a sort of hospital, where the combatants had gone for healing. They were also retrieving the dead and separating them by sides. There were many more of Grindlewald’s followers but there were enough wizards who fell fighting for her. Hermione walked over to the fallen soldiers and loudly sobbed. Lord Malfoy, her father-in-law was staring with dead eyes at the night sky. She leaned down with shaky fingers as she closed them for a final time. She barely heard as Lucius realized who she was touching. Avery threw his arms around Lucius and pulled his blond head against his own black one. They were brothers and they would morn this loss together.

Hermione stood in front of Lucius and stroked his face, tears sliding down her cheeks. He tried to pat her dry but gave up as more and more tears flooded his hand.

“I am going to find mother and make sure she knows. I would hate for her to be the last one to hear.” He whispered. Avery and Theo gestured that they would go with him as she turned back to her self-appointed task.

Trying to keep herself together she walked the line of dead men. She promised herself that all of these men would be honored for their sacrifice that night.

She walked into the Manor, drained, looking for the physical reassurance that Sirius and Regulus were alright. She opened the door to the dining room and saw Reg and Sirius sitting next to Tom Riddle who had been placed on the table where he was waiting to be treated.

“Everything went well, I trust.” Tom said anxiously, noticing her white face.

“Lord Malfoy died tonight.”

“I’m so sorry for your loss.”

“Thank you.”

“I promised you that I would show you a memory if we made it out alive. Do you have a vial?” He asked her gently. She nodded her head and produced the very vial that gave her the family wand. In the end, she didn’t need the wand. Tom cast the final spell that ended his life. She would put the wand up for when Sirius took over the estate. He could do what he wanted with it.
Tom pulled a long silvery thread from his head and stuffed it into the tiny bottle and shoved in the stopper. He sent her a lopsided grin as her brothers wrapped themselves around her.

“Thank you ‘Mione.” Sirius said. “For everything.”

“Never for one moment believe that I don’t love you with every fiber of my being, both of you.”

“Why don’t you boys stay here with me and keep me entertained while Hermione takes a moment for herself?” Tom asked them.

“Sure, what do you want to do?” Regulus asked.

“Why don’t we play exploding snap?”

“Awesome!” Sirius said.

Hermione quietly left the room and walked out beyond the wards and for old times sake, apparated on the top step of Grimmauld Place.

Knowing the drill, she entered the vaults easily.

“Grindlewald is dead.”

“Good. Does that mean I am getting out of here?” Percival demanded.

Hermione let out a snort.

“After I view this memory, I will put you in my front hall.”

“Oh goody. And here I thought leaving this dump was my lucky day.”

“I would miss you too much if I left you down here, Percival.”

“Yes well, it’s my winning personality. I am a people person.”

“Obviously.” Hermione deadpanned. She quietly snickered as she walked over to the mirrored cabinet and pulled out the Pensieve. She dumped Tom’s memory in and watched the liquid churn. With mild trepidation, Hermione plunged in head first.

Tom was laughing with his group of friends, leaning back in his chair during second year transfiguration. The girls were throwing him adoring looks and he occasionally winked at them, sending their hopes soaring. He nearly crashed to the floor when at the front of the room a beautiful woman appeared, just like magic. With little more than a thought she turned not one but all of the beetles in the box into buttons. He knew for a fact doing many transfigurations at one time was incredibly difficult. He had to find out who this black-haired beauty was. He immediately knew he wanted to marry her one day. Once they were released to practice on their own, he had a burning determination to impress her. He smiled triumphantly as his beetle turned into a button on the first try.

“Professor, Tom got it on the first try!” Philip Greengrass announced.

“Great job, Tom! Ten points to Slytherin.” Professor Dumbledore said. Tom beamed as he watched her double take. She waved at him, uncertainly, but with a smile on her face. His heart swelled with rapture.

He watched as the woman talked with the Professor. Straining his ears, he heard the Professor
call her Hermione. His eyes went wide. Could she be the same Hermione that time traveled, the same woman who changed his birthday by eleven years? He couldn’t understand why his mother hated her, she was the most brilliant, beautiful woman he had ever seen.

