

# **Harry and the six Virgins**

by

DrT

# Table of Contense

Harry and the six Virgins.....	1
Chapter I.....	3
Chapter II.....	9
Chapter III.....	13
Chapter IV.....	20
Chapter V.....	25
Chapter VI.....	32
Chapter VII.....	38
Chapter VIII.....	43
Chapter IX.....	50
Chapter X.....	55
Chapter XI.....	61
Chapter XII.....	65
Chapter XIII.....	71
Chapter XIV.....	76
Chapter XV.....	80
Chapter XVI.....	86
Chapter XVII.....	92
Chapter XVIII.....	98

## Chapter I

Monday, July 8, 1996

*Dear Remus*

*First, I have to say it still seems strange to call you that. I also have to apologise for the yelling last week. Of all the people I shouldn't yell at because they don't deserve it, you must be near the top of the list. As you said, we can understand how the other feels more than most.*

*So, yes, I'm fine. By that, I mean the relatives are not locking me in closets, cupboards, or even the bedroom. They aren't giving me any problems about Hedwig or reading 'those freak books'; they moved Dudley's old television to my room so I am able to watch the news or anything I want. They are very certain they don't want you, or especially Moody, coming to visit again. Especially during the day. Especially on Wednesday afternoons, when Aunt Petunia's 'club' meets to drink pink gin and pretend to talk about books they haven't read. I really think Tonk's obliviate needs a little work, as Mrs. Reed still jumps whenever I raise an eyebrow at her.*

*As you might gather, yes, I am still as 'bitter, disillusioned, and generally aggravated at life' (that was your phrasing, wasn't it?) as I was last week. Yes, I am practicing my Occlumency. I still think it was unfair to threaten me with Snape if I didn't, but as you said, that alone is more than sufficient motivation. I haven't had any of 'those' dreams. My scar hasn't really hurt at all (it has always had little twinges, and that hasn't changed). I have had some odd dreams, some about the Ministry, but nothing more.*

*Dudley has actually let me use his equipment. Working out my aggression has helped my temper. Maybe you should ask the Headmaster if we may have a gym at Hogwarts?*

*Please let me know when I can leave here!*

*Harry*

Wednesday, July 10, 1996

*Dear Remus*

*Why are you so worried about my dreams? My scar should at least warn me after the fact if anything gets through. The dreams are weird, though, so, if you must know, they replay in fragments. If I could see them all connected, and remember them all, they might make sense. The arch where the veil is is in some of the scenes, but the area is outdoors, and the people I see are in costumes, like a living bronze-age museum our school went to when I was ten. Sometimes they are alive, sometimes they are dead. Other scenes are in what looks like ancient Rome. Some others are set in a tavern, sometimes with the people in classical costumes, sometimes more medieval. I see Hogwarts built up in stages. I also hear names: Casey, Caswallon, Cassiwallan. These seem to refer to the same person, or I guess it could be a place or a thing, but I think person. Mean anything to you?*

*Harry*

"Hello, Hedwig," Remus Lupin said. "That was a quick turn-around for you. Let's see what Harry has to say; probably ticking me off." Remus casually opened up the note, and then turned very pale. "No! It . . . it can't be. . . ."

Lupin ran to the fireplace, and called out to Albus Dumbledore.

Thursday, July 11, 1997

"Answer the door, boy! Probably one of those freaks!" Vernon declared, before muttering as Harry left the room. "No consideration . . . calling at dinner. . . ."

Harry didn't think it likely, but went to the door with some hope (few people called on the Dursleys in the evenings, after all). Opening the door with a sigh, Harry was shocked to see Professor Dumbledore, Remus, Moody, Tonks, and worst of all, Snape.

"May we enter, Harry?" Albus Dumbledore asked.

Harry nodded, and gestured them in.

"Who is it, boy!" Vernon roared. "Those freak friends of yours?"

Moody took a step towards the dining room, but stopped when Dumbledore made a gesture.

"Severus, would you mind ensuring the Dursleys are quiet, but unharmed, until morning? If you should care to speak with them, please be my guest."

Snape's mouth curled with both pleasure and disgust, and strode into the dining room. Snape must have cast a silencing spell, because Harry heard nothing more from the dining room after his uncle's initial protests to Snape.

"Come, Harry, we must talk." Dumbledore gestured towards the stairs, and Harry led Dumbledore to the small bedroom he was allowed partial possession of.

"We have little time, Harry, so I must ask you some incredibly strange questions. Any questions you might have will be answered within a few days. First, did you have a dream fragment last night?"

Harry nodded. "A few, actually. The one I remember most was in a Roman villa, a bit like one I saw on a special on Pompeii. Casey was called Caius Cassius Cotta, so I guess he's a person."

Dumbledore sighed. "I regret I must now ask you a very personal question. I do promise to tell you why in a few days. I must ask you to please name the girls, at least fifteen of them, you are most attracted to by the time you go to sleep tonight."

"What? You CAN'T be serious!"

"A strange question, but whom would you date if no obstacles existed, exempting those girls already in a sincere relationship, of course. And I do need fifteen names at the least."

"And this is important?"

"It is."

"In order?"

Dumbledore smiled. "That would be best. Pack your things. Write me a list after we portkey to Headquarters. It is unlikely we shall ever make you return here, so take everything. Alastor should be checking to see if there is anything of your parents' which Petunia has been hiding."

Harry was ready to go in less than twenty minutes. In less than half an hour, he and the others were in a bedroom at Grimmauld Place.

"Please send Hedwig with that list before you retire," Dumbledore said, herding Snape and Moody out the door. To Harry's surprise, Tonks kissed Remus on the cheek, winked at Harry, and followed Dumbledore out.

"You and Tonks?" Harry asked.

"You can't be as surprised as I was," Remus said. "She's . . . a very determined young woman."

"Do you mind?"

Remus gave a small smile. "Not a bit. Have a seat, Harry."

There were two large chairs in front of the fireplace. For the first time since he'd appeared in the room a few minutes before, Harry looked around the room, which was easily as large as Dudley's and the Dursleys' combined. There was a large canopy bed, two large mostly empty bookcases, a dresser and a large wardrobe, and a library table and a desk, with a chair on rollers that obviously rolled between the two. It had medium wood paneling, and Harry saw the second door led to a bathroom of some kind.

"This was Regulus Black's," Remus said. "Sirius spent weeks fixing it up for you last spring. You might take a look at the desk when you have time."

Harry, of course, immediately stood up and went to look. Harry saw a series of wizarding photos on the desk and library table. Some were of James and Sirius through the years. A few had Remus in them as well. The centerpiece was of Remus and Sirius, with Sirius holding the infant Harry, both looking very proud. The bookcases had reference books and some works on defense.

Remus broke into Harry's thoughts. "I hope you don't mind, but I've been appointed your wizard guardian."

Harry frowned. "Who has it been?"

"Albus," Remus admitted. "Although he deferred to Sirius after his escape with Buckbeak."

Harry felt a tide of anger, but fought it off. "Where is Buckbeak?"

"We sent him back to Hagrid. Fortunately, few people can tell one hippogriff from another."

"And Kreacher? And that awful painting?"

"Kreacher is dead. And the painting has been destroyed, along with the tapestry. I hope you don't mind."

Harry frowned. "Why should I mind?"

Remus shrugged. "You, Tonks, Tonks' mother, and myself inherited all of the Black fortune. You inherited almost all the real estate, although Andromeda inherited a building in Diagon Alley. With the investments of your parents and the Black real estate, not to mention the cash, you need never work."

"You mean I inherited more from my parents than the vault?"

"Oh, yes. That represents your father's ready cash. Banking is a bit more primitive in the wizarding world than the Muggle. I have no idea what your total worth is. Our tax laws are much lower than Muggle Britain, but you had an annual income of over a hundred thousand Galleons a year after taxes just from the Potter real estate."

Harry shook his head. "Did you reverse the exchange rate?"

Remus smiled. "No, I did them correctly. Your total real estate will probably now bring in some three quarters of a million Galleons before taxes. So far, it's been reinvested."

"Wow!" Harry collapsed back in his chair. "I hope I live long enough to spend some of it!"

"You will," Remus told him. "Tell you what, put your things away and write whatever this list is the headmaster wants. Tomorrow, we'll go shopping in Muggle London. We both need new clothes, and we'll even order you some new glasses if you want. I saw an advert for wrap-around goggles you might want to look into, for Quidditch."

"Has my ban been listed? Do you know where my Firebolt is?"

"Yes, and yes. The Firebolt is already back in your room at Hogwarts."

"That's good to know."

Harry took half an hour to sort out the material from his trunk and other possessions (mostly old school books and notebooks). He took a quick shower, and sat down at the fully-stocked desk and thought.

Harry thought about 'the list' and blushed at each name he thought of adding. After the disaster with Cho, he was more than wary about dating again. Still there were a number of girls he wouldn't mind walking to Hogsmeade with. He thought of the mistletoe the previous December. How many girls would want to kiss him under the mistletoe? Cho had, and Luna might have.

And 'no obstacles', Dumbledore had said, which meant ignoring things like Ron's jealousy or Ginny's old crush. Harry thought of the Hufflepuffs and Ravenclaws, and the cute girls Ginny roomed with. He even thought of two of the Slytherins in his Potions class. Wondering why Dumbledore wanted to know kept intruding -- it was an odd question, by any standard -- and Harry had to keep filtering it out.

Harry sighed and wrote names for the list. He crossed a few names off, circled some names, and drew multiple arrows around most of the names. The hardest was deciding which name to list first, second, and third. Finally, he wrote:

Luna Lovegood  
Hermione Granger  
Ginny Weasley  
Victoria Frobisher  
Katie Bell  
Lavender Brown  
Eloise Midgin  
Parvati Patil  
Doreen Dale  
Lisa Turpin  
Megan Jones  
Hannah Abbott  
Susan Bones  
Padma Patil  
Daphne Greengrass

He gave the list to Hedwig, and went to bed.

Friday, July 12, 1996

Harry saw a cavern. He realized he was dreaming again. He could only see shadows playing against the wall of the cavern, and heard some voices.

"You must aid us! We must save the wizarding world from the Muggles and Mudbloods!"

'Sounds like a Death Eater,' Harry thought.

The voice Harry had now come to think of as Casey's answered the Death Eater. "Muggles outnumber you some two thousand to one, maybe more. We couldn't defeat them when we were outnumbered merely a thousand to one, when we had mastered magic and the Muggles merely had swords and spears. Now they have guns and steam engines; they produce more cloth in one factory than a city of slaves made two thousand years ago. You are a fool, and your followers are fools."

Harry woke up, and saw it was well past dawn.

Harry went down stairs to the smell of frying bacon. "Welcome, Harry Potter!"

"Hello, Dobby. Why are you here?"

"Master Dumbledore asked if Dobby would be willing to work here for the summer, and Dobby said yes." Dobby frowned. "Lazy evil house elf! Causing the death of his Master! the worst crime of a house elf! Never did Dobby consider doing such a thing to his evil Master, and Mister Sirius has been revenged."

"You?"

"No. Dobby must not say who. Please, Harry Potter, do not ask, for Dobby would answer Harry Potter!"

Harry, remembering the house elf's penchant for self-abuse, did not ask. He sat and piled his plate high with fried potatoes and tomatoes, eggs, and the hot bacon. "This looks great, Dobby. thanks!"

After six mouthfuls, Harry mumbled something that Dobby guessed was an inquiry about Remus Lupin. "Professor Lupin?" Dobby verified. Harry nodded. "Professor finished a short time ago, eating all the bangers. Professor told Dobby to fry bacon for Harry Potter, and to say you and he leave for shopping at Nine thirty."

Harry glanced around, looking for a clock. "Human time is Eight fifteen," Dobby told him.

"Thanks, Dobby."

"Harry Potter. . . ."

"Yes?"

"Could . . . could Dobby work for Harry Potter for real?" Seeing the confused look on Harry's face, Dobby explained. "Harry Potter owns this house. Dobby would like to take care of Harry Potter's house."

"You want to leave Hogwarts?"

Dobby considered that. "Dobby could work part time here and there during the year, until Harry Potter leaves school, if Harry Potter and Master Dumbledore agree."

Harry smiled. "You may ask the Headmaster."

"Thank you, Harry Potter. Oh, and Professor Lupin told Dobby to transfigure something to fit Harry Potter."

Harry flushed, and went back to his breakfast in a bad mood.

When Harry and Remus returned from shopping in the early afternoon, Harry's mood had largely swung back to happiness. Harry had never really understood how much money he had. Remus was a good teacher, and Harry was a fast learner, however. He came back with a totally new wardrobe, and a series of small toys and books for himself. Remus had managed, with difficulty, in keeping Harry from buying loads of presents for the Weasleys, Hermione, and Luna. Instead, he brought each two small presents, and Remus had sent them off via public post owls before they had left Diagon Alley (their last stop).

Dobby was very happy to burn Harry's old trousers, underwear, shoes, and more than half his shirts.

Over the next week, Harry was more confined to Grimmauld Place than he had been to Privet Drive, just in case word of Harry's being on the loose had reached Voldemort. Still, he found that more congenial than Privet Drive. He exercised in the back garden, ate well, and read books on defense. His O.W.L. results were still a week or so away, and until then, he did not have to worry

about choosing classes, let alone homework.

Every night, he dreamed at least one fragment that he remembered, often three or four, once six. Harry saw London, Paris, Florence, Milan, Athens, and Rome in ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and modern settings. He saw Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. He saw remote towns across Europe, North America, and, he suspected, Australia. Harry wrote them all down, and those he remembered from Privet Drive.

If there was a pattern, Harry couldn't see one.

Harry wasn't very happy that Remus Lupin was uninterested in telling him anything. He had expected that kind of behavior from Dumbledore, not Remus. It was only tolerable because Remus was so apologetic about it.

Trapped with that impasse, Harry felt he had only course of action: he outlined the situation to Hermione (without mentioning Dumbledore's odd request) and sent it off.



## Chapter II

Friday, July 19, 1996

When Harry came down to lunch, he was surprised to find Dumbledore, Remus, Tonks, and six guests: Luna Lovegood; Hermione Granger; Ginny Weasley; Eloise Midgin; Susan Bones; and Daphne Greengrass.

"What's going on?" Harry asked, both puzzled and nervous.

When Dumbledore didn't answer, Hermione said, "The Headmaster said he needed my help in a special project."

"The same here," Ginny said. "Ron was rather . . . peeved he wasn't let in on it."

"Now THAT would have been awkward," Remus muttered to himself.

"I presumed it has to do with . . . fighting the Dark Lord," Daphne said in a hesitating voice.

"What?" she demanded of the stunned faces. "Most Slytherins do NOT support Malfoy, let alone . . . You-Know-Who."

"Is that . . . we're not going to have to face. . . ?" Eloise asked in a frightened voice.

"No, no," Dumbledore said. "While this has to do with Lord Voldemort, I do not expect any of you ladies shall have to meet him . . . this summer, or possibly ever."

"Do you know why we're here, Harry?" Luna asked.

Harry glanced at Dumbledore, who nodded. "I've been having . . . dreams. No, not THOSE kinds of dreams," he protested to Ginny and Hermione. Hermione nodded, having just had enough time to read his letter before Dumbledore had collected her. "These are . . . dream fragments. Little bits and pieces, spread over history. They seem to concern, well, which name would be best?" he asked Dumbledore.

"Caswallon or Cassiwallan should do equally well," Dumbledore said. "Do any of you know the names?"

Harry and Ginny looked at Hermione, who flushed slightly. "Well," she said, wishing she had had enough time to do some research, "there is the legend of Cassiwallan. He has something to do with the downfall of the Druids, although the versions I've seen haven't said how."

"And wasn't Caswallon a teacher of Merlin?" Luna asked.

"Very good, both of you," Dumbledore said. "We do not know if this is a succession of individuals or a group of people, although they like to pretend to be one person. It is easiest to think of them as perhaps a succession of individuals. Cassiwallan the group has existed for more than two millennia. The legend says that the magical druids foresaw the Gauls and Britons crushed between Rome and the various German tribes. They tried to infuse one person, the original Cassiwallan, with the power to protect the Celts from these threats. Instead, Cassiwallan decided the Celts would be better off under Roman rule. Gaul was then invaded by the German tribes, and over the next sixty years, the area we would call France, and Belgium, and most of Switzerland and western Germany, was conquered by Rome, who had first expelled the Germans. Most of Britain was conquered between a hundred and a hundred and fifty years later."

"Three hundred years after that, the western Roman Empire was starting to weaken, and it would collapse within a hundred years. Shortly after the Romans withdrew from Britain in 410, a brilliant young wizard, whom we call Merlin, returned to the island. He said he had been dream-called more than ten years before, while he was in his twenties, by Caswallon. Caswallon shared some of

Cassiwallan's power, although if Merlin knew how Caswallon acquired that power he never said to my knowledge."

"Since that time, no one, to our knowledge, has been called until Harry. However, the Valley of Cassiwallan was identified in the mid-Five hundreds. Dozens, perhaps scores, of wizards have sought power there. None has been granted any significant power, although a few have been granted small favors. The Hogwarts Founders made the pilgrimage, and Cassius the Wise sent them to the location of Hogwarts." Dumbledore glanced at Remus, who took the hint and picked up the story.

"To make the pilgrimage, the wizard must have an exact request, and must be in the company of, well, not to put too fine a point on it, at least six teen-aged virgins whom he likes and who like him," Remus told them, somehow managing not to blush. "A number of recorded pilgrimages ended with the wizard marrying one of the virgins, and on many occasions, one or more of the virgins came back carrying the current Cassiwallan's child, or didn't come back for a number of years, usually with a few children in tow."

"That has seemed to have been by mutual consent," Dumbledore added.

"Why haven't we ever heard of any of this?" Hermione demanded.

"It's not a story Binns is fond of," Dumbledore replied, "and the location is in the south eastern Swiss Alps, more or less between the St. Bernard's Pass and Saint Moritz. The smaller continental schools may mention the stories. And, of course, the results of the known pilgrimages have not been promising. Half have ended in the death of the wizard. One of the most recent was almost exactly a hundred years ago. At that time, there were seven wizards working in Germany and Austria."

"They had picked up on the various Muggle racial theories current in the mid-to-late Nineteenth century," Remus told the group. "One of the more charismatic leaders made the journey, and so angered the current Cassiwallan that he not only killed Hermann Eichmann, but two of the young witches, including one who was Grindelwald's youngest sister. He then visited a meeting of the group, killing five more of the seven leaders, and thirty followers, in an attack that apparently lasted all of three minutes. Had Grindelwald been at the meeting, he no doubt would have been killed as well."

"Of course, as best we know, none of these people were called," Dumbledore told them. "We think Harry has been called. He will likely be tested to see if his character makes him worthy to deserve help in our fight against Voldemort. We do not know if Harry needs to be accompanied or not, but, to cover the possibility, I asked him for a list of those he might wish to at least casually date, as the virgins must be . . . attachable to the wizard. All were acceptable, in terms of security. Two seem to be in more-than-casual relationships, however, and I eliminated them. One, alas, no longer met the minimum requirement, and two were traveling out of the country."

Harry had turned a very bright red while Dumbledore spoke.

"So, I must ask you six witches if you are willing to travel with Harry to Switzerland. I do not know what you may face, although I do doubt you are in any true physical danger. If the mission succeeds, Voldemort will be stopped, and stopped soon."

Luna smiled, and said, "Harry, may I please accompany you?"

Harry tried to answer, but coughed instead, choking on the words. He managed to nod. Hermione rolled her eyes and poured Harry a glass of water from the water set on a near by table.

"I don't know about any seduction or matchmaking, but I'll go," Daphne said.

"It does seem to be the right thing to do," Susan said.

"Do you really want me . . . to go with you?" Eloise asked in a meek voice.

"If you would like to," Harry managed to say without spilling the rest of his water.

"You should know me well enough to know I'll go," Hermione told him.

"You don't all have to look at me!" Ginny protested. "I'll go!"

"Then let's have luncheon," Dumbledore said with a smile, gesturing them towards the dining room. "Remus is free, and I managed to get Miss Tonks here, who is an auror for those of you who don't know her, assigned to help us."

"Is our . . . virtue really an issue?" Susan asked Dumbledore over lunch. "I mean, well . . . not that, well. . . ."

