Summary

Harry is slightly off balanced. He isn't what they are or won't be expecting.
Chapter 1

Severus growled has the tracking spell he put on Harry Potter went off. He got out of bed and began to follow it. Only to realize it was leading him out of Hogwarts. What has the boy got into now? He was going to have the boy in detention for the rest of his life. Severus apparated into the middle of a graveyard, what was that boy thinking. Well, it was different, he thought as he followed his spell only to find Harry Potter at a grave with a spade. He saw the grave marker that read Tom Riddle. Who was Tom Riddle?

"Oh, good, I was wondering how long that tracking spell you put on me would delay your arrival. Grab a spade and let's play grave robbers." Harry pointed to the spade laying on the ground.

Severus didn't comment on what he decided to ignore as he wondered about the boy's sanity. "Mr. Potter, what exactly do you think you are doing?" Severus looked around the empty graveyard. There were some lights on the ground that he assumed were muggle style light as he didn't recognize them. He knew they weren't something he had seen in the magical world.

Harry stopped shoveling. "You know I have a connection to Him, right?"

"Yes." Severus wondered where this was going. He had known about the connection for a few months. The dreams the boy had been a bit strong and he was also a bit surprised by how well the boy endured the torture from the resulting madness of the Dark Lord. He had seen the after effects as Dumbledore had him make some of the potions to help stop the effects of a certain Unforgivable, one he had experienced a lot when he was in the presence of the Dark Lord.

"Well, it turns out Wormtail, the moron, is to use this ritual to bring him back. It involves his father's bone. So I am removing the bones so he can't come back. I don't need the competition. I mean, honestly, we can't have two Dark Lord's running around. It's bad enough dealing with Barty Jr. as Mad-Eye, We don't need the crazy loon to return also." Harry looked at the spade. "Is there a spell we could just use to uncover the coffin?"

Severus didn't answer right away as he thought about what Harry said. He knew the boy wasn't even remotely normal but he wasn't expecting anything like this. The boy wanted to be the next Dark Lord. He would deal with the Barty Couch Jr. comment after they returned to Hogwarts. It would be a simple potion to brew to counter-act the poly-juice potion the man must be taking. He would also make sure the man would find out why it was a bad idea to steal from him.

Severus was tempted to drag Harry back kicking and screaming to Dumbledore but something was holding him back from doing it. He usually followed that something as it had saved his life on more than one occasion. Some liked to call it gut instinct or something equally silly, he preferred to call it using his Slytherin traits. "Not that I am aware of. What ritual did he plan on using?"

"Only saw part of it but it involves the bone of the father, the blood of the servant, and blood, unwillingly, taken from an enemy. Though, personally, that doesn't make any sense, what enemy is going to willingly give their blood to bring an enemy back?" After several seconds of no response from Severus, Harry continued. "So I take it you have no objections to helping me become the next Dark Lord?"

"I believe I am going to reserve judgment until you answer some questions for me." Severus didn't want to think of what someone already powerful like Harry was becoming an insane Dark Lord like the last two were. Grindelwald and Voldemort weren't nearly as powerful as he believed Harry would be when he hit his magical majority.
"Sure but let's get the bones as you ask your questions. No sense in putting this off as I do want to get some sleep tonight which I am also sure you do too."

Severus grabbed the other spade and started digging. The boy sounded so reasonable about digging up a grave in the middle of the night. "Why do you wish to become the next Dark Lord?"

"Honestly, just sick of Dumbledore thinking what he says is how it should be. I mean, he has done nothing to aid dark creatures or wizards. He has, however, made thing harder for them. Hogwarts doesn't admit any creature. He doesn't do anything about abused students, and frankly, he pissed me off."

Severus, again, didn't reply as he thought about what Harry said. He had to agree on all those points. He knew Dumbledore had continually pissed him off about some of those issues. Abused students ended up in his house because they learn how to put up masks, they learn how to hide the truth, and learn to survive. He had been fighting with Dumbledore about abuse since he was a student and didn't want to return home after his mother died. He glanced at Harry and realized his assessment of Harry being abused was most likely correct. "How do you know magic will accept you as the Dark Lord?"

"She already sent me the pull. It's why you're here. It's why no matter what I do, you show up when I need you. You have been answering the summons I send out. I can't accept your full service as we have to get rid of the fake Dark Lord first."

Severus stopped shoveling. "Mr. Potter, I do believe you better start at the beginning." He thought about how he always knew Harry was in trouble. It wasn't the same feeling he had when he knew one of his snakes needed him or if they were in some type of trouble. He analyzed the past feelings and realized it was a bit like a summoning.

"Sure but can we keep shoveling. I think when we get closer an Accio might work." Harry didn't stop shoveling or even glance at Severus. "It started during my first trip to Diagon Alley. I am not sure how much you know about my last few years in the wizarding world."

"Assume I know nothing as I have a feeling what I do know isn't completely accurate." Severus was wondering what could have happened to make a child feel the call of being the next Dark Lord.

"First, you should know that my letter came address to my cupboard. It was my bedroom."

"Your bedroom is a cupboard?" Severus knew abused children learned to hide their abuse as they were taught. He realized Harry was telling him, only because Harry knew that he needed to know, needed to understand what happened, and why.

"It was until my relatives saw the address on the envelope that they got afraid and thought our kind was watching them, so they gave me my cousin's second bedroom."

Severus, again, stopped shoveling. Did he just hear correctly? The cousin had two bedrooms and the nephew slept in a cupboard. He started shoveling again. "Your cousin had two bedrooms?" He was going to be doing some heavy drinking when he got a chance than find a method to torture Dumbledore.

"Yes, for his broken and discarded toys. Why they believed they were being watched I have no idea. I mean honestly, if we were being watched and if the watchers cared about how I was treated they should have spoken up the numerous time my caring relatives decided to punish me because of Dudley, my cousin. He would decide to break something to get me into trouble or flat out lie to his parents." Harry really wondered about how smart his relatives were at times. He knew Dudley was
very stupid, but he always thought it was more because the boy was lazy and didn't want to learn.

Severus had a feeling there was more but didn't comment. He didn't like the picture he was getting. He heard Harry continue his tale. "So my relative decided to run away from the numerous owls because they wouldn't let me read my letter. Finally, we were in this shack on an island in the middle of nowhere when Hagrid arrived. Hagrid took the door off of the hinges in his eagerness to obey Dumbledore and brought me to Diagon Alley. Just so you know, I never received any of the books or pamphlets the Muggle-born students get even though I had just learned I was a wizard from Hagrid."

"That explains a lot." Severus could see Harry was confused by the comment. "Dumbledore had been telling all of us that you had been trained in our world's customs, lore, and practices. He told us you had been having training since you were a placed there. Mrs. Figg was to make sure you learned all of that. She was the one that Dumbledore told us the reports were from."

Harry laughed. "Mrs. Figg loves her cats too much to teach me anything. She is too naive about Muggles. I think it comes from the wizarding world beliefs Muggle are inferior. Well, not all believe they are inferior but most wizards are naive in regards to how dangerous Muggles are."

"So you want to follow up on the Dark Lord's plans to get rid of the Muggle-born and Half-bloods?" He didn't think Harry was like that. He wasn't going to follow another murderer.

"What? No. I do believe we need to strengthen wards and get tougher on the Statue of Secrecy. Look at the Creevey brothers. Colin is taking pictures of everything, showing them to a variety of family member. Dennis is almost as bad and no one has done a thing about it. Now, I know not all Muggles won't be afraid of magic but look at their history. It only takes one or two leaders to speak up against wizards and we would be back to being hunted."

Severus had to agree with that point. He didn't comment as Harry took his silence as agreement. "So anyway I am in Diagon Alley and feel this pull to go into a store. Hagrid left to go get a pint or two from the Leaking Cauldron, so I followed the pull."

Severus wasn't surprised by anything in that statement, he was well aware of Hagrid's parchment for going to get a pint or two. "What pull?"

Harry stopped shoveling and Severus knew he was trying to into words what he felt. "It was like a feeling combined with a strong compulsion. Stronger than the ones Dumbledore tries to toss on me anyways. It felt warm and comforting, a bit like a caress over my magic." Harry started shoveling again. "So I followed it to this small store, inside was this old woman. She explained how no one else but those who answered the call could see her. She explained how no one else but those who answered the call could see her. She explained how Dumbledore was really the original Dark Lord but he declined. Hence no Dark Lord and it allowed the psycho was able to step in. I asked her if he was the Light Lord and she explained that the Light Lord has been killed a few different times. First by the last Dark Lord Grindelwald and then by Tom Riddle, our current one. It got a bit confusing as she explained the history."

"History? What is the current Dark Lord's real name? I am assuming his last name is Riddle?" Severus understood what Harry was saying but wanted more information.

"Yes, it is. He is a Half-blood, too. It's why he changed his name. His name didn't fit in with all the pure-bloods."

"What? Really? I wonder how many know the truth?" Severus asked.

"Not many, if any of them are still alive, I am sure they are afraid of the man. His mother used a love
potion on his father when he found out about it, he left her. Her family was nutso, complete and utterly nutso. So she found no support from her crazed pure-blood family. She died after naming him. His first name is after his father, his middle is after her father. He grew up in an orphanage during World War II. The orphanage was run by an ultra-religious woman who took Tom's accidental magic as being a very bad thing. So he had it tough and Dumbledore's judgment of Tom when Tom got sorted into Slytherin didn't help Tom at all. Dumbledore kept sending him back to the orphanage."

"Explains why he hates Muggles." Severus knew that with kind of background it made it hard to convince any wizard that Muggles didn't want to hurt them. It also explained why the Dark Lord hated Dumbledore. Dumbledore kept sending him back to be abused.

"Exactly, now to continue. Things were set into motion by Dumbledore shortly after Dumbledore hit his magical inheritance. Dumbledore dated Grindelwald when they were in their teens, Dumbledore was about 18 and Grindelwald was 16. They created this whole take over the magical world bit down. Grindelwald's great Aunt Bathilda Bagshot, I am sure you know she wrote A History of Magic, is a great source of information about their relationship."

At Severus agreement, Harry continued. "The greater good line comes from Grindelwald. If you go to German and visit his prison, you will it on the sign. It was the camp they had designed to help guide the inferior Wizards into a correct stance on how the magical world should be run. However, Dumbledore didn't like what Grindelwald was turning into, by the time of their duel, Grindelwald was experimenting with magical beings. Now, some more interesting back history. It seems Dumbledore's father was already dead by the time he was dating Grindelwald. He died in Azkaban for attacking some Muggle boys. They hurt Dumbledore's sister, Ariana, making her afraid of her own magic after that." Harry was a bit surprised by Dumbledore's history. He thought that the attack would have made Dumbledore realize not all Muggles welcome magic or anything they consider abnormal.

"Here is where it gets interesting. Ariana was killed by one of the Dumbledore brothers or Grindelwald. No one is really sure who, well technically no one. I will explain in a few minutes. A fight started out between the Dumbledore brothers and Grindelwald. Aberforth wanted to take care of Ariana after her accidental magic killed their mother. Albus didn't want that but Aberforth was enraged because Albus was ignoring his duties in taking care of them and didn't think Albus would follow up on whatever plan they arrived at. Albus was too wrapped up in Grindelwald and Aberforth knew it."

"This old woman, whose name is Hera, yes, I know the myths about the Goddess named Hera. Anyway, she says the fighting started because Grindelwald wanted Albus to go on this world tour. Aberforth didn't care and neither did Ariana. Albus, however, decided that it was his duty to attend to his brother and sister even though he had been ignoring them since their mother died. So a duel broke out between the three men. One stray spell, boom Ariana is dead. Now Hera says it was Albus' spell that killed his sister and deep down he knows it. So when he got the call to be the next Dark Lord, he refused. He is trying to go in the opposite direction but he still has that power and control issue. She says since he is fighting with his nature he is going to the extreme to counter it."

"Did she say why he refused?" Severus was finding this interesting and certainly explained a lot about the Dumbledore family and Albus' attitude.

"Yes, she did. She said because he has always known deep down that he killed Ariana and can't forgive himself so he set himself up to make things right. The previous Dark Lords they did the correct thing, worked on keeping the balance of magic. However, our Dumbledore, Albus not Aberforth, felt that he couldn't accept that and he feels that because of their plans and the follow-up
duel with Grindelwald that he needs to get rid of the dark. He desires to be a beacon of the Light but refuses to accept a balance is needed. You can't have light without dark like you can't have a shadow without light."

"So he isn't balancing out magic which caused our Tom Riddle to grab control of the dark and create havoc." Severus summarized. He understood Harry's analogy and fully agreed with the statement. He was actually impressed by Harry's understanding of how magic worked but also felt like he was getting the complete story of how magic worked. He had never felt that he did. He didn't believe that magic had to flow only a certain way. Too many magical species used magic differently from everyone else, perfect examples were house elves and the goblins.

"Correct, and in doing so, they have knocked the balance so far out of whack it's going to take a lot of work to make it right. Hera has been giving me a lot of books to read and work with. I haven't been going back to my relative house at all, I usually spend my summer with her. She actually sends one or two of my hairs to the address to keep the wards from crashing and Dumbledore from knowing. So during the summer, I get a lot of tutoring from her."

They heard the thud as Severus' spade hit the coffin. "Might I suggest we banish the coffin and bones?"

"We could or grind them up for us to use in some potions. There is this lovely potion I want to try and work with. It is an area blacken spell. The one who creates it and his allies will be able to still see but their enemies can't."

"That potion, I thought, was lost." Severus would be very interested in creating a potion like that.

"Hera gave me a lot of books that have magical potions and spells in them that others believe are lost or are locked behind some wards in their families' manors." Harry transported them to the edge of the hole, so they were looking at the coffin.

"So your potion mark?" Severus was impressed. He was expecting to have to climb out of the hole they had just dug. His interest in the potion kept him from asking Harry how he transported them,

"Phoenix Tears in my blood." Harry explained to the unasked question. "Now in regards to my marks, they are to throw Granger and Weasley off. They were placed to spy on me. So all of my marks are basically bogus. Wait until I take my OWLs and do better than that little know it all."

Severus couldn't help it, he laughed. "Mr. Potter, I do believe I will align myself with you."

"Before you agree, there is one more thing you should know. I am not sure how this works, but if you agree, you will be marked. I can remove that current mark but I am not sure if that is a good idea. You need to keep spying but being part of the Dark, those who follow the Dark Lord are marked. It's why our loony toon one did it. He read about it and decided to create a fake mark. It's why it hurts. The marks weren't designed to be used the way he is using them."

Severus arched an eyebrow, waited to see if Harry would continue. He didn't have to wait long. "The marks were originally designed as a way to help those closest to the Lords of Magic. Yes, a true Lord of the Light also marks their followers which is a sign of a fake Lord. The marks were used to communicate during battles, to summon individuals to their Lord, and to make sure the followers were safe."

"Interesting." Severus touched his mark. His mark brought a lot of pain. His mark had been getting darker and hurting a bit, not all the time.
"It hurts when he is angry or during high emotions. He can't control the connection as well because he isn't fully back." Harry explained. "Where do you want the bones? I can put them in the Chamber so they can't be detected by the wards at Hogwarts."

Severus looked down at the coffin. Yes, the Chamber would be the best place. "The Chamber. I would like the complete truth about your years."

"I can provide that."

"Now, you are correct in your summation that I need to keep spying. Also if my mark was removed, Dumbledore would want to know why and I wouldn't put it past him to force me to take some kind of truth serum. So is this situation covered in those books?"

Harry waved his hand and the coffin disappeared. Severus took the hint and they started to fill the hole in. "No. However, I was thinking I could create some type of device to communicate with you. Like the Order uses or even the mirrors the Mauraders' created."

Severus tried not to sneer or comment on the Mauraders but again Harry seemed to know what he was thinking and feeling. "They were idiots. Major idiots and bullies and I can't believe Dumbledore let them get away with the stuff they got away with. He favors the Gryffindors to much."

Severus was a bit shocked. He wasn't expecting Harry to accept that his sainted father wasn't perfect. "We have a lot to speak about. However, I do agree to accept the role you have chosen and to follow you." He was a dark wizard and it was the reason he joined the dark, he believed that dark magic shouldn't be banned and that it wasn't evil. He didn't believe in killing innocents.

"Good. Let's finish this and head back."
Dealing with Barty

Harry POV:

Harry closed his eyes as a headache was developing from Mad-Eye giving them another lesson. The man only had one volume setting and it was loud. He wondered if the tic Mad-Eye had with his tongue was really Barty or Mad-Eye's? He would have to ask Severus. Maybe if he focused on what they needed to--

"Harry, pay attention." Suddenly an elbow was thrust into his side by Granger. He couldn't wait to oust this girl off of her pedestal. How annoying can one self-righteous girl get?

He ignored the growl that wanted to escape out of him. "I am getting a headache, give me a few minutes to at least recover." He needed to go and see Poppy after this class. He had a headache a week from this man's lessons. Thankfully it was almost the end of the year. The idea of the ritual being ruined by their late night activity had cheered him up for the last few days. He had to speak to Severus about that maze that was now on the Quidditch pitch. He knew they had to be using some of Hagrid's pets, now which ones?

"Is it a vision?" Weasley leaned close, Harry could smell the onions he ate with lunch. Why did Dumbledore pick these two idiots to saddle him with?

"No, it's just a plain, regular, boring headache but you could use a toothbrush and toothpaste." Harry snapped. He counted to ten. "Sorry" he meekly said. He hated being this weak-willed, eager to please persona he had to use, but it was just a few more weeks, then he would be free of Dumbledore ruling his life. Who knew Barty tossing his name into the Goblet would work out so well.

"Potter get up here and assist me with my the demonstration." Mad-Eye shouted from the front of the classroom.

Harry groaned as he slowly got up and headed up to the front of the classroom. He really wasn't in the mood to deal with Barty right now. He wanted his bed. The stuff he had to put up with in this school wasn't worth the advantages sometimes.

Severus POV:

"Potter, what is that?" Severus loomed over Potter's cauldron. It wasn't smoking, the potion was thick, almost dark green in color and lumpy. He had already reassessed Harry's potion making skill and recognized that this wasn't something that Harry would have produced without some help.

"My very poor attempt at that burn paste." Potter retorted. "Clearly, I must have added something that wasn't on the list. I was thinking some fennel seeds made their way into my cauldron."

"Zero for the day, Potter. Ten points for cheek, detention tonight. 7, do not be late." Severus had seen Draco and Pansy throw fennel seeds into Potter's cauldron and knew Potter had to do something quickly that counteracted the fennel seeds which normally would have caused an explosion. Given what they were using for ingredients, Potter had to have used some aloe that Potter didn't have time to chop which would have saved the potion. Severus walked toward his snakes, he leaned down. "You two have detention all next week. You know better than to throw dangerous ingredients into anyone's potion."
When they went to protest it wasn't them he glared at them and watched them wilt under his glare. He honestly couldn't wait to give them the marks they truly deserved. Draco was always demanding his attention like the little kiss-up he was. This was actually a mild day for Draco. He didn't hear his name constantly from Draco's lips.

Neither of them could brew but he had to pass them and pretend to like them for his role. Despite his demeanor, he actually liked teaching and the students, some more than others. He knew he was considered a cruel and demeaning professor but it kept the students alive. Most of his snakes he did like, Draco and Pansy, however, were spoiled-rotten brats, they were Slytherin's versions of James Potter. Draco was never going to be like his father.

Harry POV:

Great another detention for Granger to run her mouth about how I needed to improve my attitude in Potion class lecture was going to be coming after this class. He knew why he got the detention and honestly didn't even mind it. It would give them time to speak without anyone wondering why they were speaking to each other.

"Really, Harry, again." That voice was going to drive him crazy, well, he was slightly crazy. You had to be in order to be a Lord, otherwise, you really couldn't deal with people. Granted, he knew he wasn't anywhere near as crazy as Voldemort and Dumbledore but given his background, he was actually surprised how sane he was.

"It's not his fault, Snape hates him, well us, but he really hates Harry." Harry began to clean up the mess on his desk, ignoring the desire to scream at them to just kiss already and leave him alone. "He didn't have to get smart with Professor Snape."

"Ten points for talking, each. Potter, Granger and Weasley."

"What? Harry wasn't even talking." Weasley said a bit louder than was necessary.

Harry wanted to smack the boy. He wanted to reach over and smack him on the back of his head as he heard Severus say "detention with Filch, Mr. Weasley tonight. 7, do not be late."

"Git, great, just great, I have to spend tonight with Filch for no-" Weasley started mumbling. Harry was tired of the usual rant the two of them did. He wondered if they would ever change the script. Incoming Granger with her warning.

"Ron, be quiet, we can't afford to lose any more points." Granger warned as Weasley was about to go down the I hate Snape rant he usually muttered in class. Harry couldn't wait for detention tonight to have a conversation where he didn't have to pretend to be an idiot.

Harry made his way down to the dungeons, Draco and Pansy were rounding the corner he did. Draco ended up on the floor, Pansy pulled out her wand. Draco looked a bit surprised to be on the floor. "Are you trying to kill him?"

"Potter! Why aren't I surprised." Draco started to get up.