Once they were dismissed, he was slowly following his friends out of the classroom, barely listening as they chatted about the lesson. His head turned right around once he realized they started on a new subject, Hermione.

“A Black. I wonder who she married.” Philip Greengrass mused.

“I haven’t heard that any of Black family got married. My father is a Lord and has a seat on the Wizengamot, we would have been invited. I wonder who she really is.” Magnus Prince argued.

“She has to be a Black. That circlet is special, I heard my sister complain about it once when Lyra Black married Lord Lestrange. Lilibeth was sore about it for weeks after.” Aldric Travers added.

Tom was devastated. She was already married. If he couldn’t marry her, then he would make her family another way. She cared about him. He believed that with every portion of his unblemished soul.
Epilogue

Chapter Summary

Twenty-Six years later

Epilogue

Twenty-Six years later: Hogwarts 1998- Quidditch finals

One of the students in the stands was covering her face in embarrassment. Only would her family be so crazy to converge en mass at the last Quidditch match for the two seekers on opposing teams. Slytherin vs. Gryffindor. Rosalind and Theo Nott Jr. smiled and waved at their parents despite their groaning sibling. Their blue and silver scarfs were yanked by their sister, Lola Malfoy, whose green and silver scarf hung perfectly straight under her long curly blond hair.

“Do not draw attention to us. They will want to sit here!” Lola said desperately.

“Nah, they will sit with the Headmaster like usual. You are just worried that they will find out about Ron.” Rosalind said sweeping her dark brown hair over her shoulder in annoyance.

“Find out about who, Darling? I hope you two are keeping Lola out of trouble.” Lucius Malfoy said.

Theo snickered as Lola went white a sheet.

“As if anyone can control Lola, Dad.” Rosalind said rolling her eyes.

“No one, Daddy. They are just teasing me.” Lola stammered. Lucius narrowed his eyes, not believing his daughter for a moment. She was just like her mother.

“Lucius, we will be in the staff box. Join us when you are ready. I’ll see you kids after!” Hermione yelled over the heads of several students.

“Okay, Pet.” He shouted back. “If you are hiding anything from me Lola, I suggest you come clean before your mother finds out.”

Lola gulped as Theo and Rosalind waved at their mother.

“There’s nothing.” She whispered.

He left the three of them to find their friends and their seats. On his way to the staff box, his eye was caught by a flash of bright blond Malfoy hair next to the locker rooms. Lucius made his way over to his son, Draco to wish him luck on the match but stopped dead in his tracks when he noticed Draco wasn’t alone any longer. His son’s tongue was trying to taste what Genevieve Potter had for lunch earlier that day. He supposed it wasn’t like they hadn’t seen this development coming. Shaking his head Lucius decided to just meet Hermione in the teacher’s box. His heart couldn’t take any more surprises.
“Headmaster Riddle.” He said in greeting, sitting between Hermione and Avery.

“Lucius, see the kids?”

“Most of them.”

“You will never guess where I found young Hermione yesterday.” Tom said conversationally. “I was under the impression that you were a studious child who didn’t look at boys.”

“She had a completely different upbringing than me.” Hermione said as she searched the crowd to find Sirius who was supposed to come and support his Nephews and Godson in their last ever Hogwarts match. Well, it wasn’t Richard’s last. He had another year until it was his turn. With Avery’s legacy as chaser for Slytherin, it didn’t surprise anyone one when his son joined the Slytherin team for the same position.

It didn’t faze Hermione that three out of five of her children ended up in Slytherin, but she thought at least one out of the brood would have been a Gryffindor. Nope.

“Well, I found Potter with his filthy hands all over her. He had his damn hands up under her skirt. I nearly killed him.”

Hermione chuckled. Tom was like a strict father to the poor girl. Young Hermione would die alone and unmarried at the ripe age of one hundred and fifty if he had any say.

“Were his hands really up her skirt?” Theo asked skeptically. It was more likely that Harry wouldn’t dare do anything inappropriate with her. His hands were probably on the hem of her skirt or on her waist. Tom was having none of it.

“I’ll chop his damn hands off.”