"If any of you six are not . . . technically virgins, you had best let me know. Whatever you may think of the requirement, I do not believe this is the time to tempt the powers of an ancient order. If any of you are merely . . . not totally innocent, it shouldn't matter."

"When will we be leaving?" Luna asked, pushing away her mostly-full plate and reaching for a small dish of banana custard.

"Why immediately after lunch, of course," Dumbledore said, to the seven teens' shock. "No reason to wait. We have arranged a special long-range portkey to take you to a chateau near a small town called Cresta, where you will spend the night. First thing in the morning, you will be portkeyed to a home near a wizarding village approximately twenty miles away. The entrance to the Valley of Cassiwallan is six miles by broomstick."

"Broomstick?" Hermione asked, shuddering.

"It will not be a difficult flight, Miss Granger," Dumbledore assured her. "It is, however, best to do all this quickly and undercover. It would not do to have any of Voldemort's agents catch wind of this."

"How long will we be gone?" Daphne asked, ignoring her pudding. Seeing Luna eye it, she handed it over.

"There is no way to know. As best we know, most are usually with Cassiwallan only a day or two, a week at the most. Harry may be asked to stay longer, for training, if he is accepted. Now, you will need a little help, so I have arranged for two elves to accompany you. They should have the proper clothes and equipment ready for you."

"What exactly am I supposed to do? What are they supposed to do?" Harry asked.

"If I knew, I promise I would tell you," Dumbledore said. "While their memories do not seem to have been modified, those who have made the journey can not be induced to talk about any of the details, just the over-all course of events. One of your dream fragments told us more about the confrontation with Eichmann than anything else we've discovered. As for the ladies, I am hoping they are not necessary. However, it is likely we will only have this one real chance, and so I thought it best to ask you all along."

Ginny turned to Hermione. "Ron will have a fit, for several reasons."

"Has your friendship with Mister Weasley crossed into a relationship, Miss Granger?"

"No," Hermione answered in a hesitating way that plainly hinted that she wouldn't terribly mind if it did. "I'm not committed to anyone."

"Is there anyone here who would not, under the right circumstances, wish to have a least a casual dating relationship with Mister Potter?"

"Harry would be my second choice," Hermione answered.

"I don't have them listed," Daphne said a little snidely, "but of course it would be difficult for us to date considering all the House rivalry. If You-Know-Who IS defeated, maybe that will become

easier."

"You know, sir," Susan said to Dumbledore, "it would be easier to overcome those Inter-House rivalries if we had more chances to meet outside of class. Harry and I had Herbology together for five years, and we probably said about twenty sentences to each other, not counting the DA last year."

"And do you have a solution, Miss Bones?"

"Perhaps we could have an informal dance one Saturday night a month?"

"Perhaps," Dumbledore mused, "once the Dark Lord is finally gone."

Susan blushed a little, and turned to Harry. "I, well, I haven't dated anyone, Harry. I wouldn't mind having a dance with you."

"You haven't seen him dance," Ginny said with a grin.

"But why me?" Eloise asked Harry. "Hermione is one of your best friends; you're close to Ginny. Rumor has it Luna went with you to the Ministry. Daphne is about the prettiest girl in Slytherin, Susan in Hufflepuff. Why me?"

"Why not?" Harry asked. "Aren't you one of the nicest girls of our year?" Actually, Harry had sometimes thought Eloise might be a bit like Myrtle before she was killed; a nice, sweet, not very attractive girl, who was treated badly by many of the other students. Harry knew what it was like to be disliked. He would never tell her that, of course.

Eloise blushed at the compliment. "I wouldn't mind a dance, either."

"I wouldn't like one," Luna said, drawing everyone's eyes. "I don't like to dance. Maybe a walk by the lake?"

Harry smiled. Ginny snorted.

"Enough of these pleasantries," Dumbledore said. He stood and pulled out a length of rope. "If you could all stand and take hold of this?"

The nine travelers stood. "The house elves will be waiting for you. Have a safe, and successful, trip." Dumbledore moved to touch his wand to the rope, but just before he did, the seven students disappeared.

At Harry's place setting was a sheet of parchment.

*My Dear Professor Dumbledore*

*The young folk seemed to be anxious enough without having to wait another twenty-one hours, so I decided to take them now. I shall take good care of them. With luck, I shall be able to return them early next week, unless they would like to stay longer. The six virgins were not necessary, but welcome. Hopefully, a few of them may wish to stay. They all look delicious.*

***Cassiwallan***  
***The Last Druid***

## **Chapter III**

"Where are we?" Susan asked. All seven had their wands out and shining light -- none was worried about underage magic under the circumstances.

"My guess is a cave in the Valley of Cassiwallan," Hermione said.

A pleasant baritone voice started singing, echoing around the large cave.

**"In a canyon**

**In a cavern**

**Excavating for a mine**

**Was a miner**

**A forty-niner**

**And his daughter, Clementine."** After a pause, the voice added, "Goleuo."

A soft light flooded the large cavern. "Welcome, friends." A man walked out from behind a stone pillar. He was above average in height, and built on broad lines. He was dressed like an American Muggle. "You are totally safe here. You will not be harmed, unless you are foolish enough to try to harm myself or one of your fellows."

"Casey?" Harry asked.

"As good a name as any," the man said. He looked to be in his mid-to-late twenties at most. "I've had so many names over the millennia."

"You mean you're Cassiwallan? I mean, you claim you're the original Cassiwallan?" Hermione asked.

"Oh, yes. I am. I know, that sounds very unlikely." He waved his right hand, and eight chairs appeared. "Please be seated."

"Are you related to Harry?" Luna asked.

"Why would you ask that?" Harry asked.

"Mostly the eyes, although the hair is similar as well." Looking closely, they saw that the man did indeed have the same distinctive green eyes as Harry, as well as the same hair, although it was cut a bit shorter.

"But I got the hair from my Dad, and the eyes from my Mum!" Harry protested.

"Oh," Luna said. "I didn't know that."

"Harry, I'm over two thousand years old. I'm sure I've fathered over three thousand children. . . ."

"Three thousand!" Ginny and Eloise echoed.

The man smiled. "Possibly more. I took over for a number of men killed in both world wars, and earlier wars for that matter, showing up for a final visit, you might say. One was your maternal great grandfather, Harry. That no doubt accounts for much of the reason that your mother was magical, but it can't be the complete story. I may have had some part in your Potter ancestry as well, but if so, that was many hundreds of years ago."

"You're really over two thousand years old?" Hermione asked, her skepticism still obvious.

"Two thousand one hundred and thirty one on the last summer solstice." He looked at them. "It's been a long time since I've told the story. If you are interested, may I rely on you not to repeat it, unless under pressure, other than to Dumbledore and Lupin?"

They all agreed.

"I was born on mid-summer's day, in what we would now call the year a hundred and thirty-five years b.c., in the northern most outpost of druidic power in Britain."

"At the location of Hogwarts?" Luna asked.

"Closer to the current location of Hogsmeade, but generally yes. In any event, seers had long worried about the growing powers of both Rome and the Germans. A plan had been worked out over the decades to deal with the problem."

"Druids, both magical and Muggle, came from the aristocracy and warrior class. In theory, any magical child born to peasants would be killed." He looked at their stunned faces. "Child exposure was quite common in the ancient world. In reality, most infant witches were traditionally taken instead of killed. For over forty years, however, all these children, male and female, were collected from all around the Celtic world, although not trained: from Ireland; Britain, western Spain, Galatia in what is now Turkey; and the parts of Gaul -- France, Switzerland, Belgium, and western Germany in modern terms. The magical Druids also scoured Germany, Scandinavia, eastern Europe, and the Mediterranean as far away as Egypt, and perhaps beyond, buying slaves with any trace of magical power, and stealing any from the streets of towns and cities if they were from families so poor as not to miss them or at least so poor that they couldn't effectively do anything about it." He shrugged. "They probably stole others as well, but I won't swear to that."

"In the end, they collected nine hundred and sixty-three, ranging in age from six months to forty-five at the time of the ceremony. The idea was to drain off their power into a druid-in-training from the warrior class, who was a well-above average powered and skilled wizard, who would use the power to destroy the Germans and Rome, although they thought it would quickly burn me out. I was to be a magical berserker, sacrificed to the greater good. I agreed, being a patriotic young idiot in my early twenties."

"We gathered around an ancient arch, that connected this world with the afterlife. . . ."

"The veiled arch in the Department of Mysteries," Harry said softly.

"That's where it's kept now," Cassiwallan agreed. "There were also twelve-hundred and ninety-three magical Druids, nearly three-quarters of the magical members of the order. There were another hundred and twenty-six wizards, six hundred and seventy-eight witches, and one thousand and eleven of their magical children. Watching at a greater distance were one thousand and two other Druids and two thousand and four nobles and warriors. They had six thousand and ninety-six servants and slaves of various kinds. There were even three hundred and twelve house elves."

"The ceremony did not work as planned. I didn't just absorb the magic from those to be sacrificed, I absorbed it from them and the others in the crowd. Worse, I absorbed the very life force from all of them and another five thousand and thirteen people from the surrounding countryside. I know the exact number, because I saw each of them as I took their lives and power, before I was able to stop it. Eighteen thousand four hundred and ninety-eight people and elves in the end. I have their power, and their lifespans, all inside me. If they all averaged out at having fifty more years, for they were for the most part fairly young, I have at least nine hundred thousand more years, probably more, especially since I also killed off every living thing in a twelve mile radius."

"And after I saw each of the people with more clarity than I currently see you, I saw three paths covering the next three hundred years. I chose what I thought was the least worst path. I may have been wrong, but there is no way to know." He shrugged.

"I escaped to Rome. I watched the Celtic world fall, and Rome rise. I lived in and near Rome until the Two hundreds. At that point, I finished building this place, where I stayed most of the time for almost two hundred years, and where I have spent a fair amount of time since."

"As the Western Empire started to fall, I decided to try and save at least part of it: Britain. I called out to a very skilled young wizard, and he came here. I trained him even more, and gave him some extra power."

"Merlin," Susan said, although no one was certain if that was a statement or an exclamation.

"Others came, looking for power. I added the six voluntary magical virgins between the ages of thirteen and eighteen who were willing to sacrifice themselves, hoping to discourage the wizards from coming, but it didn't stop as many as I'd hoped. Still, I managed to shoo most away without having to harm them, although some were so evil I hurt or even killed them. Some of the women stayed, which has been pleasant. When I haven't been here, I've been living around the world. I've spent Muggle lifetimes in Greece and the Middle East, several parts of India, Tibet, southeastern Asia, several parts of China, Japan, and the Americas, not to mention Europe of course. Actually, I am currently a young Muggle college professor, teaching art history in California at the moment."

"And now you've called Harry," Hermione stated.

"I do not like to get overly involved in the world," Casey said. "I would either end up as a slave or a dictator, and I have no desire to be either. However, this Riddle is a very nasty individual."

"Couldn't you just kill him?" Ginny demanded.

"Probably, but there had to be some reason for the prophecy. . . ."

"You know the prophecy?" Hermione and Ginny both demanded. They and Luna still thought it lost. Luna leaned in closer to hear the answer.

"Of course," Casey said. "Mister Potter here either has to kill Voldemort, or Voldemort will kill him. Neither can survive while the other lives."

"That's awful, I mean, for you," Susan said to Harry.

"And you knew! Why didn't you tell us?" Hermione demanded of Harry.

"Because I don't like thinking of my self as a murderer," Harry snapped. "It's bad enough I led Sirius to his death. . . ."

"You do share some of the blame," Casey told him, "however, yours is not even half that blame. Roughly in order, I would say Bellatrix Lestrange, Voldemort, all the other Death Eaters, Sirius Black himself, you, Dumbledore, the other members of the Order of the Phoenix, your companions, and so on." Harry's wand appeared back in his hand. Harry lifted it, and stared at it. "Go head, boy! Kill yourself or stop wallowing so deeply in self-pity."

Harry flushed and put his wand back away.

"Good. You passed your first test."

"How many are there?" Luna asked.

"I'm not going to reveal everything, that takes all the fun out of the process," Casey said with a smile. "I must say I've been taken by surprise by how little time it took Harry here to tell Lupin. I didn't expect him until early August, and I certainly didn't expect you six until this morning, so I've decided to change the tests."

"How powerful are you, anyway?" Harry asked as Casey paused.

"I am as far past Dumbledore as Dumbledore is past a squib. Why?"

"Could you . . . could you. . . ."

"Bring Sirius Black back? Alas, no."

"I didn't think so, so I was going to ask if you could cure Remus."

"H'mmm," Casey said, thinking. After some three minutes, Casey stood. "I'll be right back." He disappeared.

"This is SO weird," Susan said.

"I don't think Daddy would believe it," Luna agreed.

Remus Lupin was sitting in an old Victorian captain's chair, his head in his hands. They had lost Harry. He could be anywhere, and anything could be happening to him, not to mention the six girls who were with him. After all, there was no way to tell if the note was genuine or not.

Tonks was trying to comfort him, but she was not being very successful. Dumbledore had left to put various attempts at tracing Harry and the others, leaving Lupin to his worries.

"Excuse me?"

The pair looked up, and saw a broad wizard in his mid-twenties. "Are you from Dumbledore? Has he found them?" Remus demanded.

"Ah, well, allow me to introduce my self. I am best known to you as Cassiwallan," the wizard said simply. "As I said in my note, I decided to bring the youngsters to me this afternoon, instead of waiting until the morning. They are all quite safe, and I'll return most of them in a day or two, or a week at the most. Uh uh uh!" Casey froze the duo. "No violence allowed."

He approached the pair, moving Tonks a few feet out of the way. "Young Potter asked me if I could possibly cure your of your condition. For this, even I need a wand." He pulled one out of his left sleeve. A series of complex wand motions later, and Remus was bathed in a silvery light. "There. If you stay under that light as you are for three hours, you will not have to turn into a wolf under the light of the full moon. If you choose to do so, you will keep your mind. Your bite, however, is still fully infectious at that time, even if you stay human."

A quick wave placed an hour glass in the air, and Cassiwallan spoke to Tonks. "When it runs out, you have five minutes to break the spell. Do so with the simple canceling incantation. Goodbye!" The wizard disappeared.

Tonks unfroze, and stared at Remus. "Oh, Merlin! What do I do!"

Casey reappeared in his cavern. "If Ms Tonks trusts the spell I have put Lupin under for the full three hours, he will not turn into a mindless werewolf again. He is not completely cured, but it will be under his control." He sat down heavily. "That literally took about twelve years out of my life. I hope I never have to do THAT again!"

"Thank you," Harry said, shocked.

After a few moments of silence, Casey gave a big sigh and stood back up. "Oh, well, back to work. Stand up, Harry -- may I call you Harry? -- and take off your glasses."

"Uh, sure," Harry said, standing up and taking his glasses off. Casey pointed his wand at Harry's face, and Harry's head felt like straps were tightening all around it. "Oi!"

"Look around, Harry," Casey said kindly.

Harry stopped rubbing his temples, and looked. His jaw dropped.

"You fixed Harry's eyes?" Hermione asked. "I mean, I know it can be done, but. . . ."

"But it's supposed to wear off in a few weeks, and leave his eyes worse off? Yes, that's what usually happens when one of you does it. Harry's eyes should be good for eighty or ninety years and then weaken normally. Sorry, not much I can do about the scar. Other than that, you seem fairly healthy, if underfed."

"Wow, I mean thanks."

Casey stepped next to Luna, who stood and looked back at him. "Except for those dry eyes, you are also very healthy. Try blinking a bit more often."

"I forget," Luna said with a shrug.



Casey fixed three of the bones in Hermione's left hand, which had not mended quite correctly after being broken when she was nine, fixed a number of minor scars she had picked up over the years (which made Hermione blush), and finished healing her internal injuries from the battle at the Ministry. He proclaimed Ginny and Susan healthy. He warned Daphne that others in her family might develop diabetes while he fixed the tendency in her. For Eloise, he removed the severe acne scarring, especially on one cheek and across her chest and back.

"Now, I'm sure you are all wondering what's going to happen. Well, I am going to test Harry's character to see if he can be trusted with the amount of power he will need to guarantee victory over Voldemort." He smiled. "I need to study Harry for some amount of time. To do so, I will need some help."

His grin grew into a leer. A form materialized beside Harry. It took a few seconds for all to realize that it was a nude, older version of Harry.

"Merlin!" Daphne, Ginny, and Susan exclaimed. Eloise looked likely to faint, while Luna and Hermione studied the nude future-Harry with detached interest. Ginny added, "Do we have to speak Parseltongue to it?"

"I don't think it cares what kind of tongue. . . ." Daphne started, before blushing from embarrassment.

"In real time, only a few hours will pass. In subjective time, each woman will spend two months with Harry. . . ."

"Doing what?" Ginny demanded.

"You will spend time in the past. Provided you don't do anything stupid, it should last about two months."

"Why are you looking at me?" Hermione demanded. "Why think I would do anything . . . stupid?"

Casey smiled. "If I were to drop you in the American South before 1860, could you manage NOT to get yourself burnt out of house and home or run out of town for criticizing slavery? Or for condemning racism in the American South before 1965 or South Africa during Apartheid? How would you feel about living as a Muggle under Stalin or under Hitler?"

Hermione looked abashed.

"You will not have to work, just live. The excuse will be that you are all young couples on your honeymoon." The silence now came from shock.

"You ladies may say no. You may both decide to live as husband and wife, or to just pretend to have a physical relationship. You will not know if you are asked first or last. I suggest you refrain from asking Harry; it may only spoil your relationships." A wave of his hand, and the six young women disappeared.

Harry was still looking stunned.

"Problem, Harry?"

"You mean, I'm supposed to . . . there's no way they'll go along with it!" Harry blushed. "I mean. . . ."

"I know what you mean," Casey said slyly, noting the conflicts in Harry between desire and bashfulness. "However, you need some love to counter all that death in your life in general, and the poverty of the spirit of your childhood. Now, if this were totally real, probably only Ginny Weasley and Luna Lovegood would even consider going through with this. And, in case your ego needs stroking, they would only consider it because it's you."

"But this is not totally real. The bodies you will be in will feel totally real, the situations will feel totally real. But these won't be your actual bodies. You're risking emotional stress and pain, but no

physical harm can come to the actual you."

"Each of those girls has feelings for you, some stronger and/or deeper than the others. You need love and affection, and all six ache to give you both. Daphne, for example, finds you attractive and interesting. She has ambitions, and should you wish a career in politics, she would be the perfect helpmate and lover for you. While all six are passionate in their own way, she would probably work hardest to keep you pleased, as long as you had no double standards."

"Meaning what?"

"She wouldn't sleep around unless you do. If you did, she would probably help you with your affairs, and then use most of her own to further both your interests." Casey smiled. "Don't frown, boy. That kind of mentality is a bit out of favor now, but it has won careers and even a few empires throughout history."

Casey went on, "Susan is a type more familiar to you; she would be Molly Weasley without the temper. If you wish to be mothered for the rest of your life, she's the girl for you. Right now, she has a bit of a problem, in that she feels people use her and never return the favor. Treat her with affection, and she will adore you."

"Eloise and Luna are both very lonely. Eloise is almost as lonely as you. She's the youngest of four daughters, and the only one not a stunning beauty. Her mother died soon after she was born, and she has been mostly ignored by her family. She has a number of acquaintances but no friends, and a heart that yearns to share love and passion, even if she's not certain how. She may tend to be a bit clinging, however."

"You know about Luna's mother?" Harry nodded. "Her father loves her, but pays her little attention. When his wife died, he threw himself into his work. He hardly noticed when Luna went off to Hogwarts. She hides behind her eccentricities, which are so extreme that even Ravenclaw, noted House of eccentrics, dislike her and tease her. Whomever taps into the love she is capable of had best wish for a soul mate who will latch on to him, or her, and at times be a conjoined twin."

"Ginny has her mother's temper without the deep mothering instinct. She is the one most likely to be jealous of the others, even if you choose her. In some ways, she loves you the most; in others, her affection for you is the most childish and superficial. Try and be her friend, and even if you don't stay lovers you may stay close friends. DON'T, repeat, DO NOT! treat her like a sister. That will ruin any relationship, and any friendship."

Harry nodded.