"Really, falling on the floor will kill Malfoy? If I had known it was that easy I would have done it years ago." Harry smirked as pushed Pansy's wand out of his way. "You might want to learn how to use it before you pull your wand out, Parkinson."
"Tough talk for a Gryffindork in snake territory." Draco was glaring and Harry was trying not to laugh. "You got lucky in knocking me down, don't think otherwise."

"Oh, Draco, here is a hint, don't think, it's not your strong suit, leave it to your girlfriend." Harry laughed as walked around them. He really needed the laugh and Draco never failed to provide it. He ducked as a spell went over his head and almost clipped Severus, who had to dodge back into his doorway.

Severus POV:

Draco and Pansy gasped as they saw his fury. When they went to speak he put his hand up. "Potter, my office now." Severus waited until Harry was in his office before speaking again. "I heard everything and I can tell you I am not impressed. Hexing a student, even if it is Potter, behind their back and their wand not drawn, is not how you were taught. You will be explaining in the morning why Slytherin is down fifty points. You have to the end of the week to give me a three-foot essay on how Slytherins think before they act and don't cast in a school that is run by the Leader of the Light and what it means to curse the Brat-Who-Lived when he was walking away."

"He knocked me down."

How that boy could whine, he was nothing like his father, thankfully. While Lucius was an arrogant, pompous man, he wasn't a whiner. "No, you fell down when you collided. Don't try a martyr complex with me. Be thankful he isn't running up to the Headmaster's office whining about your performance. You know the Headmaster doesn't like Slytherins and favors his lions, that boy especially." Severus paused. "Be grateful I am not giving you detention with Mr. Filch."

"Yes, Sir." They replied.

"Well, what are you waiting for, dismissed. I have a lion to torment." Severus watched them leave. He turned and headed to his office. As soon as he entered the room he put up his privacy wards. He found Harry sitting in the chair opposite his desk with a book opened. He looked at the title. "You will find the potions in chapter six more interesting."

"I did." Harry closed the book. "I was actually going to ask you about a few different potions I might be able to use in the maze as I know Hagrid's pets will be used. I have a list." Harry pulled out a piece of folded parchment and handed it to Severus.

"I am not exactly sure what animals are going to be used but I can inform you that the maze is alive. If you linger in any spot the hedges will try to pull you into the hedge." He began to look down the list, crossing off some he didn't think would be needed but added extra healing potions.

"Great, just what I need. I was wondering do you think we should expose Barty before the maze ends or afterward? I am not sure how sane he is, by the way."

"I see three different solutions. First, if we expose him before you enter the maze, they might double check anything he might have tampered with. Second, if we expose him while you are in the maze, he would be caught. We would have to time it correctly so that you might not be transported to the graveyard. Third, if we wait Barty might escape."

"We know Pettigrew is going to be waiting for me at the graveyard along with Nagini. Since he can't do the ritual I am not sure what Pettigrew will do. Do you think Pettigrew would have a backup plan?"

"Pettigrew is too stupid to even think about a backup plan and the Dark Lord is too arrogant to think
he would need it. He won't summon anyone until after he is in a new body. If he thought about summoning anyone, it would be me or Malfoy. Malfoy would have a backup escape plan in place."

"Well, Barty is going to make a port-key to send me to that graveyard. You up for scouting it out the night before? I want us to place some potions in certain areas and an extra wand or two might be helpful."

"If we put some healing potions by his father's grave, Pettigrew won't notice. I am worried about Nagini. I don't have any anti-venom to counter if she attacks." He didn't even want to think about Nagini attacking. He had seen the damage that snake could do.

"She won't do anything, he has been expressing to her the importance of keeping me alive. He wants her to handle anyone who might interfere with the ritual. Pettigrew is to set up some kind of runic circle to keep her from being aggressive. I've seen the symbols he wants to use, they will work, if Pettigrew draws them correctly. Most of the time, when he is trying to practice he slack off causing Moldie to get annoyed."

"Is that when you see them? When his emotions are heightened?" Severus wanted to find out more about this connection. He could be helpful if it wasn't dangerous to Harry.

"More like extreme." Harry answered. "It mostly happens when I am asleep. So this summer we need to figure out this connection. I know it's linked to that night and my scar. Something happened, something I believe I will need to have the goblins investigate. I am also concerned about Dumbledore. He has to know that isn't Mad-Eye."

"I agree. They have been close friends for over twenty years. I really have no idea what the man's plans are. He has never been one for revealing his intentions. Tea?" Severus handed the parchment back to Harry. "There are a few I think we can place that will also make it safer for you. I added them to the list."

"Please." Harry answered as reviewed the list as Severus summoned a house elf to bring them tea. "He is going to be furious about the ritual so we will need to find a way for me to block a headache or even a way to deaden the connection for that time frame."

"Has Madam Pomfrey run a scan on your scar?" Severus was trying to remember if he ever heard anything about Harry's scar. He poured tea when it appeared on his desk. "Cream? Sugar?"

"No cream and one sugar. No one has done a scan on my scar as far as I know. I could message Hera and find out if she knows anything." Harry wrote a small note to himself on the piece of parchment as his tea was placed in front of him.

"Ask her but I think a trip to Gringotts before next month should be the priority."

"I agree. This weekend?"

"Yes."

Harry looked at the note that appeared in front of him during his free period in the Great Hall. He looked around and no one was watching him. He recognized the writing on the front of the note. He usually used this time period to study since no one was allowed to talk during this time.

Potter:
Your detention will be on Saturday, 11. We will be gathering ingredients in the Forbidden Forest, be prepared.

SS

"Who is that from?" Granger sat down across from him.

"Snape, I have a detention on Saturday." He knew he was going to hear a lecture again.

"Really, Harry? Again? What did you do now?"

"He's breathing." Weasley said as he took his place.

"Five points for talking Mr. Weasley." McGonagall glared a warning at them. Harry wanted to send the woman a thank-you note for stopping the two idiots from speaking to him.

"Potter, how original, you're on time." Severus sneered as waited for Harry to reach him.

"Thought I would change it up a bit." Harry could see there were a few others listening to their conversation.

"Five points for cheek, Potter." Severus knew Harry didn't care about the point loss and when they returned he planned on removing whatever lead the Gryffindors had over Slytherin. He knew Dumbledore and Minerva would expect it. He would have to see their disapproving face at dinner.

He knew he was being bitter about the House Cup going to Gryffindor each year because of something Dumbledore planned and frankly he was sick of it. It started with the first year Harry started. They didn't speak as they exited Hogwarts and made their way to the Forbidden Forest. They were past Hagrid's hut when Harry said, "you know he is going to find a way to give the cup to Gryffindor again?"

"I am aware."

"Still enjoy the taking off of points, I know I would." Harry smirked at the man. "Especially after he stole it from your house during my first year."

Severus didn't respond. He wasn't sure how Harry knew what he was thinking about in regards to the points, he wasn't going to ask. He was still unsure about how their relationship worked. He was Harry' teacher but yet he did agree to serve Harry, to become his second, to help him take charge of the dark faction, and to get rid of his previous two Masters.

He gave an inward smirk as he watched the boy next to him. He was a boy, maybe if he let the boy think he was in control he could manipulate the situation to his advantage. He had been doing it with the Dark Lord for over twenty years and to some extent Dumbledore. He would provide the valuable information, yet, the boy was still full of uncontrollable emotions, he could play on them.

"You know I wasn't going to view myself as your Master. Yes, I am the Dark Lord. However, that being said--" Harry turned and before Severus knew it he was on the ground. "I am in charge, don't ever doubt it." Harry kept his hand on the back of Severus' neck.

"Master." Severus moaned out the word. He was on his knees, with his wand arm behind his back and he wasn't even sure how it happened. He felt Harry's hand on the back of his neck. He wasn't expecting the boy to show this much control. He had severely underestimated him.
"Do you want a Master?" Harry asked quietly. "What you see in Hogwarts is an illusion. I thought I showed you that in the graveyard. Now answer me, do you want a true Master?"

Severus didn't answer right away. He knew he belonged to the dark, he had been raised to serve the dark. "Yes." He finally answered.

"You're mine, Severus." Harry quietly spoke into Severus' ear. He released Severus' arm but didn't step away from the man. Hera had informed him that the person he would call would have an important part of his life. At the time he didn't understand her, but now he did. Yes, Severus was going to be a very important part. "Get up."

"Yes, Master." Severus rose but kept his head down. He hadn't felt this in years, and he craved it. Someone else in charge, someone who wanted his option, valued what he thought, what he could contribute, someone who was going to be there for him, not abandon him.

"Severus, if you want to use that because you need to that is fine. However, I much prefer you as you."

Severus knew he made the right choice, as soon as Harry said that. Dumbledore was always trying to change him. The Dark Lord didn't care except to use him for his potions and spying. Yes, he made the right choice. Harry Potter passed the test, a test neither of them were aware Severus was doing.

"It's time." Harry stated.

Severus pulled out the knut and soon they felt the pull of the port-key.
Harry start hiding potions around the graveyard as Severus was carving runes into tombstones. Harry touched one of the runes. "Wards?" They had a few more hours before anyone would notice they were missing.

"Yes, I put this set on the three rows on the outside ride, every five tombstones. It will give you a place to hide and heal if you need to. On the inner rim, where I believe the cauldron will be set up, will be some protections ones. I am going to say, based on looking at his father's tombstone, you are going to be tied to that one." Severus pointed to a statue. "It would be easy for Pettigrew to reach your arm to get the blood needed but also he will be able to tie you to it."

Harry nodded. "I covered every other tombstone in the first two rows toward the center with a healing potion, a numbing one, and put a burn paste in each row. The outer, I did one every five tombstones like you."

"He won't put up any wards as he won't have the strength and he will want to call his followers to him. So I believe we can give you a port-key to get you out of here."

"Do you think Barty will use a two-way port-key instead?"

"Not if the Dark Lord is planning on killing you. Do you want to get him caught as you are ported out?"

Harry grinned. "I know how I am going to do the maze, get him caught, and win a trip here tomorrow."

"So we need to go to the maze tonight?" Severus asked.

"Actually no, but we do need to get a few things." Harry grinned. "So how do you feel about Jericho Rose or Oleander?" Severus grinned.

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Harry POV:

Harry was walking from the library after getting a book about the hedges in the Quidditch pitch. He groaned as he heard Granger bleat out "Harry." He pictured her face on a goat, he liked that image. "Hermione."

"Where have you been?" Granger was upset about something and he had no idea what.

Yes, he didn't go and let them know he was back but she wasn't his mother. Harry looked behind over his shoulder to the library, to the book in his hand, and back to the library. "Buying shoes. You like?" He held out his leg as he pulled up his trouser leg up. He showed off his old boots that were covered in dirt.

"Harry, we were worried about you. You didn't come and let me know you were back from detention." Granger

"Well, I didn't because it really wasn't your concern. I am old enough to walk around Hogwarts without a babysitter." Harry walked away, ignoring whatever she was trying to get him to listen to. He made his way to the Great Hall and sat down between Neville and Seamus.
He saw Neville give him a questioning look but as soon as Neville heard Granger, his eyes showed understanding. "She is worse than my mother's dog chasing a cat." Seamus quietly stated. "I wonder if I give her a dog bone will she go away?"

Harry smirked. "Let me know when you try it. I want to see her face."

"I will have Colin take a picture of it." Seamus responded.

"Harry, are you ready for tomorrow?" Granger pushed Dean out of his spot across from Harry.

"I was sitting there." Dean and the rest of the students around them were looking at Granger in surprise, even he was a bit surprised. "I can't believe you did that."

"Miss Granger, five points from Gryffindor for rudeness." Severus stated as he walked by. "Pushing a fellow lion, what has the little kittens come to."

"Hermione, are you going apologize?" Harry asked.

"What? Why?" Granger stated. "I was speaking to you and you didn't answer any of my questions."

"Maybe because they didn't need to be answered." Harry responded. "Neville, I do have a question for you, it's about herbology. May we talk after dinner?"

"Sure."

Harry looked at the maze. He was going to be the last one in the maze as he hadn't done anything during the first two events. He actually sat down and just chatted with the dragons during the first event. During the second event, he summoned a blanket, built a small fire on the dock, and read.

"First to enter will be Viktor Klum with 93 points. Two minutes later will be Cedric Diggory with 91 points, followed three minutes later by Fleur Delacour with 80 points, and five minutes later will be Harry Potter with zero points." Harry beamed and bowed at his score. He had worked hard to maintain that score. He had also spent hours listening to Dumbledore, Granger, and Weasley giving him lectures on why he needed to win this part. "The first one to the cup will win 150 points. So it's still anyone's race. Good luck contestants." Dumbledore sat down.

Harry could see Severus was in place. He was going to take care of Moody as soon as Harry touched the port-key. Harry waited patiently as he watched the other three enter the maze. He wondered if they had any idea about the dangerous animals he knew Hagrid had added last night and this morning.

"Mr. Potter, you may enter." Ludo Bagman was standing next to Harry.

Harry entered the maze. He followed kept heading in one direction. Last night they figured the cup had to be in the center. They were entering heading east, so he kept heading east. He saw the spiders up ahead. He wasn't dealing with any of that and pulled out the spray bottle of Oleander Poison he had made. He sprayed the hedges on his left and waited. Once the hedge was dead, he stepped over it and did the process until he was past the spiders. He did the same thing each time he met up with a maze delay.

He could see the cup sitting on the pedestal. He checked the area for any traps. He hit the little button in his pocket to let Severus know he was about to take the port-key and has he touched it he could hear the crowd gasp in shock as Barty was revealed.
Harry landed and heard Pettigrew saying "it's not here. The grave is empty." He held the laugh in. The man looked totally confused and lost.

"You moron, I told you to have everything set up before this." He could only see the top of a bald head.

"I did. See I have the cauldron." Pettigrew whined. He was looking around at the different tombstones, hoping he had dug up the wrong one.

"Excuse me, am I interrupting something?" Harry asked. "I don't want to interrupt a lover's quarrel but you see I just landed here and am wondering what you are doing."

Pettigrew pulled out his wand and started throwing stunners toward Harry. Harry dove for cover.
"Nice welcome. You invite me to the graveyard and what do I get? I get stunners thrown at me. No tea, no biscuits, not even a simple hello. How rude."

"POTTER!!!! What did you do?" The Dark Lord screamed.

"When?" Harry was moving toward a tree for better cover. He could tell that Pettigrew hadn't found any of the potions nor had he noticed the runes.

"You did something to ruin this day. Where are my father's bones?"

"Someplace safe. After all, we can't have two Dark Lords running around messing up Dumbledore's plans." Harry checked to see where Pettigrew was. He was standing behind a tombstone near the Dark Lord. He glanced to see where the snake was. He smirked as he realized she triggered one of the protection wards and couldn't get to him or her master.

"Wormtail, what did he mean by two Dark Lords?" Harry wondered if he could cause the Dark Lord to have a heart attack.

"I don't know, Master." Pettigrew replied.

Harry grinned, time to have some fun. "You might want to talk to Lucius about a certain diary of yours. You were a hottie when you were sixteen. Did you keep your good looks? It's hard to tell, looking like you do." Harry peek around the tombstone and knew it would be useless to try and kill the mini Dark Lord until he figured out how he was still alive. He knew it had something to do with that diary.

"Wormtail! You didn't inform me about my diary." The Dark Lord was furious.

Harry counted it as a win as his head was throbbing. He needed a headache potion. They should have thought of that when they placed the potions. He summoned the port-key to him. "Tootles." He yelled as he felt the pull.

Harry landed, looked around, everyone seemed to be dealing with Barty and the remaining three contestants. He changed the coordinates on the cup to the Forbidden Forest. He walked over to the crowd. "How? I mean how is he here? He is dead." Fudge asked.

"We don't know. As soon as Severus returns with the Veritaserum we can find out." Dumbledore answered. "Has anyone figured out where Harry is?"

"Behind you." Harry held back the enjoyment he got out of seeing everyone jump when he spoke.

"My boy, are you alright?" Dumbledore asked.
"Perfectly fine. So I won? I did get the cup." He held up the cup.

"Where have you been?" Dumbledore asked as Poppy pulled out her wand and started to scan him.

"The Forbidden Forest. I landed by where we found those unicorns." Harry held out the cup to Shacklebolt who began to examine the cup.

Severus had returned with the bottle of Veritaserum as Shacklebolt said, "the wrong coordinates were entered. I will go and make sure there wasn't anything dangerous there. Dawlish with me." He didn't wait for an answer before they disappeared.

"My Lord, is he back?" Barty was looking at Harry.

"Not that I am aware of. What does he look like?" Harry asked. "Because all I saw was a rat, a snake, and I am not sure what species the other thing I saw was beside Hagrid's pets in the maze."

Severus arched an eyebrow. He wanted to snort as Harry didn't lie. As soon as they turned their attention back to Barty, Harry nudged Severus. Severus tipped his head in acknowledgment. It was a job well done.

Shacklebolt appeared back and said. "Everything was fine."

"No dark magic was detected." Dawlish added.

"Give him the Veritaserum." Fudge ordered.

"I believe it might be better if we do it in a more secure location." Madam Bones stepped out of the crowd. "Take him to the Ministry." She ordered.

"Mr. Potter follow me to the Infirmary." Poppy ordered.

"May I get a lolly after?" Harry followed her.

"Of course, I have those lime ones you like in." Poppy answered.

Harry smirked. "So how long can I hide out in the Infirmary?"

"I believe I can stall them for the night."

"You just want to make your money back from our last Pinochle game."

"I never should have taught you how to play." Poppy replied. "I will teach you Cribbage next."
Coots, Idiots, and Bugs.

Harry resisted the urge to scream when the Infirmary doors were opened and Granger and the two Weasley's entered. Why couldn't it have been the interesting Weasley twins? He knew he should have left earlier. "Harry," he suddenly had a mouthful of hair. He spat her hair out of his mouth as he tried to not glare at Granger. He never returned the girl's hugs and did everything except hex her to avoid being hugged by her. She was clueless.

"Perhaps if you let him loose he might be able to speak." Poppy had her hands on her hips glaring at the three of them as Harry was trying to remove himself from Granger. Poppy had spent the last four years healing Harry and she didn't care for Granger or the two Weasleys. "If he had broken ribs or something you could have severely hurt him."

"But he wasn't hurt." Granger finally released Harry and sat down on the bed between the Weasley duo.

"Oh, so you're a healer now?" Poppy asked. "I don't remember seeing your certificate or degree. I certainly don't remember you attending any of the courses I have taught nor do I remember seeing your name on students heading to St. Mungo's for instructions."

Harry wanted to laugh. He loved how protective Poppy was of him. Granger looked down for a few seconds and Harry knew she was trying to think of a good answer. He watched Ron and Ginny exchange a look, stumped for an answer. That, honestly, didn't surprise Harry. He wondered if the two of them combined might have half a brain.

"When can he leave?" Ginny asked. Harry was grateful the girl was sitting on the bed next to his and not on his special bed, the one he had carved his name into.

"After lunch. Run along." Poppy dismissed them.

Harry sent her a grateful smile. Hera had summoned Poppy after Harry's first year when Harry was finally able to get away from his relatives. She had to heal him and it was their idea to send hairs to Petunia to cover his not being in the home. Harry viewed Poppy as the closest thing to a mother.

They watched the trio slowly get up as if waiting for Harry to protest their leaving or beg for at least a few more minutes. That wasn't going to happen. Harry wasn't going to invite them to remain. They slowed down even more as Severus walked through the doors followed by Dumbledore. Harry resisted the urge to curse someone, anyone really, about his luck. He was hoping to avoid the old coot.

"Ah, Harry, I see you are awake." Dumbledore transfigured a cup into a chair and sat down as the idiot trio gathered behind him.

"Yes, sadly, I am." Harry should have left after breakfast but he enjoyed talking to Poppy so he hadn't left when he woke up this morning. He usually hid in Poppy's office to escape when things were getting stressful.

"Well, my boy, I need to know what happened yesterday." Dumbledore's eyes were twinkling.

"I got up before my alarm went off. Doesn't that just annoy you? I mean honestly, what is that about? Anyway, I showered, used a new shampoo but I think I am going to go back to my old one. I got dressed, had a very hard time selecting an outfit. It's so difficult to choose, Gryffindor Tie or Gryffindor Tie. After a lively debate with myself, I went with the Gryffindor Tie. I went down to
breakfast having my usual eggs, bacon, toast, pumpkin juice. You know you might want to change that up once in a while. cranberry juice, blueberry juice, even apple juice would be a nice change." Harry could see Severus and Poppy were trying to not to laugh while Dumbledore and the idiot trio were wondering what was going on.

"We had Charms. I went to the library after that class to start on the essay that Professor Flitwick assigned. It is an interesting assignment. We have to compare two similar charms and cite the differences in each and the results of those difference. I have a few charms I am looking into but I think I have it narrowed down to the two." Harry grinned. "I can't tell you which ones, wouldn't want to be accused of cheating."

"I am sure but I was referring to the third task, the maze." Dumbledore voice betrayed the fact he was trying not to lose his patients.