“Now, Tom. It could be worse. I hear Rabastian Lestrange has been sending her gifts.” Hermione realized that wasn’t the best argument as Tom’s eyes bulged. His face turned red as his blood pressure went through the roof.

“He is thirty-three years old!!”

“Like I said, it could be a whole lot worse than Harry Potter.”

“I think she would make an excellent muggle nun.”

“I don’t doubt that is your opinion for a moment. Oh, there’s Sirius. Finally!” Hermione huffed, waving like mad to catch his eye. She stopped waving and wrinkled her brow. Who was he talking to? Her jaw dropped as she saw young Ginevera Weasley plant an interesting looking kiss on his shocked lips.

Hermione shook her head and chuckled. Every one of the adults knew of Draco and Genevieve. This, however, was a complete surprise. Sirius sure looked like he had been hit over the head with a frying pan.

“Did you just see that?” Hermione whispered to Theo.

“Molly is going to kill him.” He whispered back.

Lucius and Tom were both laughing like crazy at the gob smacked look on Sirius’ face.

“And if that was Hermione or Lola instead of Ginny?”
“That would be incestuous, it would never happen.” They both said.

“Impossible, the both of you. As if the purebloods care about incest.” She muttered.

“We don’t marry our brothers or uncles.” Lucius stated, trying to keep his face neutral as Sirius made his way to where they were sitting.

“Keep telling yourself that.” Hermione said.

“When can we expect the wedding?” Avery teased. As Sirius took his seat by Regulus directly behind Hermione.

Sirius turned green. “Molly would kill me.” He whispered.

“Yes she would, but if you both really loved each other, they would accept it eventually. You are a good man Sirius.” Hermione said.

“Thanks for the vote of confidence but I’ve been seeing someone.”

“Anyone I know.”

“Probably.”

“Are you going to tell me who?”

“Not yet.”

Hermione pouted, she didn’t like to be kept out of the loop. She looked up suddenly as if it just hit her. She smirked and gave Sirius a look.

“How is Severus doing?”

“Pretty good. Still tweaking the Wolfsbane potion.”

“Is he your boyfriend?”

“Oh my God, Hermione. You cannot just ask him that. He wasn’t ready to come out of the closet yet.” Regulus said from the seat behind them. His wife, Amy Bell Black snickering behind her hand. Sirius was glaring at his brother, hard. Their snickering got interrupted when Albus took the seat next to Sirius.

“Albus! I am so glad you came.” Hermione beamed.

“How did you know where we were?” Theo asked curiously.

Dumbledore had retired from his Headmaster duties the year Grindlewald died. Poor Albus’ heart was broken that night. He never did recover. Hermione wasn’t one to let him waste away as a hermit however and often brought the kids over to tug his beard and listen about knitting patterns when they were young. More recently she had been trying to set him up with a nice wizard. He had blocked every attempt. He was old and sad, not stupid.

“My father’s portrait was yelling about Hermione’s abuse again. He insists that she is the devil reincarnate. He has suggested a purge of Malfoy Manor.” He twinkled. “When I asked where the she-devil was he replied that she was here at Hogwarts. He wishes the boys good luck and wanted me to tell Lola that Ron Weasley would make a fine match.”
“Ron Weasley?!” Lucius choked.

“It’s not nearly as funny when it’s our daughter is it?” Hermione asked.

“She shouldn’t have a match! Lola is only fourteen!”

“Three years is hardly a big gap.” She said.

“You are okay with this?!”

“Ron is a wonderful young man.”

“He needs to keep his filthy hands off of my daughter!”

Hermione snorted. “Fathers!”

“It’s starting!” Amy Black said.

“The Gryffindor team kicks off the pitch.” The crowd erupted into loud cheers and catcalls. “And the Slytherin’s!” The crowd went wild as Dean Thomas commentated.

Hermione watched as Richard winked at no less than twelve girls. Merlin, they were in trouble! She spied Genevieve Potter going crazy when Draco mounted his broom. She didn’t miss that his Slytherin scarf was gracing the Gryffindor’s girls neck. She shook her head. It was inevitable that Draco in any timeline would become obsessed with a Potter.

“Another goal for Slytherin! 50-20 Slytherin.” Dean announced.