"I believe Hermione loves both you and someone called Ron, and is in love with you both but slightly more in lust with him, all of which she covers up very well. She cares about you more than all the others combined, but that may not turn into romance. She is probably the least likely to form a physical relationship with you, although she desires it almost as much as the Weasley girl, which is saying quite a bit." He paused, puzzled. "She has some very strong defenses in that area, but I'm sure we shall break through them."

Harry decided not to think about any of that yet. "Who will I be fighting?"

Casey smiled. "No one, I hope! You will be living a nice, boring life, outside of your relationships. In some you will be living more as a Muggle, in others a nice mixed existence. You will not have to work, as long as you are not too extravagant, and I may be with you for most of these months. It is better to see how people react to the stresses of everyday life over time to under learn their character."

Casey stopped and stared at Harry. "What?" Harry demanded.

"You only know English and some Latin, correct?"

"And a touch of French, but not much," Harry admitted.

"You can easily handle six languages, probably twelve. But let's start you out with fluency in four besides English: Latin, French, Italian, and German."

"How?"

"You'll see."

Harry was suddenly in the more adult version of himself.

"I'll give you a subjective day or so in limbo to adjust. Take a look at the books, and pick some out to practice your new languages."

Harry found himself in a small study lined with books, wearing a work robe, alone. When he tried to think, he was thinking in five languages, which hurt his brain.

## **Chapter IV**

Ginny sat in a soft chair, staring at a blank rock wall. There seemed to be no way in or out of the small cavern she was in.

"Good afternoon, Virginia."

Ginny leapt to her feet and spun around. "Why are you doing this to us?"

Casey smiled slightly. "To test Harry with everyday life; to give Harry a chance at affection. I'll have fun doing it and if you're honest, it allows you to fulfill a fantasy. You'll treasure this always, even if this is your only physical relationship with him. Is that worth the risk that you fall in love with him, while he might fall more deeply in love with another? Or, almost as bad, that you will discover as much as you like Harry, you don't love him?"

Ginny sat back down, and pouted. "I don't think I like you."

"Well then, if you don't end up with Harry, I won't plan on your staying with me," Casey teased.

"Now, this is you at twenty-three."

Ginny's eyes flew open, staring at a slim nude beauty from the back, three inches taller than herself at not-quite fifteen. Apparently most of her future growth would be in her legs. Her hair was thick, hanging to brush her shoulders. "Wow, I'll develop a really nice arse and legs," Ginny said softly to herself. Moving around to the front, however, she said, "What! I never get more than the little I have?"

"It's a pretty balance," Casey commented with the air of a connoisseur. "It's a magnificent body, and a lovely face. Now I said you wouldn't know the order, but you are the first. I thought you deserved the chance to take Harry's virginity in everything."

"Not everything," Ginny said, disbelieving.

"Well, I understand he was badly kissed by some Chinese girl last year. Other than that, he has never experienced physical affection. He has had no chance at privacy, either."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning he has never even touched himself. While you are technically a virgin, I sense you have both enjoyed and given pleasure." Ginny blushed a very bright red.

"You seem to have me all figured out. So, I guess I have to do this."

"You don't have to. I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

"Yes," Ginny said. "I've dreamed about it for almost five years. I'd be stupid not to take the risk."

"Now, you need to practice something. Come along."

Ginny found herself in her new body.

Harry, Ginny, and Casey appeared in a small Muggle motel room. "It is the afternoon of Sunday, June Twenty-second, 1969. You are in a motel in the American town of Seaside, Oregon -- that's on the Pacific Ocean, if your geography is weak. You have each had three subjective days to get used to your new bodies, and for you two to practice on the Harley motorcycle. You both handled it very well in practice. While it is the custom here for the man to do the driving, I am certain Ginny will wish to be the main rider at times."

"Remember, you are Henry and Virginia Porter. Your licenses and passports are made out to those names. Use your magic to shrink your possessions for the small storage compartments and the

knapsack. Whomever is riding pillion takes the knapsack. Remember to wear those charmed jackets whenever you ride!" The two, who had fallen and wrecked fairly often at first, knew they needed the protection of the jackets.

"Do either of you know what happened in mid-August, in up-State New York?" Both looked blank and shook their heads. "Woodstock?" he tried. The two still looked blank.

Casey sighed. "It's one of the biggest rock music festivals of all time -- that's Muggle popular music over the last forty years or so by your time," he added when Ginny still looked blank. "Your goal is to get there from here, but you can easily make it in a week so there is no rush. The rest of the time is yours. Where you go for a few days afterwards is also up to you. Look over the background material some more, as well as the maps. I added info on the concert, most of which will fade in a few days. You have the money, travelers' cheques, and credit cards I gave you. Have fun! Check out is tomorrow morning at Eleven." Casey disappeared.

"Check out?" Ginny asked.

"I think that means if we're still here, we get charged for another day even if we leave."

"Oh." Ginny looked at Harry, then herself. They were dressed in jeans, plain blue undervests, and old-style high-top trainers. 'T-shirts and sneakers', Ginny reminded herself. Their jackets were laid over a chair, and combat boots for riding stood near the door. Their wands were visible in the inside sheath of the jackets. Ginny picked up a door key from the bed. Her left hand froze -- she was wearing a wedding ring.

She was mesmerized for a moment by the ring and by the single large bed in the room, then mentally gave herself a shake. A glance around the room showed there was a small kitchenette and a bathroom, along with the bedroom. "He said this was Seaside. Shall we see the sea?"

Harry smiled and opened the door, gesturing Ginny through it. Ginny smiled nervously, then noted his ring as well.

The huge motorcycle was parked outside, and they both stopped a second to admire it. There was a sea breeze; the day was a bit overcast and it was 21 Celcius at best. Ginny did the mental arithmetic, and converted that to about 67 Fahrenheit.

The start of the beach was only two blocks away. They stopped and took off their sneakers and socks, and walked onto the slightly chilly sand. Harry smiled and held his hand out, which Ginny took.

'I'm actually doing it! I'm walking hand-in-hand with Harry on our honeymoon! It might be temporary; in some ways it might not be real; but his hand **feels** real.'

After a few more minutes of walking, Harry spoke for the first time since they had found the beach. "You look happy."

"I am." Ginny smiled. "Harry, this fulfills just about every fantasy I've had for almost five years. Just think of it! I have you to myself for two months. Two months where I know you're totally safe. . . ."

"What?"

Ginny stopped and made certain no one was near them. She held both Harry's hands. "It just occurred to me. You have a year of being totally safe from . . . Riddle. A year where you can just live, and be loved. I'm glad you have that, Harry. You deserve it, and I get to be part of it." Ginny dropped Harry's left hand, hesitated, and stroked his cheek. "I'm very glad you're part of my life, Harry. I don't know what will happen when we get back, but whatever happens, know that I care about you very much. Know that I want you in my life, even if it's just as a very intimate friend."

"I want you in my life, too," Harry said. His hand closed over Ginny's, and he kissed the palm. Ginny moved them into a hug, and they kissed lightly on the lips. It was too public for more than

that.

They returned to the motel nearly an hour later. As they passed by the office, a middle-aged man poked his head out the door. "Have you decided about staying the week? I can still book you through Friday morning. I know it's kind of gloomy today, but it's supposed to be nice by Tuesday morning."

Harry and Ginny looked at each other, and Harry said, "Sure. It sounds like a great idea."

They walked into the hotel room, and Harry asked, "Are you hungry?"

"Actually, I am. I wonder if there's any food in this little kitchen."

"Is there?" Harry asked from the bathroom, where he was washing his hands.

Ginny giggled. "I think so, but I certainly don't know how to access it!"

Harry looked in and saw a bag of groceries on the small table -- all tinned items, plus a can opener and some paper plates and plastic cups and cutlery. Under the table was another sack, with three small pans and a note. "If you are staying, breakfast is on your own. There is one good place to eat lunch and dinner," Ginny read. "And there are directions; oh, and it says 'read all directions; things are different in America'." She paused. "Would the restaurant be open Sunday nights?"

Harry pondered. "I don't know. Let's see what we have here. Look in that ice box."

"Eggs, butter, milk," Ginny said.

"Do you want to try the restaurant, or shall I do a quick supper?" Harry asked.

"I'll unpack some of our clothes; you cook." She looked at Harry. "You can cook, right? If not, I can try."

"Yes, I can cook this at least. Twenty minutes?"

"Sounds good."

Ginny poked her head into the little kitchen and asked, "Which table shall we sit at?"

"The one in the . . . other room is larger," Harry said, unwilling to say 'bedroom.' "Do you want some milk, or a cola or some other soda? I saw a machine."

"What are cola and soda?" Ginny asked.

"Very fizzy, very sweet," Harry answered.

"How long will the milk last in the Muggle thing?"

"It's not dated, but probably at least three days."

"Milk," Ginny said, "since it's cold. I hate warm milk." She sat down at the table. Harry carefully set the table, brought in the milk, then a new bottle of ketchup, and finally dinner: a cheese omelet, beef hash, toast, and green beans.

"What's this?" Ginny asked.

"The tin said corn beef hash; if we have it back home, the Dursleys never have it."

Ginny shrugged and ate; she was far from a fussy eater.

When they were finished, they cleaned up together. This of course just consisted of throwing the plates and such away and washing the two small pots and the small frying pan. As Ginny was wiping the frying pan, she said, "Harry, we can't dance around this any more."

"What do you mean?" Harry asked. He turned to leave. "Have you ever watched the telly before?"

"Yes, I have once, and I'm not that easily distracted. Harry, I was told I'm the first."

". . . well, yes . . . I mean, I haven't . . . well, you know. . . ."

Ginny smiled. "Harry, you're turning as red as any of my brothers." She turned serious. "Casey claims you're, well, to be blunt, a total virgin. While I've never . . . gone all the way, Michael did talk me into doing a lot more than I ever admitted to. Please, Harry, let me love you."

"What do you suggest?"

Ginny stood and pulled off her t-shirt and undid her jeans. In less than a half a minute, she was nude. "Wow," Harry said.

"Let me see you, Harry."

Harry stood and stripped, turning away while removing his boxers. When he turned back to face her, Ginny giggled nervously. "My, from snake to barge pole!"

"Ginny!"

"Honestly, Harry, don't be embarrassed. Michael wasn't much more than half the length of you. Just about the same girth, though, and if I could swallow him I can at least handle you."

"Swa. . . !"

Ginny smiled and took Harry's hand. "Let's see how long it takes for the hot water to run out." Hermione and some other Muggle-raised girls had several times remarked on how nice it was to have magical showers with never-ending supplies of hot water.

By 9:15, Ginny and Harry were exhausted. They collapsed nude on the bed, and fell into deep sleep, relaxing from their lovemaking, even if Ginny was still technically a virgin.

Harry woke up in the gray light of dawn, looking at a pair of green-varnished toe nails.

Harry blinked, in part because of what he saw, and in part because of the clarity with which he saw them.

Then he remembered the very strange events of the previous days. Then he remembered the very erotic events of the previous evening, which explained his sore jaw and flaccid state -- unusual for Harry in the mornings. Harry managed to move off the bed and into the bathroom.

When Harry came out, he saw Ginny looking at him. She stretched her long-legged nude body and smiled at him. "Good morning, Harry," Ginny said softly and seductively. "I hope you slept as well as I did."

Harry blushed. He wanted to reach for a towel, or find his pants, or something. Ginny's laying there, content to be nude and to look at him nude, seemed to imply to Harry that he shouldn't try to cover up.

"Good morning," Harry managed to answer. "Care for a spot of breakfast?"

"Sure. If you prefer food. . . ."

Harry sighed. "Ginny, after last night, it will take a while to recover, I'm sure."

"It?" Ginny teased. "No clever nickname? Wonder Wand? Firebolt? The Pride of Gryffindor? The Envy of Slytherin? Colin's Dream? How about Harry's Heavenly Hose?"

"No, no clever nicknames," Harry huffed, and went into the kitchenette, taking a pair of boxers and cut-offs with him.

Ginny was in the kitchen and hugging him in within seconds. "I'm sorry, Harry. I was just being

playful."

"This is weird," Harry stated. "It just doesn't seem right, somehow."

"Because you aren't in love with me? Can't you look at this as a two month fantasy?"

"I don't want to hurt you, or see you hurt."

"Damn it, Harry, I've wanted you for five years! We both know this is likely my only chance to have you! Please, don't take this away from me."

"Is this what you really want?"

"Yes, Harry. Let's have fun. When else can we do this without serious consequences? We're not even losing time."

Ginny pulled the clothes from Harry's hand and tossed them on the floor. She grasped Harry gently with the other. "Lose yourself in the fantasy, Harry. I swear, I won't hold you to anything in the real world." Ginny moved closer, and Harry wrapped her into a hug, her fingers crossed.

Although far too spent to make love in any form, they forgot all about breakfast while they explored each other.



## **Chapter V**

As far as Ginny was concerned, the weekdays passed by too quickly. She wasn't certain if Harry was falling in love with her, or if he had just accepted the situation as a dream which was filled with more reality than usual. For her, it was both and more.

They walked on the beach. Since it was warm enough on the Wednesday and Thursday, they swam in the ocean. They made love every morning. Harry would snuggle with her and bring her to orgasm every afternoon. They would snuggle, or even make love, in the evenings.

Growing up as they had, poor near a Muggle village, and with Arthur Weasley as a father, Ginny had learned more about Muggles than many witches as pure-born as she. She had gone with it, and was taking Muggle Studies as well as Care of Magical Creatures as her extra courses.

And yet in many ways, she had learned more about actually living as a Muggle in those few days as she had known previously.

Ginny didn't wish that these conditions would last forever, since forever is just that.

She wouldn't have minded a few more decades of it, however.

However, Friday morning arrived. After they had made love and had breakfast, they scurried around the motel suite, securing food with preservation charms, cleaning their clothes, and packing and shrinking everything that needed to be packed away.

At a little past 10:00, Harry turned in the key, thanked the owners, and checked his petrol. 'Gas,' Harry reminded himself. He climbed on the motorcycle, buttoned his enchanted denim jacket, and put on his sunglasses. Ginny was dressed the same way: t-shirt, jeans, leather boots, the enchanted jacket, and sunglasses. She braided her hair into two side braids and climbed on behind Harry.

They were off to see the United States.

Friday June 27

Ginny, when asked on the previous Tuesday, had said she was happy to go wherever Harry wanted to. He had glanced through some guidebooks, and made a rough outline of where they might go.

Their destination on the Friday was Mount St. Helens in Washington State, a little over 200 miles or so by the Muggle roads. Even stopping for lunch (Ginny's first McDonald's), they were looking at the volcano by 2:00.

"It's very pretty," Ginny said, "But why are we here?"

Harry made certain no one was close enough to overhear. "It's not as dormant as many people think. It will actually erupt a few months before I'm born. Sirius teased me about it a few times last summer."

"Difficult to believe, since it looks to peaceful," Ginny acknowledged. "It helps makes you realize how . . . impermanent everything really is."

"Makes you wonder how Casey stays sane," Harry agreed.

"Maybe he's not, not totally anyway. I mean, I like being with you, but you have to admit, this is a very weird set-up."

"True," Harry had to admit, then he smiled. "I thought you were enjoying yourself, Mrs. Porter." Harry knew this was even more her fantasy than it was his, and had worked very hard to please her.

Ginny blushed. "I am."

Harry put his arm around her shoulders. "Come on, I'll ride post for a while."

They rode back to the coast and up towards Olympic National Park. They took their time, making love every morning and Harry bringing Ginny off every evening after they showered. Over the next 10 days, they slowly wound their way through Washington, Idaho, and western Montana, seeing scenery such as Harry had never seen even on television, and which Ginny had never even dreamed of. They gazed at National Parks, National Forests, and lava fields and mountains that took their breath away. On Monday the 7th, they went through Yellowstone National Park, and were even more impressed. By then, they had purchased a pair of cheap Muggle cameras and were snapping away like Colin Creevy.

On the Tuesday, they were halted by three days of rain in Jackson. There was no way they were going to try and cross the mountains in bad weather.

Ginny didn't mind. As much as she was enjoying the scenery, she was enjoying Harry more. Shortly before noon, just after they had finally gotten dressed after a prolonged session, they were surprised to hear a knock on their motel room door.

"Yes?" Harry asked, wand at the ready.

"It's me," came a familiar voice.

Harry opened the door, and Casey walked in.

"Are we behind schedule or something?" Harry asked.

"No, no," Casey assured them both. "Just time for a progress report." He smiled at them. "If one of you could go into the bathroom for a few minutes? Doesn't matter who's first."

Harry shrugged and went into the bathroom.

"He won't be able to hear us," Casey assured Ginny. "How is your fantasy going?"

Ginny sat heavily on the bed. "Harry is everything I dream of, and more," Ginny admitted.

"So far, so good. Go on."

"Well, even if Harry and I ever became , err, ever get together, it wouldn't be like this, would it?"

"My dear girl, so far as I know, marriages are never as happy as honeymoons, although some are as bad."

"And you did say that, in many ways, this isn't real. It isn't real to Harry. This is an escape, a vacation, for his horrible life."

"Exactly. I thought he deserved some happiness and joy in his life. I am certain you're bringing him both."

"By being a scarlet woman?"

"Are you really? Aren't you at least allowed to fantasize? This is, after all, much like the ultimate fantasy."

"I guess I am, it just feels so exactly right and yet wrong." Ginny sat on the bed and pouted. "Maybe I'm just being greedy, but I do wish this could last."

"Don't let that thought intrude. Enjoy. I hope you'll get two months of happy memories from this. How many people manage to have two months of consecutive happy memories? I've lived so long, and I have many happy memories, but I've never had two months of unalloyed joy with a lover. Life itself prevents such joy to be unsullied. Here you are, knowing you will have no bad news from the outside world, no bad health, no financial problems."

"True," Ginny admitted. "Oh, we've been taking snaps. May we bring them back with us?"

"Give me the film, and I'll see they're developed, preserved, and kept safe for you. And I'll make certain you each get a set, even if they're Muggle photos." He grinned. "If you take any . . . candid and personal shots, warn me, so I can have them discretely done."

Ginny blushed.

Harry exchanged places with Ginny. "Any problems, Harry?"

Harry grinned. "Except for the fact some Americans seem to think we're criminal bikers, no, no problems or complaints." His grin grew wider. "In fact, it's bloody wonderful!"

"Well, I'm glad you're having a good time."

"Any chance I can keep the cycle?" Harry asked eagerly. "I'd be glad to pay for it!"

Casey smiled in return. "Don't worry about it. You'll find I'm one of the wealthiest beings around. I'm glad the two of you are having fun."

Harry's grin faded. "I hope none of them will be hurt," Harry said.

"Don't tell any one of them that you love them, unless it's the very last one, until you come back," Casey warned.

"Good point," Harry admitted.

"I hope you're studying your French. You will need it in the next adventure," Casey reminded Harry.

"I'm reading, but Ginny isn't very interested in speaking it with me." Harry shrugged. "Not surprising, really. And I should be practicing, taking advantage of being able to do magic in the summer, shouldn't I?"

"Well, keep going as you are. You'll get plenty of time to practice in your other incarnations." Casey stood. "Here," he added, handing Harry a thick envelope, "Some more cash. Have fun!"  
Casey

Harry went to the bathroom. Opening the door broke the silencing spell. Harry was a bit surprised to see Ginny in a foaming bubble bath.

"Care to join me?" Ginny asked.

The rain ended that evening. Harry and Ginny, both loving the scenery, took the next ten days to explore the high mountains in Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and winding up finally at the other end of Wyoming (Cheyenne). Consulting the maps, they then went north after spending an extra day in Cheyenne. Three fairly easy days riding took them to Banff in Alberta. Over the next week, they rode up the Rockies to explore the Canadian parks, and then rode on to Edmonton. The next three days were rather more boring, riding across the plains and towards the Great Lakes, ending up just past Thunder Bay in time to stay Saturday night and Sunday on the shore of Lake Superior.

"What's wrong, Ginny?" Harry asked they stood on the deck and watched the sun set behind the motel.

"Just wishing this wasn't going to end so soon," she answered. "I mean, compared to real life, this is wonderful. But we'll have to go back to real life in maybe three weeks -- well, ten months and three weeks for you." She suddenly looked very sad.

"What thought just popped up?"

"Just wondering about . . . after."

"After?"