"Oh, the maze, nothing too exciting, except the trip to the Forbidden Forest. I took care of anything in the maze by going around it. I used this mixture of plants that I talked to Neville about. I ground the petals up, added some arsenic to the ground up petals, let it soak for a bit, put it in the spray bottle, filled the bottle up with a mixture of Dragon's Breath and water. I just sprayed the hedges and waited for them to die. I did keep in a straight line to the cup." He loved to push Dumbledore's buttons. He wondered if he could get the man to lose control.

"What happened in the Forbidden Forest?" Dumbledore asked.

"Nothing. I landed, looked around, realized I was in the same spot where the unicorn died. You know where I was attacked by Quirrmort during my first year, not that we knew it was him at the time. I made my way back to the pitch. I got there and you had some guy tied up asking about me." Harry wished Dumbledore was as easy to read as the three idiots behind him were. "Poppy only kept me here to make sure the poison I used didn't cause any problems."

"I see. No one was waiting for you?" Dumbledore asked.

"Was someone supposed to be there? Did I miss them? I mean I wouldn't want to leave anyone in the Forbidden Forest but I thought those Aurors went and checked, didn't they? They said there was nothing there," Harry looked confused. He loved playing the confused and innocent Harry. Dumbledore bought it every time. Though he did wonder if Dumbledore thought he was slightly crazy.

"No, no there wasn't to be anyone waiting. It's just since the cup was meant to take you someplace I had to make sure."

"Really? So my landing in the Forbidden Forest and finding my way back to the pitch wasn't part of the trials? Did I win by the way? I was the first to get the cup."

"Yes, my boy, you won. The award ceremony will be at the end of the week."

"Figures I would ruin my perfect score." Harry mumbled as the idiot trio beamed smiles at him.

"What are you going to do with the money you won?" Ron asked.

"Money?" Harry was confused. He hadn't been paying attention to anything regarding this tournament except for the fun part of not having to worry about exams. That part enabled him to research stuff he wanted to learn.

"Yes, Potter, you won a 1,000 Galleons." Severus smirked. He knew Harry could care less about the money but Ron Weasley was very interested in it.
"Cool. It will help pay for the expenses of the stuff I used during the events." Harry really didn't have any expenses but they didn't know that. He was going to use the money to buy books and some clothes.

"I am sure Poppy is ready to release you so I will see you at lunch." Dumbledore rose from his chair.

"After lunch. I already informed the other three they were to leave." Poppy gave a harsh stare at the trio. She had learned to ignore Dumbledore years ago but the trio was always subjected to her harshest glares.

"I am sure they were just concerned about Harry." Dumbledore gave her "let's indulge them" smile.

Harry wanted to curse the man. He really didn't want the three of them to remain behind. "Mr. Potter will be taking a nap and eating lunch before I dismiss him. Severus, I have the list of potions I need for you."

Dumbledore nodded and guided his minions out of the Infirmary. "Poppy got any mouthwash, I have the taste of Granger's hair in my mouth." Harry asked after Poppy nodded that they were indeed gone.

Severus sat down on the bed next to Harry as Poppy cast the toothpaste spell. "That girl, she is too rough."

"So what happened?" Harry had already explained Poppy's involvement. Poppy was willing to assist him but she couldn't do much because of the Vow she had taken as a healer and her contract with Hogwarts prevented her from doing anything against Dumbledore.

"Barty, Jr. was given Kissed this morning. He killed his father so they are looking for the corpse. They found the real Mad-Eye in a trunk in Barty's quarters."

"I didn't think of looking in a trunk." Harry stated. "I peeked into the wardrobe but I didn't think to check the trunk." He would also be adding that type of trunk to his list to look into. He might need one if he has to return to the Dursleys.

"Dumbledore wanted to keep Mad-Eye here but Madam Bones refused to allow that and had him admitted to St. Mungos. Madam Bones gave Barty some truth serum but he didn't provide much information beyond that the Dark Lord was trying to return. Fudge is in denial about it. He doesn't want to believe a word about it, claims that Barty was insane from his time in Azkaban. Dumbledore called a meeting of the Order of Phoenix for tonight. He was going to have it last night but Madam Bones stopped that with a lot of questions regarding why didn't Dumbledore know about Barty. She wondered why Dumbledore didn't realize a good friend was really a Death Eater."

"Oh, I bet those were interesting answers." Harry stated.

"Dumbledore denied any knowledge concerning it. I wasn't there after they escorted Barty out but I could tell Madam Bones wasn't very happy and Fudge looked like he was having a heart attack. His undersecretary, a vile woman by the name of Umbridge, was there reinforcing his views about the Dark Lord not being back. I believe Fudge is going to look for a way to discredit Dumbledore."

"Not surprising." Poppy stated.

"Fudge doesn't want anything to ruin his image and the return of Voldey would do it. How much trouble you think this Umbridge woman will be?" Harry asked.

"Not sure. I heard she can't stand creatures, thinks the Ministry should be the only power out there. I
am worried Fudge might try to get someone in Hogwarts, due to Dumbledore's inability to hire professors." Severus stated.

"You think that could happen?" Harry was going to have to make sure it didn't happen. He didn't want to get caught in between a battle between the Ministry and Dumbledore. "Do you think the Minister will come after me because of Dumbledore?" Dumbledore had used his name to get things done before.

"Yes." Severus answered. "Unless we find a way to make it look like you support the Ministry. I do have an idea or two that would work. You will need to release a statement saying you have no idea if the Dark Lord is back or not. Have Rita do a story about how you got transported in the Forbidden Forest and you didn't see anyone. While it won't be against Dumbledore it also won't be against the Ministry. Fudge and Umbridge will think you aren't in Dumbledore's pocket."

Harry smirked. "I think I know how we can get Rita to find out about it."

"Oh?" Severus asked.

"Yes, you see she is a little bitty bug. Isn't that right, Rita?" Harry looked up at the corner of the window. "Did you get enough?"

Rita transformed. "I wasn't sure if Snape and Poppy were aware of our friendship." Rita met Harry during his second summer in Diagon Alley. They had both been looking at some quills, starting talking, and became friends.

"Can you do the story?" Harry asked.

"You know I can. I will even include some of what you and Dumbledore discussed." Rita looked around. "I can't stay too long, I don't want the wards to alert Dumbledore. I can have the story in tomorrow's paper."

"See if you can speak to Fudge. He might give you some quotes to divert attention from Harry." Severus added.

"I will. I can run with this story for a few days. Poppy, window please?" Rita transformed as Poppy cast the spell to open the window.

"I believe I will be attending breakfast in the morning if I am able." Poppy cast the spell to close the window. She had spelled the windows with a special spell to keep students from opening and closing the windows.

"Poppy, I need to speak to Severus alone for a few minutes, do you mind?" Harry asked.

"No. I will make sure no one interrupts." Poppy headed to her office.

"Have you heard anything from any of the Death Eaters?" Harry asked.

"No, but our marks burned last night. He was furious. What happened?"

Harry filled Severus in on what happened in the graveyard. Severus laughed as Hary described what happened. "I want to see the memory of that."

"Gladly. Do you think we might be able to recruit some of the more stable and rational Death Eaters?"
"I believe so. I know Lucius would love a sane Dark Lord. He fears for his family. It's one of the reasons so many haven't searched for the Dark Lord. They don't want to serve him. They know he would kill their families if they disobeyed him. It's one of the reasons so many of them have remained single."

"Let's work on that this summer."

"Where are you going to be staying this summer?"

"I was going to stay with Hera but I believe you would be better. There is a lot you need to teach me."

"I agree. I should mention that Dumbledore has the idea of you learning Occlumency next year. He has already started to hint at it. He believes your connection to the Dark Lord will increase and you will need the protection. He mentioned something about visions?"

Harry laughed. "Really? So they bought it."

"Harry?"

"I told the idiot trio I was having these weird dreams. I knew they would go running to Dumbledore so I made up these weird events that Voldie was doing and acted like I had no idea what was going on. Even blame a few headaches on it."

"Not a bad plan and he knows Occlumency will help control it. We will start it over the summer but I am going to say I believe you have some natural shields since Dumbledore hasn't seen any of your plans."

"I keep busy stuff in my head when I speak to him. Like earlier, I just kept things that were in my trunk as I was telling him what he wanted to know. I know he won't go too deep but I also don't want to take a chance so the sooner I can learn Occlumency the better."

"I will give you a book tonight, start by reading it." Severus stated. "I need to go if I spend too long here he will wonder what is going on."

"I am going to have a nap I was promised." Harry settled back down.
Harry felt like skipping down to the Great Hall. He was actually able to get out of Gryffindor Tower without the annoyances bothering him. Of course, it did help that he had Dobby hide all of their clothes so he could enjoy the last morning before the summer holidays arrived, oh, that was a lie. He did it to annoy them and be able to watch Dumbledore's face when the paper arrived. He would be able to enjoy listening to the students as they read the paper and not have Granger and Weasley bickering in his ears about what they were reading. Dumbledore announced last night at dinner that the Dark Lord was returning and everyone needed to be aware of the situation after he informed the students that the Ministry didn't want them to know. Harry was going to enjoy this morning. He sat down next to Neville.

"You have that grin on your face." Neville poured himself a cup of juice. Neville was always up earlier to assist in the greenhouse.

"I do?" He took the pitcher from Neville. He couldn't help it. He wasn't going to hide who he was any longer. Well, no, he needed to hide some things but he could let out his Slytherin side a bit more.

"Yes, you will need to hide it as I believe the annoying trio will arrive soon." Neville glanced at Harry still seeing the grin. "What did you do?"

"I didn't do anything." Harry was being honest. He didn't do anything. He might have suggested the idea to Dobby but he didn't tell the protective elf to do anything.

"Save it for someone who doesn't know you. What did you do?" Neville looked around the semi-empty hall making sure they weren't being listened to.

"Dobby is doing laundry this morning. It appears he found a lot of the Weasleys and Granger's clothes in the laundry bin." He knew Dobby would have everything packed for the annoying trio before the train left as no elf wanted Granger to remain behind at Hogwarts. The elves usually did whatever they could to avoid Granger. They didn't want to listen to her.

"A lot?" Neville smirked. "Why do I feel like anything that they weren't wearing?"

"I have no idea." Harry knew they weren't the only ones who hated the annoying trio. After this summer, everyone, however, would be able to show it. No one could really do anything because they used being Harry's friend to their advantage and knew that Dumbledore wouldn't do anything to the trio.

"I know nothing." Dean sat down. "I didn't see anything, I didn't hear anything, I know nothing. He was naked." Dean shuddered at the idea of seeing Weasley naked.

"Weasley?" Harry watched as Dean and Seamus poured themselves some water. Seamus was still trying to turn water into rum.

"Yes, woke us up, going on about his clothes." Seamus muttered. Today was the one day that they could sleep in late during the week, as they didn't have any classes until after lunch. Granted the train was leaving at 11 but they could have slept a bit longer. They had developed a nice routine.

"Rude-" Dean started mumbling under his breath. He looked at Harry. "Next year?"

"Yes." Harry answered. Dean, Seamus, and Neville had been a great help in teaching Harry the old customs that weren't in the books. Neville had been guiding Harry in what was needed for an heir to
know. The four of them had spent a few hours in the library looking for what advantages Harry would gain from being entered into the Tournament. Harry knew that Dean and Seamus planned on pranking Ron a lot when they returned. They hated how Ron was always trying to keep them away from Harry, and using Harry's name to get his way.

They were quietly discussing a ritual that Harry had read in one of the books that Neville had given to him to read when the annoying trio entered. It was a suggested book from Neville's grandmother. They changed the subject as soon as the annoying trio entered the Great Hall. "Interesting outfits. Where are the fashion Aurors when you need them." Harry commented. It looked like they were still wearing their nightclothes under borrowed robes.

Granger huffed, Ginny tried to sit between Neville and Harry and ended up knocked into the Ravenclaw table. While Ron began to whine about not finding his clothes. "Harry!" Ginny said from the floor as Terry Boot pushed her off of him.

"Get your own seat. I need new eggs as mine seem to have landed on a Weasley." Terry gave Harry a grin.

"Don't look at me as I agree. Terry likes his breakfast the same way the rest of us do without someone sitting on them and their food on their plate. I mean honestly, who wants eggs de la floor and it's almost impossible to drink with someone sitting on your lap though you might make a good napkin." Harry didn't even bother to turn and face her.

"Mail." They heard someone say as the owls began to descend into the Great Hall.

Harry had a piece of bacon set aside for Hedwig. "One." He held up the bacon. Hedwig didn't lift up her leg but tilted her head to his plate. "Fine, two, with an owl treat later." Hedwig held up her leg, releasing her grip on the newspaper. Harry pushed the two pieces of bacon toward the bird.

"I swear that bird is a Slytherin." Dean Thomas stated. Harry grinned and began to read the headlines.

"Crouch Son Kissed, after claiming You-Know-Who is alive."

"Barty Crouch murdered by son"

"You-Know-Who Back?"

Harry arched a brow. He didn't think the paper would announce it like that. He selected to read what Rita wrote:

You-Know-Who Back?

By Rita Skeeter

Yes, that is what I wrote. If you listened to Headmaster Albus Dumbledore, he would have you believe that You-Know-Who tried to make an attempt to return to our world. The day before yesterday at the end of the Triwizard Tournament. From a variety of sources, we learned what happened. The story is simple. The four champions entered the maze. No one could see exactly what happened until near the end when Harry Potter took the cup and disappear. As he disappeared Alastor "Mad-Eye" Moody bent over in pain. His body started to distort and everyone realized he had been using a poly-juice potion. Professor McGonagall stunned the man as Professor Snape had him bound in ropes. The bound figured turned into Barty Crouch Jr.

Everyone wanted answers. Everyone was confused as to how someone who was declared dead
could pose as the DADA Professor for the past school year. Our own Minister Fudge stepped up and summoned the Auror Department while asking Professor Snape to provide truth serum.

Harry glanced up at Severus. He thought Severus went and got it on his own. Severus must have felt his eyes for the man looked up and seeing Harry's confusion, sent Harry a quick note. Harry looked at the note: Rita asked if she could say Fudge did it. Harry tore up the note and stuffed it in his pocket. He continued reading:

While this was going on Harry Potter turned up behind the gathered group. He landed in the Forbidden Forest, the cup was a port-key that was to bring him to the front of the maze but someone had the wrong coordinates. Mr. Potter was unhurt, however, the drama started.

After listening to Barty Crouch, Jr., who admitted his father got him out of Azkaban by using his wife (the complete tale on page 2), we're wondering if the Ministry will do something to tighten security. Now in regards to Barty Jr., admission that You-Know-Who was trying to come back, we're again wondering what the Ministry was going to do. However, after reading the description of how You-Know-Who looked, I can safely say that You-Know-Who isn't returning and the Ministry has already handled the areas that Barty Jr., mentioned.

I know, my dear Readers, you are wondering what Barty Jr., described. His description is a thing no bigger than a five-year-old, barely any magic, and sounded insane. That certainly doesn't sound like You-Know-Who. When the Aurors arrived at the location given by Barty Jr., they found a dead rat sitting in the chair described by Barty Jr. It seems he confused a rat with You-Know-Who.

Harry had to hide his grin. Pettigrew was now dead. He wondered what Dumbledore was going to do now that he had no way of freeing Sirius Black, who was still on the run.

After speaking to several students at Hogwarts last night, we discovered that Albus Dumbledore has been spreading the rumors of You-Know-Who has returned and warned the students to be careful. This was after the Ministry had informed the Headmaster not to inform the students, however, he did warn them that very night and told the students that the Ministry didn't want them informed about this new danger. Does Albus Dumbledore think he is the Ministry?

"He is returning. Ask Harry (Potter) he will tell you." Miss Hermione Granger of Gryffindor stated.

"He has to be, why else would Crouch play Mad-Eye and enter Harry into the tournament." Mr. Ronald Weasley of Gryffindor stated agreeing with his friend.

"It had to be that way. Professor Dumbledore told us so." Miss Ginevra Weasley of Gryffindor added.

"I didn't see anyone in the (Forbidden) Forest except for a rat, a snake, and something I have no idea what it was." Mr. Harry Potter was heard stated after his return when asked if he saw anyone when he was port-keyed away.

"Harry? He hasn't said anything like that." A Ravenclaw named Terry Boot answered when asked if Mr. Potter was declaring You-Know-Who was attempting to make a return. Several other students from all the houses agreed with Mr. Boot. No one had heard Mr. Potter stating that You-Know-Who was trying to come back.

Is Barty Crouch Jr., delusion being shared by Headmaster Dumbledore in a bid for the Headmaster to retain his former glory as the defeater of the former Dark Lord Grindelwald? Are the three friends, known as the annoying trio of Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, and Ginny Weasley, looking to bolster their status in Hogwarts? Many are wondering since the annoying trio are allowed to escape
many detentions for being the favored by the Headmaster. Questions abound on in that area, and, I, your diligent reporter will be searching for those answers and more.

"How dare that woman!" Granger slammed her paper down. She started rummaging through her purse and pulled out ink, quill, and parchment.

"Harry tell them." Ginny demanded.

"Tell them what? That you look weird wearing someone else's robes? I think you should remain away from the pastels colors they do nothing for you." Harry was trying to listen to what people were saying but it seems that wasn't going to happen with the annoying trio complaining.

"Tell them that You-Know-Who is returning." Ron almost shouted to Harry.

"I am not sure who you mean. That statement covers a variety of people. It could mean that is Dean going to return to our dorm and give me my book back, or that Seamus might actually return next year with the spell to turn water into rum. Could you be more specific?"

"Sorry Harry. I'm almost finished with your book. May I owl it to you?" Dean asked.

"Sure." Harry waved off the book. He knew Dean would return it, he always did. The four dorm mates were always borrowing books. He knew that Granger didn't have a clue about how big his library truly was.

"I will find that spell. There has to be one." Seamus informed everyone causing those around them to laugh. "I came close I got the color and texture correct, the taste was off."

"Harry, you know exactly what she means. We will be discussing this as soon as I finish my letter to that woman."

"I gave my statement. Neville, I need to go to the greenhouse and pick up some of those herbs we need for our summer assignment. Want to help?"

"Sure. I know where the best varieties are."

"You will sit here and wait for us. We need to go and speak to the Headmaster about this mess you created."

"Granger, last I check you are not a Professor or even a member of the staff and therefore can not demand another student to the Headmaster's office. If the cup wasn't already awarded I would remove points." Severus appeared next to Harry.

"Git."

"Mr. Weasley a thirty-six-inch essay on the importance of dill in healing potions has been added to your summer assignment." Severus knew Dumbledore would prevent him from giving the boy a detention for the fall.

"Granger, I have nothing to say on the matter. If you can't accept that I already informed the Headmaster, Ministry Fudge and well, everyone at the tournament what I saw that is your issue, not mine. I didn't see anyone who fit the description of the murderer of my parents."

"What were you attempting to do before Miss Granger informed you of her demands?" Severus could see Harry was about to lose his temper. Granger seemed to bring that out in people.
"Neville and I were heading to the greenhouse to get our plants for our summer assignment, Professor."

"A little late, but your plants will be in better condition. Don't let me stop your intellectual endeavors." Severus spelled a note into Harry's robe pocket. "I believe a walk will do me good." Neville looked like he didn't want Severus to join them but he wasn't given much of a choice as Harry followed Severus out of the Great Hall. "Do stay out of trouble, Mr. Potter." Severus commented as they reached the stairs. No waiting for an answer, Severus headed toward his office.

They walked in silence. Harry listening to the gossip. "You know, the annoying trio is going to be an issue on the train."

"Yes, it's going to be a shame that I won't be on it."

As everyone was leaving the dorm for their summer holiday Harry snapped his fingers and Dobby appeared. Dobby took Harry's hand and popped him into Severus' quarters. "Thanks, Dobby."

"No problem, Mr. Harry Potter, Sir. We wait for Professor Potions?"

"Yes, you will need to pop us to Gringotts."

"Just snap, Dobby be here. Dobby won't tell anyone."

Severus and Harry, courtesy of Dobby, arrived at Gringotts. "I have been waiting all year for this." Seeing Severus' face, Harry smirked. "Freedom. The tournament declared me an adult."

Severus grinned. He had already informed Harry of the mini fit Dumbledore had in his office when he summoned Minerva and him after breakfast. Dumbledore was furious about the article. He wanted to summon Harry up to his office, but Minerva pointed out that Harry hadn't done anything. He wasn't even quoted whereas the annoying trio was.

"He is expecting the Weasley family, with Kingsley, to meet you at King's Crossing. They are to make sure you get to your relatives' house."

"My relatives have moved." Harry grinned. "Something about the house being haunted. Did you know the Hogwarts ghosts can travel by house elves? Dobby and Peeves hit it off really well."
Harry was sitting in Gringotts, with Severus, waiting for Hera to arrive. They had an appointment to speak with his account manager and she wanted to attend. "Harry!." A woman with a lilting voice waved, almost bouncing as she walked toward them.

Severus looked at where heard Harry's name. He saw a woman who looked slightly older than him. He guessed 40ish with curly brown hair. She looked a bit like Narcissa and Bellatrix combined. She had the polish of Narcissa but the wildness of her hair was almost similar to Bellatrix. He frowned a bit.