Hermione shook her head out of her musings about Draco and Harry to focus on the game. She would miss the whole thing at this rate. She would probably never stop comparing them to the counterparts in her original timeline. Nature vs. Nurture. From the experience that she gained from living her life as a time traveler, she learned that nurture has more to do with the shape of a person’s life than anything else. Look at what she was able to accomplish just because of a few small and sometimes accidental changes. She looked at Tom, her greatest achievement. She took a man who was the greatest dark wizard of all time and turned him into the magnificent man before her. His contribution to the magical world is lauded as much as Dumbledore is. She was proud of him.

“And Gryffindor takes the lead! 80-60!”

Hermione turned back to the game and watched as Richard took the quaffle and with the help of his team mates zoomed down the pitch to the Gryffindor hoops, scoring once more. Draco and Harry still circling and searching from above.

“80-70 Gryffindor.” Dean announced.

Ginny had taken the quaffle and blew a flirty kiss at Zabini who completely lost his mind and ran...
into his own teams’ beater. She was able to score while the two boys tried to untangle themselves and stay flying.

“90-70 Gryffindor. I’m not sure if there are any penalties for flirting but it seems like a dirty move. If you know what I mean.”

“Mr. Thomas!” Professor McGonagall admonished. Hermione wasn’t sure why Minerva still oversaw the commenting. Between the Jordan’s and Dean among several other dubious candidates over the years, she figured the Scottish professor would wash her hands of it. Nope.

One of the Gryffindor beaters sent a well-aimed bludger to take out Richard. He was without a doubt the best chaser in Slytherin. Richard was too well trained to get taken down by one bludger, employing the use of the sloth grip roll and catching the quaffle simultaneously. His fangirls screamed out their approval.

He raced down the pitch flanked by Zabini and Greengrass, both clearing the way for Richard to score.

“90-80 Gryffindor! You are going to have to work harder than that Avery!” Dean smugly announced into the magical microphone.

Ginny took the quaffle and zoomed back down the pitch. Zabini, obviously trying not to look at her face, blocked her causing her to drop the quaffle into Daphne’s waiting hands below. Bole and Flint cleared the way of bludgers and hit them towards Ginny and Mclaggen.

The crowd hushed as Draco seemingly spotted the snitch and was off at break neck speed.

Lucius, Avery and Theo were yelling encouragement to their son. Hermione rolled her eyes. Her husbands had a bet of their own with Sirius and James. It was where Draco and Harry got the idea of punishments from in the first place.

Harry had noticed his rival had seen something and bolted off after him. Draco was just a bit faster and as his hand closed around the snitch he pumped his fist triumphantly. He took a lap around the pitch before stopping at Genevieve Potter and handed her the game winning snitch. She blushed prettily as Harry sullenly landed. He was usually a decent winner, but he disliked that his sister and Malfoy were together. On top of that he had to pay the piper. He shuddered, knowing what Draco was going to make him do.

Lucius and Avery had turned around in their seats to openly gloat at Sirius who turned a nasty shade of puce.

“Where is Potter anyway?” Theo asked.

“Petunia was having a thing for Dudley and you know Lily, she always goes and makes James go with her. I don’t know why she bothers.” Hermione said offhandedly as she cheered and clapped for her son.

“I am still uncertain why you dislike her so much. You like Tom and he used to be a Dark Lord. What did she do? You never elaborate.” Albus asked.

“I have my reasons.” Hermione sniffed. What they didn’t know is that she went over to the Evans’ once when Petunia wrote to Dumbledore asking to be included in the wizarding world. It hadn’t helped. If anything, it made the woman more bitter. She still ended up marrying Vernon Dursley.

“How are things going at the Ministry, Dearest?” Tom asked. He was watching as the students
filed from the stands and made their way back to the castle and common rooms.

“The same as ever unfortunately. I am afraid I never got the catalyst for change that I wanted. Even with the amount of seats our family commands, I still have to toe the red tape. It’s bloody painful at times. It’s a good thing Scabior came on board, he has been an absolute godsend!” Hermione claimed.

“It makes us feel better too, Kitten.” Avery said.