"After we're . . . gone. Beyond the veil. What ever you want to call it. Forever is a long time, Harry. I could spend a thousand years like this with you. I hope I can spend a thousand like this . . . after. But that's nothing compared to eternity. And if Casey doesn't help, some of us might be facing . . . whatever there is fairly soon."

"I think he'll help," Harry said. "And no one seems to have any answers. We either have faith or we don't. Not much we can do about it, except make this life as good as we can, and hope there's some explanation afterwards that makes sense." He shrugged. "In the end, we all have to go, even Casey. If there's something after, we just have to hope we did enough good, and learned enough in this life, to keep going." Ginny was silent.

"Don't cry," Harry pleaded, as he saw Ginny was crying.

"Sorry; I just realized, if Casey does help, then . . . we . . . we'll all survive. We'll have a chance to have peace; to have real lives and find real love."

"At least until the next Dark Wizard."

"Well, I must say THAT'S positive thinking!"

"There seems to be one in Europe every thirty to fifty years, Gin. If I live to be Dumbledore's age, there will at least three more. Not to mention all the little creeps, like the Malfoys and such."

Ginny sighed. "Will you please hold me tonight, Harry?"

Harry held Ginny close and kissed her temple. "Of course I will."

"Shall we just stay in tomorrow and make love?"

"Any way you'd like to. We can move on Monday."

"Where to?"

"We should be in central New York State a week from Thursday. I thought we could go through Ontario into Quebec, find a nice French-speaking town with good food, and stay there for a while."

Ginny pouted, knowing Harry had to prepare for whatever girl was next, but made certain Harry didn't see it.

They followed Harry's plan. The only pall over their happiness, especially Ginny's, was the knowledge that it would soon be over. They stayed in Quebec until Wednesday, August 13. Both, having read some future accounts of the festival, were interested in going, and a bit anxious about the experience. They also knew they had to arrive early. One reason Harry had directed them to Quebec, other than practicing his French, was so they could approach Woodstock from the north west, which would be about the least crowded direction.

They left Wednesday morning, and easily made it to Binghamton, New York. They woke up very early the next morning, and made it through the thickening traffic to the camp sites by the late morning. They managed to snag one of the last sites under one of the trees on a slight hill.

They quickly secured the cycle and had the tent up in a few minutes. This was a larger, and more sophisticated, tent than the ones they had stayed in for the Quidditch Cup finals. Anyone other than them looking or even coming into the tent would find an empty tent (although Muggle repelling spells should prevent most snoops). They had plenty of food and gear, and they changed out of their cycle clothes to sort through their period costumes.

This took some time, as Ginny decided that would be a good time to encourage Harry to make love with her.

Harry and Ginny came out of the tent to mix with the crowd. Ginny had grown her hair even longer, down to her waist, and put it into a long braid. She wore just a granny dress in a light cotton print,

sandals, rose-colored granny glasses, and nothing else. She transfigured her wand into a walking staff and took her camera. Harry had lengthened his hair a bit as well. He wore a tie-dyed short-sleeved shirt, cut-off jeans, and sandals. He also transfigured his wand, and carried a knapsack with an ever-fill water canteen and rolls of film in one compartment. Another compartment had two bottles of cheap wine, and was charmed to keep popping one bottle in as one was removed, up to 12 cases (144 bottles), which they had stored in the tent.

They saw that the large crowd had grown by at least three-fold. They knew it more than quadruple again by the time the music started in a little more than 24 hours.

In some ways, it reminded the pair of the Quidditch Cup, although the crowd was younger and even more good-natured. Radios blared rock from tents. After about half an hour, they came across an area where all the radios were set to the same station, and a large crowd was dancing. Harry and Ginny twirled around, hiding the transformation of their wands back to normal. Ginny put them away in Harry's knapsack, and they joined in the dancing.

They danced for three hours, and then made their way back to their tent. Ginny collapsed in an easy-chair, while Harry threw a pasta and chicken salad together for them.

"Are Muggles always like this in large groups?" Ginny asked.

"I wish they were," Harry answered.

"I know, I know . . . it's just so . . . amazing! The synergy!"

"And this isn't supposed to be much, compared to the next few days," Harry pointed out.

"I read it; I just didn't believe it!"

They rested another hour, and then went back out to dance the night away.

"Merlin! my legs ache!"

"Well, you were a lot more energetic than I was last night, and you danced with all those other boys," Harry teased.

"Jealous?"

"No. Now roll over, and I'll massage your legs."

Ginny shivered as Harry drizzled a little cold rose oil over her calves and the bottom of her feet.

"Oh, Harry! You've gotten REALLY good at this!"

"Thank you, Gin." After a few more minutes where the only sound were Ginny's moans of pleasure from the thorough massaging of her legs and feet, Harry asked, "Anything else you'd liked oiled, or shall we go out and see what's going on?"

Ginny got on her hands and knees. "Go ahead; just be gentle. I know you've been thinking about it."

Harry and Ginny ate either a late breakfast or early lunch, and then went out to see what the crowd was up to. After an afternoon of dancing, and refusing many offers of pot, hash, and acid, they stopped at their tent before heading off to the concert.

A little after 5:00, as soon as some announcements were made, the concert started. Harry and Ginny stayed until 10:00, and then made their way back to their tent early. They almost made it back before the rain came.

"Whew," Ginny said as she beat Harry to the WC.

"Hurry up!" Harry pleaded.

Ginny opened up the door and rushed to the bathroom. "I'll be in here, when you're ready!"

"I'll double-check the wards, then be in!" Harry called.

Late the next morning, the pair went off to the second day. The music lasted from just afternoon on Saturday until late Sunday morning. They took just two breaks before the early morning, preferring to fight their way back to the tent rather than standing in line for the port-o-lets. They had fun arguing about the acts. While they didn't directly partake in any of the drugs being passed around, they had enough exposure to the smoke to get slightly high. They were also more than slightly drunk.

As the darkness surrounded them, they were a bit shocked at the sex going on all around them. At some point during 'The Who,' around 3:15 am, they were sucked into an actual orgy.

When Harry was finally exhausted, he managed to retrieve their clothes, and after a break in the action, Ginny. By the time Harry got Ginny back to the tent, she was crying. She cried as Harry stripped the badly torn dress off her; showered with her, cleaning off all the dirt they had picked up; helped her douche, and settled into the large frothing bubble bath whirlpool, holding her gently.

"I'm so sorry, Harry," Ginny finally said.

"For what?"

"You didn't want to do that; we shouldn't have done that." Ginny knew she had pushed Harry into the action, and when he'd hesitated, she had practically leapt into it. What she couldn't explain was why she had done it. She twisted around and hugged Harry tightly. "I love you so much, Harry. And I just had sex with at least six boys and two girls."

"Actually, I saw at least nine men take you, plus three women, before I could pull you out," Harry said.

Ginny shuddered. "You must hate me!"

"Do you hate me for the three girls I had? Especially the one I did while she was licking you and the man inside you?"

Ginny retched slightly. "I'm not like that! How could I?"

"It was partly, perhaps mostly, the atmosphere, and I don't just mean the wine and drugs. There was sex, lust, and affection as well. Add in the drugs and the wine we drank and the late hour." Harry shrugged.

"I don't know if I'll ever feel clean again," Ginny said.

"We can leave once we wake up," Harry offered. "We can even do some sobering and stimulant spells and leave now, if you want."

"I think that might be for the best."

They showered, did the spells, and quickly packed the inside of the tent. It was still dark, although dawn was not far off. Seeing no one was nearby, and knowing if there was anyone watching they were likely drunk or stoned, Harry collapsed the tent with a wave of his wand, and shrank the cycle with another.

They had to walk over two hours before they could safely restore the chopper. Ginny had been unusually silent the whole time. Partly to keep her mind occupied, Harry rode behind her as they rode route 17B to 97 to 17, and then west. They had a late lunch at a Carrolls outside of Binghamton and finally stopped at a motel in a town called Horseheads, New York.

Their dress and hair earned them some disapproving looks, but their money was welcome.

Ginny practically ran into the shower, and used up all the hot water trying to scrub the memories off her body. When the water ran cold, Harry dragged Ginny out of the shower. She again broke down, crying from guilt.

Harry managed to calm her down. She was partially disgusted with herself, and partially terrified Harry would think badly of her, and would never be able to trust her. It took some hours, but finally, after Harry had confessed how bad he felt about being drawn into the orgy and not helping Ginny get out sooner, Ginny had realized that, while such behavior could have had some nasty consequences in the 'real' world, they in fact had to treat this as a learning experience.

Harry was directed to a local pizza and sub place called 'Pudgies', and by the time they came back, Ginny had started to accept what had happened to the pair of them.

Harry coaxed Ginny into his arms that night. They had no place they had to go, and they decided that night to stay there until Casey came for them.

Ginny woke up feeling a little better about herself. She, and Harry, had made a mistake. She should regret it and learn from it, but not torture herself about it. She reached over and slowly stimulated Harry until he woke up.

Casey came for them on Thursday, the 21st. Ginny was a bit sad her time with Harry was over, but not as much as she would have been the week before. As she settled herself into the room she had at Casey's cavern, Ginny smiled as she flipped through a stack of photos she and Harry had taken.

She didn't know if she had captured Harry heart, but she would always be Harry's first, and he would always be hers.

## **Chapter VI**

"Good afternoon, Daphne."

Daphne looked at the ex-druid. "Why are you playing games with us?"

Casey's mouth almost formed a smile. "Why not? Perhaps because I can and I enjoy it. That's supposed to be an answer a Slytherin would understand."

"Don't give me 'the Slytherin talk'. I've heard it for years, and I don't buy it. I understand the motivations of the other girls, more or less. Convince me I should go along with this game."

"No," he said simply. "You have the option of playing. No real penalty, except the absence of experience. No real reward, except the experience. Either you want the experience, or you don't. In reality, you would have to give up two months of your life, and have to face up to any physical changes. Here, you lose the same amount of real time, just a few hours, no matter what."

As Daphne considered that, Casey materialized her future form. It looked much as Daphne did at sixteen. Perhaps half an inch taller, perhaps a just a bit bustier. Tall, leggy, firm-busted, with light brown wavy hair and greenish-hazel eyes. "I see I've lost my tan-lines, or rather my tan."

"Where you're going, this is a more appropriate complexion. Assuming you wish to go?"

"I really have a choice?"

"I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

"Of course," Daphne said with a small smile. "Ambition means taking a chance."

"Where am I," Daphne asked. She looked down. "And why am I dressed like this?"

"It was a bit abrupt," Harry added, making Daphne look around. He was also dressed up.

"You are in Paris. It is Monday afternoon, the Seventh of April, 1913. Daphne here is an aficionado of classical music, especially the ballet . . . very un-Slytherin interests, I might add."

Daphne had been looking puzzled, and now smiled. "The premier of 'The Rite of Spring'!"

"Well done, Daphne," Casey replied, a bit impressed. "Harry is Henry Porter, although you may call him Harry. If he's been practicing, his French should be up to the mark, and I know your's is. You are newlyweds, your name was Daphne Green. You are privately-educated Canadians, from British Columbia. If you search your minds, you will find the necessary information."

"Now as you both should have noticed, your clothes here will need a great deal of work, especially Daphne's." Casey smiled. "Be glad it's 1913. Until the last few years, you'd be trapped in whale-bone and steel corsets, bustles, and at least one more layer of clothing."

"Thank Merlin for small favors," Daphne said drily.

"Now, I shall be with you parts of each day. The manners here are very formal, and very different than either of you are accustomed to. Harry and I will be going to get him some formal training in dueling, both wizard and various swords, every morning except Sundays. With me so far?"

They both nodded.

"Now, we are in a wizarding hotel in an old quarter of Paris." He picked up a small bell and rang it. Two house elves appeared. "These are Fifi and Moko," Casey told them in French, "hotel employees. Fifi will stay here and show Mistress Daphne the current fashions, for Muggles and witches, and how to dress properly in them. Her customs are different," he added to the elf.



"Yes, Master Causey," the elf intoned.

"It is currently a little after Four. Please have Mistress Daphne dressed for dinner in the dining hall by Six forty-five." He looked at Harry and Daphne. "We'll brave Muggle Paris tomorrow afternoon."

They nodded their agreement.

"Come along, Harry, Moko," Casey said. He led them through a connecting door into a smaller room. "You have a suite here. WC and bathroom, two dressing rooms, bedroom, and sitting room. I have a suite of rooms next door. Moko will shave you every morning. How is your French?"

"So far, I have understood everything you have said."

"Good! Your accent is a little off, but it is not too bad. There are a pair of guidebooks over there. Moko here will also show you the current Parisian Muggle and wizard fashions. You may be idiosyncratic if you wish and wear the Muggle drawers under your robes. I suggest you knock on Daphne's door at Six forty-five. I shall knock on the suite door at Six fifty." He bowed to Harry and left by one of the other doors.

"May Moko show Master. . . ?"

"Harry."

"Master Harry the wardrobe Master Causey had brought for you?"

"Of course, why not?" Harry said, again remembering that reading French fluently was one thing, speaking it another. At least the elf seemed to understand him.

Harry had been a bit worried his dress robes might look something (anything!) like Ron's dress robes for the Yule Ball. Instead, his looked a bit like Draco Malfoy's had. Much to the elf's dismay, Harry indeed insisted on wearing the short drawers he was already wearing. Over that, he put on a buttonless dark emerald silk shirt. The robe was fairly form-fitting black velvet on the top and open at the collar to show off the shirt. The bottom of the robe was more like satin, falling just past Harry's knees. Highly polished black dragonhide boots ended just below the knee, and felt amazingly good to Harry. He slipped his wand into his forearm holster.

He noted his wedding ring remained the same. "Master Causey told me to give Master Harry this." Moko handed Harry a box. Inside was a heavy red gold signet ring; the device was a stag. Harry slipped that on his right hand.

He rapped on Daphne's dressing room door. Harry had a rough idea of what the Muggle fashion of the period should be like (Aunt Petunia certainly watched enough costume drama on the telly), but his own dress was very different than the Muggle clothing of the period. He was curious to see what Daphne would be wearing.

Daphne was stunning. She was dressed in what looked like a cut-down version of a kimono. It was made from heavy silk, cream in color. Only magic made it decent, as it scooped into a deep neckline that then continued to plunge, the edges an inch apart, well past Daphne's naval. The back and sides were missing, but the edges clung to her skin. Her entire ensemble consisted of the robe (which like Harry's was tight on the top and flowing below, although going to just above Daphne's ankles), a silk belt that cinched below her naval and was tied in a bow on her left hip, and a pair of golden sandals. That was all she wore, except a string of black pearls with matching earrings and a gold tiara with black peals and diamonds that held her slightly auburn brown hair up.

"Wow!"

"I feel . . . naked and sexy," Daphne said in English. She switched to French. "I hope you are pleased with your wife, my handsome wizard."

"I am so pleased, if Casey, err Causey were not coming for us, I would see if they provided room service!"

Casey knocked on the door. He was dressed much the same as Harry, although his silk shirt was dark Prussian blue. "Who are you here?" Harry asked as they moved down the corridor.

"I am known here as Charles Causey," he answered.

"Will not your being someplace where you are known cause problems?" Daphne asked.

"No," he said simply. "And no, I shall not explain."

They came to a slowly moving stairway. Harry went first while Casey helped Daphne.

The stairs deposited them in a wide stone corridor. "We are three storeys under ground level," Casey told them quietly. "The Parisian version of New York's van Buren Close or London's Diagon Alley is the Rue des Gauls. Unlike those two, there are three entrances here. One is a public house, the other two are hotels, including this one. They are simply called the Hotels Left and Right. This one, on the right side, is the slightly more exclusive. Still, wizards from the magical area and visitors are likely to be here for dinner."

A turn brought them to the large dining room. A uniformed goblin stood guard. "Master," he said, bowing low.

"Grencoe," Casey replied. "You have our table?"

"Yes, Master." The goblin hesitated. "The Count was not pleased; he has a number of guests."

"Were you able to partially accommodate him?" Casey asked, unconcerned.

"Yes, Master."

"Very well."

The goblin led them into the room. Harry, looking back, saw another goblin take this one's place. They were led to a far corner. They passed a long table, and gathered several dirty looks.

"They did not look happy, did they, Harry?" Daphne said.

"No," Harry agreed, "but I also noticed one other thing."

"What's that?"

"Even though most of the younger witches are dressed like you, none comes close to how you look. That style was made for you."

Daphne blushed for the first time in her life. Casey smiled; Harry had managed to acquire a tinge of flirtatious talent. Looking around, however, Casey slightly changed his mind. There were perhaps a dozen attractive witches dressed in the same general style, and none were close to having Daphne's stunning good looks.

"Why was the goblin so respectful?" Harry asked in a low voice as they looked over the menus.

"I own Gringotts, and I own the land the Rue des Gauls, Diagon Alley, and many other similar areas, are situated on," Casey replied. "All the goblins know is that I am a major agent of Cassiwallan, but that is enough."

"Who is 'the Count'?" Daphne asked. "I take it he is part of that sullen group at the long table we passed."

"A very rich and Pure-Blooded wizard, with a title so old it appears in no Muggle reference book and who likes having his back to the wall where he can keep an eye on everyone."

Harry glanced over and scowled.

"What is wrong?" Daphne asked.

"Look five wizards down from the Count's left."

Daphne sniffed. "Looks like a Malfoy."

Casey shrugged, and asked them what they were going to order, so he could order the wine.

The trio enjoyed most of their dinner, but as they were having a cheese plate with the remains of their wine, the Count, backed by four others, came over to their table.

They stood, and simply looked at Casey.

Casey, wine glass in hand, leaned back in his chair. "Is there some problem that causes you to act so impolitely?"

"I am the Count of the Somme. I am curious as to whom displaced me and my table from its usual spot."

"I do not believe this restaurant sells tables," Casey replied in a nonchalant voice.

"I do not know you, or your guests, and I know every important wizard in western Europe!"

"Since you do not know me, you are not as well informed as you think," Casey said dismissively.

"You are . . . no, you can not be Henry Porter!" the oldest wizard suddenly stated.

"I am. How do you know me, sir?" Harry asked.

"But . . . but it is impossible!"

"Perhaps you knew Henry's father. He and his wife, Eloise, honeymooned in Vienna, much like Henry and Daphne are in Paris," Casey supplied.

"And you! You are. . . ."

"I am a black agent of the Cartel of Magic," Casey stated. "Perhaps you met one of my brethren. We all look similar." That seemed to sober the group.

"May I ask you to remember me to your parents," the older wizard said to Harry.

"I regret to say they were murdered shortly after I was born, Monsieur. . . ?" Harry answered.

"Noir; Theseus Noir," the man said with a bow.

"I am always pleased to meet those who knew my parents," Harry said.

"Are you as fine a dueler as your father?" Noir asked.

"With a wand? Nearly so," Harry answered.

"I thought I knew all the Pure-Blooded wizards and witches in Britain," the Malfoy look-alike said, "right down to the scum like the Weasleys, Shunpikes, Prangs, and such."

Harry glared, but refrained from standing up or hexing the arrogant young man. "Since I'm from an old community in western Canada, that might explain your ignorance, Mister. . . ?" Harry retorted in English.

"Gaius Malfoy. You've heard of us?"

"No, not really," Harry said with a straight face.

"Will you be staying in Paris long?" the Count asked, ignoring the conversation in English, although his question nearly came out as a demand.

"Some two months," Casey answered.

"I see. I bid you all good evening."

"That was fun," Daphne said brightly. She turned to Harry. "Henry, my dear, I find myself become chilled."

Harry caught himself from asking why Daphne didn't cast a warming charm. There was no place in her outfit for a wand. "Would you care for a warming charm, or shall we retire?"

"It has been a rather fatiguing day. Perhaps it would be best to retire early tonight."

Harry stood, as did Daphne. Casey smiled up at them, and then stood. "Do you know the way back to your room?"

Harry and Daphne looked at each other, abashed.

Casey smiled and signaled. A goblin appeared. "Please have Fifi or Moko meet my guests at the up-stairs." The goblin bowed and shuffled off. "The up-stairs are a bit further along the corridor from the ones we came down on. Good evening, children."

Harry bowed and Daphne managed a fair curtsy. Daphne linked her arm into Harry's, and they swept through the now-half-empty restaurant. Daphne drew the eyes of most of the men remaining. Casey smiled to himself as he sat. "Lucky bastard," he muttered in ancient Briton.