"Yes, it's her." Harry nudged him.

"I am aware you just informed me that was Hera was attending." Severus, however, wondered about the look in Harry's eyes. It was something he had seen only when he had pulled the wool over Dumbledore or his pets.

"No, he means me." Hera, aka Bellatrix, announced next to him. "Hera is on her way." She sat down next to Severus.

"Bellatrix?" Severus was now a bit confused. The Bellatrix he knew was crazy and in Azkaban. The Bellatrix he knew was loyal and frantically in her devotion to the Dark Lord. Harry was a Dark Lord. He hoped he wasn't going to have to deal with her going after Harry.

"Yes, it's me. Relax, the one you saw at the meetings wasn't me." She rolled up her sleeve and showed him her arm. "My darling father used the same trick that Barty Crouch Senior used on his son. His goal was to keep me from marrying Lestrange. Lestrange is married to a transformed rodent. We have to remember to renew the spell soon." She pulled her sleeve back down, smiling at the memory of the male rat being married to Lestrange, who was currently in Azkaban. "I took care of the Muggles and Order. The Order will believe they delivered Harry to them. I already altered the Muggles' memories. The fat Uncle will meet them at King's Cross. He won't give away their new address."

Severus looked at Harry, who was hiding his laughter. "You could have told me."

"I didn't know she was going to be joining us." Harry defended. "Dobby and Peeves?"

"I believe Dobby mentioned visiting them, again, starting on your birthday, Peeves and him mentioned making sure those Muggles didn't forget about you. They did mention some potions so check your supplies, Severus." Bellatrix responded. "Also, I have some news on a certain small being. Narcissa was able to get some information out of Lucius, I had tea with her and she was a bit free with the information. I gave her a mild true potion."

"Ah, there was the Bella he knew." Severus had known Bellatrix from Hogwarts. She was a few years ahead of him, Lucius, and Narcissa. "So Narcissa knows?"

"Yes, but not Lucius. Narcissa is under a Vow."

"He is at Malfoy Manor?" Harry had wondered how the man got there but if he used Wormtail and summoned Lucius. Lucius would have taken care of Wormtail, and brought the Mini Dark Lord to hide him.

"Yes, hiding in the newer wing of the Manor." Bellatrix answered. "He is looking for a few missing
items. I guess Lucius lost a book of his."

"Second year." Harry responded. Severus could see that Bella knew what Harry was referencing as did he. He was still a bit surprised by Harry's yearly events. He was also looking forward to experimenting with some of the Basilisk parts.

"We can deal with him later." A young woman about twenty with long dark brown hair was in front of them. She was dressed in a simple, yet very elegant gauze spun from silk black robes with light green highlights on the thread. Her eyes were a deep purple, her face reminded him a bit of his mother's, soft, a bit round. Her nose was a bit straight but it matched the firm mouth. "Severus Snape, it is a pleasure to meet you, finally."

"Oops, sorry."

"Yes, indeed. Manners." Hera gave Harry a slight smile.

"It is my pleasure. Harry has told me a lot about you."

"As I have heard a great deal about you, Professor." Hera gave a slight bow of her head. "Are you ready, Harry dear?"

"Yes. I wonder how soon Dumbledore will find out?"

"Why, my dear, he should already know! After all, he did allow you entrance." Hera gave him a beaming smile. "However, that being said we shan't officially inform him until it's suitable for him to know. Bella, the Muggles and Order?"

"Taken care of."

"Good, good. I was impressed by what I read Harry. Excellent use of potions and runes." Severus knew the woman knew about the graveyard as he had written to her about his part in it. "Let's go and see Ironclaw and formalize your new freedom." Hera headed to the teller area.

Ironclaw was staring, a bit, and he knew it but this was Hera. They had finished telling him about the tournament. "In the rules, they did adjust the rules. The rules stated that anyone who entered had to be 17. Since Harry was accepted by the Goblet, he would be considered an adult." Hera finalized the issue.

Ironclaw summoned the files for the Potter estate. They were quiet while he read through it and he wasn't happy with what he was reading. "I believe we have a few issues to be sorted first."

"Why aren't I surprised?" Harry knew Dumbledore had to have done something. The man was just too much of a busybody not to.

"The first issue that we have is that your parents' wills were sealed. Now, while it wasn't never officially read, it has created a few problems. One of them is that it states you were never to go to Mrs. Potter's relatives."

"Lily wasn't Lady Potter?" Severus knew Potter was an heir, the Mutt and Potter bragged enough about it. It was also the reason Dumbledore was able to force him to not report Black to the Ministry. He also knew Lily wouldn't have cared about a title, but Potter, that was beyond anything he could fathom. The man had a responsibility. He started a rant in his head but stopped. It was James Potter he was talking about the man still hadn't grown up after leaving Hogwarts and becoming an Auror.
"No, Mr. Potter never claimed his Lordship. The seats have been assigned to Albus Dumbledore since June 1979."

"Of course." Severus couldn't keep the loathing out of his voice.

"He really was an idiot." Harry muttered but Severus heard him. "Of all the stupid things he did not claim his title has to be up there with the top ten." Harry inhaled deeply and slowly breathed out. "I want to claim my titles."

"That is fine. Dumbledore will be informed." Ironclaw warned.

"I understand. I know there is nothing I can do about him using them as my father allowed it." Harry was seething. His father was a first rate idiot. "What else?"

"Since you were never to go to the Muggles we can get the funds returned."

"What funds?" Harry was confused. His relatives made sure to inform him often enough that they were taking him in out of the goodness of their own hearts, that everything they gave him was a drain on their expenses.

Hera, Bellatrix, and Severus recognized this wasn't going to be good news. They knew how the Dursley's family treated Harry. "Who else has been getting funds out of Harry's vaults?" Hera was hoping Hary wouldn't lose his temper. He rarely did but when he did it was something no one wanted to be directed at them.

Ironclaw looked down the statements. "Dumbledore has been taking 500 Galleons a month, the Bird Club has a direct transfer of 300, Molly Weasley 300, Ronald Weasley 150, Ginevra Weasley 125, Hermione Granger 200. Also, books and items have been removed. Now, your school funds have come out of your trust fund, which has a renewal of 3000 per year on your birthday. We have a record of Molly withdrawing through the school year of 100 per month. Dumbledore has authorized withdrawals for transfers to Remus Lupin and someone called Padfoot."

"I want every bit of it returned." Harry growled. He was giving money to Black and Lupin, too. He knew his so-called friends weren't real friends but for those two, who called themselves his father's best friends, that was a bit of a surprise.

"Did he have the right to authorize those transfers and withdrawals?" Hera had her hand on Harry's leg, working on keeping him seated.

"No, as he placed himself in charge of the Potter estates, instead of, well, the only one available to take Mr. Potter was Mr. Snape." Ironclaw looked down at the paperwork. "Even when Mr. Potter entered Hogwarts, they should have been informed and Mr. Snape granted custody. However, Mr. Dumbledore placed himself as Mr. Potter's magical guardian."

"Me?"

"Yes, Lily Potter's has the authorized custody agreement as she was the last to die. She named you while Mr. Potter named Sirius Black."

Severus knew why the old man sealed the wills. He knew that if he raised Harry, Harry certainly wouldn't have obeyed the old fool nor would Harry have been easy to control. The plan backfired but it still was infuriating to know Dumbledore's planned to use Harry. "It explains the vow."

Harry and Hera exchanged a look. They had a feeling there was another reason for the Vow. It involved a certain dark mark on Severus' arm.
"Mr. Potter is now going to become Lord Potter which we can hide that bit and claim we just finally got to these vaults in our audit. We warned about three years ago." The audit actually never happened. They had issued the statement to soothe the ruffled feathers of wizards regarding the theft from one of the vaults.

"Get everything returned. Harry, take an Inheritance Test." Hera was shocked at how much Dumbledore had done. They had expected that he placed Harry at the Dursleys for a reason and knew he was Harry's magical guardian but they didn't expect theft.

Ironclaw got the testing supplies out and took the three drops of blood.

Harrison James Potter

Titles:
Gryffindor
Slytherin
Peverell
Potter
Black
Evans

Ironclaw wasn't the only one surprised. He looked back in the file. He saw a notice about a blood test being done Harry as a child, however, the results were missing. Whoever took the results didn't realize that they provided a backup test history to the account holder's information. "I have a test listed on 1 November 1981."

"He had to know." Severus was furious and at their looks, he explained. "Dumbledore keeps telling everyone about the blood wards. How they had to be based on love and that was how Harry survived. However, if he did this test, he has to know that Harry is the Dark Lord's heir."

"Which means what? Heirs can be killed by the Lords." Bella was a bit confused and knew she wasn't the only one.

"Yes, that is true. However, two exceptions do exist. They're in the Slytherin line. One is that the Lords can't kill an heir and the other is one Parseltongue can not kill another Parseltongue if it's an underage child."

"That explains his desire for them to face each other. He is counting on Tom to kill Harry and magic to punish him for doing it." Hera now understood why the man was so certain the prophecy could come true. He set up the events to make it so.

"Yes, it explains why he allowed Harry to remain in the tournament. It also explains the lack of training despite everyone asking him when Harry will be trained. He likes to say it's so Harry can have a childhood." Severus was planning on using some of his experimental potions on the man. He was already arranging the testing in his mind.

"Does this affect me if I kill him?" Harry wondered.

"No, because you are the heir and now are of age." Hera responded. "It also will enable you to get rid of Dumbledore as you will own half of Hogwarts after Tom Riddle dies."

"What titles can I claim today?"

"All but Slytherin, you can claim the heir ring." Ironclaw knew this group was going to change their world and he knew it would be for the better. He was going to speak to the King and make sure they
got the help they would need and to provide cover for everything if need be.

"I want to claim all I am entitled to. Hide the information from Dumbledore for as long as possible. Get the funds and items back. Can you create problems for the little thieves?"

"Yes, we can. In reviewing the accounts, they will be owing you funds. We will also be charging penalties and interest." Ironclaw summoned the ring boxes. "We can hide the accounting using an audit. Might I suggest since he is only using the Potter seats that you leave them with him for now and assign your other seats to an appropriate representative?"

"I have someone in mind." Harry took the boxes and went through the process of the rings accepting him. He was thankful they all did and even had some of them merge together.
The summer was passing quickly. Severus was actually enjoying teaching Harry all he knew. Hera also was teaching the three of them, Harry, Severus, and Bella, about forms of magic that had all but disappeared because of Dumbledore's controlling their world for almost seventy-five years. Hera taught them how to mask their power, how to control their power levels, and how to store power in their hidden wands that she crafted for them.

Dumbledore had summoned Severus a few times during the first month in an attempt to figure out what the Dark Lord was doing. Dumbledore firmly believed that the man was back and eager to take control. Dumbledore wanted Severus to start spying again.

****Flashback************

"He isn't back." Severus rolled up his sleeve. "See, my mark is still as faded as last year and the last ten years before that."

"The Tournament had to mean something. Barty couldn't have just arranged because he believed the rat was the Dark Lord."

"Why not? The man was in Azkaban and he wasn't sane. He even killed his own father." They had found the body buried at the edge of the Forbidden Forest a few days after the students had returned home. Fang actually started baying for Hagrid. Hagrid discovered the body and called Dumbledore.

"It's starting. You know it, Severus. We must be vigilant in making sure that Voldemort doesn't return."

Severus flinched at the name, glaring at Dumbledore. "I do agree, however, we can't create his return."

"I need to show the Ministry. They are trying to get someone inside Hogwarts. I feel that unless I can find a way to prevent it, Fudge will insist."

"They might anyway. There are a number of positions opened." Severus knew the man always claimed that no one signed up for classes he considered dark, but because the Board and the Ministry didn't agree with him, they were still included in the charter. "So unless you hire a lot of staff, Fudge will succeed."

"I am aware, but if I can show -"

"Don't you dare say that name." Severus warned.

"He has returned. They believe I am losing mental faculties."

Severus didn't respond but thought about Bella and Hera. "I know two people who might be interested in working here. One has the DADA, the other has the new English professor." Bella would be perfect for the English professor and Hera would make sure no one would be in danger from whatever plot Dumbledore planned for the year. He also refrained from commenting about the fact that he believed Dumbledore lost his mental faculties a while ago.

"I will find someone for the position. I really need you to work on your connections. Perhaps speak to Lucius?"
"I usually see Lucius several times a week. Draco is my godson." He was going to speak to Hera and Bella about applying directly to the board with Lucius backing them. "Is that all?"

"Severus, we must know what is happening."

"I am aware." Severus rose, pulling his sleeve down. "I do need to return home. I have a potion brewing."

***********End Flashback***********

Severus arrived back at the Potter Manor. Hippy, one of the elves appeared and handed him a cup of tea. He sat down in the little sitting room. Though little was a bit of a misnomer. The room was about the size of the Great Hall in Hogwarts with cozy little sitting areas set up around the room. There were three fireplaces, one on the north wall, one was the middle of the room creating a separate area for the small library that was attached, and one on the south wall. The main color was a deep blue. The walls were off-white and the floor had oriental rugs scattered around the room. He found the room to be relaxing. "Rough day?" Bella sat down on the long couch opposite his high back chair.

"Dumbledore."

"That would do it."

"Bella, I have an idea. I think with Lucius' assistance we could actually pull it off."

"Lucius was here earlier. He has been trying to find out more information but he said the little dark lord thing is getting crazier. He has been researching the diary, using the information that Harry gave. He is hoping that Hera might have some answers. So he is meeting with her when she returns tomorrow."

*****Flashback****

Bella and Severus flooed to Malfoy Manor. They had made arrangements to meet with Lucius while Narcissa and Draco were on holiday in Paris. They knew the Dark Lord was hidden in the new wing of the Manor and that Lucius wasn't happy about it. Lucius was waiting for them in his study. He quickly cast up privacy wards. "I didn't tell him you were coming. Nagini has been keeping him in that wing."

"Lucius, I need a Vow before we continue. Nothing dangerous. Just a Vow that would won't repeat anything we say to anyone without speaking to us first." Severus glanced at Bella.

"How important is this information?"

"It will save all of our lives." Bella calmly answered. She knew Lucius cared about his wife and child more than anything else.

Lucius looked at Bella and made his Vow. Severus showed Lucius his memories after Bella explained about Hera. "So we have a true Dark Lord, one that is going to fix the imbalance?"

"Yes." Bella and Severus answered.

"You believe Harry Potter can do it?"

"Yes, Hera is behind him. Lucius the magic she has already taught us is amazing." Severus let his magic surge forth. "She taught us how to hide our power. How to store it."
Lucius was very impressed. "I will aid in this endeavor. We have to first figure out how that thing is still alive and how it returned."

"We are already searching for that. We believe the diary you had is key." Severus wasn't sure how it worked but they all agreed that the diary was key.

"That diary, to be honest, creeped me out. It just leaked evilness." Lucius thought for a few minutes. "I will see if I can find out anything in the DoM." They began to make plans. They knew they couldn't stay long as the thing would wonder where Lucius was. So they agreed to meet once a week at Potter Manor.

*****End Flashback*****

Hera and Bella, with Lucius' support, put in their applications for positions at Hogwarts. Lucius mentioned that Dolores Umbridge was going to be the new DADA professor. Harry wrote Granger about the new courses while Lucius had Draco enrolled in the new classes. Bella would be teaching the new English class while Hera would be teaching Ancient Civilization. Since Draco was enrolled a few other Slytherins enrolled in the classes, forcing Dumbledore to hire them.

Severus took a headache potion as soon as he sat down in his favorite chair in the little sitting room. "Had a fit?" Harry asked.

"Yes. Between Umbridge already taking over, the board hiring two other professors, he was fit to be tied." Severus closed his eyes.

Hera strolled into the room. "I see, you had a meeting with Dumbledore."

"Yes." Severus opened his eyes. "What are you doing back? I thought you weren't going to return until Friday."

"I am meeting with someone who might have an idea of what that little Dark Lord did to come back. He mentioned soul magic and has few books for me."

"Soul Magic?" Severus and Harry never heard of it.

"Very bad magic but it would explain a few things, it depends on what he did." Hera was hoping it wasn't as bad as she thought it might be. "Where is Bella?"

"She went shopping, something about getting a complete look for her new teaching position. She left about ten minutes ago. She had tea with us." Harry had avoided Bella as soon as she hinted at shopping. "I believe she is heading to Paris with her sister."

"Well, we have two weeks to get everything set up. Dumbledore sent us letters, telling us we need to arrive a week before school starts. The first staff meeting is on the 25th."

"Yes, he likes to assist us with our lesson plans." Hera summoned some tea.

Harry was sitting on the train with Neville, Dean, and Seamus. They had seen each other over the summer and Neville and Harry had spent their birthdays' together at Neville's with their friends. "Did you see the new classes?" Dean was excited by the changes.

"Yes, already signed up." They started discussing their books when Granger and Weasley barged into the compartment.
"Where have you been?" Demanded Granger as soon as she saw Harry.

"Well, since it's a train there really any options to where I have been." Harry really couldn't wait to put this girl in her place. He looked at Dean. "1-800-OMG-FOOL."

Dean, Seamus, and Neville laughed, Weasley looked confused. Granger hit Harry. "Prefect Higgs, did you see that?"

"I did. Conduct unbecoming a prefect. I will be informing Professor McGonagall. I would suggest Granger you find someplace else to sit."

"What? He started it. You heard what he said."

"Let's see, no wand, he didn't hit you. He made a reference to a muggle phone that no way indicated you yet you took it as such and hit him. I'm sure that someone referencing a muggle phone is a good reason to hit someone especially if you are racists."

"I'm not. I am a Muggle-born."

Higgs looked at her. "You don't think that because you are a Muggle-born you are exempt? I have heard Weasley enough times with his racists' rants about Slytherins."

"Granger, for once, listen to someone else and go and find a compartment." A seventh year Ravenclaw Prefect joined their group. "If you don't I will start detecting points."

Weasley grabbed Granger before she could open her mouth and left the compartment. "They will never learn." Neville commented. The prefects followed Granger and Weasley.

"True. They don't want to." Dean knew Granger was all about books. It didn't help that Granger and both Weasleys were in Dumbledore's pocket.

"This year is going to be interesting. You know the three of them are going to try and make our common room hell?"

"Yes, too bad for them it will be hell for them. They aren't as popular as they like to believe." Seamus grinned. "I have a few ideas for pranks for them."

"Do share."
Chapter 8

Harry and Neville sat on one side of the table opposite Dean and Seamus. They had avoided the annoying trio who were sitting isolated at the end of the Gryffindor train. It didn't take long for the tale to spread that Harry wanted nothing to do with the trio. "We are going to have to listen to Granger when we get to the common room." Lavender warned.

"Already handled." Seamus waved his hand toward the trio's drinks.

"Harry, who is that next to Professor Snape?" Neville doesn't like the way the woman was staring at Harry.

Harry looked up, next to Severus was a woman with pallid, toad-like face, with buggy eyes. "That must be Umbridge. Next to her is our new English Professor Trixie Noir, next is the new Ancient Civilization Helena Blanc. Umbridge is the new DADA professor, Ministry appointed. She is actually looking at the trio."

"That spells trouble." Dean knew that Dumbledore had created a lot of problems, along with Granger and the Weasleys, repeatedly saying that Voldemort was back. "I hope she isn't out for us."

Harry hoped so too. He wouldn't want to make someone disappear so soon. "She works for Fudge." Harry knew he might be able to use that if the woman wasn't as stupid as she looked.

Suddenly Dumbledore stood and addressed the school with a podium appearing in front of him. "Welcome back everyone, to another year at Hogwarts. And a pleasant welcome to those joining us. As you may have noticed we have a few changes in staffing this year. We are very pleased to welcome back Professor Grubbly-Plank who is our Care of Magical Creatures. Professor Noir, our new English professor. Professor Blanc, our new Ancient Civilization professor, and Professor Umbridge, our new Defense the Dark Arts instructor."

"I have a feeling her class is going to be a lot like Binns." Seamus had a very bad feeling about the woman.

"Hem, hem" They looked to find that Umbridge has taken the podium, almost pushing Dumbledore out of the way. "Thank you, Headmaster. I'm am delighted to be here and I'm sure we're all gonna to be good friends. The Ministry of Magic has always considered education to be an important and vital roll in all of the growing wizards and witches."

"I second the bad feeling." Harry muttered to his friends. Umbridge's voice started getting louder.

"-changes will be for the better. Some old habits, outmoded, and worn out must be abandoned."

"That isn't a good sign either." Neville voiced his opinion.

"No, it's not. Boys, I do believe we need a plan of action."

The Annoying Trio arrived in the common room. They had been to the Infirmary. "What happened to you three?" Dennis Cleevey was trying not to laugh as they long rabbit ears, whiskers, and had
purple rabbit fur all over. Harry liked Seamus' prank.

"Prank." Weasley stormed to one of the couches. "So what do you think about Umbridge?"

"Honestly, Ron, I already informed you that it means that the Ministry is starting to interfere with Hogwarts."

"How do you know that?" One of the first years asked.