“What does?” Hermione asked.

“Having Scabior there, he watches out for you.”

“As if I need protecting.”

“No, but it is nice that he does it when we can’t.” Theo elaborated.

“I didn’t think you trusted anyone else enough to do that.”

“He has been protecting you ever since you stepped foot in Hogwarts in 1971. I trust him.” Tom bragged.

Hermione rolled her eyes. She was so done with this conversation.

“What are you three going to make Sirius and James do this time?” Hermione asked slyly, looking at Sirius from the corner of her eye.

“Streak across the atrium in the ministry.” Avery grinned.

“Don’t you think that is a little juvenile?” She asked.

“It wouldn’t be a punishment if it wasn’t embarrassing and painful. Plus, it was all prearranged.” Lucius announced, picking a speck of dirt off of the shoulder of his robe.

“Whatever.”

**HGHGHGHG**

Hermione was sitting in her silk robe in the rose garden at Nott Manor with a cup of tea and the Daily Prophet. She chose the secluded spot specifically. She didn’t want her husbands to find out just how hilarious she thought the punishment actually was. After all, it did make the front page.

_Bare Naked Lords_

_It was to the great shock of the ministry workers today when Lord’s Black and Potter stripped down in the middle of the atrium and ran naked, the length of the room. Many ladies swooned and were in need of immediate medical attention from the shock of two finely muscled men prancing about in the ministry without a stich on. The ladies were positively scandalized. For a moment, many stared in shock, the silence only broken by the loud guffaws of Lord’s Malfoy, Avery, Nott, and Gaunt. Unbefitting behavior for the leaders of our school and government._

_When asked about the different Lord’s behavior, the Minister of Magic only had this to say: “Go away I am trying to drink my tea in peace for Merlin’s sake.”_

_There you have it ladies and gentlemen, the downfall of our political system. Next we will be asking unicorns to run for office._
The article was followed by a 5x8 picture of Sirius and James in all of their naked glory, running the length of the room. It was a good thing Hermione put up silencing wards. After all, she had told them off and ordered the lot of them to grow up. It wouldn’t do for them to see her laughing so uproariously.

“Good morning Kitten, I thought I would find you here.” Avery said.

“Morning Cadeus!” She smiled as he leaned down and gave her a sweet kiss on the lips.

“I got a very entertaining letter from Lola this morning. Would you like me to read it to you?”

“Go on then.” Hermione smiled as Avery cleared his throat.

“Dad, you will never guess what happened this morning right before breakfast! Harry was chased by Filch into the Great Hall while everyone was eating breakfast. The mad part was, Harry was completely naked! Draco was laughing so hard and covered my eyes. He said Harry wasn’t supposed to come into the Great Hall. Hermione didn’t seem to mind but when he saw that she was there he turned beet red, all over. I didn’t even know anyone could blush that hard. I know what you are thinking, if Draco covered my eyes how did I see? Well, Draco couldn’t stop laughing, he ended up on the floor, the prat. Richard thought it was just as funny. The best part though was when Professor McGonagall had walked in when Harry tried to go back out as he was chased closely by Filch. Harry ran right into her! You know Dad, I think Draco had something to do with Harry’s stunt. He keeps denying it though and once Harry got some clothes on and about a million detentions from McGonagall, He wouldn’t say either. Stupid boys. Anyway, Professor Lupin taught us about boggarts today and you will never guess what Dennis’ turned into. The giant squid. I thought it was terribly cute. I can’t wait for the summer hols. Love you all, Lola Malfoy. P.S. Say hi to Da, Daddy, and Mummy!”

Hermione shook her head. Boys were the same no matter the age.

“Mistress, you have a visitor.” Poppy, Nott Manor’s head house elf said.

“Thank you Poppy.” Hermione said before taking Avery’s hand and apparating them into their bedroom.

Lucius and Theo were still in bed sprawled out sleeping. She smirked as she looked around the room. They had celebrated Draco’s win privately. There may or may not have been body shots, kinky sex, and blow jobs last night. It surely explained her sore jaw and satisfied body. Their clothes were still scattered around the room, left exactly where they were flung in their haste to de-robe. She leaned down and kissed the bare shoulders of her sleeping husbands and lightly rubbed their backs. She didn’t even get a grunt in reply. It wasn’t that surprising really, they had gotten quite inebriated.