Harry enjoyed having Daphne on his arm. She was closer to his height than to Ginny's. Each movement made it appear as some essential part of Daphne's anatomy would show itself, although none did.

He did not know her at all. He did recall that only she, and Blaise Zabini and his long-term girlfriend Tracy Davis, had not made a big deal about Malfoy's 'Potter Stink's' badges. They had worn them, at Malfoy's insistence, but at least had never flashed them at him, and she had been the first to forget to wear them.

Somehow, she had always seemed sympathetic, interesting, and at least slightly interested.

"What is wrong, Harry?" Daphne said softly.

"I was just thinking . . . how little we know each other." They came to the stair, and saw Moko.

"Master, Mistress," he asked with a bow. "We are on the fifth floor." He hopped onto the stairs, and Harry and Daphne followed. Going up, they didn't see anything except the walls. "Only exit seen is the only one guests may exit," Moko said. They saw it coming, and had no trouble getting off. There were four doors on the corridor. Moko took them to the last door on the right.

"Which is Monsieur Causey's?" Harry asked. Moko pointed across the hall.

"Is there a pitcher of iced water available?" Harry asked.

Moko bowed. "Yes, Master."

"I shall leave everything in a dressing room," Harry said. He looked at Daphne. "I should not need anything else; do you, Daphne?"

"No; no I can clean up myself."

"Did Monsieur mention when he wanted to meet with me?" Harry asked the elf.

"Master Causey said to serve you breakfast at Seven thirty. Fifi is to wake you at Seven, and Master Harry is to dress in a work robe. Moko has the robe already hung out, Master Harry."

"Thank you, Moko, that will be all," Daphne said. "Come with me, Harry." She took Harry into her dressing room. "Do you know what an arranged marriage is?" she asked, switching to English.

"Yes, of course I do."

"Well, we're a lot better off than most arranged marriages," she said, sitting down and taking off a sandal. She used it to gesture for Harry to sit in the other chair. "We've known each other slightly for five years. I know you're shy, heroic, and a good friend to those who treat you well. You hate most of what life has done to you, but you don't seem to hate in general, just in particular." Daphne

grimaced and started massaging the marks the sandals left.

"What does that mean?" Harry asked, taking off his boots.

"You hate Malfoy, not Pure-Bloods, or even Slytherins, in general," she replied, taking the other sandal off.

Harry stood and shrugged off his robe and then pulled off his shirt. Daphne's eyes went wide, but she relaxed when she saw Harry had drawers on. To her shock, Harry sat in front of her and started massaging her feet.

"What makes you think I don't hate Slytherins?"

"Harry, you wouldn't have asked for me, let alone be sitting there massaging my feet -- which feels wonderful, I might add -- if you hated Slytherins. I understand those Muggle relatives abused you, but you're friends with Muggle-borns. Merlin, Harry, you're good at that!" Harry had moved to her lower calves.

"Thanks."

"I take it you haven't been to Vienna with Eloise yet?"

"No, not yet. You're the second. I spent two months in Muggle America during the 1960s."

"So I'm here because you're an attractive, nice, powerful, wealthy wizard. Why did you ask for me? Please, be honest."

"Dumbledore said I should write down the names of at least fifteen witches I would want to date. Well, who should I write down? Millicent? Pansy?"

Daphne giggled at the thought.

"I could only come up with about twenty names of girls I was at all attracted to, and some I crossed off."

"Like Chang?"

Harry grimaced. "Does EVERYONE know what a mess that was?"

"Probably. Go on."

"You know more about me than I do about you," Harry admitted. "I know you're smart, attractive, and you are either nice for a Slytherin, or at least knew enough not to back the Inquisitorial Squad."

"The Pro-Death Eaters allowed their hatred for Dumbledore to cloud their tiny minds," Daphne said. "So I'm smart and attractive. What else?"

"You cried when we toasted Cedric when most of the people around you looked glad he was dead," Harry said. "That stuck in my mind. It reminded me that you Slytherins weren't all bad. Hermione and I talked about asking you, Tracy, and Blaise to join the DA, but we decided it would cause too many problems, for you and for us."

"It probably would have," Daphne agreed. She stood. "Say the ending spell."

Harry took his wand and said the two words. The robe gaped open, and in two quick moves, it fell to Daphne's feet. Harry looked up at her in awe -- 5 foot 7, 38D-23-35. "Wow!"

"I know how you feel," Daphne said. "We all said the same thing when we saw you." She held out her elegant hand. "Shall we go . . . snuggle, my partner?"

Harry took her hand, stood, and dropped his drawers. "Snuggling sounds like a great place to start."

## **Chapter VII**

Tuesday, April 8, 1913

Harry woke up the next morning, with a hand gently arousing him and lips kissing his chin line.

"So far as we know, he has no plans for me today," Daphne murmured. "Please make love with me, Harry. I might need the day to recover."

Harry smiled, and made certain she did need the day.

"Breakfasting alone, Harry?" Casey asked.

"Daphne went back to sleep for a while," Harry answered with a straight face. "We hope that doesn't interfere with your plans."

Casey leered, which Harry ignored. "Cafe au lait?" Harry asked.

Casey sat, but waved it away. "You need to finish dressing. Wear the heavy boots. We will be going out every morning to practice dueling. I shall also help you a bit with your Occlumency. After today, Daphne will be visiting a witches' coven in the mornings. After luncheon, we will be visiting Muggle Paris together for a while. Most evenings, we will either be dining in Muggle Paris and going to various performances or perhaps some in the wizarding world as well."

"I just need to do the mouth-cleaning charm, and put on boots," Harry answered.

They flooded from the entrance hall of the hotel to the dueling hall. Harry was introduced to an instructor, and had little problem in holding his own for a twenty minute session.

"Interesting," Casey commented from the side when it was over. "You have a brilliant defense, Henry. Your offense needs work however."

"Perhaps he would benefit from a demonstration?" a voice came from behind Harry. He turned, and saw the Count and Malfoy.

"By all means," Casey said. "I am certain the two of you can show can show us what proper form is."

That was clearly NOT what the Count meant. "I was hoping to see a black agent in action."

Casey sighed. "If both of you gentlemen are interested?"

"Both of us? Together, or in series?" the Count asked.

"Oh, together, of course."

The challenge had been noted, and the others in the long hall started to gather. In less than five minutes everything was arranged. The three bowed, and one of the hall officials waved a small flag, signalling the start of the duel.

And in the time it took to blink, the Count and Malfoy were laying on their backs, unconscious.

"Now that was a proper attack," Casey said with a grin. "Those two should be awake in two or three hours. Perhaps we should get Monsieur Porter started on the epee before introducing him to the sabre?"

They returned to the hotel for lunch. Harry found Daphne in her dressing room, covered with the Muggle undergarments that were the custom of the time.

"Have a good time?" she asked as Harry stooped and kissed her cheek.

"Swords are difficult," Harry admitted. "Casey took the Count and Malfoy down a few notches." Daphne looked curious, so he added, "They challenged him to a duel, and he beat them at the same time in less than two seconds."

She looked properly impressed.

"He wants us to go to tour Paris with him at One," Harry added. "Shall we lunch here?"

Daphne rang the bell, and they placed their order.

The trio walked out of the wizarding hotel and down a short arcade between two Muggle hotels. "Muggles merely see us exiting one of the two hotel entrances, if they notice us at all," Casey told them as he signaled a open horse-drawn cab. It was warm for early April, although Casey told them there would be one last winter storm the following week.

The cab made its very slow way through the sights of 1913 Paris. Harry rather wished he had paid a bit more attention to Hermione's travel talks. He half-listened to Daphne and Casey debate which performances they should take in on which night, and what Daphne might learn from the coven she would be attending in the mornings.

Daphne was an enthusiast for opera and classical music as well as ballet and drama. Harry admitted to total ignorance on all counts. Daphne had promised to make up for any boredom Harry felt, if he didn't like the performances.

It wasn't that Harry disliked high culture, he had just never been exposed to it. He was willing to try anything, and except for his dueling and Occlumency lessons and his time with Daphne, he had no other demands on his time.

Harry had asked Casey to procure a box camera for him. This would allow him to at least take some Muggle photos of their experience. He hoped he could talk Daphne into posing in the robe of the previous evening.

At 4:30, they stopped off at a cafe called the 'Dôme.' Casey introduced them to a number of German and Central European artists, and made arrangements for them to visit some of the studios over the next month.

"Most exhibited very little," Casey told them. "We can buy some good art cheaply, and store it until 1996." He took them to an excellent Muggle restaurant for an early dinner (so they wouldn't have to change into formal evening wear), and then back to the wizarding hotel by 8:15.

Every morning for the next six weeks, Harry accompanied Casey to the dueling studio. No one challenged Casey again, and in fact the Count and his friends had left Paris early rather than risk encountering him. Harry progressed rapidly in his magical dueling, although his progress with the swords, although steady, was no-where as spectacular. His Occlumency, under professional guidance and Casey's help, progressed even faster than his dueling.

In early May, the trio even attended a professional dueling tournament. To the amusement of Harry and Daphne, a sprightly Filius Flitwick, who had just left Hogwarts, placed third. Casey even arranged for Harry to have an hour of private lessons with Flitwick. Harry promised him a copy of the photo Casey took of them. Casey smiled as he clicked the camera, wondering what Flitwick would think when he received the gift 83 years later!

Other than Sunday evening dinners in the hotel, the group only made five forays into Magical Paris, mostly because there was nothing that they really needed. Harry did manage to pick up two sets of the two first great manufactured brooms (the other set was for Ron), the long-distance Oakshaft 79

and the first true racing broom, the Silver Arrow. And, although Harry didn't know it, Daphne had quickly dropped out of the coven discussions and instead had a different project going.

Three times a week, they went to different galleries and art shows. Casey picked up sixty paintings, and Daphne was allowed to get three. To Casey's slight surprise, Harry had a decent eye, and was also allowed to pick up three paintings.

Harry was even more surprised than Daphne and Casey when he quickly developed an interest in classical music and opera. No music of any kind had figured into the Dursley household. There was very little music at Hogwarts. Harry had enjoyed the rock and folk music he had been exposed to in 1969, but now he was swept away by the operatic and orchestral performances Casey took Daphne and himself to.

Harry had never really had a chance to dress up before, other than the Yule Ball in his Fourth year. He now positively looked forward to putting on his evening clothes and escorting Daphne, who looked stunning every evening. Somehow, he could envision himself escorting a beautiful, elegant witch to concerts, dinners, and other formal events. Equally, he had been able to imagine himself riding a motorcycle (or, in his imagination, a broom) with a beautiful, athletic witch with her arms around him when he had been doing so with Ginny. Harry had been brought up to go with whatever life served him. He was beginning to see, dimly, that there was a wide-range of options available to him.

The one aspect of formal culture Harry had some difficulty with at first was dancing. He had quickly mastered dances like the waltz and polka, but dancing had been starting to change over the previous decade, even in the conservative upper-crust Muggle circles Casey managed to escort them into.

Still, by the time of the Grand Balls Casey managed to get them invited to on May 23 (magical) and 24 (Muggle), Harry had reached the point where he was able to lead Daphne in a tango which, if not the best on the floor, was certainly more than adequate.

Harry had found Ginny, as a lover, enthusiastic, athletic, and slightly submissive if very demanding in terms of repeat performances. Daphne was much more sensuous, and their passions were much more the meeting of equals. On a more personal level, Harry found Daphne intelligent, and interested in ideas nearly as much as Hermione. While Harry had little to spend the allowance Casey was allowing him (other than splurging on the brooms), Daphne spent her money in magical and Muggle bookshops.

Harry started to understand the Slytherin mind-set, and encouraged Daphne to tell him about the factionalizations within her House. He tried to encourage Daphne to try for the leadership of her year. Pansy and Draco had been stripped of their prefect status, and if he did destroy Voldemort, Malfoy's faction might be ripe for supplanting. Listening to her think through the possibilities, Harry understood what Casey had meant when he had said Daphne would be his best partner if he planned a career in politics. While he saw the opportunities for himself (since Daphne was certainly interested in his pursuing them), Harry was still rather more uncertain.

For her part, Daphne hadn't taken Malfoy and Snape's opinions on Harry totally to heart, but she hadn't realized just how far off they were. Harry really was just as good, decent, honest, and above all shy as he came across. It wasn't an act at all. Nearly every day, she was reminded of some cruelty her Housemates had inflicted on Harry, sometimes with herself joining in.

Her shame drove her to try and please Harry all the more. If she came away from this adventure with nothing more than many pleasant memories and some paintings and books stored away, she also would feel she better understood the errors her Housemates had made and that she had atoned for her mistreatment of Harry.

She had to fight herself more and more not to fall in love with him as well.



Slowly, the magic night approached; the night Daphne had been dreaming of since they had arrived. She and Casey had tried to explain Stravinsky to Harry, but that was difficult to do with mere words. In all honesty, Harry was a bit worried. He rather enjoyed Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and the other classical composers, but he had found he preferred the 19th century composers that had come after Beethoven, especially Berlioz and Wagner, and the then-current composers Ravel and Puccini. He had little doubt he'd be build a record collection once he came into his inheritance and made certain he'd escaped the Dursleys.

At many of the cafes and Muggle parties and balls, the new ballet was already a hot topic of disagreement. Whenever Harry stated he would wait to hear the piece before deciding if he liked it, most of the people on both sides stared at him blankly. Harry certainly wasn't used to having ideas, let alone music, causing such disagreement -- the topic was as heated on both sides as Malfoy's Pure-blooded fanaticism.

Casey had secured them tickets both for the premier and the second performance. He cast repelling spells on their clothes just before they left their rooms.

"Is that really necessary?" Harry asked, puzzled.

"That depends on what account you read," Casey answered. "Some say there was a riot, and the performance went unheard after the opening bars, with food and even fists flying. Some say there was a minor disturbance that was quickly overcome by the music. Obviously the first set of claims, being more colorful, have been the most repeated, both in tomorrow's newspapers and ever after. We shall see."

"The people who really care about the music, those in the cheap seats and throughout the audience, will love it," Daphne said firmly. "Those who are there simply because it's the place to be will no doubt be making the most noise."

Pushing their way into the Theatre des Champs-Elysees, Harry could see this was by far the rowdiest crowd he had yet to encounter. People were loudly shouting opinions at each other, about Stravinsky and about the Ballet Russe and its manager/choreographer Serge Diaghilev, and their previous collaborations (L'Oiseau de Feu' and 'Petrouchka') and praise for the principle dancer Kajinsky -- and some lewd comments about some of the female dancers.

In retrospect, Harry found the stories of the riot were closer to the truth. From the opening bassoon solo, there were whistles and cat-calls. Within seconds, partisans on both sides were trading insults and shouts. That made the majority of the audience, who were not taking sides, restless and hence rather noisy. The shouting went on throughout the entire performance, sometimes dying almost out, but then rising again.

From what Harry could hear and see, it was an interesting piece, but certainly very different than what he had seen over the previous weeks. The trio retired back to their rooms, all with at least a mild headache.

"It should be better tomorrow night," Casey said.

It was. The music, now that he could really hear it (since there were almost no disturbances on the second performance), was different than anything Harry had ever heard. The dancers' movements were very different from the more formal ballets he'd seen. It was primitive.

It was erotic.

It was arousing.

After the other concerts they had been to, the trio had discussed the performances. That night, Harry said goodnight firmly to Casey, stripped Daphne roughly, and the pair enjoyed some primitiveness

of their own.

Casey took them away from Paris on the Sunday. Daphne found herself back in her sixteen year old body. She stretched and reveled in her memories. Daphne rather doubted Harry would choose her, if he had to choose that day. But, with luck, Harry wouldn't have to choose for some time. She sat back in envisioned herself and Harry, the destroyer of Voldemort, dancing at one of the new Hogwarts dances Dumbledore had promised.

And who knew where a dance could lead?

## **Chapter VIII**

"Good afternoon, Susan."

"What are you going to do to me? With us?"

"Just what I said I would. I will transport you to a point in the past, where you will spend approximately two months with him. You both can benefit from the experience, although I suppose you could talk yourself into having a miserable time if you want to. That, however, is up to the pair of you."

"What do you mean?" Susan demanded.

"You are a very pretty girl, and fairly intelligent. But somehow, you have decided that while people like you, you are not very strong and therefore people will take advantage of you. When they do, or when you think they do, you feel miserable. When they don't, you believe they soon will. Try and enjoy this experience. I doubt Harry will take advantage of you. You will be the one in charge."

Susan bit her upper lip, hesitating. "Can you tell me where you're sending us?"

"Not yet. We may have some work to do before you can go. And you will want to see your self, I suppose." 'That catches most of them every time,' Casey thought. This was a favorite trick of his.

An older version of Susan appeared. A shade over 5 foot 4, 37C - 22 - 36, with waist-long strawberry blonde hair, this Susan exuded a happy sensuality.

"Wow!"

"I'm sure Harry will like it almost as much as you," Casey said with a grin.

"I can really do this? Nothing . . . no one will think badly of me?"

"None except you, Harry, and myself will even know for certain that you've gone. I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

"I do."

"You don't sound sure."

"Alright, I don't want an adventure! I want a nice, peaceful time. I want a nice, quiet, home. Harry can use something like that as well! Some place where no one will bother either of us!"

"You're not afraid of being bored? Or Harry being bored?"

"Not as long as he can fly," Susan said emphatically. Susan didn't know Harry very well, but even she knew that.

"Of course, you have few Muggle housekeeping skills, do you? And you'd need two months worth of food, because it would be difficult to put you into a purely magical setting. And it would be difficult to put you into a Muggle setting. . . ." Casey pondered for several minutes. "Do you like cool, even cold, weather?"

"I love it!"

"Alright. What else would you like to do for two months?"

"It would give me a great chance to practice my guitar -- Harry doesn't hate music, does he?"

"No, I don't think he knows much about it, but he certainly doesn't seem to dislike it." Casey smiled.

"I believe there is no need for further preparation after all. You were going to go to an American city in the 1950s, but you've changed my mind. Good luck, Susan."

Harry found himself standing next to a more mature Susan. It was difficult to see how she had developed, other than being a little taller, because they were wearing heavy robes and cloaks (since there was a distinct chill in the air). They were standing in what looked a bit like a double garage, except it was full of wood, with a pile of coal near the single door -- there was no car door.

"It doesn't really matter where we are, or what year we are in, although it is 1947 and in a very secluded valley in the Northeastern United States," Casey told them. "It is the afternoon of the Thirtieth of October; you'll stay here until the afternoon of New Year's Eve. There is a modern house. The pipes are enchanted to keep from freezing, as are the kitchen sink and the bathroom fixtures. There are, of course, also the usual magical pump and water heater. There is a wood and coal stove in the cellar and a fireplace for heat. Light is provided by special lamps that will hold your bluebell flames."

The pair nodded.

"Now, there even is some electricity. There is an electric icebox, a washing machine, and the stove and oven. There are also three radios, which will pick up all the Muggle and wizarding radio bands. Harry, you have two months to fly and to practice your hexes where no one will bother you. I remind you to practice your Occlumency as well. The valley is well-warded and under many Muggle-repelling spells."

"I thought wards disrupt electricity," Harry pointed out.

"They can, but the wards are around the valley while the electricity is generated by two small windmills. The radio signals come through because of a special charm for the antennas I've developed."

"Could you teach Hermione?" Harry asked, gaining him a dirty look from Susan, which he missed. "She'd be really interested."

"I'll consider it," Casey said simply before going on. "For food, there is a contact stone. It will put you in touch with an elf, who can transport food to a space near the stone. There are two new brooms -- well, new for 1947 -- there in the corner." Casey smiled. "Have fun." He disappeared.

Susan removed all trace of jealousy from her face, reminding herself that she had to share Harry to some extent. If she had any chance of winning Harry in the long term, jealousy would not help. She held out her gloved hand. "Shall we look at the house?"

Harry was getting used to these situations, so he smiled and took her hand. "Alright. Let's see what we have to work with."

They stepped outside and surveyed the valley. The mountains were low ridges, a few hundred feet high. The valley appeared to be perhaps two miles wide and five miles long. The sun was already setting behind the low mountain.