"Because Professor Umbridge just said it. Didn't any of you listen? Didn't you see the look on Headmaster Dumbledore's face? No one wants her here. The rest of the professor looked didn't happy when she started to give her speech. I bet you she's a spy for Minister Fudge." Granger's chest puffed out in pride as the whole house was looking at her. She hadn't realized that most had already figured it out and were trying not to laugh at her and the Weasleys.

"But they can't do that! My father would have warned Dumbledore too. I mean -"

"Honestly, Ron, haven't you been paying attention? The Ministry's slowly taking over. They're trying to force Headmaster Dumbledore out. That's why the Daily Prophet's been calling him an old fool. It's Fudge's doing. It's propaganda."

Ron glanced over, seeing Harry. "You could have admitted it. You abandoned Dumbledore."

"There was nothing to admit. I told you what I saw, I'm not going to lie." Harry shrugged his shoulders.

"Harry, you know the Headmaster wouldn't lie to us. You should have stood with him." Granger rebuked.

"I'm not going to lie. That is the end of it." Harry knew Voldemort hadn't returned. The man was still trying and failing and he wasn't about to admit he was the new Dark Lord.

"That's why people are staring at us, now. I don't like it." Ginny whined, finally making her presence known.

"It's from last year. A lot of people still don't believe us." Granger calmly explained.

"I don't see why. Dumbledore is the one who is warning everyone." Ginny tried to sit down next to Harry only to land on the floor. Harry looked around and saw Neville's wand point.

"Why? Isn't Dumbledore like the leader?" A confused first year wondered.

"Everyone went home and had the summer of reading that rag the Daily Prophet and their lies. Their parents have been telling them what to think." Granger rolled her eyes at having to explain everything.

"She makes us sound like a bunch of sheep." Dean whispered.

"Yes, and look around the room. No one wants to believe her. They are listening to her only because they are trying not to laugh at the twitching nose and whiskers." Harry quietly informed them. "We will need to protect the younger ones from Annoying Trio."

"Not many of 'em believe what happened." Ron summed up what Granger was saying. His nose twitching fast.

"But Dumbledore even told them what happened." Ginny whined. She was sitting on the floor.
Unhappy that everyone was not believing them.

"You just have to wait it out. You-Know-Who can't stay hidden forever." Granger summed up. "We need to take the next dose of the potion and go to bed as Madam Pomfrey ordered."

Harry hid his smirk. You-Know-Who was never going to be seen again if he had anything to say about it.

"Great, DADA first thing." Harry looked at Neville's schedule. "We have the same schedule." They were down early for breakfast and McGonagall had passed out the schedules to those who arrived early.

"So does Dean and Seamus." Neville saw their two friends were debating about a book theory as they had a book opened in front of them. "I want that book next."

"Sure." Dean absently answered as he continued showing something to Seamus in the book.

"That will make it easier to keep away from Granger and Weasley."

"Exactly. I'm looking forward to the new classes." They discussed their courses, ignoring the Annoying Trio who finally arrived.

"Harry, why didn't you wake me? We would have come down with you." Ron started filling his plate.

"I tried, you rolled over." Harry had actually stood on the other side of the room, called out Ron's name, looked at his dorm mates. "I tried." They left after they got ready.

Gryffindor was sitting on one side of the room, Slytherin was on the other side. Harry nodded his head toward Draco and the Slytherins. He took his seat between Neville and Seamus. Dean was on the other side of Seamus. The rest of Gryffindor was muttering with itself as the class was teacherless.

Suddenly Professor Umbridge entered walking toward the front of the class. She flicked her wand and a piece of chalk began to write on the blackboard, "Defense Against the Dark Arts. Return to Basic Principles." She got to the front of the classroom, turned. "Wands away, books out!" No one spoke as they get their books out. Hermione had pulled Ron's book out for him. "Well, good morning class."

Harry, Dean, Seamus, Neville, Granger, and the Slytherins all respond. "Good morning."

"Well, that won't do. Let's try again. Good morning class." Umbridge had a fake smile on her face, her wand waving around as she moved her hands.

"Good morning, Professor." Everyone responded. Harry narrowed his eyes. Oh, yes, this one was going to be problems. Why was it always the DADA Professors?

"Much better. I've been going over your history and it seems your class has been disrupted and fragmented. With the changing of teachers every year, you are far below the Ministry standards. As you all know, I'm sure, your OWL's are this year. They determine your future. I strongly suggest you take them seriously. I'd like you to open your book to page 5: Basic for Beginners. There will be no
need for talk."

Umbridge sat down. Harry rolled his eyes, he looked at the plain black and white pages. He had already reviewed the book. Hera, Severus, and Bella declared it the worst book. He saw Granger didn't look very happy about being assigned to read. He thought she would love it. He watched her raise her hand.

"Yes, miss --" Umbridge had no idea how to run a class. She didn't even take roll. Most professors knew who they were by now except for new ones. The new ones always did a roll.

"Granger, Professor, I have a query about your course aims?"

Harry wanted to laugh. This was going to be interesting. "A query? I think that will be perfectly clear once you read through carefully."

"But there's nothing here about using defensive spells."

"Miss Granger, why would you need to learn how to use a defensive spell? Are you expecting to be attacked in my classroom?" Harry saw a sickeningly sweet smile appear on the woman's face.

"Wait, so we won't be learning magic?" Weasley looked a bit surprised by his own question.

"Students will raise their hands if they wish to speak in my class!" Umbridge had the nastiest voice. Weasley ducked down sheepishly. Granger raised her hand again. "Yes, Ms. Granger?"

"But, surely the point of Defense Against the Dark Arts is to defend ourselves against the dark arts?" Granger looked around the room for support. Most were interested in finding out where this was going. They knew it wasn't going to end well but they couldn't stop the train wreck that was coming.

"Well, Ms. Granger, I'm afraid you are not qualified to decide what the point of any class is. You will be learning defensive spells in a secure, risk-free way."

"What the hell's the point of that?" Weasley snapped. He didn't like the way this professor was speaking to his potential girlfriend.

"Mr. Potter! Did I not just say raise your hand if you wish to speak?" Harry was a bit confused. He hadn't even spoken and he knew he wasn't the only one. "As I was saying, It's not my place to criticize this way this school is run . . . yet. But in the past, there have been very irresponsible wizards giving you instructions in this class. I assure you that all ends today. As long as you have studied the theory hard enough there is no reason why any of you should not be able to perform the spells under a controlled examination."

Granger raised her hand and asked before called on. "Without ever practicing them?" Harry could see many, including him, had wondered how that was going to work.

"I repeat, as long as you've studied the theory!"

"How does that help us in the real world!?!" Weasley was getting very annoyed. He wanted to show Granger he could protect her and he didn't like the way this professor was speaking to his potential girlfriend.

"What did I say about your hand, Mr. Potter? This is school, not the real world. Who are you expecting to jump out of the bushes and attack you?"

Harry raised his hand. "Yes?"
"I'm Harry Potter. That is Ron Weasley." Harry pointed to the scowling Weasley.

Umbridge looked around the room. "Ten points, Mr. Potter. Now let me makes this very clear: You have been told a certain Dark wizard has returned from the dead."

"He has come back." Weasley stated.

"Mr. Potter! Let me repeat. You've been told of the return of a certain Dark wizard. Let me assure you, this is a lie!"

Harry's magic started building. Neville exited the room quickly. He ran straight to the Potion Classroom. Neville was one of Harry's friends that knew the truth. "I don't care if it is a lie. I haven't even said that he is back. I have told what I saw and I didn't see anyone matching that description of What's His Name. You can't take points from me when it's someone else causing the problem." Harry was getting ready to kill the woman.

"Detention! Once again, this is a lie."

"That does it." The entire class shuttered. Granger closed her eyes.

"Come here."

Harry stomped right up to Umbridge's desk. There is no regret in his stance. He looked defiantly at Umbridge and was about to cast a spell as the door opened up and Severus arrived, with Hera and Bella, and a panting Neville. "Mr. Potter!" Severus's voice echoed through the still room. Everyone was tense.

Harry's magic was building. "Get Lord Malfoy here. I want to file a complaint and file charges of mental abuse and prejudice." Hera and Bella took defensive positions by the door while Severus walked to Harry. Harry was staring at Umbridge almost as if daring her to draw her wand.

"I'll get Father." Draco exited the classroom as fast as he could.

Severus pulled a calming draught. "Drink." He stood between Harry and Umbridge.

"Take my memory." Harry ordered once he was seated.

Umbridge looked surprised when everyone asked her to explain why she was taking points for what Ron Weasley had stated. "He is Harry Potter. I won't fall for switching students around in order to protect Harry Potter."

"Red hair, Weasley, ring a bell?" Lucius couldn't resist saying. He wanted this woman out of power.

"The detentions and point loss will be assigned to Ron Weasley." Dumbledore declared.

"I will be speaking to the Minister about this and the Board." Lucius warned. "No more incidents like this will be tolerated."

Umbridge looked a bit surprised. She believed that Lucius would have stood next to her, even if she had the wrong boy.

"Regarding the lack of practicals, you will teach them. It's part of the course requirement. If I hear of anyone not getting the correct practical lesson, I will address it with the Minister, the Board, and the parents of the students." Lucius continued.
"I can handle the practicals." Umbridge wasn't going to let down Cornelius. She would get rid of Dumbledore and Harry Potter.

"How? You didn't even get a NEWT in the subject and had an acceptable on the OWL." Harry was so glad he spent so much time in the archives.

"What?" Lucius was furious.

"I was informed you had your NEWT." Dumbledore knew this was the way to get rid of Umbridge. "I can have a replacement here tomorrow. You will not be instructing here."

"You can't remove me. The Minister appointed me." A smug smirk on her fat face.

"No, but I can. Pack your bags. I will be speaking to the Minister."

"I will get in touch with Remus." Dumbledore wanted to dance. Remus would reconnect with Harry and get him to be friends with his pawns. He needed to get back control over the Potter vaults.

"No, you know the Board won't approve of it. I will take the spot until we find an appropriate instructor." Lucius informed Dumbledore. "It will satisfy the Ministry, the Board, and the parents."

Severus glanced at Harry. He wondered when the boy had looked up Umbridge's scores. He knew not to underestimate the boy but he didn't except it and either did Lucius. Yes, the boy was a true Dark Lord, one he was proud to serve.

Chapter End Notes

I used part of the scripts for Umbridge.
"I bow to your greatness." Neville bowed as Harry returned to the dorm.

"Not even a week. It has to be a record." Dean was writing home to his parents. Dumbledore had announced at dinner that Lucius was now replacing Madam Umbridge.

"Did you see the faces of the moron trio and Dumbledore when Lord Malfoy was introduced. Weasley looked ready to explode." Seamus was laughing. "I hope Colin got some pictures."

"Granger looked like she was chewing glass." Neville pulled out a piece of parchment. "I ordered some from Colin for us all."

"I can't wait to see them." Harry plopped down on his bed. "Tomorrow is going to be interesting as we have Professor Noir and Professor Blanc."

"Ron will rant about Slytherins being evil, how Lord Malfoy is dark, and all snakes need to be killed. We really need to find a spell that lets him think we are listening to him while we can't hear him talking." Dean pulled down a reference book he had picked up over the summer. "I found this old spell book. There wasn't anything in there but I figured maybe we could search some of the methods the author wrote about concerning making spells."

"It would be worth it, especially if none of us had to listen to the three of them." Seamus had his Potion book on his bed for him to refresh his knowledge before tomorrow's class.

"They're coming." Was announced by one of the watchers. They could hear everyone leaving the common room to hide in their dorms.

"Lucky them." Neville sighed. "Why do we have to get stuck with him?" The common room emptied as many went to their dorms except for the fifth years.

"I figure it's part of the Potter family luck."

"Can you believe it? They are actually having a Death Eater teach us. I can't believe Umbitch, either. This is all your fault, Potter!"

"My fault? I wasn't the one fighting with her in class." Harry really couldn't believe Weasley was blaming him. Granted it worked out, for him anyway, for the better with Lucius at Hogwarts but he didn't set it up. He had looked up Umbridge's scores because he wanted to have protection in case she did try to go after him. She went after him but not in the way he was expecting. How did she confuse him with a Weasley? He was still wondering how that happened.

"You and Granger were the ones who couldn't shut up in class. Harry was minding his own business." Seamus wasn't about to listen to another Harry Potter is to blame for everything that goes wrong in Ronald Weasley's life.

"If he hadn't lied about Voldemort being back, the Ministry wouldn't have sent Umbitch here. If she wasn't here, I wouldn't have detention and Malfoy, the biggest Death Eater, wouldn't be at Hogwarts."

"I wasn't going to lie. He isn't back. I certainly didn't see anyone matching what my parents killer looked like."
"How could you keep lying like that? You know he is back. Dumbledore even says so. You're just a coward, a lying coward. You have turned your back on your parents and the light. I bet you would fall down and beg to get marked by Voldemort if you aren't already."

"Mr. Weasley!" Professor McGonagall stepped into the common room the male six and seventh-year prefects. "You were warned about this attitude. I want everyone in the common room." The prefects made their way to the dorms. Professor McGonagall waited until everyone was present and sitting down. "I'm only going to say this once. I will not put up with anyone bullying anyone. Mr. Weasley, Miss Weasley, Miss Granger, your attitude has already earned you detention, and if what I saw and heard tonight happens again, you will be suspended. You-Know-Who isn't back. I will not allow you to slander Mr. Potter's name any longer. If his parents were still alive, they could sue you and win. If I hear it happening again, I will aid Mr. Potter in finding a barrister. Miss Granger and Mr. Weasley, you have been stripped of your prefect badges. Mr. Thomas, you are now the fifth-year prefect, with Mr. Potter. Miss Patil, you are now the fifth-year prefect. I expect everyone to follow the same rules I just laid down regarding Mr. Potter, bullying, and slander."

"That isn't fair." Granger jumped up immediately. "We are telling the truth."

"I see. This isn't just about tonight. I heard the reports about your behavior on the train. Also, think about these questions many will be asking you if you keep spouting your theories. Did you see You-Know-Who? Did you see his return? Were you witnesses? You have seen him since this alleged return?" McGonagall questioned.

"No, but Harry did." Granger gave her the usual Granger "I'm Right" look. "Headmaster Dumbledore said it also."

"I did not! I keep telling you what I saw. My story hasn't changed in the last few months and it won't change in the future." Harry threw up his arms. "I keep telling you that. I told you last year when you demanded I follow you up to the Headmaster's office. I told you repeatedly until we left for the summer holiday, and I have been telling you since we returned."

"Miss Granger, while I admire your ability to trust in authority figures, I would think someone with your logic would take the word of the person who was at the event versus the word of someone who wasn't, no matter what age." McGonagall's lips were pressed together. She held up her hand to stop Granger from speaking. "The Ministry found no evidence to support this theory. Even when given truth serum, the thing Barty Crouch, Jr., described didn't match what You-Know-Who looked like. I have seen You-Know-Who and the description didn't match. So this will end here and now."

"The Headmaster-"

The students all groaned. "Miss Granger, it ends now. I will not warn you again. Mr. Weasley, you will cease your Death Eater and Slytherins must die rant. I will not put up with any more of that attitude."

Weasley, wisely for once, kept his mouth shut.

Hera, Severus, Lucius, and Bella were thinking. "How are we going to find all of these Horcruxes? How many do you think he has? We know Harry destroyed one."

"Harry!" Bella and Severus almost yelled at the same time.

"The scar!" Hera spoke as they did. They all sat and thought what it would mean if Harry was
indeed a Horcrux.

"Dumbledore had to know." Lucius recovered a bit. "There is no way he didn't."

"He did know. According to the library records, Horace Slughorn checked the book out but Tom Riddle returned it." Hera threw the piece of parchment on the table. "I know Slughorn, he would have never checked that type of book out."

"I agree, he wouldn't have. If the Dark Lord knew about the book, he wouldn't have checked it out and made sure it wasn't returned but since it had to be returned." Lucius shuddered at the idea of shredding your own soul.

"Harry mentioned a few things he found in researching him. Dumbledore was the first contact. Dumbledore turned him down for the Defense position after Dippet promised it to him. Dumbledore also kept him from being removed from the orphanage." Hera closed her eyes. She wondered if Dumbledore set this up or it just happened.

"We are going to need more research into Horcruxes, the Dark Lord's life, and Dumbledore's." Severus believed Harry might have information but not that type of information. "We might need a way to speak to Dumbledore."

Hera sighed. "He does know Tom the best. However, getting him involved is bad news. He is to set on having another war and having Harry and Tom fight each other."

"Agreed. Unless we allow him to believe that Harry is willing to work with him. Dumbledore wants me to start teaching him Occemenacy. He wants me to call it Redimial Potions."

"Harry did lay the groundwork for that. He also hasn't given Dumbledore any real reason to doubt he is still on the side of the light. I know the Moron Trio have been giving Harry problems but Dumbledore just believes Harry is annoyed at them because of the interview." Bella smirked. "I heard Granger telling the two Weasleys that they needed to cool down their approach to Harry, so it might work."

"If anyone can do it, it's Harry. Dumbledore really believes those relatives of his trained him." Hera was disgusted by the muggles.

"What happened to them, anyway?" Lucius really hadn't heard anything after Harry's birthday.

"Dobby, Kreacher, and Peeves had a great summer tormenting them. They moved again." Bella smiled as she remembered what Kreacher reported to her. "Kreacher was tired of the Order living at the Black House, he wanted to assist and I have to say that elf is really a Black family elf. The Dursleys were afraid to eat anything in the house after he turned their pasta into snakes, their meatballs into eyes, and Peeves dumped the sauce on them. Dobby dumped anything sweet onto the floor. Peeves added anything and everything to their soap, shampoo, cleaning products. Kreacher reported that Peeves added black dye to their washer. Peeves dropped dung bombs all over the house and yard. They received some fines because of the smell."

"I bought Grunnings or whatever it was called and dissolved the business. I gave the other muggles new jobs in some of my other companies but Dursley is now unemployed. The government is after him for his taxes and Ironclaw showed the tax office how much money Dursley received for Harry's care." Lucius smirked. "Narcissa suggested that since Dumbledore paid them, they might not have reported the funds, they didn't. They were also getting funds from the government to take care of Harry."
"Oh, that explains Dumbledore's anger about goblins, muggles, and money." Severus had been in Dumbledore's office when a letter had arrived with a blue seal from Gringotts on it. He was dismissed but when he closed the door behind him, he had remained in the small hall and heard Dumbledore ranting.

"That is the least of his problems and ours. I will see if I can locate any more books on soul magic and Horcruxes. I don't want to bring them into Hogwarts, so that gives us a few months to get more information on Tom Marvolo Riddle and the mini Dark Lord. Hopefully, we can find a solution over the Yule holiday." Hera brought the matter back around. "I also don't want us to meet too often here, Dumbledore might start to suspect something."

"He would. Despite his trusting grandfather act that he uses, the man doesn't trust anyone he doesn't know personally."

"Use Harry to pass messages?" Lucius suggested.

"Yes, since he will see us all. If it's urgent, Dobby or Kreacher." Hera wanted to find a solution as fast as possible but knew they couldn't rush it. They needed to make sure they had all the Horcruxes and that Dumbledore wasn't going to interfere.
Chapter 10

Harry groaned as another lesson about Tom Riddle was about to occur. The last few months had been spent with Harry having a weekly session with Dumbledore regarding Tom's life. Dumbledore took his Saturdays while the lessons with Severus, well the ones Dumbledore thought were lessons, happened on Monday and Thursday nights.

Harry spent hours watching the memories of Tom Riddle's live. After each lesson, Harry would spend Sunday showing them to Hera, Bella, Severus, and Lucius. To prevent Dumbledore from wondering what was going on, Harry would leave the memory with Severus and the rest would review it. Sunday nights Harry would have detention with Severus and they would discuss where the Horcruxes might be located. So far they figured out from Dumbledore's not so subtle hints and the memories that Tom preferred the founders' items. Dumbledore had tried to hide that Riddle had made Horcruxes. He kept telling Harry how he needed to learn about Tom's life to get a better understanding of how to defeat the man. Each memory Harry watched made him realize the Dumbledore did nothing but almost force Tom into the role of the Dark Lord.

Hera pulled all she had about Horcruxes. "I found a book about Herpo the Foul. He was actually the first creator and only person besides Tom to create them. The book, well, let's say the nature and concept of a Horcrux are terrible. It's one book I'm glad Dumbledore banned from Hogwarts even if I still think he gave Slughorn the book for Tom to use."

"I researched using Magick Moste Evile and I barely found any information on it. I did hear of a book called Secrets of the Darkest Art that is rumored to have detailed information on Horcrux creations and consequences." Severus had gone home, using the excuse of collecting potion ingredients to check the book.

"I checked with the Ministry. There is no documentation in existence that has information regarding a single individual creating multiple Horcruxes." Lucius had made a side trip to the DoM to see if he could get any information about them from Rookwood, who was an Unspeakable and didn't want the Dark Lord to return.