Hermione shook them and still not getting any response, a devilish look came into her eye. She grinned and flung the curtains open, much to the aggravation and groaning of her two husbands. It’s not as if they didn’t do the same thing to her millions of times. In fact, it was usually her. She just would never be a morning person.

Hermione showered and dressed quickly wondering who came to see her. It wouldn’t be any family. They would rather battle a hundred nesting Hungarian Horntails before waking her up in the morning.

When Hermione finally walked into the drawing room, she froze, stunned at the scene before her. Narcissa Black was holding Damion Scabior’s hand. Narcissa, the prim and fashion conscious
society lady was holding hands with Scabior, Hermione’s assistant and former street rat.

Narcissa and Scabior stood as she entered the room.

“Tea?”

“No thank you. We only came to ask your blessing.” Narcissa chattered nervously.

“Blessing? Are you getting married?”

Narcissa colored prettily and held out her left hand, showing off her modest diamond ring. Hermione’s eyebrows rose. This was not what she expected when she woke up that morning.

“Of course you have my blessing. I am very happy for you both. You didn’t need to ask me for it.”

“Technically I have to ask the head of the family for permission.”

“But this isn’t your first marriage. That can’t still hold you. And Sirius is the head now.”

“I already asked him and he gave his warmest of blessings. It means a lot to me to know that you support us.”

“You have it, of course you do!”

Hermione stood and hugged her cousin and whispered in her ear. “How does it feel to be a cougar?” Hermione teased.

“What’s a cougar?” Narcissa asked confusedly.

Hermione and Scabior looked at one another before laughing loudly, drawing the attention of a grumpy Lucius.

“What’s going on in here?” He asked moodily.

“Narcissa and Scabior are getting married.” Hermione smiled at the couple.

“It’s about bloody time! He has been sending you longing stares for years. I never thought you were going to notice.” He winked at Narcissa as she narrowed her eyes. “Well, it’s been lovely. Congratulations. I think I hear Theo calling me.” Lucius said getting a tad worried that Narcissa’s wand hand disappeared into her robes.

“Nope. I didn’t call you.” Theo grinned from the other side of the room munching on toast and handed a plate to Hermione.

“Traitor.” Lucius murmured, his ears going pink from being caught in his lie. “Must have been Avery then.” He said a bit louder, backing out of the room slowly as Narcissa’s lips thinned.

“Wasn’t me either.” Avery said clapping a hand on Lucius’ shoulder. He walked into the room and sat next to Hermione.

“Cissy, forgive Lucius. He is a bit grumpy this morning.” Hermione said trying to repress a smile.

“Of course.” she said, looking pained as if unclenching her hand from around her wand was a physical blow.

Lucius mumbled something about breakfast and disappeared to the amusement of the rooms
occupants.

Once their guests left, Avery turned to Hermione and smirked. He watched her for a moment as she devoured the toast before clearing his throat.

“To be honest I thought I was going to be Tom to fly in here. I heard from a very reliable source that the Potter boy asked Hermione to marry him. James told me yesterday that Harry had asked to go into the vaults and choose a ring during break. He decided to let me know that Harry was going to ask after the match yesterday. So, Lucius and Theo decided it was time to clear out Avery Castle. After all we have been neglecting it for a while now.”

“Your father died six months ago how bad could it be.”

“Probably not too bad but to be honest we don’t want to be here for Tom’s temper tantrum.”

“You are abandoning me?”

“Ha! You are a capable witch. You will be fine.”

“Unbelievable!” Hermione muttered murderously.

“Well, we will leave you to it.” Avery said as she heard the faint sounds of hurrying feet leaving the Manor. Hermione sent her finished plate back to the kitchens and settled in, waiting for the tempest to arrive.

It wasn’t Tom who entered panicked however. It was James.

“Do you know what your son did to my daughter?! James yelled as Lily hurried in, smirking, behind him.

“No. Am I supposed to?”