The house was a simple large bungalow. The back door entered into a small areaway between the kitchen to the right and small dining room to the left. Straight ahead was the entrance to the basement, so they explored that first. Susan explained that a bluebell flame spell cast at the lamps would keep going for between one and three hours, depending on the caster's power. They would need to keep their wands handy. Harry hung their cloaks and outer robes on pegs in the cellarway, but Susan refused to add her inner robe to his with a laugh.

"Harry, I'm pretty Pure-raised, you know." He looked at her, puzzled. "This is all I have on, except my knickers, shoes, and socks."

Harry flushed. Her heavy robe was so different from Daphne's dress robes, he hadn't realized what she wasn't wearing.

"Come on, let's see what we have down here. A pantry, I hope!"

They found the cellar divided into four uneven areas. The main room contained the stove at the far end (more-or-less under the WC, as it turned out), a long set of book shelves running from near the stairs to the far wall and the around the corner as far as the stove, and opposite the bookshelves an area set up as a comfortable sitting room.

Susan gave a squeak of joy, and moved to look at something Harry couldn't see, since she was in the way. When he walked into the sitting area, he saw two stringed instruments. "What's that?" he asked, pointing to the instrument next to a guitar.

"That's a lute! I play the guitar, but I always wanted to learn the lute!"

The pair started a small fire in the stove, since there was supply of kindling, wood, and coal and it was nearly as cold inside as it had been outside.

Off the sitting area, there was a narrow but long closet, which turned out to be a stocked wine closet. The area under the kitchen was indeed a pantry, and also had the old-style wringer-washer. Harry looked at it, and a polished stone area of the floor next to the foundation wall and a full-length polished stone mirror set into the wall, with puzzlement.

"I know how to command the washer," Susan said. "My great grandmother still has one. This is the contact stone. It puts you in direct contact with its sister. Anything that can be fit onto this stone in the floor can be transported in from a matching stone. The mirror allows you to record and send messages, requesting supplies or whatever. These are very rare; I've only heard of them."

Harry nodded. The last area of the cellar (under the parlor) had a few work-out machines, and a set of aluminum or tin pipes about six inches across which seemed to snake from the ceilings and met in a small standing tin box about six feet high and two foot square. "That's an air circulator. Some of these pipes draw cold air from the colder parts of the house, and warm air from places like around the stove and fireplace. I saw the conduit for this going around the pipe going to the chimney and another behind and under the stove. I bet, when we see the fireplace, there are slits in the stone or brick work, where it draws warm air in. Every room will have a small exposed section of the pipe; tap it once and it draws air for about half an hour. Tap twice and it stops. And, even when it's not working magically, you get some passive circulation. Somewhere, there will be a master plate, where it can be ordered to circulate the air for longer periods of time."

"Cool."

The kitchen was much more Muggle, and Harry would have to help Susan get the hang of working the stove and oven. The parlor was long and formal, and look out onto an inclosed veranda which was probably very cozy in the warmer weather. The bed room was large and comfortable looking, although they merely glanced in at it and the dining room.

At first, they thought there was a small bathroom at the end of the short hall, with the master bedroom on the right and a smaller bedroom to the left. Instead, they saw the small room at the end of the corridor was just a WC. The 'smaller bedroom' was instead a luxurious bath. Only magic or heavy steel girders could have supported its weight in such a small house. It took three steps up to access the floor. Where a closet should be, there was a shower to get clean under. The actual 10x12 foot room held a pool just over a meter deep at the 'deep' end and perhaps two-thirds that deep on the near end, some 8x9 feet in total size. "That looks relaxing," Susan said with interest.

"It certainly does," Harry agreed.

"Shall we. . . ." Susan asked shyly.

Harry considered. "Why don't we build a fire in the fireplace, too. Once we get that and the circulation going, we'll need to wash anyway."

"Alright. Why don't you do that, bring in more coal and wood, and build up the fire downstairs a

little, and I'll check to see what we have for dinner. Shall we?"

They left the bath together and set to work.

The sun was fully set as Harry finished laying the fires. The young couple decided to eat next, and they sat near the toasty stove and ate the stew Susan had found in the fridge, along with a bottle of claret Harry had selected from the wine closet.

Susan sent Harry off to shower while she cleared away the few dishes. Susan came in as Harry settled into the water. She merely smiled and took his robe, replacing it with a dressing gown on the hook. She came in a few seconds later, only wearing a short silk kimono.

Harry watched her every movement, as Susan slowly stripped off the robe, her back to Harry, and then moved to shower. Harry could see Susan's hands lather her trim body, but could only guess at what she looked like from the front.

Susan had carefully thought things through. She really liked Harry, even if she wasn't in love with him. If they didn't fall in love, she wanted to have as much fun as possible during these two months. If she did fall in love with him, this was her one chance to draw Harry to her.

Ginny Weasley was an active and attractive girl who had had a notorious crush on Harry. She had no doubt studied Harry very well over the years, and Susan believed Ginny would do anything to snare Harry. Ginny would no doubt offer her body to Harry in any way he desired. Daphne would no doubt be similar, in a more seductive and sophisticated way.

Eloise, Hermione, and Luna, she decided, she could discount, unless Harry actually fell fully in love with one of them. That she would risk.

Susan decided she would do more than yield herself to Harry; she would seduce Harry. And she would do that best by being herself, which was a bit playful and sensuous.

Susan rinsed off and turned around. Harry's eyes widened, and Susan slowly walked into the pool and settled herself astride Harry's thighs and sank into a deep languorous kiss.

'Damn,' Harry thought, 'I wish these months would NEVER end.'

Harry had to admit that he had needed those first two months with Ginny. Except for packing, he'd used fairly little magic during his time with her. He'd forgotten that he would have to face Voldemort, that he would have to kill Voldemort, for days at a time.

His dueling practices with Casey in Paris had reminded him. The next morning, after breakfast, he flew the Tinderblast to a clearing, and spent an hour throwing hexes at the trees and another hour swinging his swords and practicing.

Returning to the cabin, hoping to exercise, Harry had heard wonderful music. Investigating, he saw Susan playing the guitar. Harry hadn't known much about music before this experience, but had decided he rather liked it, both the music of the Festival and of the formal and informal concerts in Paris.

He added learning the guitar to his language and Occlumency studies. Harry suspected Casey might have given him some musical talent as well as his linguistic knowledge.

By the second day, Harry and Susan had created a routine they both enjoyed and felt comfortable with. They would wake up at 7:00 and 'make snuggle' as Susan called it. Susan would make them breakfast and start cooking for the day. Harry would have a short workout in the basement, and then fly and practice hexes until 11:30. He would come back, shower, and finish putting lunch together. Susan would be practicing until Harry brought lunch.

After lunch, Susan would coach Harry in his guitar playing for an hour, then she would practice the guitar and lute until 3:30. Harry would be studying his languages and Occlumency, as well as Charm and Defense theory.

Every other day, from 3:30 - 4:30, Susan would coach Harry on Household Charms, the cleaning, cooking, and maintenance spells that Harry wouldn't be learning in N.E.W.T. Charms. The other days, they would go outside and Harry would coach Susan in flying and Defense.

They would cook a late dinner together, after they had showered and made love. Some evenings, they make love in the bath, the other nights they would do so in other rooms. They would end most evenings cuddled in front of either the fireplace or stove. At first, Harry tended to read while Susan again played. By the end of the first month, they would play a duet together, and would then slip into bed around 10:30. It was a very satisfying routine for both of them.

To Harry's surprise, Casey didn't show up for almost a month. He left a note explaining the American custom of Thanksgiving, and he showed up on November 27 with a full American Thanksgiving dinner. He didn't quiz either of them during dinner, merely asking if there was anything that they needed to make their last month more fulfilling.

They didn't, although Harry was relieved to learn most of his acquired musical knowledge would come with him, although the callouses he'd built up from playing wouldn't.

After dinner, however, Casey took Harry down to the basement. "I'm having a small problem with one of the remaining girls."

"Hermione?"

"Why her?"

Harry shrugged. "I don't know why she came along. She loves Ron."

"You like her, don't you?"

"I like her, but I think I like Luna more."

Casey thought a short time. "Hermione is in love with both you and this Ron. She believes Ron would never share her with you, although she seems to think you would share her with Ron."

Harry shrugged again. "I don't know. I know I would have been . . . interested, if she and Ron weren't involved and if I hadn't met Luna. Now, of course. . . ." Harry shrugged yet again. He wasn't certain what to think about his dating future.

"Hermione is afraid if she sleeps with you, she will fall in love with you, yet she wants to, desperately. She was wondering, perhaps as a defensive measure, if I might send you both to ancient Rome, and if you would still be interested if she looked like this."

"But . . . that's a boy!"

"True."

Harry shook his head. "Interested in being with Hermione, yes. I love her and usually love being with her. I'll go to Rome with her as a him, but no, no sex."

"I'll let her know. You'll likely be with Eloise next, then Hermione and finally Luna."

Male Hermione disappeared with Casey. "Weird," Harry said.

"What did Casey want?" Susan asked.

"I'm not really sure," Harry said, since he didn't know why he'd been shown that version of Hermione. He just hoped he hadn't said anything wrong, especially anything that would hurt

Hermione's feelings.

Susan smiled, and they went to finish cleaning up the feast together.

As snow slowly accumulated, Harry could spend less and less time practicing outside, although he still flew every day. Although they wouldn't exchange presents, Harry and Susan decided to bring a tree into the veranda as a Christmas tree. They carefully did the spells that uprooted a small blue spruce and bound its roots. With careful replanting, it might be a bit stunted in its growth for a year or so, but it shouldn't be damaged.

Susan taught Harry special spells that created glass ball ornaments and which laid tinsel. These had been designed to last just three weeks, so they would fade away right after Christmas. She taught him to preserve real icicles, and how to enchant the glass ornaments to hold a bluebell flame for several hours.

The afternoon after the summer solstice, Casey showed up again. He took them outside, and led them through three ancient rituals (Druidic, Roman, and German), to praise the restart of the lengthening days. Harry had requested a camera a few days before, but the elves had not sent it through with the food. Casey had brought one, however, and took wizarding photos of Susan and Harry in front of the tree.

Susan had managed to pry many stories out of Harry about how he had been raised by his relatives. To her, the saddest of all was his lack of happy Yule memories. Yule, to her traditional family, was the happiest time of year. She told Harry of all the traditions she knew, and managed to get him to tell her some of the Muggle ones. The day before Christmas, from after lunch until after dinner, Harry sat in a large chair in the parlor, in front of the fireplace, reading A Christmas Carol aloud to Susan, who sat on the floor, her head in Harry's lap, for much of the time.

Harry was finding his time with Susan relaxing. She was a willing, pleasing, if somewhat passive lover, willing to try anything Harry wanted to try, whenever he wanted to try it, and enjoying it all, but except for that first night, rather unwilling to initiate the actions very often. They were lucky she hadn't been first, or both would have been too shy to enjoy their time together as much as they did.

Susan woke up first on Christmas morning, feeling warm and very fulfilled. She hoped Harry and she would date. She knew they would never have as relaxing a time as they had had so far. She was considering waking Harry, hoping he would make love to her again, when she smelled something cooking.

"Harry!" she whispered. "Someone is cooking!"

Harry opened one eye. "Did you think Casey wouldn't visit?"

"Oh . . . but . . ." she stroked Harry's arm, about as suggestive as she got.

Harry smiled and sat up. "I'll see if someone is here, or if there's just a goose or roast cooking for us."

He came back quickly. "Dinner is cooking; Casey left a note saying he'd be here a little after noon."

"Is it a goose?"

"A venison roast, actually. Now, there's nothing we need do until around noon, except eat breakfast. Are you hungry?"

"Not for food."

Nearly an hour later, Harry went into the parlor to clean out the fireplace and start a new fire. He



wasn't surprised to see it already cleaned out, but there were two other things he was surprised to see. "Susan!"

Susan came in from the kitchen, where she had been trying to figure out what might need to be done and when it would be needed to be done. On either side of the fireplace were two filled Christmas stockings. As soon as Susan came close to Harry, they heard music coming from the enclosed porch where the Christmas tree was. Opening the door, they saw Casey had added some six dozen fairies, playing tag around and in the tree.

Going back to the fireplace, they opened the presents in their stockings. None were exceptional: chocolate frogs; American wizarding candy; a pair of small pink pearl earrings for Susan, but the act of opening even little presents made it seem more like Christmas.

Susan woke Harry up early the morning of New Year's Eve. "Harry?"

"H'mmm?"

"We have to leave today."

"H'mmm h'mmm," Harry managed to make a slightly more affirmative noise.

"Would you please make love with me one last time?"

"Of course."

Susan smiled at her memories as she relaxed on a sofa, back in her sixteen year old body. She hoped she could find a wizard who would like to settle down with her and at least partially recreate the simple life and fulfilling pleasures of the previous subjective months. Susan wasn't certain if that person could be Harry or not. Part of him yearned for just such a life, but part of him would always be in demand to save the world.

She would have to see which direction he would go in.

## **Chapter IX**

"Good afternoon, Eloise."

Eloise bounded up from her chair. "I'm first?" she asked in a frightened voice.

"Every one experiences about the same amount of waiting time," Casey told her. "However, since I sense it will put you at ease, no, you are not first. I won't say where you are in the order, but you are not the first or last."

"Good." Eloise looked at her boots. "I've never even come close to kissing anyone. I wouldn't want to have to be Harry's first."

Casey smiled. "Let's see you at twenty-four."

"That can't be me!"

Casey laughed lightly. "You are what is known as a 'late-bloomer.'"

"My feet are still too big and my legs are too short" she complained. "Of course, if I grew into the feet, I'd be six foot tall, or so, right? Instead of, what?"

"Five foot eight and a half, just a bit more than a shade under Harry's height as an adult. Your legs are actually a shade longer than average for your total height. And your feet are not that large. And look at those lovely long, sensitive fingers. You will be able to drive a man mad with passion, especially someone like Harry."

"Really?"

"He has led an almost totally loveless life until this adventure. Massage him, be tactile. Now, look at your front. Your backside was not the only part of you that grew up."

"Wow! those must be. . . ."

"I'm not certain of British sizes; in America you'd be a 42DD-24-35. And look at that face. We could put that face in a dictionary to define cute, sweet, and adorable."

"But I'll never look like that!"

Casey shook his head. "When you look into a mirror, you frown, you make faces. This face is a bit blank, but that slight smile shows how pretty you can be." He considered. "I think your hair here is so full from art rather than nature, but the rest is all you. You need to use Muggle conditioner."

"I'm . . . attractive!"

"'Adorable' would be even more accurate. Now tell me, why did you agree to this?"

Eloise went a little pale, but answered. "Look at me, or at least how I looked before you cleaned up my scars! Ugly; skinny; no shape at all, unless 'stick-like' is a shape! Everyone's made fun at me, except Hermione and Harry. I know he's not in love with me or anything, but he's at least been nice to me. And he asked for me." She sniffled a little. "No one has ever asked for me in my entire life! How could I say no?"

"I think, after your little adventure, you'll know your true worth, Eloise. I think it's time you got used to your future body."

"Does that mean I don't have a choice?"

"I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

Eloise chewed her lower lip for nearly half a minute. "I think I had better try," she finally said. "Not to know would be worse than failing."

"There is no reason to fear the future, especially not for the next two subjective months. But first, I'm afraid, we're going to have to change you a little. The styles where you're going demands corsets, and those take some getting used to."

"Oh! I love the looks of those!"

"Let's hope you enjoy the feel! These are the real thing."

Harry looked around, and at first he wondered if he was back in Paris instead of Vienna. The style of the room he was in nearly matched his dressing room in the Parisian wizarding hotel. 'Of course,' Harry thought, 'wizarding styles don't change as fast as the Muggle. I just hope they have a properly functioning bath and loo.' He wondered what year he was in. Since he was apparently going to have to be thought of as his own father, he had guessed it would have to be somewhere between 1875 and 1885. He had found a number of history books in the cabin which allowed him to have a better idea of what to expect from Muggle Vienna than he had for Paris.

The door opened, and Casey came in alone. Harry noted that he now sported a full beard and mustache.

"Oh, good!"

"What is it, Harry?"

"May I talk with you . . . privately?"

"Of course. Eloise is still getting ready. What do you need to talk about?" Casey asked in a curious and friendly voice.

"Hermione. Does she want to specifically go to Rome?"

Casey pondered that. "No; overall, I would have to say no. It does meet the parameters she suggested, however. Do you have an alternative?"

"Could we go to the cabin? In the late spring or summer?"

Casey looked puzzled. "Hermione does not strike me as the domestic type."

Harry brushed that away. "I can do most of that. You must have a huge library Hermione could borrow books from. That's what would please her most."

"And what about you?"

"What about me? I'm sure I'll be practicing dueling here, and maybe where ever you send me with Luna, and since Luna is last, that's the most important. And I'll probably be doing at least as much practicing with Hermione as I did this last month at the cabin."

"You and Susan must have had a fantastic time together, if you want to duplicate it with Hermione."

Harry gave Casey a dirty look. "Don't be disgusting! I can sleep on one the large sofas if Hermione doesn't want to be . . . close."

"You don't love her? You're not attracted to her?"

"I thought Hermione was attractive, if bossy, from the first time I saw her. Do I love her? That's like asking someone if they love their hand. I could no more easily live without Hermione in my life than I could without a hand. And she and Ron seem to belong together, as a couple. This would be the one chance we have to . . . be intimate, but THAT will be Hermione's decision."

Casey stared at Harry. "My gods, you're serious, are you?"

"I am. Look, I don't know how you're testing me to see if I'm worth helping, but don't hurt Hermione to do it."

"Are you sure you don't love her?"

Harry gave a tired smile. "I think we would drive each other nuts if we lived together in a one-on-one relationship of any kind for the rest of our lives. I'd be better off with Luna. But yes, I love her. I adore Hermione. She's sexy as hell. But tell me, does that mean we'd be good for each other?"

"Perhaps not. I shall put the idea to Hermione. I'll give her three choices: Rome as a female; Rome as a male; or the cabin. I'll be right back."

Casey popped away, and then popped back a few seconds later. "I don't know what she'll decide. I'll let her think about it for a while. Let's see if Eloise is ready."

She was. It was hard for Harry to judge Eloise's looks, other than the fact that she was stunning. She was dressed as a Muggle, waist corseted tight and pushing her now-large breasts up. The bustle looked even odder than Harry had thought it would, and the skirt of course totally obscured her legs. Still, from what Harry could see, Eloise was very different than the shy mouse he was used to seeing. He was by now wise enough not to comment on the changes, and merely complimented Eloise on her style.

"We are in a Muggle townhouse on the outskirts of central Vienna. It is Friday, April Twenty-second, 1881. We are taking a cab the inn which marks the entrance to Vienna's Parsifalplatz, their version of Diagon Alley. We will not be staying at the inn itself, but at a hotel inside the Platz. Tell me, Eloise, do you like to dance?"

"I've never danced," she said. "I really like listening and watching old-style dances, though."

"I hope you like to waltz," Harry said. "Vienna was waltz crazy throughout most of the nineteenth century."

Eloise smiled, but then lost it as she turned to Casey. "Who are we? Oh, and I don't know much German!"

"You do know French, Latin, and Italian, which should be sufficient most of the time," Casey answered. "Now, you are Eloise and Henry Porter. . . ."

Eloise gasped as she noticed the wedding bands for the first time.

"Do we all get to keep these?" Harry asked. "They'd be nice souvenirs."

"Of course, Harry," Casey answered. "I am Stefan Causey, a black agent of the Cartel of Magic. You are both from one of the small self-sustaining communities in western Canada; there is no need for greater detail than that. Feel free to refer any further inquiries to me. Harry will be practicing dueling weekday mornings, and there will be quite an array of parties, balls, receptions, and concerts to attend in the evenings, some lasting quite late." He escorted them out to a waiting fiacre.

Casey pointed out the new construction as the horse carriage passed by the new Ring street that encircled the center of the city. They finally pulled off onto a street where there were various inns, a new department store, restaurants, a theater, and a large hotel. The Muggles on the street walked right past a narrow inn, whose sign showed a broken broomstick.

Casey held the door for the young pair, and then followed them into the darkened inn.

"Well, Marius, it looks like we should not drink so close to the dregs, their muddy relatives just flow in." A large group of wizards were sneering at the trio from the first table.