"According to the book, a Horcrux is the only way he has been able to stay alive if you want to call it that." Severus found the idea disgusting and understood why the Dark Lord selected his Nom de plume of Voldemort. After all, the man needed a new name to write his theories to attract the purebloods. The name Tom Riddle would never attract the attention of purebloods but Voldemort did. Riddle was a muggle name.

"He made one at sixteen, the diary to be specific." Harry had explained what happened down in the chamber and even taken Severus down to gather some of the Basilisk's venom to enable them to destroy any Horcrux. "Which Dumbledore had to know and my adventure confirmed it for him. He also allowed Hagrid to go to Azkaban twice for something he didn't do."

"There is no converting Hagrid. He won't believe a bad word about Dumbledore and neither will anyone else until we remove him from power." Hera sighed. "He certainly has created a mess."

"Dumbledore had to know that Tom created more than one. I remember him telling me about how Tom died that night. Something he said at the time has been bothering me since, well, until I learned about Horcruxes. Dumbledore explicitly stated that Voldemort's soul had become so unstable that it simply "broke apart" when Voldemort tried to murder Harry Potter for the first time in 1981 in Godric's Hollow." Severus knew that Dumbledore did nothing to stop Tom from gaining power and did nothing even knowing that the Dark Lord was using the foulest of magic. Dumbledore allowed
Tom Riddle to gain power and create a war.

"It explains his descent into madness. Dumbledore hasn't come out and said Tom has Horcruxes but it's a matter of time."

"He might move whatever timetable he has up. Especially since no one believes him about the Dark Lord returning. He might try and stage another confrontation between Harry and the Dark Lord. He had to know that Barty was here acting as Mad-Eye." Lucius paused to take a sip of his tea. "He might believe I'm here to assist in his return and harm Harry."

"It would fit." Severus pulled out some parchment. "We know Helga's cup, which Bella can retrieve, is one. The diary was destroyed, we need to find Ravenclaw's Diadem, Slytherin Locket, and figure out the rest."

"What is a Diadem?"

"It's a crown, or more specifically a royal headband." Severus answered Harry's question. He found the book he had been reading on the founders. He opened the page to Helena Ravenclaw. "Here is what it looks like."

Harry looked at the photo. "I know where it is. I saw it in the Room of Hidden Things. I can get it later tonight." Harry flipped the pages in the book. "I saw this at Sirius' house. Kreacher might be able to get it for us."

"How did Slytherin's Locket end up at the Black house." Hera looked at the picture.

"Regulus. He was a Death Eater before he disappeared." Bella frowned. "Sev, remember Regulus seemed fearful that last year when I asked him about his brother. He mumbled something about Dumbledore and left before I could question him."

"I do. I thought it was because the Mutt was putting pressure on Reggie to go and speak to Dumbledore."

"Strange, when I saw him, he seemed afraid of Dumbledore. He disappeared a week later." Lucius glanced at the pensive. "I believe we need to review our memories."

"Agreed, but later. It's getting late and I don't want the annoying trio to wonder why Harry hasn't returned to Gryffindor."

"Yes, they have been exceedingly annoying. Everyone is tired of them complaining about your classes, especially Granger."
her exceeding the required length.

"No, Minerva, I'm not changing her grade. She doesn't follow directions and she exceeds the maximum length. When I removed points for exceeding the maximum length, she wrote so small I had to magnify the parchment to read what she wrote. She takes up most of the classroom time asking me useless questions on the spells we are using, even though they are in the book. She actually demands that I inform her where the spells originate from and if they are used in Dark Arts. If I reply no, she proceeds to give graphic descriptions of how they could be used differently." Lucius was working on keeping his temper.

"It's a slight misunderstanding, I'm sure." Dumbledore's hands were smoothing down his beard. They were currently sitting in the staff room for the monthly staff meeting.

"She does that in all of her assignments. I have been taking points of since her first assignment." Severus helpfully added. "She yells out the answers when she isn't called on. I have seen a decline in students' work because of it."

"So have I." Most of the teaching staff added.

"She isn't getting special treatment from me. I have removed points from anyone who doesn't follow directions. It took Ravenclaw one lesson to revamp their assignments but Miss Granger seems to believe she is the exception to the rules." Lucius arched a brow at Dumbledore.

The staff meeting had started off on a good note until Dumbledore and Minerva had brought up the issue of Granger's declining rank. She was currently fifth. Harry and Draco were wavering back and forth for the top spot. "I warned Miss Granger about exceeding her assignments and the small writing. I failed her on the last assignment because it was the fourth time she had written so small I couldn't even use a basic enlarging spell." Hera firmly believed the girl needed a lesson in reality.

"I have too. She came to me for extra assignments. I informed her until she could learn to follow directions I wasn't going to accept anything extra from her. I had a headache from trying to read one paragraph of her last assignment. The writing was so small I thought the paragraph was one big word." Bella poured herself a cup of coffee. She didn't care for the tea that Dumbledore provided for the staff room.

"If we speak to her will you allow extra credit. I will express to her your concerns." Minerva knew what they were saying was the truth. It had been her own issue with Granger's work.

"You can try but I've been telling her for five years." Severus remarked. "I don't give extra credit either." Everyone knew not to even ask him to reconsider.

"It's not fair." Granger slammed her satchel down on the table Harry was doing his assignment at, sending some of his papers and books to the floor. "I'm going to speak to the Board."

"What are you whining about now?" Dean plopped down onto the couch, next to Lavender.

"I can't get any extra assignments. I can't keep failing."

"Try listening to directions." Harry suggested. "You are always going on about how the Professors are always right, how we need to follow their directions, and now your mad because they are removing points for you not obeying. I personally want to know where you have been. They have been removing points from us for that very reason since we started here."
"You don't understand. This is my future we are talking about. You have the Potter name along with
the Boy-Who-Lived fame. I am a muggle-born with no name here."

"You know what Granger, I don't care. If you came here looking for sympathy, well, it's between
shit and syphilis in the dictionary." Harry wanted to curse the girl.

"Language!" Granger almost screamed.

"Five points, Harry, for language." Dean smirked. He would give Harry ten points later for that
remark.

"Granger, the Board won't do a thing, you have no case. My grandmother would most likely find a
way to mark your permanent record." Neville had no idea what a permanent record was but the
whole house had listened to Granger's rants on permanent records more times then they could count.

"Stop picking on her." Weasley stepped out of the fifth year boys' dorm. "I think you picked on her
enough."

"Weasley, please don't think, it's not your strong suit." Harry gathered up his belongs. "Granger, if
you did your work like everyone else, you wouldn't be having this problem. All of us follow the
Professors' instructions and we're passing." Harry looked at Weasley. The boy was on academic
probation. "Weasley isn't included in that but he might be if he stopped copying your work."

"Harry Potter!"

"Well, that is my cue to leave. I have potions with Snape." Harry didn't want to listen to Weaslette
start. He knew he would be early, but he honestly didn't want to listen to the annoying trio whine and
if anything happened while he was gone, they couldn't drag him into it.
Harry stared at the newspaper. He looked down the table to Granger. She looked ready to hex someone but it was her own fault. He glanced up at Severus and worked his way to the opposite end. Dumbledore looked furious while most of the staff seemed not sure how to take it with the exemption being Severus, Hera, Bella, and Lucius. They seemed delighted.

THE TRUTH BEHIND MISS PERFECT

The first part of this article is written at the bequest of Hermione Granger. In the spirit of gaining my freedom, she had me in a jar for a year, I agreed to write an article that Miss Granger insisted I write. The terms were simple, I was to write what she wanted and she would not go to the DMLE and inform them that I have an Animagus form. I have filed the required registration, however, I'm still going to fulfill the requirements to gain my freedom. After all, a deal is a deal. So here is her story:

Miss Granger has been trying to file a complaint against certain professors at Hogwarts. She already went to the individual professors to complain, her complaints were ignored (her words not mine). Her next step, following protocol, was a visit to her Head of House, Professor McGonagall. She felt her complaints were dismissed and not taking seriously. She tried to set an appointment up with the Headmaster. After a month of trying, he granted her request. Again, her complaints were ignored. She filed a petition with the School Board of Governors and it was also ignored. I should state that Miss Granger is regularly seen going to and from Dumbledore's office, so I'm unaware of why it took so long for the formal meeting.

Now, she has requested that I explain to the parents of Hogwarts, the ones who read this paper, about the lack of concern the staff and even the Headmaster has shown in clearing up this matter. She feels that she is being rejected at every turn as she is a muggle-born and the professors she has been complaining about are pureblood. Lord Malfoy, Professors Snape, Blanc, and Noir are who she is complaining about despite numerous conversations with said professors.

She has done every assignment given to her and her classmates. She feels all her assignments are worthy of an outstanding. As she has fulfilled the required aspect of each assignment and yet she has failed on almost every assignment. Her exams are no better. She feels she is being graded unfairly and wishes to inform the parents of what is happening at Hogwarts. She is also very upset that none of the professors will give her extra credit to improve her grades. The professors explained that they do not assign extra credit and if she wished to improve her grades simply follow the directions given.

She wants a call to arms, she wants parents to demand that all children be treated fair at Hogwarts. She wants everyone to realize how unfair the pureblood society is. She believes it is showing how unfair she is being treated and likened it to her quest to free the house elves, who run when they see her.

Now, my turn. The truth of the matter is Hermione Granger is upset because when given her assignments, she doesn't do what is requested. She has failed her assignments because she exceeds the required length and writes so small that I can't even read it in my bug form as it's too small. She refused to change her "writing habits", her words not mine. When in the common room, her fellow Gryffindors have told her it's her own fault. They have explained numerous times that you can't exceed the required maximum a professor has indicated and expect to be exempt from being penalized when it happens.

I have witnessed in my year in the jar with Miss Granger that she is an "obey" authorities except when it comes to her own personal beliefs. She hits and screams at her fellow students when they
don't listen to her. However, when they point out she isn't listening to the professors, she will fight
with them about listening to the professors. She did lose her prefect badge this past year for her
behavior.

Another major concern is her and her two friends, Mr. Ronald Weasley and Miss Ginerva Weasley,
insisting that Harry Potter stop lying and admit that You-Know-Who is back. Mr. Potter has
repeatedly informed everyone what happened last May. However, the annoying trio of the two
Weasleys and Miss Granger keep insisting that Mr. Potter needs to obey Headmaster Dumbledore
and admit he saw You-Know-Who. Miss Granger has publically stated that Harry Potter is a liar, yet
wants him to confirm what Headmaster Dumbledore has been saying as the truth. This is the same
girl who kidnapped me, imprisoned me, abuses her fellow students, and she wants Mr. Potter to
admit the truth about seeing a wizard he didn't see.

Next issue, I'm sure many of you are wondering how she arrived at the pureblood stance. I'm afraid
I'm not sure. As we know Lord Malfoy is indeed a pureblood but Professor Snape is a well
known half-blood and Professor Blanc and Noir are listed as being from France, with pureblood ties.
Professor Snape has had the same policies since he started teaching, so I'm unsure how she arrived at
her conclusion.

In listening in to the conversations floating around me, Miss Granger spends most of her time raising
her hand and demanding Lord Malfoy explain each and every spell in the book that was selected by
the Headmaster. She wants him to list if they can be used in any way besides what is listed in the
book and has flat out stated he is teaching Dark Arts when he showed everyone a few of the spells in
chapter six of the book. Most of the students have had to form a private study group, with Lord
Malfoy's aid, to help them maintain their grades and get ready for their upcoming OWLs (which by
the time this article is printed, will have passed).

Miss Granger, with Mr. and Miss Weasley, spend a lot of their time trying to convince Mr. Potter to
do the right thing. Mr. Potter has wanted nothing to do with the three of them since his name came
out of the cup last year. Mr. Weasley still insists, despite the vow, that Mr. Potter entered his own
name into the tournament, and in the annoying trio's mind, that makes him a liar.

According to the Annoying Trio, Headmaster Dumbledore is working on regaining control over Mr.
Potter and will have everything fixed. Soon the four will be friends again with Miss Weasley as Mr.
Potter's girlfriend and future wife. I've seen the girl writing Lady Potter over everything as they
discuss the different ways it might be done. According to the Annoying Trio, Mrs. Molly Weasley
will make a love potion while the Headmaster will use compulsion spells and will lace his famous
lemon drops with potions designed to do the same. Also, there was mention of slipping Mr. Potter a
truth serum and having him declare the truth in the Great Hall.

I know it was done because it failed. The Annoying Trio was very upset, to say the least, when they
asked about You-Know-Who and all they got was the same response that was issued last year. Mr.
Potter said "I saw was a rat, a snake, and I am not sure what species the other thing I saw was."

What is so important about forcing Mr. Potter to lie? Is it because they want the boy to be seen as the
future spouse of Ginny Weasley? Is Miss Granger hoping to use a friendship with Mr. Potter to get
herself a better job in the Ministry? She does have dreams of being the youngest Minister of Magic.
After spending a year listening to this girl, I feel sorry for anyone who believes someone as self-
centered, hypocritical, a bully of the first order, and a criminal. I have already submitted my
memories of the year to the DMLE.

The hall was silent for a long time before the whispering started. Granger was having an intense
discussion with her two counterparts, and Dumbledore looked like he was having a very intense one
with Professor McGonagall. "Well, Granger, I hope you like Azkaban." Draco laughed as he walked away.

Harry saw a note appear in front of the Annoying Trio. He was going to have to send Rita a box of chocolates. He loved that Rita used the Gryffindor name for the trio. He found it was funny.

Harry arrived in the ROR with the rest of his followers. Everyone was still in shock over the article. Hera had pointed out that Granger could actually go to Azkaban as they had sent children there before. One was a boy who killed his whole family while under Imperio, which really didn't make any sense, but it was Wizengamot and sounded like someone bought the vote on that. Granger made a lot of enemies by using Rita to write the article. Honestly, she expected Rita to not want to get revenge.

"I have to say I wish I had known she had Rita in a bottle, I would have let a few things slip to her about them." Neville and the rest to of his dorm mates had a lot of dirt on Weasley. Weasley liked to talk in his sleep and they got all kinds of information from him.

"I can't believe she thought it was fine to keep someone in a jar for a year. She really has some weird viewpoints. I mean the house elves were bad but she could have killed Rita." Dean wasn't sure if anything would be done since Granger had the Headmaster's favor. "Do you think Dumbledore will be able to get her off?"

"Not if I can help it." Lucius announced, causing everyone but Harry to jump a bit. They had been working on teaching Harry to feel magic in the air and sense if someone was coming using his magic. "Miss Granger and her cohorts will be dealt with. We don't have much time since Dumbledore wants all the staff to attend a meeting in two hours."

Harry looked at Lucius and realized what Dumbledore was going to do. Dumbledore was going to rally the staff to him. He was going to make sure there wasn't any kind of rumors about anything seedy about Granger spending time with the Headmaster. Dumbledore most likely already spoke to the few Wizengamot and Board members in his pocket and wanted to start working on the rest.

"Physical or mental?" Draco asked his father.

"Physical tonight, the spells are on the wall." Lucius waved his wand and a list of spells appeared. "I want a written report on the effectiveness of each spell. Next week we will work on the area of effect spells, so study up on them."

Severus made his way back to his quarters. He was exhausted. It had been a long day of listening to Dumbledore whine. The OWL results had arrived. Dumbledore had a rough last few weeks thanks to Miss Granger's article, barely keeping her from being escorted to Azkaban.

Lucius had been furious, as well as Madam Bones and Rita Skeeter. Dumbledore had pulled a lot of favors and got the girl off on the charges, using the girl being a muggle-born and not aware of the full extent of the laws in the wizarding world. He agreed to get her some mental help and backed by the Wizengamot she was freed.

Now, however, the OWL results were in, and Granger failed all of them. Every single one of them. All the examiners listed the same reasons. The girl exceeded the length of the assignments, wrote so small they couldn't read the answers, and while her practicals were acceptable they couldn't pass her
on that alone.

Severus was going to see about being at Grimmauld Place when she found out. Miss Granger had the option of repeating the year or dropping out of Hogwarts.

Granger was pacing in the kitchen. The OWL results were due to arrive. "Hello, Professor Snape."

Severus nodded his greeting as he took his usual seat. Molly placed a cup of tea in front of him. The youngest two Weasleys were sitting at the breakfast table eating breakfast. "Hermione, you need to finish eating." Molly escorted the girl back to her seat. "The owls won't arrive faster by watching for them." Two owls flew into the kitchen. Granger snatched it off of the poor bird's leg causing it to let out a squawk. Severus gave it a piece of bacon as Molly removed her son's results.

"No, no, it's not possible. I know I didn't fail any of them. This is the purebloods getting revenge against me." Granger slammed down her results and Molly picked up the paper and started to read the letter.

"Oh dear." Molly laid the letter back down on the table as Granger started heading toward the floo. Severus picked it up, scanned down to the results.

Transfiguration-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical E

Defence Against the Dark Arts-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical E

Charms-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical O

Potions-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical A

Astronomy-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical A

History of Magic-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical O

Herbology-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical E

Arithmancy-No OWL Granted
Written T
Practical A
Any student failing an OWL may retake them either by retaking the classes or hire private tutors. See the Ministry Educational Department for references on tutors.

"Ronny, how did you do, dear?" Molly asked as they could hear a sobbing Granger whining to Dumbledore about her marks, saying it was all unfair and that they failed her because they are purebloods and she is a muggle-born.
Divination-No OWL Granted
Practical T
There wasn't a written exam

"RONALD BILIUS WEASLEY! Look at your results." Severus took that as a hint to leave.
Severus, Hera, Bella, and Lucius looked exhausted. "Bad meeting?" Harry knew they had been to Hogwarts before a Board meeting. Harry had spent the day with Neville, Dean, and Seamus. Draco was going to tomorrow with a few of his friends and they were going to play Quidditch.

"Yes, he tried to get Granger into her sixth year, with her retaking her OWLs over the Yule break. He didn't want her to fall behind." Severus rolled his eyes. The way Dumbledore was jumping through hoops to keep this generation of pets at Hogwarts was making him have flashbacks to what Dumbledore did to keep Potter, Black, and Lupin at Hogwarts.

"It was denied. He kept trying to come up with more and more excuses, but we provided the proof of her work throughout the year and the OWL examiners showed the Board her tests. No one could read them. Lady Longbottom gave Granger a long lecture on following directions and how it wasn't the examiners' fault she didn't pass. She told her to stop blaming others for her own mistakes. I thought Granger was going to explode." Lucius had enjoyed watching Dumbledore and Granger getting lectured by Augusta Longbottom. "She rebuked Dumbledore like a little boy for calling a special Board meeting. Ted Tonks added his own comments about Granger using her the fact that she is a muggle-born as a way to get away from her bad marks. Granger actually asked him what does he know about it. Ted explained he was a muggle-born. It shut her up."

"Well, why you were doing that, Kreacher, Dobby, and I visited the Chamber of Secrets with Neville, Dean, and Seamus. We collected some Basilisk venom and the other Horcruxes. Since they know what they feel like, Kreacher and Dobby are going to some of the places we saw when Dumbledore showed me the memories concerning Tom." Harry pointed to the pile of goodies on the table. "Kreacher and Dobby harvested the Basilisk while we collected skin and eggshell fragments. The goblins are willing to auction off some of the parts. I left a lot in a separate vault for us to use."

"I believe I have old potion books that might have potions that need Basilisk parts." Hera knew Harry and Severus would join her in creating some new potions.

"Back to our original subject, is Weasley able to return? Are they both going to repeat their fifth-year?" Harry hoped he got rid of at least one of the Annoying Trio. Weasley was the hot head and could be violent. Granger and Weaslette would be easier to distract.

"They are returning, as fifth-years. However, they are on academic probation. If they are failing at the end of the term, they will be expelled." Lucius hoped they failed. Judging the grins, he knew he wasn't the only one. He looked at Severus. Yes, looked like they would be failing judging by the look on Harry's face.

"Granger was warned again about her writing, yelling out answers, and other annoying things she does to disturb the class." Severus had enjoyed watching Granger huff when the Board warned her. "The Weasleys were warned about their Slytherin rants, all three were warned about hitting others."

That took care of the major issues with the Annoying Trio. "So who is this year's DADA Professor?" Harry watched all them start to grin. "What?"

"Dumbledore wants Horace Slughorn to return to teach Potions and for our dear Severus to teach DADA." Bella was grinning.

"So he really wants to go that way." Harry looked at Hera. "Is there any way to know when we destroy the Horcruxes if it was the last? I don't want to kill the Little Dark Lord and find out we
missed one."

"When we destroy them, he is going to feel it. There is no hiding it from him as it will be painful. He is going to want to make sure they're safe. So after Kreacher and Dobby collect the Horcruxes, we can start. However, I am wondering about his relatives' house. He did kill his father and grandparents, he might use one of their houses for a safe place. We know he can't go any place without assistance." Hera had been building a timeline on Tom Riddle's life.

"He would. He prides himself on being Slytherin." Lucius wondered if there was a way his wards could track the Little Dark Lord if he did leave by using Nagini. He was going to have to see if there was anything in the family grimoire. "Also by the orphanage, I would suggest."