“You are his mother. You should take better notice of your children!” James shrieked.

Hermione’s eyes narrowed.

“Watch very carefully what you say to me, James Potter!” Hermione said dangerously.

James stopped and gulped realizing just who he was talking to. Sirius’ scary older sister.

“Oh good, you are conveniently here so I don’t have to run around the country to kill you!” Tom raged as he stormed into the room, taking James’ neck in his hands. In a surprisingly short amount of time, James face turned purple.

“Tom! Let him go!” Hermione’s displeasure evident.

“Do you know what his son just did to Hermione?!” He yelled.

“Oh this is getting old.” Hermione said. “Let me guess. Harry just asked Hermione to marry him.”

“You knew?!” He looked like she had slapped him across the face. “Betrayed!” He yelled.

Hermione rolled her eyes at his theatrics and narrowed them once more as she focused on James. “And what are you accusing my son of? I am assuming you mean Draco?”
“He was caught snogging her in the hallways! My baby girl.”

“This is ridiculous!” Hermione muttered. She sat contemplating things for a moment.

“OUT!” She yelled. Molly Weasley would have been proud. “Except you Lily dear, the only reasonable one of the lot.”

Lily giggled at the look of terror on James face and the mutinous one of Tom’s. Neither man moved. Hermione’s angry face formed.

“Poppy!” Hermione called.

“Yes, Mistress.” Poppy bowed.

“Take Lord’s Potter and Gaunt into the kitchen for a time out. Once they are ready to apologize and talk like reasonable human beings you may let them out.”

Poppy and Lily giggled at the look of sheer disbelief on both of their faces.

“You can’t put me in time out, I am the Headmaster of Hogwarts and I am older than you.” Tom said as if that settled matters.

“Fine, then leave.” She said uncaring.

James had walked over to Poppy and grabbed her hand, already accepting the inevitable.

“I am a grown ass man.” Tom grumbled.

“Then act like it next time.” Hermione shrugged.

“You are making this, a thousand times worse.” James grouched to Tom.

“This is all your fault, Potter.”

“And to think, you used to be my favorite Professor.” James said.

Poppy nodded at Hermione and with a pop the three left Lily and Hermione alone in the sitting room.

“Poor James! The first time he stands up to you and he ends up in time out.” Lily laughed. “I don’t feel bad for him, I told him not to do it.”

“I am actually quite impressed.” Hermione said with a fond smile.

“How long will they be in time out?”

“Well, since they obviously need to talk about Harry and Hermione alone, to deal with things, Twenty minutes or so. Tea?”

“That would be lovely!” Lily said happily.

“Why is Tom so attached to Hermione anyway? I was not aware that he had any family other than you, Sirius, and Regulus.”

“It’s a long story but I’ve saved his life many times. Also, I am from a future timeline that no longer exists. She is who I would be if I was raised and lived in this world. He decided to became
her protector in the wizarding world. My biological mother, Jean couldn’t stand him at first. She thought it was really creepy for a grown man to show such interest in a little girl. I had to sit her down and explain my story to her. He needed to be in her life so that he could repay me for everything I did for him.”

“He owes you a life debt?” Lily asked a little scandalized.

“No. Don’t get me wrong. I am not sorry I changed his life, actually I am very pleased with the outcome but it was an unintentional thing. Taking care of young Hermione was a task that he set for himself. She is like the daughter he never had but always wanted.”

“That is very sweet.”

“It is, usually, except for when he tries to convince her to become a muggle nun for when she graduates Hogwarts. He really isn’t going to take her marriage to Harry well at all.”

“I can see that.”

Poppy came in with a tray loaded with assorted goodies.

“The Misters are still fighting; do you want me to break them up?”

“No, let them fight it out.”

“We will be here forever, Mistress.”

The three of them nodded solemnly.

“Fancy a game of exploding snap?” Hermione asked Lily and Poppy.

“Sounds like fun!” Lily exclaimed.

“Of course, Mistress.” Poppy climbed up on the couch next to Hermione and snapped her fingers, summoning a small table and the deck of cards.

“Thank you, Poppy.” Hermione said, shuffling the cards and beginning to deal.

Fin.

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