Harry gave the speaker a dirty look, and then looked again. It was Hermann Eichmann, looking exactly as he did when Casey killed him in the dream fragment. "Excuse us, we thought there were honorable wizards in this city, not drunken idiots," Casey snarled, as he pushed the slightly confused Eloise (who couldn't quite follow the Viennese dialect of German) slightly behind himself and Harry.

Eichmann and two of the wizards with him made gestures towards their wands, but they were already covered by Harry and Casey. "Drinking and dueling do not go together, sirs. And even by your silly standards, we are as 'pure' as you are. If we wish to mingle in Muggle Vienna on our visit, is it really any concern of yours?"

"Brave words," the youngest wizard sneered. "You don't know who you might be dealing with!"

"I assure you, Herr Grindelwald, I know exactly who and what you people are," Casey answered. "Now, if you will excuse us? You may attend us Monday afternoon, if you are interested. We are staying at the Silver Dragon."

They exited the inn, and Casey told them the entrance code was the same as Diagon Alley. Parsifalplatz looked much more like Diagon Alley than the wizarding area in Paris had. That did not mean it was identical, but they still looked to have much the same layout and architectural style. Like Diagon Alley, it went some length and then split into two branches at a branch of Gringotts. The Silver Dragon was across from the bank.

Whereas most of the staff in Paris had been goblins and elves, here all turned out to be human and elf. Like the hotel in Paris, rooms were reached by moving stone staircases. Harry felt almost like an expert as he helped Eloise ascend.

Their suite of rooms was even larger than those in Paris had been. Eloise sat on a fainting sofa while Harry and Casey found seats. "When does Eichmann go to your valley?" Harry asked, switching to French so Eloise could understand the conversation more easily.

"He should be on his way soon. The confrontation is tomorrow afternoon, and my attack on the meeting is tomorrow night."

"Hence the beard and mustache."

"Exactly. I do not think anyone who saw me and survived could recognize me, but I thought it best to take these simple precautions."

"So we stay in the hotel and Platz until Monday morning?" Eloise asked.

"That would be best," Casey agreed. "It is a little after Two. I shall leave you two to become acquainted. Your house elves are Linni and Efrik. They should show up between Five and Six. We go down to dine a little before Seven thirty. Dress shall be wizard, of course."

After Casey left, Harry and Eloise looked at each other. Harry wasn't certain what to do. Ginny, Daphne, and even Susan had all been, if not always aggressive, at least willing to give him a hint. Eloise merely sat there, looking nervous.

'Well,' Harry thought, 'why shouldn't she be nervous?' "Is that outfit . . . comfortable?"

"Amazing enough, I find it is," Eloise answered. Silence descended for a few awkward moments. "I look a lot different, don't I?"

"Yes, you do," Harry agreed. "I wouldn't have recognized you," he admitted.

Eloise caught sight of herself in a mirror, and smiled. For once, she really was in control of a situation, and she knew what she would like to do. She therefore took a deep breath and said, "I suppose, if we're to dress in robes, you'll have to help me out of all this. One really needs help to dress like this."

At precisely 3:00, a house elf popped into the bedroom. "Master? Mistress?"

"What is it?" Eloise demanded through clenched teeth, her hands gripping the sheets.

"Master Stefan told Linni to come early and ask if you would be dining with him or here tonight?"

Harry moved up to nibble on Eloise's ear, making her giggle before she could say, "HERE!" Harry licked a bit lower, his hands still moving.

"When and what would Master and Mistress like to dine?"

"Harry! Stop doing that and answer the elf!"

"Would a bottle of decent claret, consomme, followed by chops, roasted potatoes, and either peas or string beans, a chocolate torte for two, and a cheese platter be possible?" Harry managed to ask before going back to lick Eloise's shoulder and throat.

"Yes, Master."

"Come again at Seven fifteen, and we'll dine here at Eight."

"Yes, Master." The elf disappeared.

"Now, where were we?"

"Your lips were here, your left hand was there, and your . . . THAT'S RIGHT!"

## Chapter X

Saturday, April 23, 1881

"Good morning, Eloise," Harry said as he sat back on their bed.

"Morning," she mumbled.

"Are you alright?" Harry asked, concerned, putting his hand on her bare shoulder.

"I can't tell you how sore my jaw and, well, privates are this morning," Eloise admitted, trying not to move her mouth too much. "I'm glad we did . . . everything we did. I just wish I wasn't so sore, so we could do it again!"

"I couldn't do it again right now if I wanted to!" Harry said with a small laugh. "Three times a night is my limit, even past it for that matter! Here, if you rub this potion lotion on you, you'll be ready again this afternoon, and with luck, I might be, too. If not, maybe tonight."

Eloise smiled. "Oh, we'll at least try this afternoon."

Harry wondered yet again at how insatiable these witches were. Ginny had wanted him to satisfy her three times a day when possible and in a variety of ways; Daphne preferred taking him multiple times at night, riding him when necessary; Susan had preferred long, languorous sessions in the late afternoon or early evening. Harry could barely believe that Eloise was apparently the same as well. 'No wonder witches have to wait,' Harry thought as he poured Eloise a cup of hot chocolate. 'If we all shagged this much at Hogwarts, we would all fail!'

Casey picked them up at 10:00. All three were in conventional robes. "Where are we going?" Eloise asked.

"To a public meeting," Casey answered. "The Seven, as they like to call themselves, will be trying to whip up enthusiasm for their racist policies and announce Eichmann's trip. Eichmann and his six virgins have already left to take the same trip you were supposed to make. Alas, Grindelwald and most of the second tier leadership will be leaving to spread their message of hate this afternoon, and so will not be around for the meeting tonight where the me of this time period will try and stomp on this nonsense." He shrugged. "If I knew Grindelwald would cause to much trouble, and inspire Voldemort, I'd have tracked him down and killed him."

"Do we have any part to play in all this?" Harry asked.

"No," Casey assured them, "you merely have to watch and observe. There will be much confusion tomorrow and the next day, of course, but since the Seven are not all that popular, it should not affect us if we keep our comments largely to ourselves."

Eloise looked at them. "Are you really certain it's safe?"

"We're perfectly safe with Casey, and neither you nor I are totally helpless," Harry told her. Casey smiled.

A crowd of nearly five hundred had gathered by 10:30. Perhaps a hundred seemed to be followers, and another hundred and fifty somewhat sympathetic, to the so-called Seven. The other half seemed to range from the merely curious to the fairly hostile.

There were six wizards sitting on a platform. Harry still thought in Muggle terms, and to him they looked like they ranged from their early twenties to late forties. Grindelwald was the youngest. At 10:30, the next-to-eldest stood up.

"Alfred Rosen," Casey told them. "He's the most obscure and mystical of the Seven. They'll

probably speak in Latin; that's the commercial language here, and whenever Rosen speaks in German, he gets lost in his own language."

Rosen started his remarks in Latin. "Six years ago, Seven wizards came together because of their worries about our World! The Mud-people have long controlled the entire world, and over the last fifty years, their power and population have grown beyond their own comprehension! They must be put in their place! And now the Mudbloods and other Mongrels are trying to take over OUR world! Although we disagree to a degree on HOW to regulate the Muds and Mudbloods," here some on the platform gave Grindelwald dirty looks, "our goals remain united!"

A few people clapped.

"We have decided to take action! Our young comrade, Hermann Eichmann, has put our plan into action!" Here two of the people on the platform tugged on Rosen's robes. He was obviously going beyond his mandate. "But to tell you the exciting news, let me present to you the glorious Founder of our Movement! Wizards and witches, Parsifal!"

The applause was a bit louder for the oldest wizard on the platform. Casey again leaned over, "He's actually an English wizard whose grandparents were three squibs and a near-squib, named Austin Stanley Chambers."

"I see many of you, perhaps most of you, still have doubts about us and our Movement!" the lanky wizard yelled. "You prefer to touch the Mud-people's world, allowing them to dictate our place in the world. They are polluting the world, with their factories and railroads. Just smell the air! Look around you!" He waved his arm. "See the coal smoke of this great monster that has grown up around us! Their trade has penetrated to every corner of the world! Every year, we are pushed further into the fringes; every year we are threatened with exposure and destruction! Every year, we lose more tradition!"

He looked around. "You can see one of our number is missing. Hermann Eichmann has left to invoke a very venerable tradition, in the company of six of our young pure witches. Yes, he has gone to invoke the Cassiwallan!"

A buzz swept through the crowd, most of it from those in the crowd asking their neighbors who or what Cassiwallan was. Parsifal waited a few minutes for the buzz to die down.

"The Cassiwallan will heed our call! He will teach us as Merlin was taught! Then, we shall teach you, and we shall finally put the lesser peoples in their place!" Parsifal's gestures now became more hostile. "Beware! You are either with us, or you are no better than the Muds! Soon, you will have to choose your part!" The six and their more devoted followers went cheering and yelling down the Platz equivalent of Knockturn Alley.

As the rest of the crowd started to breakup, Harry saw someone that made him draw a deep breath of surprise.

"What is it, Harry?" Casey asked.

Harry jerked his head. "Dumbledore!" he said very softly.

Casey looked. "So it is. I'm impressed, Harry. He looks very different than he does in your time, of course."

"Where?" Eloise asked.

"The tallest red-haired man with that trio of other red-haired young wizards, moving towards the entrance portal," Harry told her. "Next to the one that looks a little like Ron." Dumbledore here had a closely trimmed beard.

"Come, let's meet them," Casey said. Eloise squeaked, but followed.

"Excuse me," Casey said to the slow-moving, talking quartet in German-accented English, "Am I



correct in identifying you as English?"

"British, anyway," the youngest said. "I'm Aberforth Dumbledore. My elder brother Albus Dumbledore, our second cousin Percy Weasley, and our friend Ian McGonagall."

"I'm escorting my brother and his friends on a trip around Europe," Albus said. "They left Hogwarts School of Wizardry last year."

"I am Stefan Causey, a black agent of the Cartel of Magic. My guests are Henry Porter and his bride Eloise, from a community of our friends in western Canada." Harry and Eloise sketched bows, and the four young wizards bowed back at Eloise.

"The Cartel of Magic?" Aberforth asked. "Isn't that the group that owns Gringotts and most of the magical city property in Europe?"

"It is," Casey replied simply.

"What is a black agent?" McGonagall asked.

"There are nine types of agents," Casey answered. "Orange, Red, and Black are security agents."

"If some of the rumors are true," Albus said as they moved into the Broken Broomstick, "you probably have an accurate estimation on Eichmann's chances of success."

They found a long table all could sit around, a number of the wizards around them staring at Eloise, who was one of the few women in the inn.

Eloise looked around, her eyes wide open. "Shouldn't I be here?"

"It is not common, but forbidden it is not," Casey stated. "Public displays of affection are frowned upon for . . . ladies, as opposed to more common types."

"How . . . repressive," Eloise said simply. She merely sat back and mostly just followed the discussion thereafter. Casey ordered two bottles of white wine and a carafe of water. Eloise drank one glass of wine, and water after that.

Casey turned to Dumbledore as the wine was brought and opened. "I know enough to say that no one should believe they can command Cassiwallan, let alone command his active interference. They are pursuing a dream, because they could not agree on their next move. Grindelwald wants to influence the Muggles into destroying themselves, while the others are much more . . . mystical."

"So you believe the Cassiwallan is a succession of individuals, rather than a group?" Albus asked.

"I believe so, but I wouldn't say for certain."

"It's said that the Cassiwallan controls the Cartel of Magic," Dumbledore stated. "Others believe that the Cartel controls the Cassiwallan."

"No power in this world controls Cassiwallan," Casey said simply. "Beyond that, I find it safer not to speculate."

"We have little contact with urban Muggles and have had less with European wizards," Harry put in, changing the subject. "I find them, and you . . . fascinating. Do these Seven have much of a following in Britain?"

"Some," Albus answered. "Our oldest, most noble families will no doubt hold themselves above it all, as usual. The Pure-Bloods whose lineages are not so antique will go according to their nature."

"Bloody Malfoys," Percy Weasley muttered.

"Percy!" Albus remonstrated, nodding towards Eloise.

"I beg your pardon, Madam," Percy said, blushing much as his great grandson would.

"Granted, Mister Weasley," she said with a nod.

"Will we be seeing you much in Vienna during our stay?" Harry asked.

"Alas, no. We are actually taking that wonderful Muggle device, the train, tonight to go through to Milan. I did want to hear what this alleged 'great announcement' would be." He turned to Casey. "I am certain your speculation is correct. Hopefully, the current Cassiwallan will send Eichmann and his companions back with some sort of public remonstrance. Otherwise, I fear they will cause more trouble."

"I'm sure they will manage that in any event," Harry grumbled. Seeing everyone look at him, and the slightly dirty look Casey was giving him, he added, "Come now! There will always be troublemakers. The only question is, will this group make major or minor trouble? Or perhaps I should say, will their ideas cause major or minor trouble? Even if something happens to these so-called Seven, their ideas may catch on."

"Too true," McGonagall agreed. "Albus takes too genial an out-look of human nature."

Casey finished his second glass of wine. "You gentlemen probably have to pack, and we must go back for a light luncheon. I hope to meet you all again." Casey stood, and he, Harry, and Eloise took their leave.

"Did I say too much?" Harry asked.

"Not exactly," Casey said. "The problem is, Dumbledore is already a very powerful and skilled Legilimens. He had tried to use it on me, and was using it on you, with only a little more success. It was just a matter of time before he might have used it on Eloise, who has had no training in Occlumency."

"What did you think of that trio?" Ian asked.

"The Porters sounded more English than Canadian," Aberforth said. "And Porter looked a great deal like Gerald Potter, except for the eyes, of course."

"Actually, the two men looked like close cousins, including those eyes," Percy pointed out.

Friday, July 19, 1996

Albus Dumbledore stared at Tonks, who had just finished describing what had happened, including a description of Cassiwallan.

Albus sat down from the shock, which was unfortunate, since there wasn't a chair behind him. Tonks helped him up and sat him down. "Albus, what is it?"

"I believe there is a very good chance that was the genuine Cassiwallan. And I know where Harry and Eloise are, or at least were."

"And where is that?" Tonks demanded.

"I met them in Vienna, in April of 1881."

"What!"

"Harry and Eloise looked to be in their early twenties, and were said to be on their honeymoon. But it was them, Henry and Eloise Porter indeed! And the Cassiwallan was called Causey in two of Harry's dream fragments, which is the name he was going under in Vienna!"

"Is it really possible to travel that far back in time? And does that mean that Harry and Eloise are growing older in the past, and are married?"

Albus had to admit, "I just do not know. All this," he waved his arm around to include Remus' condition and the entire situation, "it suggests that Cassiwallan might really be one person, not a

succession of people. If so, then no doubt Remus really will be partially cured."

Sunday, April 24, 1881

"Eloise isn't joining us?" Casey asked.

"She really prefers to avoid confrontation," Harry said. "I'm not certain if she just lacks confidence, or if she's a natural pacifist."

"Possibly a bit of both," Casey speculated as they went on the spiral stairs.

They could hear the uproar coming from the dining room even before they came off the stairs. Walking to the entrance, they saw the room was fairly full. A few people were crying, but most were circulating, trying to discover exactly what had happened.

Casey led Harry over to the small table which had been reserved for his use, grabbing a waiter along the way. "Are you serving, or is this some sort of meeting?"

"If you want more than coffee, chocolate, and rolls, you had best order from your room."

"Your largest pot of chocolate, some extra cups, and a double helping of rolls, please."

While they were waiting to be served, Casey surveyed the crowd. When they were finally served, Casey stood and plucked a man from the crowd. Harry saw with some slight surprise that it was Theseus Noir, the man from the Parisian restaurant of 1913. "Sit yourself down, sir, and tell us what has happened."

Noir was shaking a bit. An elderly wizard patted Noir on the back. "The man is in shock," the elderly man stated.

"Drink the chocolate," Casey said. "It has a very positive effect on wizards after all."

"Really?" the elderly man asked. "I always thought that only worked on witches."

"No, it's very good for us as well."

Noir drank off two helpings of the hot chocolate, and slowly calmed down. "You seem to have been correct," the elderly man stated.

"You are a healer of some sort?" Casey asked.

"A researcher, at least. Sigmund Meynert."

"Stefan Causey."

Meynert patted Noir on the shoulder again. "He seems much better."

"Tell us what happened."

Noir looked at them. "Where you in the Platz yesterday for the announcement?"

"We were."

"There was a meeting of the First, Second and Third Circles last night. . . ."

"The Seven is the First of seven circles," Casey explained to Harry.

"Exactly," Noir agreed. "Apparently Eichmann not only failed to induce the Cassiwallan to help us, he turned the Cassiwallan against us! Five of the Seven, and nearly all of the Third Circle, were slaughtered. By all accounts, it took less than five minutes. Only Grindelwald and most of the Second escaped, since they left yesterday afternoon. We don't know for certain what happened to all the Travelers. . . ." Here he trailed off and drank more chocolate.

"Why are you certain Cassiwallan did this?" Harry asked. "I understand there were some . . . disagreements between Grindelwald and the others." Casey gave Harry a dirty look.

"He brought back Eichmann's head, and those of two of the girls'," Noir said, shaken. "The movement to preserve our heritage is dead."

"There must be better ways to preserve our heritage than violence," Harry argued. "Some way to bring the Muggle-born into a fuller knowledge of our heritage."

"There probably is, Henry," Casey stated in English, "but now is not the time to argue such points." He turned to Noir and asked in German. "Where you a member of a Circle?"

"Seventh," Noir said, also in English. "I was to leave tomorrow to return to England."

"Oh?" Harry asked, innocently. "You're English?"

"Yes; actually, Parsifal is . . . was my cousin. He asked some of us to come to the Continent to help him meet the right people. I was sent to Paris, which is why I was just a member of the Seventh Circle here."

"So I take it your name is really Black?" Harry asked.

"Oh, yes. Theseus Nigellus Black. My maternal grandfather was Professor Nigellus, who was head of Hogwarts, which I'm certain you've heard of."

"A passing knowledge," Harry acknowledged.

Noir heaved a heavy sigh. "I don't know what to think," he said to Harry. "You might be right, if only we could convince the Mudbloods to go along with us."

"Perhaps it would help if they weren't called Mudbloods," Casey drawled. "In any case, violence only works well against other violence."

Noir shrugged. "I suppose." He stood. "In any event, I have to see what I can do to comfort the survivors of the Inner Circles."

"Did I say something wrong?" Harry asked.

"Nearly," Casey grumbled. "Not as badly as I did, however."

"Why what did you say to him that was so bad?"

"Not him; Meynert. I forgot the full medical uses of chocolate on wizards were only established in 1884, by Meynert." Casey shrugged. "This is why I so seldom go into the past."

"Do you know what relation Noir was to Sirius?"

"Great-great uncle or great-uncle, at a guess." Casey stood. "Come along. We might as well go back to our rooms. We can start to explore Vienna later, say on Tuesday."

## **Chapter XI**

Tuesday, April 26, 1881

The trio stuck to the hotel until Tuesday morning, which pleased Eloise to no end. Harry was proving himself an imaginative and caring lover, and much more entertaining than she had anticipated. She never would have guessed Harry as musical, and he played guitar fairly well, although his singing wasn't the greatest. Lounging on the huge bed while Harry pampered her, made love with her, and played for her made her feel nearly royal.

Harry was a bit disappointed that witches' formal fashions in 1881 were much less revealing than 1913. He was struck again at how different, yet how insatiable, each witch was. Eloise was the most passive, yet thankful, of the four witches, and she was still able to inspire Harry to greater heights of compassionate passion than the other three had, even if the pure lust that Ginny and Daphne had inspired was missing. For the first time, Harry realized that Casey had likely affected them all, at least in the sense of lowering their inhibitions.

Finally, late Tuesday morning, with the assistance of Harry and a house elf, Eloise squeezed back into the elaborate Muggle dress (corset, collapsible high bustle, elaborate hairstyling) of the upper class of the period. As they made their way to the Broken Broomstick, Harry noticed there were more people in Muggle dress than he had seen before, although none were in quite the high-style of fashion Eloise was.

They spent the rest of the day touring around the city. Eloise was enraptured; Harry thought the Vienna of 1881 attractive, but not nearly as much so as the Paris of 1913 had been. They returned to the hotel in the early evening for a light dinner, and then came the process of exchanging Eloise's day costume for an elaborate Muggle evening gown. Even with the help of a house elf, and some from Harry, it was an exhaustive, fairly time-consuming process compared to the standards of the 1990s.