"I agree." Severus thought for a few seconds. "You know Dumbledore goes to the orphanage and Tom's grandparents area at least once a year. So I bet he has been searching for them. Dobby and Kreacher will have no problem keeping an eye on him. He never checks for house elves or creatures following him. So they will be able to locate them."

"Good, we got a plan."

Severus smiled, he knew it was strange, but he did. This was Harry Potter, a Dark Lord. He wasn't like Dumbledore or Voldemort who kept everything a secret, sent you on crazy missions, and all the other stupid things they had done through the decades. Harry wasn't a crazy Dark Lord like Voldemort, who would kill you for no reason what so ever. He caught Lucius’ eye and knew the man was thinking the same thing with the added bonus of keeping his family safe.

The summer passed quickly. Hera kept them busy with learning more and more magic, rituals, and research. By the end of the summer, Severus felt like he knew all there was ever to know about Horcruxes, Voldemort, Tom Riddle's family, and Dumbledore. It was more information about Dumbledore than he ever wanted to know.

Kreacher and Dobby collected another Horcrux, which was a Gaunt family ring. Thanks to their research and the goblins they were able to safely remove the Horcrux from Harry. The goblins set up a ritual room to destroy all the Horcruxes. Harry, Lucius, Severus, and Narcissa killed Nagini when the snake wouldn't let them near the Little Dark Lord.

******************Flashback******************

"Remember she is fast and deadly so it's going to have to be when she isn't alert." Lucius cautioned.

"She hunts or does the elves give her food?" Harry remembered from his visions from Tom that Nagini would chase Pettigrew but she never tried to eat him.

"The elves usually, she doesn't like to leave him alone. He also gets paranoid when she is gone."

"So how about we drug her? You know she refused to listen to me when we tried to get to him earlier." Harry looked at Severus. "Anything that would be tasteless, odorless, and deadly?"

"A few would work. We would need to make sure it's right before she eats one or they would die before that."

"The elves threw the rats at her, she catches them in a blink of an eye." Lucius had shuddered. He had gotten a bit sick when he had seen it done the first time and watching it still make him sick. "Dobby would be able to do it."
"Once drugged, we need to cut off her head." Harry wasn't sure where they could kill the snake. "He also going to know, so we need to get him to Gringotts fast."

"Apparate with Nagini directly to Gringotts. We kill her the goblins do the ritual."

"I can allow us to apparate from the house. I'm sure the goblins will allow us to apparate in with the Little Dark Lord and Nagini. They want him gone as much as we do." Lucius would be willing to pay whatever price to be able to apparate directly into Gringotts in order to get rid of Voldemort forever.

Dobby had three rats in cages. Severus had just injected them with the poison. "They won't feel anything, Dobby. Just toss the rats to Nagini."

"Nasty snake die?" Dobby and the other house elves didn't like Nagini. She tried to eat them a few times.

"Yes, as soon as she passes out we will take her and the Dark Lord to Gringotts." Severus could see Lucius and Narcissa had their wands hidden up their sleeves. Harry was hidden under his invisibility cloak with a spell to protect him from Nagini being able to smell him.

Dobby popped to the wing to feed Nagini. When he made sure she ate the rats, he popped back. "Snakey ate them."

"Let's go." Lucius led the way with Harry bringing up the rear. Severus was in front of Harry, Narcissa was behind Lucius.

They were almost to the door where the Little Dark Lord was when Nagini weaved her way toward them. She was hissing.

"Harry?"

"She slurring her words but warning us not to go into the room." Harry removed the cloak. "She is going to fight. She won't be as fast but she is still deadly."

"Great." Severus muttered but Lucius and Narcissa aimed their wands and killed the snake. They severed her head from her body. Her head went flying up to the ceiling, splatted, and they were covered in snake blood and guts, as the body part spasmed around. "Yuck."

"No kidding." Harry picked off some snake off of his invisibility cloak. "I hope this is washable. As I can't see taking it to the dry cleaners." He didn't see the three adults give him a strange look. They just killed a huge snake and Harry was talking about laundry.

"Quickly, we have to get him." Lucius slipped a bit as he made his way to the room the Little Dark Lord was in.

They tried to rush to join Lucius but slipped here and there before they finally got into the door. Lucius waited until they were with him. They could hear the Little Dark Lord screaming. "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? Nagini, my sweet, sweet, Nagini."

Harry opened the door. "Nagini is now snake soup." Harry cast a quick binding spell as Lucius and Narcissa threw a long satchel over the Little Dark Lord. The little legs were kicking at Lucius. Narcissa started casting a cleaning charm on them. Once they were clean, Harry gathered up Nagini's head. "Ready." Lucius centered himself as they held on for him to apparate them to Gringotts.
They landed and the goblins grabbed the sack and placed it on an altar. Hera and Bella took the Nagini's head and placed it with the other Horcruxes. "Harry, you need to lay down on that table over there." Hera directed.

Harry climbed onto the stone slab and felt the magic flow over him. "You will feel tired but don't fight the magic." The goblin warned. "Healer Rixas will be ready with potions for you. It won't take long, you will feel the separations but do not fight it. It might hurt." Harry gave him a look. "Fine, it will hurt."

"While they are extracting the Horcrux from you we will be destroying the others, leaving the midget for last." Hera pointed to the squad of goblin guards. "They have business with him concerning a robbery."

Harry smirked. "He won't be keeping his head."

Severus, Lucius, Bella, Narcissa, were each standing in front of a Horcrux. "I'm going to join them as well as Ironclaw. All will be destroyed at once." Hera patted Harry's shoulder. "You'll be fine."

"Places everyone." The Head Goblin made sure everyone was ready. "Ritual Master Stonechipper and Gemcrusher will begin. When it is time, I will tell you to pour the Basilisk poison over the Horcruxes and that snake's head."

The ritual started and Harry watched, wondering what was going to happen when pain lanced through his head. He felt something moving inside of him, it felt like part of him but not him at the same time. It was dark, very dark, evil. It started to fight like it knew what was going to happen. Harry suddenly felt a surge of foreign magic. The foreign magic started pulling the evil thing out of him. Harry wasn't sure when he started screaming but he knew he was. After what seemed like forever a black puff of smoke left his body. It joined the other puffs of smoke from the objects they collected. The black puffs flew into the screaming Little Dark Lord. Harry tried to sit up as the goblin guards moved forward. As soon as the Ritual Master stopped chanting, the guards cut off the head off of the now fully formed form of Voldemort. Harry passed out.
Harry woke up. He was still in Gringotts. Severus was sitting on the chair next to the bed he had been laid on. "My head doesn't feel like it's going to explode."

"The healers administrated some healing potions combined with a headache one after you passed out. They ran a scan. The Horcrux is gone." Severus was relieved that Voldemort was gone. He still was surprised at how easy it was and knew Dumbledore could have done it a long time ago. His fury at Dumbledore rose as he thought about how many died because Dumbledore wanted to use that prophecy. He also wasn't happy that Dumbledore had him take a Vow and knew about the Horcrux and what it would mean.

"So it's done?" Harry sat up on the bed. He didn't feel any pain. He knew they had a long way to go to get magic back to where it was balanced but now that the Little Dark Lord was gone, they could move forward. Now they could get rid of Dumbledore without worrying about the Little Dark Lord's return.

"Yes, the goblins confirmed it. The titles and vaults he had closed and a death certificate was magically issued," Severus rolled back the sleeve on of his robe, exposing his left arm. "It's gone." He had spent at least thirty minutes looking at his bare arm as Harry slept. He had never thought the mark would ever go away. He knew that Harry could have removed it, and he would be willingly marked again, but the ugly, painful mark was gone.

Harry looked at the bare arm. He ran a hand over the skin. "Interesting. No magical residue." He began to use his own magic to feel Severus' arm and Severus' magic.

"No backlash or pain when he died either. It just disappeared completely. I know Dumbledore is going to find out about this as there is no way to hide it." Severus felt Harry's magic caress his skin as Harry ran his hand over the mark again. He felt no pain, no fear, just a soft caress of Harry's magic.

"I can't feel his magic any longer either." Harry lowered his hand. "What does everyone think Dumbledore will do?" Harry wasn't sure exactly how long he was sleeping the ritual off but they didn't have time to relax. Dumbledore was still a danger to them and magic. Dumbledore would take advantage of this new development.

"Lucius is going to check with the Ministry to see if Dumbledore has made a move. The Azkaban guards will report the changes to Madam Bones so Dumbledore can't block the information from being released." Severus knew that Dumbledore was going to try and deny that Voldemort was deceased. Dumbledore wasn't going to let the idea of a deceased Voldemort become a reality. Dumbledore had been in charge for so long and he would use whatever was necessary to remain in charge. Severus knew that the Order, with Granger and the younger Weasleys, would attempt to gain control over Harry. Dumbledore wanted that prophecy to be a reality, he needed it to be a reality. They knew getting rid of Dumbledore was going to be a hard thing to do.

"Hera?"

"She believes we should take advantage of it. Work on the fact that the marks have disappeared."

"You?" Harry arched a brow.

"I am in agreement. If we get it released, Dumbledore won't be able to keep insisting that Voldie is
coming back. He is going to try to find out how it happened so Ironclaw had an idea of releasing the original death certificate that the Ministry issued in 1981 combined with the new magical death certificate, after the release of the marks disappearing." Severus was always a bit surprised that Harry asked his opinion. While they may discuss things, Harry was the one in charge. However, unlike Dumbledore and Voldemort, Harry asked his advisors their advice and listened to them. Harry also didn't have to know everything. Harry trust them. Severus wasn't used to being trust. He wasn't used to someone just telling him to do what he thought best.

"Won't that create an issue with the two different dates?" Harry wasn't sure how magic handled birth and death certificates. He really wasn't sure how the Ministry even knew if people died unless someone reported it like in the muggle world.

"No, as the magical ones don't list the date of death. They just state the name and that they are deceased. They are just a magical confirmation that the person is deceased as viewed by magic. In order for a will to be read, both have to be issued. I believe it was how Dumbledore was able to seal your parents' wills, as the magical one was issued but not one from the Ministry when he sealed the wills." Severus knew Dumbledore had sealed the wills that very night to keep control over Harry and the Potter estates.

Harry grinned a bit as he stood up. "I say we do it. It will take care of them insisting that he is back. Granger and the two youngest Weasleys won't be able to insist that I'm lying. However, I feel that Dumbledore is going to want to find a new Dark Lord. I don't think he will start saying there is one but he will believe it's possible." Harry thought that Dumbledore might try and create one as he did with Tom Riddle. Dumbledore knew he was to have been the true Dark Lord over eighty years ago. Dumbledore wanted to be viewed as the Light Lord and that would require a Dark Lord for him to be seen as opposing.

"We agree. However, Lucius has an idea of pushing Dumbledore going senile. He is above retirement age for most and holding three positions taking their toll on his abilities. Bella and Hera added that we work on the fact that Dumbledore has Dark Lords on his mind. Grindelwald and Voldie have taken up a vast amount of his years and time. Time away from Hogwarts. Hera suggested we show the decline of Hogwarts in standings in reference to the time spent on his three positions." Severus watched Harry closely. The boy was learning to hide his emotions very well. While Harry was good, to begin with, Severus could see the improvement they had been working on.

"I agree. How does one man have so many powerful positions?" Harry knew there had to be a reason for Dumbledore to keep all his positions. Was it because he defeated Grindelwald or was there other reasons? Harry made a mental note to check the archives.

"Most will say it's because of his defeat of Grindelwald. However, that was almost sixty years ago. He wasn't the Headmaster at the time. We could use that combined with the decline of education. Hogwarts was at the top of the magical educational system before Dumbledore." Severus knew Harry was thinking. "All of his correspondence includes all his titles. He doesn't let anyone forget. Even the Hogwarts' Letters have all of his titles."

"Leave off of the mental health issue. He would find mind healers that would state he is mentally stable, even if he wasn't. He has connections in every branch of our world."

Severus knew Dumbledore had so many believing in his grandfather image. "He does."

Harry glanced at Severus, who was still sitting in the chair. "If we stick to the facts, we can gather those who are on the fence."
"I agree. There are many who don't want to support Dumbledore but didn't want to join Volde."
Severus watched Harry. Harry was thinking of something as he kept seeing Harry glancing at his arm.

"Severus, since he passed, does that means all the Death Eaters' don't have marks? If they don't, might be able to use it. We know he wants Lupin and Black to get close to me. We know that the Black House is under wards but not a Fidelius Charm. Is there a way we can get it raided? Have Dumbledore discovered with Black, a wanted criminal? Since there isn't a mark and he went to Azkaban for killing the muggles, not for stealing from me, we could get rid of a few thieves and ruin his name in a small way at the same time."

"Lucius would be able to provide Fudge with the information. The problem will be if Kingsley, Tonks, or Mad-Eye learn about it ahead of time. The only way possible is if we appeal to Fudge's re-election desire. Lucius would be able to word it just right and Fudge would have to hold onto who the raid is on until they arrive at the Black House." Severus thought for a few minutes. "Dumbledore doesn't spend the night. He is usually only there for meetings which will work for us since those three would be present also."

"He doesn't give much notice of the meetings. If Fudge even delays in the littlest bit, everything would be ruined." Harry knew Dumbledore liked to keep things close to his chest. "Unless we give him a reason to call a meeting."

"We could also not worry about catching him. The Weasley family, Granger, and Lupin have been staying there. We alert the twins, Bill, and Charlie, so they won't be caught. It would enable those who have been stealing to get caught." Severus liked that idea, justice for their stealing, put a taint on Dumbledore's name, and expose the Order without revealing their own activities.

"It would ruin his name a bit and less chance of Fudge messing everything up." Harry stretched a bit. "I say we do it. How long before we can leave here?"

"The healer wanted to do a quick scan before you leave. Bella has taken care of your relatives, again." Severus stood up. "I told Hera we would meet them at Prince Manor as soon as you were cleared."

"We have a lot to plan. I was thinking I might take some of the NEWTs this summer."

"I have already drawn up a list of NEWT level classes for you and the rest to look through that I believe everyone is ready to take. The results wouldn't be submitted to Dumbledore either since the courses aren't offered at Hogwarts."

Harry laughed. Lady Magic knew what she was doing when she selected Severus for him. Severus always seemed to know what he was thinking and planning. "Dobby? Kreacher?"

"I believe they are going to summer with your relatives again. Dobby and Kreacher made sure to put some of your hair and blood on the property so that Dumbledore will believe you are staying with him." Severus sent the signal for the healer to enter and scan Harry. "Dumbledore already warned the Order that no one should write to you this summer, as it would put you in danger. I'm not sure what excuse he will use after the news breaks."

"He will find something, I'm sure. Dobby and Kreacher can keep an ear and eye open at Grimmauld. Let's get home. We have the summer to plan on what we want to get done."
Chapter 14

Harry was cutting the latest Rita article out. Harry had created a huge scrapbook that he called the Book of Dumbleruin. He pasted the latest article on the next blank page. Harry stared at the article, running his hand over the words and the picture of Dumbledore looking confused. He flipped to the first page and started to reread the articles.

**STRANGE EVENTS HAPPEN IN AZKABAN**

by staff reporter Ilka Bramstorm

Last night the Ministry was in an uproar. The Aurors had been called to Azkaban as numerous Death Eaters started screaming about their marks disappearing. Many of the Death Eaters incarcerated in Azkaban now have bare arms. We know some of the Death Eaters have been incarcerated in Azkaban for over a decade.

One of the most interesting revelations was Rodolphus Lestrange insanely screaming about his wife, Bellatrix Lestrange (née Black), is a rat. The Aurors found the rat staring at Rodolphus and his brother, Rabastan. The Aurors caught the rat, placing it in a cage.

Bella had laughed hard at the idea of Rodolphus finally learning he had married a rat. Harry turned the page in his scrapbook.

**HE SHALL NOT BE NAMED OFFICIAL DECLARED DECEASED!**

by staff reporter Liam Turner

Yesterday we reported the strange events that happened in Azkaban. Today, the Ministry officials discovered a magical death certificate, as well as a death certificate issued on 31 October 1981 that will send a resounding sigh of relief to all magical beings. A magical death certificate was listed that You-Know-Who's name as Thomas Marvolo Riddle, which in turn was an anagram for I am Lord Voldemort.

Dumbledore has tried to deny the death but hasn't been able to produce any evidence that He Shall Not Be Named is still alive. The evidence has been mounting that contradicts what Dumbledore has been promoting. The evidence has shown that our world can breathe a sigh of relief as You-Know-Who has been declared dead by magic, by the goblins, and by the Ministry.

Questions have arisen and we will do our best to find answers.

Harry reread that piece twice. He loved reading that. The editorial and people's response showed many were relieved and happy with the news. The Aurors had worked extra duty that week due to the number of people partying, including a lot of pure-bloods.

Dumbledore had called numerous Order meetings trying to figure out what happened. He had even looked at Severus' arm. Dumbledore had Mad-Eye look at Severus' arms, too. They each ran their own scans over it, trying to figure out what happened. Dumbledore kept insisting that the Dark Lord was going to return and that he couldn't be dead.
Dumbledore had even dragged Severus to Azkaban, with Mad-Eye, to compare the results. Rodolphus had still been yelling about his wife being a rat. How he was married to a rat and that the Black family lied to him.

Harry had laughed when on the way past Rodolphus' cell on the way out, Severus asked if Rodolphus if he needed another rat. Bella had sent Kreacher to deliver some cheese to Rodolphus. Kreacher and Dobby followed Bella's advise on tormenting the Dursleys and Rodolphus.

Harry flipped to the next page. He loved this one. Lucius and the other former Death Eaters, who were never committed of a crime, were making Dumbledore's mental health an issue.

IS DUMBLEDORE TOO OLD?

by staff reporter Isaac Goldbloom

Over the past few days, many have expressed their concern about Headmaster Albus Dumbledore. Many in the Ministry and members of the Wizengamot have begun to question Albus Dumbledore's mental health as the man keeps insisting that You-Know-Who is going to return.

Many of our society have rejoiced over the news that You-Know-Who has been officially declared deceased. These same people are now wondering why the Headmaster of Hogwarts is insisting the man has returned.

When questioned how he was sure, the Headmaster wasn't able to produce any evidence. Dumbledore tried to claim that Harry Potter could confirm You-Know-Who's return. When presented with the facts of what Mr. Potter stated he saw, he tried to claim that Mr. Potter was clearly befuddled and in time would reveal the truth. (see pages 4 for the rerun of Mr. Potter's statement)

Harry remembered how Severus had returned from another Order meeting after this article had been released. Dumbledore hadn't been happy and had tried to get the Daily Prophet to stop printing articles about him. Severus had noticed that Dumbledore seemed to be scrambling to try and rearrange his supporters and his plans. Harry smirked remember the angry howlers he got from Granger and Weasley demanding that he admit that the Dark Lord was back. Harry flipped the page.

DUMBLEDORE QUESTIONED ABOUT PAST

The DMLE has called in Albus Dumbledore to answer questions regarding the past of Tom Marvolo Riddle, Gellert Grindelwald, and Harry Potter. While the information hasn't been released, as it's still under investigations, we will keep everyone up to date on the status as we learn more information.

Some of the questions regard the time frame of when Tom Marvolo Riddle was in attendance at Hogwarts before the famous defeat of Grindelwald by Dumbledore. Riddle was considered the brightest wizard of his generation. His first contact with our world was Albus Dumbledore. After Riddle left Hogwarts, Grindelwald was defeated by Dumbledore but no one saw the famous duel.

The Department of Child Endangerment submitted their own inquiry regarding the lives of Tom Riddle, Harry Potter, and a variety of other students who the Hogwarts' matron at the time had to
submit concerns about their abusive home lives. They had tried to get involved in the children's lives but all the students reflected that fact that Headmaster Dumbledore interfered with the investigations. All the records reflect the shared statement that Dumbledore was sure their families loved them and it was a slight misunderstanding.

Harry had Severus collect his memories of Harry's experiences with the Dursleys and Dumbledore. Ironclaw submitted Harry's memories to Madam Bones regarding Harry's abuse at the hands of the Dursleys. Harry had made sure to include the memories of him asking not to be returned to the Dursley family.

TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE WAS ABUSED AS A CHILD!
by staff reporter Xavier McDowell

New information has been released that shows the darkest of Dark Lords might not have come into being if the adults in his life hadn't listened to Albus Dumbledore. Tom Riddle lived in a muggle orphanage during the last muggle world war.

A very muggle religious orphanage during a time frame when there were more and more children becoming parentless, no food, no clothing, no money, and a lot of bombs ruining homes and lives. (See page 5 for the muggle war history.) A home where being different was beaten by the Matron (see page 7 for reports from the orphanage) and other children.

Tom Riddle spoke to Headmaster Dippet about staying at a different place during the summer. Headmaster Dippet put in the paperwork, explaining how Tom Riddle was treated. The paperwork was withdrawn by Deputy Headmaster Albus Dumbledore claiming that Tom Riddle was having a hard time adjusting to the magical world, needed to go back home where he was loved and wanted, and that it was just a slight misunderstanding. A statement that is found on numerous withdrawals concerning students who were abused.

The what-ifs are countless. The what-ifs of the lives affected by the careless disregard of abuse are beyond measure. How many didn't come forward after seeing their mates' concerns dismissed? We have numerous records of students who were killed by the "loving" families when they were returned (see page 8).

Harry, Hera, Bella, and Severus knew the list of abused students was long. Madam Bones couldn't go after any case for over five years old but didn't mean she wasn't going to let them be buried. Harry, again, got a few howlers from Granger, Weasleys, and Dumbledore. Severus had endured the crazy man's rants.

CHILD ABUSE NOT ACCEPTABLE
by staff reporter Tiffany Michaels

Madam Bones is working with the Department of Child Services to help prosecute the offenders of child abuse and neglect. Child Services wants to create a more effective way to protect our magical children. They want to have one of the members of the Department of Child Services assigned to
Hogwarts for the children to have someone to turn to outside of the Headmaster.

Lord Malfoy has donated a building to create a magical orphanage, with the support of other members of the Wizenagamot. The homes will be opened by the beginning of the year. The aim is to have no child required to return to their abusive families. There is going to be legislation submitted to monitor magical children in the muggle world. Perhaps if these protective measures had been installed we might not have seen the worst Dark Lord in our history rise. Perhaps so many children wouldn't have left our world if they felt we cared about them.

Harry had sat down with Severus, Hera, and Lucius to brainstorm ideas on what they wanted to do. Lucius and Hera had researched old laws and customs to see if there was anything they could turn into a foundation for the changes they wanted.

Severus had to attend several Order meetings with Granger, Remus, Minerva, and Dumbledore as they tried to figure out how to prevent anything Lucius might present without looking like they were condoning child abuse. Minerva hadn't been happy when she learned the truth about the child abuse issue but she was still blindly following Dumbledore.

The Twins reported anything they learned from the annoying trio and their mother. Molly Weasley had been complaining about how Harry needed to get his life straightened out and align himself with Dumbledore. The twins had tried to speak to Bill and Charlie but they didn't want to return home due to their mother.

DO WE WANT TO TRUST ALBUS DUMBLEDORE WITH OUR CHILDREN?

by staff report Jean-Francois LaMay

Over the summer, we have read and heard the disturbing reports about how Albus Dumbledore has allowed numerous students to be returned to abusive homes. We have read how the man is trying to convince us a dead man is actually alive and will return. What you haven't heard about is the lack of education taught at Hogwarts. We have researched the last five decades of educations, test results, OWL, and NEWT results from Hogwarts. We were surprised by the results.

In order to make sure we weren't going to create a false panic, we asked the ICW to look at our research. People, the ICW was very shocked at how far behind Hogwarts education is. Numerous members of the ICW expressed their concern over the vast number of missing course. They showed the standard been rated the worst magical institution. The ICW had been concerned for years about the lack of apprentices, the lack of masters, and the declining number of students who went to work in the magical world.

The ICW had spoken in the past to Headmaster Dumbledore regarding these issues and were informed that parents weren't interested in the programs. Dumbledore also cited budget restraints. However, we reviewed Hogwarts' yearly budget and we are unclear of the restraints. We are hoping an audit will be issued and I'm sure many are just as distressed as I am by this information.

Harry folded his scrapbook. He had a meeting with Lucius, Severus, and Hera about getting the goblins to do an audit on the Hogwarts' accounts. Dumbledore was fighting the press, the Ministry, and the Wizengamot. While Harry hadn’t officially taken his seats nor had he been the one pointing fingers at Dumbledore, it was great to see Dumbledore's world starting to crack.
Harry was sure when he returned to Hogwarts, Dumbledore and his loyal idiots were going to try and work on him. Harry wasn't worried as he knew he had true and loyal friends. When the time came to remove Dumbledore from Hogwarts, Harry knew Dumbledore would be surprised at how many true friends Harry had.

Severus had been speaking to Minerva and other staff members as well as several Order members who were slowly becoming disillusioned by Dumbledore. While Minerva was going to be a harder one to convince, Severus felt sure he would do it, and Harry had faith in Severus. Harry actually liked Minerva. He felt she did too many jobs and once they were in charge of Hogwarts, no staff member was going to be a professor, head of a house, and have another position. No person could do that many jobs effectively. Harry had been a victim of her not being able to do her job.

"Harry, Lucius is here." Hera stood in the doorway to the sitting room. She knew what Harry was doing. They, read Hera and Bella, had actually encouraged Harry to collect the articles as well as write down what happened in his life. They didn't care if Harry shared the information but felt it would be a good release for him.

"Yes. We have a lot to do before we return to Hogwarts in two weeks." Harry had already gotten his books and potion ingredients. Granger was going to be a pain. Severus already informed Harry that Dumbledore told Granger what classes Harry was taking. Severus had caught Granger complaining to Weasley about how Harry was taking the same classes she was and she didn't think it was fair. They were still trying to figure out how she was able to retake her OWLs and get into her sixth year. Weasley was also able to enter his sixth year. Severus and Lucius believed that Dumbledore made a deal where the two would be in their sixth year and would retake their OWLs over the Yule holiday.

"Yes, we do. Dumbledore has a lot of hidden sins that we need to work on when we want to expose them."

Harry grinned as he picked up a timeline of Dumbledore's life and a timeline he had roughly written out regarding the release of information and which stories that Rita Skeeter would be the best one to work on.
Chapter 15

Harry wanted to turn around and run as he saw Weasley and Granger with Weaslette waiting for him at the platform. They hadn't noticed him as of yet, so Harry stopped and watched them. They looked annoyed. He was wondering where Mrs. Weasley was. He knew the woman had to be close. She would want to make sure Harry heard about what he was doing to Dumbledore and them.

"You have to get onto the train. " Dean was watching the trio. "I can't believe their results were ignored."

Since the group of friends spent a few days a week visiting each other Harry had informed the group about how Granger and Weasley were going to be joining them in their year. Lucius was working on trying to discover how Dumbledore managed to get it done. "I was hoping to have a bit of a break from them. I am wondering why Granger isn't in trouble for kidnapping."

"So am I." Seamus joined them. "My mum's not impressed by it. She is going to write a letter and demand some answers."

"I believe we are going to have to get everyone to write to their parents encouraging them to demand answers." Harry wasn't happy that Dumbledore broke the rules for the two Gryffindors. Anyone else who failed their OWLs wouldn't be allowed to attend their sixth year or to retake their OWLs for at least a year. "I want to know how he got it done."

"So does mum." Seamus nudged Harry. "We need to get on the train. Neville and Draco are sitting down by the Prefect area. I told them we would find them. We will need to ditch the annoying trio."

Harry looked at Seamus. "I have an idea on that. Dean and I are still prefects so we can use that to escape them. Shall we gentlemen?"

Dean and Seamus groaned a bit. "I wish we could just curse them." Dean liked the idea.

"They would. Unless." Dean pointed to a group of muggles teenagers who were just hanging out. They were close to the annoying trio. "How about we pay them to bother the trio? Keep them busy until after the train leaves."

Harry pulled out his wallet and checked to see how much muggle money he had. "I will be right back." Harry didn't move directly across the open area. He didn't want to take a chance that the trio would see them. He moved with the crowd until he got to the group. "Hello. I am wondering if you might be willing to do something for me and I will pay you ahead of time for it."

"Yo, we aren't taking drugs from you or are we going to transport any." A dark-haired boy wearing ripped jeans and a black leather jacket stood up. The boy was taller than Harry. There were only four boys but they should be able to keep the trio busy.

"I'm not asking you do so." Harry turned and pointed to where the Annoying Trio was standing. "See those three standing by the clock? The two red-heads and that girl with the ugly plaid skirt on."

"Ya? What of them?"

"Just keep them busy until after 11. Don't hurt them but just don't let them get to the train platform 9. I will give you fifty pounds."
The group all stood up. "Fifty? We don't have to hurt them, just keep them busy?"

"Yes, if you flirt with the red-haired girl, she will do whatever you want. The girl with the dark hair will need to have someone smart talk to her, ask her questions but also give her compliments. Tell her how smart she is, etc. She will love it. The boy, don't worry, he won't leave them. He is also all mouth. The boy and the dark-haired girl like to hit so be careful."

"I think we can handle it." The dark haired boy turned to his friends who were grinning.

"If you need to steal something to keep them distracted, grab the trolley. They won't leave without it." Harry pulled out the money. "Actually, if you steal it just long enough to keep them busy until at least noon, I will toss in another 20."

"Deal. Do we need to give it back or can we just dump it someplace?" The leader liked this idea. Money and they didn't have to break their no drugs policy.

"Dump it someplace. They will find it if eventually so best not to be in the area when they do. You won't be arrested if they catch you but I'm sure you don't need the annoyance." Harry handed over the money. "Thanks." Harry waited until the group was almost to the trio before he rejoined his friends. "They will handle the Annoying Trio."

Dean and Seamus laughed a bit and the three friends waited until they saw the group speaking to the Annoying Trio before they started to move to platform 9 3/4. They didn't want to stick around in case Dumbledore decided to review their memories and see them in the background.

Harry, Dean, Seamus, and Neville were sitting together. No one even noticed that the Annoying Trio was missing as of yet. Draco and Neville thought it was funny. Harry was smiling. He was actually enjoying the Welcoming Feast.

"Harry's smile and the Annoying Trio is missing. Should we be worried?" Bella quietly spoke to Hera and Severus.

Severus looked at Harry. He was enjoying the feast. He looked around to make sure the trio wasn't sitting somewhere else. He did a quick glance at Dumbledore who was speaking to Filius. Minerva was bringing in the new first years. Dumbledore didn't look concerned so he didn't notice the trio was missing. Dumbledore most likely noticed Harry and assumed the trio was with him. "I'm do not think he did anything to them. Dumbledore isn't aware of their lack of appearance."

"Wonder where they are?" Hera wondered what happened. "Do you think Granger and Weasley were denied entrance into their sixth year? Lucius might be been able to discover what happened." Lucius had been looking through the archives in an attempt to discover what Dumbledore had done. He had tried to see if Fudge knew anything but the man had no idea regarding the policies concerning the OWLs or Hogwarts.

"I'm sure we will find out." Bella saw Minerva put the stool in place. "He will call Minerva and Severus into his office after the feast when he realizes they aren't present."

"True." Severus knew Dumbledore do exactly what Bella said. He hoped Dumbledore wasn't expecting him to fix whatever the issue was.

Lucius entered the Great Hall as Minerva was still doing the sorting. He sat down next to Severus. Lucius had retained the position as the DADA professor due to all the bad press about Dumbledore. The Ministry and the Board wanted someone they trusted to watch Dumbledore. Dumbledore had
attempted to get someone else in the position but Lucius signed the contract before Dumbledore came forward with his desired professor. "Dumbledore is going to be in a mood later."

"Why?" Severus didn't remove his eyes from the students being sorted. They weren't worried about anyone hearing them. Dumbledore always set up a privacy charm during the sorting.

"The Annoying Trio was arrested at King's Cross." Lucius arched a brow. "Assault." He had already written a short note to Rita.

"Who did they assault?" Bella found this interesting. She did wonder what Dumbledore planned on doing to get them out of trouble.

"A group of four muggle boys. The boys didn't touch them. A muggle officer watched the whole thing. He had originally believed that the group of muggle boys was going to cause problems but instead Ron Weasley threw the first punch, followed by his sister, and Granger. The two girls were first hitting Weasley but Weasley kept hitting the group of muggles. Soon the two girls started hitting the muggle boys. The officer arrested them before it turned into a riot as the three weren't watching what they were doing and had almost knocked over a few people."

"Is that why you are late?" Hera was the closest one to Dumbledore out of the group.

"Yes, I was there when the Aurors left to the Weasleys and Granger from the Metropolitan Police offices. They were arrested for assault."

"Really? How interesting." Hera started to hear the gossip start as Dumbledore rose and walked down to Lucius.

"Lucius, could you please inform me of what you know."

"Sorry, Albus, but that is all I know. I was speaking to Madam Bones and before we were finished speaking the call came in. It was a squib that recognized the trunks and he took over the case. A Sargent Macmillan, he is a third or perhaps a fourth cousin, once removed, from our Ernest Macmillan."

"I see. I will leave here as soon as it is possible." Dumbledore didn't give anyone time to respond before he turned and returned to his seat. He looked very upset.
Chapter 16

Harry heard the rumor mill regarding Granger and the two Weasleys adventures. He had laughed at a few of them. The rumors had them killing three muggles and they were hiding at Hogwarts. Some were that they didn't make it to the train in time per Weasley tradition of arriving on the platform at the last minute. Harry's favorite was that Gin was flirting with some muggle boys and Granger and Weasley had to drag their sister away which caused a fight to happen. Gin fueled the rumors when a few people heard her describing how cute the muggle boys were. Gin bragged about almost getting a date with an older boy but her brother ruined it for her.

He had been in the library researching some things that Hera and Bella had given him to study. It was magic that Dumbledore would have a fit over if he knew Harry was reading about it. He was the back corner of the otherwise empty library. He stood up and stretched. He spied Granger and Weasley in the stacks. He wasn't sure what they were doing and decided to find out. Granger looked very angry.

"No, Ron, it's not fine. The Headmaster had used a memory charm on my parents. They were so mad at me when they had to go to the police station. I now have a police record for assault. I'm not sure what he did about Rita Skeeter and her accusation of me kidnapping her. I keep getting students asking if it is true and my dormmates have told everyone about the beetle I kept in a jar. I could go to Azkaban for kidnapping."

"So? You are here. Your parents will never know. No one ever believes anything Rita writes. Dumbledore would never allow you to go to Azkaban. It's not that big of a deal. No one in our world will ever know. You know it was the right thing to do."

"It's Headmaster, Ron, and I'm not so sure. The Headmaster did something to get us into our sixth year. We failed and yet here we are. The Headmaster wants us to befriend Harry but that is failing. The Headmaster hasn't gotten Harry to do a thing he wanted him to do. Look at the last five years here." Granger huffed. "I'm not even sure if I can get into a university now."

"Why do you care? It's not like it matters. We are here and that is all that matters." Ron huffed. "Look, Hermione, we have a job to do. A job we agreed to do before we even started Hogwarts. We have to get Harry to stop being a snake even if he is in our house. Dumbledore says only he can defeat You-Know-Who. You know Longbottom isn't going to be able to do anything except grow a tree. I don't think a tree will kill You-Know-Who."

"Ron, are you even listening to me. It's wrong to memory charm people like that. It wrong that we are now in our sixth year." Granger sounded like she was stuffed up. "Also, the Ministry has declared Voldemort dead. How is this going to work? It doesn't make any sense."

"Dumbledore says it's impossible. He says it is a ploy and we have to be ready. We can't have Death Eaters and their master in charge. They believe in killing muggles, enslaving half-bloods, and would wipe out anyone who didn't agree with them. You read about how the Potters were slaughtered in their own home." Harry could hear Weasley's hatred of all Slytherins building. "We are the ones who will here to defend Hogwarts, to protect our world, to protect the muggles from being killed. You know what the books said about Death Eaters killing the parents of muggle-borns. A memory charm or their death, Hermione, which is better?"

"I know. I know. I get that but it still feels so wrong." Harry heard what sounded like a book being opened. "I just don't like how we were able to get into our sixth year. It's not right."
"No one will know. They will think we retook our OWLs. We will just take them at the end of the year. It's not that big of a deal."

"What if someone finds out?" Granger sounded a bit whiny.

"You are worrying about nothing. Dumbledore has everything set up and he knows what he is doing. We just need to make sure we are ready. Harry will join us one way or another."

"Ron, we can't force him." It was quiet for several seconds. "I mean it, Ron, we can't. I hate what I have done so far but I do understand it's for the greater good."

"Dumbledore will have it all worked out."

Harry back away, quietly. He didn't like what he heard one bit. He had a feeling he might be the next kidnapping victim of Grangers and have some potions forced down his throat.

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Harry had Severus pull the memory and everyone took their turn watching it. Harry was sitting on the couch drinking some tea. He had gone straight to Hera after he quietly left the library. Severus had a class and Bella was monitoring a study session in the Great Hall. They knew they couldn't meet until after dinner in the Great Hall. Harry was a bit nervous about being alone for fear of being kidnapped. He knew it wasn't logical but figured better safe than sorry.

Hera watched the memory first while Bella used Severus' kitchenette to make tea for everyone. "They didn't put up a privacy charm?" Bella was carrying the tea tray into the sitting area.

"No, they didn't. I'm not sure why. I would have thought they would have. We never did but we were also younger and didn't know about them." Harry couldn't believe they were just discussing something so dangerous without a privacy spell.

"I know Granger knows them. She brags enough." Severus couldn't stand the girl.

Hera was booted out of the memories and Bella went next. "That is very interesting." Hera poured herself a cup of tea. "I am not sure if we can use it. Lucius might have an answer for us regarding the legality of it."

"I will write to him tonight. Perhaps, if he can't make use of the memory, we might. I would have to review it to make sure." Severus was hoping Rita might be able to use it. The DMLE might visit Granger's parents. The DMLE did have a copy of the muggle police report.

"We expected him to be difficult about it but to just ignore the fact that Tom Riddle is dead is a bit concerning." Hera frowned a bit. "He must believe because Harry is still alive and was a Horcrux, that Tom must have done something to completely disappear. I am not sure if there is a ritual that would provide that type of disappearance but I can research it."

"He would. No matter what we present he won't believe it." Severus had a feeling that things were going to get a lot worse before Dumbledore would admit defeat. "We might need to get some protective gear for Harry. Harry, you will need to carry a port-key. You will need to use parsel magic on the gear and port-key to keep it from being removed."

Bella got kicked out of the single viewing pensive. "Very interesting."

Severus got up and took is turn. They informed Bella about what they discussed and waited for Severus to get booted out of the pensive. Once booted out, Severus sat down. "We do nothing. It's a
set-up. If Harry told anyone about the memory charm on Granger's parents or even their attendance by using those memories, they could claim slander."

"Are you sure? I mean they said their names, we couldn't see their faces." Bella never really worked with Dumbledore so she wasn't aware of how he operated.

"Yes, it is. Since Harry has been declared an adult, he would be charged with slander. I'm sure Dumbledore would gladly press for charges, which would make the paper. It would be enough to bring back some who doubt the other stories. In order to keep Harry at Hogwarts, Dumbledore would step in and claim guardianship instead of having Harry being punished, using his it's a slight misunderstanding. He will claim that it shows that Harry isn't mature enough and needs to under his guardianship, again. He will be gracious and remove the charges because he wouldn't want his ward to be in trouble for something he could prevent."

"Setting him up in a good light as Harry's benefactor, savior, and boosting his falling approval ratings all in one go. It would work. Many believe in him and believe what he says."

"Exactly, Granger and Weasley were having a private chat and since Harry didn't hear the beginning of it, they could claim it that Harry missed some very important things. Including even discussing the different rumors about them." Severus looked at Harry. "You said the library was quiet. Did you see them enter?"

"No, I thought I was alone. Most of the claws and snakes had classes, Gryffindor was out on the Quidditch Green with the Puffs. I didn't even hear them speaking until I was in the next stack of books."

"Yes, I have to agree, it does sound like a set-up. We do nothing but save the memory for later. Lucius is still working on figuring out how they were able to enter their sixth year. They have OWL results for each of them but not the original ones they failed." Hera was going to check a few sources of her own to see if she could discover the truth. "They kept enough of the truth in their statements that we might be able to discover if Dumbledore did memory charm the Grangers without exposing us."

"We could have a fake police office go around asking for more information for their report." Harry hadn't read the police report. "Maybe the muggle boys would be willing to sue Granger for damages."

"I will speak to Lucius before we decide to move forward. I don't want to move to fast and give Dumbledore a reason to wonder about Harry lack of leaking the information to the papers. He might even have the Granger house being watched." Hera didn't trust Dumbledore.

"He would. He would believe Harry had someone looking for more facts to add to the story." Bella took a sip of her tea. "The kidnapping of Rita, Granger seemed stressed by it. She claimed others in her dorm were backing up the newspaper article. I am wondering if perhaps he also did it to get the kidnapping claim dismissed. He would use Rita's past skills in her gossip in her articles combined with the slander case."

"Two birds, one stone." Hera and Severus said at the same time.

"I am going to warn the others. I don't want anyone to be caught in Dumbledore's trap." Harry was glad he only had one more year at Hogwarts. Technically, he still had to finish this one and finish his seventh year.

"It would be wise. He will want to counter all the articles as much as he can. Hogwarts is famous for
its gossip mill." Severus had been dealing with the Hogwarts gossip mill since he was a student. "You best head up to your dorm, I don't want Dumbledore to find a reason to remove your prefect badge."

Harry got up. He had enough time to get up to the dorm. "Night." Harry headed to the door. He loved to walk Hogwarts at night. It was so quiet and peaceful. The portraits sleeping, some pretending to be sleeping, the ghosts just roamed the halls. He was almost to the dorm when he saw Granger and Weasley hidden in a corner. They weren't well hidden since one of the candles was casting a shadow from the direction he was coming from. If he had gone the normal way, he wouldn't have seen them. He decided that Professor McGonagall would be interested in seeing who was waiting for him.

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