Harry's evening dress was much easier. He did question the medals on his dinner jacket. "Viennese society isn't as martial as the contemporary society in Berlin," Casey told Harry, "but few real gentlemen appear here without decorations, either military or civilian. If any Muggle asks, these are Canadian medals for arctic exploration. Viennese Pure-blood wizards will see that these proclaim you a special red agent of the Cartel, the equivalent of a hit-wizard, who has been awarded several medals for valor -- consider them . . . prenatal awards for your fights against Voldemort at the ends of your First, Second, and Fourth years."

Harry shrugged, and hoped he didn't run into any real Canadian Muggles.

Both Eloise and Harry enjoyed the ball, Eloise even more-so than Harry. It was a middle-rank affair by Viennese standards. She danced nearly every dance between their arrival soon after 9:00 until the last waltz at 12:45 am. Most were with Harry, but Harry gladly relinquished her to other partners, including twice with Casey.

When they were back in their rooms at 1:15 (Casey had arranged a portkey for them from the cloakroom at the grand townhouse where the ball was held to the entrance of the hotel), Harry made certain to massage Eloise's legs and feet before they fell asleep.

Wednesday, April 27, 1881

Eloise slept until nearly noon. She spent the afternoon resting, preparing for that night, when they would go to another Muggle ball. Harry was already gone well before she woke up. Harry spent the late morning and afternoon practicing dueling at a wizarding dueling hall, showing himself very proficient at magical dueling, although still only average at the sabre and other swords.

These two days established the general pattern for the rest of their time in Vienna. Four nights a

week, they went to various balls and dances, ranging from the public waltz halls to two dances at the Palace, where Harry and Eloise were presented to Crown Prince Rudolf. Eloise even managed to have one dance with the twenty-two year old prince. (When she arrived back to 1996, she was most distressed to find out the handsome prince had committed suicide, along with his teen mistress, in 1889.) Eloise was even photographed and etchings of her were printed in several of the fashionable newspapers for her beauty and dress at the great May 1 promenade in the Prater.

Two nights a week, they went to hear a Muggle concert or opera, although that pleased Casey and Harry more than it did the now waltz-loving Eloise. One glorious night, they even attended one of the famous midnight opera balls after the opera, where the Strauss orchestra played. On Sunday nights, Casey took them to hear wizarding folk concerts in the Parsifalplatz, with musicians and poets from all over central and eastern Europe.

Some of the nicer afternoons, when they weren't scheduled to go to an early evening ball or concert, the trio would make it to the Prater, the famed Vienna park, or even to the even more famous Vienna woods. Usually, however, the late afternoons were the time when Harry and Eloise found some time together.

Harry, having gained experience and power, found magical dueling exciting. He worried a bit about how that might translate into in his sixteen year old self, but Casey reassured him that he would find the power already within himself, along with the ability to control that power. It was not enough to convince Harry that he could defeat Voldemort, however, at least not without grave risk to himself. It did make Harry wonder if he might be able to have a career on the dueling circuit, if his hopes of being a professional seeker or an auror fell through.

Harry had lost nearly all traces of the depression and anger that had been threatening his psyche since the murder of Cedric Diggory. After the abuse at the Dursleys and the continual pressure of events at Hogwarts, Harry had lost all his childhood and adolescent senses of wonder and exuberance. He had become partially depressed, and partially a cynical survivor, who was continuing on with his mission because his mission -- fighting Voldemort -- was all he had left. And Harry had never been too confident that he could complete his mission and stop -- kill -- Voldemort, let alone survive the encounter.

Casey was reassuring on those points as well. Even if Harry was not granted more powers, he would still have four more months to hone his current abilities, and those abilities should enable Harry to destroy Voldemort.

But now Harry had gained something more to live for. He was tasting adulthood; he was experiencing lovemaking and great affection, if not love. For the first time, Harry really wondered what kind of life he might be able to lead if Voldemort was destroyed.

He knew he would not want to go through life as a mere celebrity, like Gilderoy Lockheart, even if Harry had largely earned his own fame. Nor, as he neared the end of his two months in Vienna, could he still envision becoming an auror, doing all the mundane work that the job often entailed, especially in peaceful times under unimaginative Ministry officials. He couldn't imagine living life as a Malfoy, supervising his investments and doing nothing to better society. He might be able to have a few seasons of professional Quidditch, but he knew Seekers and Beaters had short careers.

Susan had suggested teaching as a possible career for him; Daphne politics. Eloise wasn't particularly interested in the subject. Ginny had merely said he could do practically anything he put his mind to, which was flattering, but hardly helpful. Harry decided to just enjoy what he was doing, and worry about such questions later.

The Vienna of 1881 was an easy place for people to bury their problems.

Thursday, May 26, 1881

Harry's worries returned to him that morning and afternoon. He had been very successful with his dueling, but for some reason the congratulations he received recently triggered his concerns rather than soothing them. Harry therefore sat and worried about Voldemort and his future. Harry sat in the suite's sitting room, waiting for Eloise to finish dressing for dinner and the opera, wondering if thinking about the subject in Imperial Vienna was wise. Worrying about the future, any future, seemed antithetical. Even in magical Vienna, now that six of 'the Seven' had been dealt with, the future seemed too settled for anyone to worry about. In both the magical and Muggle circles Harry was circulating in, the only concerns seemed to be having a good time and either gaining status or keeping status.

Harry didn't like having most of the status he had back in his real life, and should he destroy Voldemort, he would like it even less. Harry now knew all six girls fairly well, although he would of course get to know Hermione and Luna even better. Daphne seemed to be the only one really interested in his status as such. Ginny had felt a spark for him even before she learned his name, although his fame no doubt had increased her crush for years.

Hermione probably still knew more about Harry status and place in history than anyone. As far as he could tell, she had never let it affect her relations to him, however. Susan and Eloise both seemed interested more in his financial status than his political/social status, if only because they would prefer not living lives of poverty. Luna seemed to care so little for either that Harry wondered if his fame and money might actually hurt any relationship they might have.

"You're looking pensive, Harry," Casey said, coming into the room.

"My time away is more than half over," Harry answered. "In what, three weeks or so? I'll be with Hermione or Luna, and then the other. I'm having fun and all, but then I'll have to live, we'll have to live, with what we've done and experienced. Even if I . . . kill Voldemort and survive, how do I . . . well. . . ."

Casey grinned ruefully. "You modern, sensitive men. Things were a lot simpler, well, nearly always, back in my days!"

Harry smiled back. "Simpler for the men, you mean!"

Casey had to nod. "You're right, of course. So far, at least, I don't think you've caused any damage. And I doubt you would hurt these six girls. You selected very well."

Harry shrugged.

Eloise swept into the room, her opera gown redesigned by the house elves to that it appeared different than the last time she wore it. "Shall we go dine?" she asked. "I know you both like being there for the overture!" She preferred watching the fashionable arrivals, who were often late.

"Not angry about missing the dance at the Baron's anymore?" Harry asked.

"Not really," Eloise answered. "I mean, once we go back, I'll probably never get to waltz like this again, but my feet are a little tired."

"And then there's the Royal Ball tomorrow evening," Casey teased. "You don't want to be tired if the Crown Prince decides to honor you with a dance this time!"

"True," Eloise responded seriously. A picture formed in Harry's head, of a future where Eloise would keep him waiting as she prepared for an opening, wondering what VIP she might be impressing that night with her beauty.

Harry kicked himself for being unfair.

"I wonder who we'll see tonight!" Eloise enthused as they approached the stairs.

Harry and Casey sat outside of the more stylish café in the Parsifalplatz, both drinking hot chocolate. "When do we leave?" Harry asked.

"Bored?" Casey asked.

Harry frowned. "That's not the right word, but I can't find the right one in any of these languages."

"Is it Eloise?"

"Partially, maybe even mostly. I mean, Daphne liked to go to concerts and dances, but we managed to talk. All Eloise likes to talk about is the last dance, the next dance, and fashion." He shrugged. "I mean, I like dancing, but we haven't even . . . been more than affectionate in over a week, because she's so tired in the afternoons."

"Well, she's looking forward to the open ball on Thursday, so you may tell her today that we'll be leaving late Saturday morning."

"Thank you," Harry said. "It's getting difficult not to seem bored."

"Not angry?"

Harry looked at Casey with a puzzled expression. "Why would I be angry?"

Casey smiled. "No good reason at all, my boy." 'No,' Casey thought, 'Harry wouldn't get angry for something like that. And his greatest concern is not BEING bored, but allowing Eloise to SEE he's bored.'

"Harry," Casey said thoughtfully, "why don't you take this week off. Spend the mornings walking around the Platz, spend all the afternoons with Eloise. Have a nice, relaxing time."

"All right," Harry said a little doubtfully.

"Stop in at the desk and order Eloise some hot chocolate and go wake her up." Casey stood and patted Harry's shoulder. "I'll see you both at dinner. We'll make this an enjoyable last week in Vienna."

And it was.



## **Chapter XII**

"Good afternoon, Hermione."

"Hello," Hermione said coolly.

"You have a question before I start preparing you?"

Hermione frowned. "I hope you won't send us too far back in time."

"You and Harry, or Harry and anyone?"

"All, I guess," Hermione answered. "I mean, you weren't clear if we are going to live as Muggles or as wizards, or a bit of both." Casey said nothing, so Hermione went on. "If we're living in the Muggle world, whole or in part, well, pre-1920, there's no real home refrigeration. Some homes only had gas lights and heat; some still used coal stoves, or wood out in the country. Before 1890, indoor plumbing is going to be rare. And, before 1930, if we're not to call attention to ourselves, we'd need, well. . . ."

"Servants," Casey supplied.

"Exactly. And the fashions before the First World War! I don't want to wear a corset!"

"Fine," Casey said with a grin, "no corsets."

"Great," Hermione huffed. "If Harry knew fluent French, you'd probably send us back to the court of Louis the Sixteenth or something, where the clothes are even more uncomfortable."

"I gave Harry fluent knowledge of several languages, including French. How about the late Consulate and early Empire, so you can show off that wonderful bosom of yours," Casey teased.

Hermione looked puzzled, and then remembered for a short time the French fashion had been long flowing dresses -- but with the breasts bared. "Please," she begged, blushing, "not that."

"I snuck a peak at your school records and some of your essays. I understand you're interested in druidism. Perhaps I should send you back to the last great justice festival, so that you can see the condemned burned alive in the wicker men? Or perhaps you'd like to see a show at the coliseum? Or a genuine witch burning, even if the poor woman was not a genuine witch? Would you care to see a slave auction in ancient Athens? I understand you love reading Plato and Aristotle. Instead of Harry's wife, you could be Harry's whore, since wives were never allowed to meet the good citizens. Shall it be a slave auction in Rome instead? Or Constantinople, either before or after the Ottoman conquest? Or in Charleston? Or in Bristol?"

Hermione, nearly in tears, stamped her foot from frustration. "Why are you saying these things?"

"Because you think you understand history, and you don't. You understand the surface, the political history and a little of the social and intellectual, probably better than any student your age. To understand history means yes, you know that political history you know so well, but you must learn to use it as a framework. You study until you know the period as if you lived in it yourself as well as understanding it through the lens of historical perspective. I'm not saying this to discourage you, but to remind you how far you have to go."

Hermione sniffled.

"Anyway, enough abuse." Hermione gave him a nasty look. "Here is you just before your twenty-fourth birthday."

Hermione circled around the figure.

"No comment?"

"I was hoping the hair would straighten out. Nice firm bust, if a bit larger than I thought I'd turn out."

Casey shrugged. "A nice full C."

"Other than that, it's what I expected, even if I'd hoped I grow more than an inch more. And I doubt if I'll be in this good of a physical condition." She turned and saw Casey staring at her. "What?"

"Why are you here?"

"What do you mean?"

"While you love Harry, I don't think you are not totally in love with Harry. You love, or claim to love, someone called Ron. You do not strike me as promiscuous; why are you here? Are you that jealous of Harry that you can't allow him to find love without you?"

Hermione flushed. "I . . . I love Ron, but I also love Harry. I can't have both. Ron would never stand for it, for one thing, even if there weren't any number of other problems. This is the one chance I will likely have to love Harry like I wish I could."

"Honest, at least to a point. I like that. So, I guess I shall have to send you to a time and place where you won't be too uncomfortable."

"Too uncomfortable?"

Casey smiled. "I can't send you to the future, and there is no time in the past where a liberated woman such as yourself could be totally content."

Hermione gave him a dirty look. "Why are you doing this? It's not because . . . I mean you seem to like Harry, but it's not because. . . ."

"Because?"

"Because Harry has to die to kill Voldemort?" she whispered.

Casey looked at the earnest young woman, tears glistening in her eyes. She was a strong, intelligent woman, who kept her emotions under strict control most of the time. But she couldn't when it came to Harry. And she was right. He **liked** Harry, much more than he had anticipated. "Should I find him worthy of the power I'm thinking of bestowing, Harry may die while destroying Voldemort, but the odds are very much against it."

Hermione sighed with relief.

"I'm doing it in part because it amuses me to do so. At my age, I must take my amusements as they come. I've been living as a Muggle, and so don't get to stretch my powers often. I am doing this because Harry is the first one who has come here who deserves anything from me since Merlin, and because he's had such a lonely life. And I'm doing it because all six of you want to, even if five of you think this will likely be your only chance of having Harry to yourselves, or perhaps your only chance of making Harry love you."

"So I guess I have to decide. Don't I?"

"You do. However, I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

"I have never willingly abandoned Harry, and I never will."

"Good. I tell you what. Where would you like to go?"

"Where? You mean. . . ."

"If it's any time I've lived, and near any place I've ever been, you and Harry can go. But where would you both be comfortable, and have things of interest to do?"

Hermione's face was blank. "I . . . I don't know."

Casey smiled. "You think on it, and I'll take Harry on to his next two months."

"Wait!" Casey gave Hermione a questioning look. "Where has Harry been?"

"Hermione!" Casey mocked scolded.

"well, I wouldn't want to repeat anything!" Hermione said, managing to look innocent.

"Yeah, right," Casey said with a scornful full-American accent. "Harry and Ginny were in America in the summer of 1969. They travelled from the Oregon coast to the Woodstock festival. Next, Harry and Daphne went to Paris in 1913. From my perspective, Harry is currently with Susan, on a rustic retreat. My intention was to take you next, then take Harry and Eloise to fin-de-siecle Vienna, or perhaps a few decades earlier than that. I will finish with Harry and Luna. I am still deciding between three scenarios for them. Shall I take you next, or go ahead with Harry and Eloise?"

"I can't imagine either of them in Vienna," Hermione said. "It's difficult to imagine Harry in any of those situations, which I supposed merely shows my lack of imagination."

Casey smiled. A wave of his hand brought the nude model of adult Harry into being. A second brought Ginny. A third put them into their clothes at Woodstock. "And now?"

"They do look right," Hermione admitted.

Three more waves banished Ginny's model, brought Daphne's model and dressed them for the ballet premier. A few more did the same with Eloise.

"That's Eloise?" Hermione said in amazement.

"Yes, she develops quite a bit, doesn't she? Harry will not doubt be impressed."

"Boys," Hermione sniffed.

Casey smiled. "So, no ideas?"

"Where would Harry be able to learn something about himself, and I could just learn?"

"I have an idea, but you would have to tolerate slaves and brutality." Hermione looked torn. "It will bring you little comfort, but remember, they've all been dead along time. There is little you will be able to do."

"We'd be going to Rome, correct?" Hermione asked.

"That would be about the only place you could go, unless you'd like a temporary sex change." He pulled out his wand, and with a wave Hermione became a male. She gasped.

"I don't think Harry swings in that way," Casey commented, "but if he's at all inclined. . . ." Male Hermione was youthened and feminized a bit. "I could make some general inquires."

"Rome will be fine," Hermione said in a very small voice. "As for the other . . . if you could. . . . It might be best. . . . I wouldn't want him to be . . . uncomfortable."

"I'll take care of things."

Casey disappeared. "Oh, goddesses!" Hermione wailed, switching to Latin, "what have I done?"

Hermione paced for half an hour before Casey came back. "What did he say? Does he hate me? Why did I say all that?" she nearly wailed.

Casey smiled. "This is what he said." A wave of his hand produced Harry's voice: "Interested in being with Hermione, yes. I love her and love being with her. I'll go to Rome with her as a him, but no, no sex."

"Of course he wouldn't! Who said anything about sex!" Hermione exclaimed.

Casey merely looked at her. "Oh," she said. "Alright! It was a stupid idea! You just tempted me to show me I was avoiding the issue!"

"And what is the issue?"

"That I wish Harry and Ron were bisexual, and in love with each other as well as me."

"Are you by any chance bisexual?"

"NO!"

"You don't have to be so emphatic. If you can't imagine sharing Harry with Luna, and Luna with Harry, then you shouldn't think about you, Ron, and Harry so much. I don't know this Ron at all, but I have seen no evidence of Harry having any homosexual interests at all."

"But even if I did . . . think of girls every once in a while," Hermione protested, blushing a little, "even if I could share Harry with Luna, that wouldn't help me be with Harry and Ron. If I were Harry's lover, I could never be close to Ron. He couldn't accept it. If I ever fully become Ron's, I know Harry and I can stay close."

'Fully become Ron's?' Casey thought. 'That doesn't sound right, coming from her.' He went on. "Even if you're right, and since I don't know Ron I'll take your word for it, that is not the question before us. The question is. . . ."

"Do I want to risk falling so deeply in love with Harry that I can never be happy without him." Hermione jumped in and finished.

"One possibility. Another is, getting the feeling out of your system; living the fantasy, so that no matter what happens, you will have had two months of together." Casey smiled. "Who knows, maybe you will find you don't love Harry, and can go to Ron without these feelings interfering with that relationship."

"Those are things to think about," Hermione admitted.

Casey looked at her, getting some very strange images from her. The situation was much more complex than he had realized. "Well, let me check on Harry. See you soon."

Casey was back in fifteen minutes. "Is it time?" Hermione asked in a small voice.

"Not at all. Harry has just arrived in Vienna. We had an interesting discussion." Casey waved his hand, and the conversation replayed:

*"May I talk with you . . . privately?"* Hermione heard Harry ask.

*"Of course. Eloise is still getting ready. What do you need to talk about?"*

*"Hermione. Does she want to specifically go to Rome?"*

*"No; overall, I would have to say no. It does meet the parameters she suggested, however. Do you have an alternative?"*

*"Could we go to the cabin? In the late spring or summer?"*

*"Hermione does not strike me as the domestic type."* She gave Casey a dirty look.

*"I can do most of that. You must have a huge library Hermione could borrow books from. That's what would please her most."* Hermione had to nod at that.

*"And what about you?"*

*"What about me? I'm sure I'll be practicing dueling here, and maybe where ever you send me with Luna, and since Luna is last, that's the most important. And I'll probably be doing at least as much practicing there as I did this last month."*

*"You and Susan must have had a fantastic time together, if you want to duplicate it with Hermione."*

Hermione gave Casey a dirty look as Harry said, *"Don't be disgusting! I can sleep on one the large*

*sofas if Hermione doesn't want to be . . . close."*

*"You don't love her? You're not attracted to her?"*

*"I thought Hermione was attractive, if bossy, from the first time I saw her. Do I love her? That's like asking someone if they love their hand. I could not more easily live without Hermione, or Ron, in my life than I could without a hand. And she and Ron seem to belong together, as a couple. This would be the one chance we have to . . . be intimate, but THAT will be Hermione's decision."*

*"My gods, you're serious, are you?"*

*"I am. Look, I don't know how you're testing me to see if I'm worth helping, but don't hurt Hermione to do it."*

*"Are you sure you don't love her?"*

*"I think we would drive each other nuts if we lived together in a one-on-one relationship of any kind for the rest of our lives. I'd be better off with Luna." Hermione frowned. "But yes, I love her. I adore Hermione. She's sexy as hell. But tell me, does that mean we'd be good for each other?"*

*"Perhaps not. I shall put the idea to Hermione. I'll give her three choices: Rome as a female; Rome as a male; or the cabin."*

Casey waved his hand. "Well, those are your choices. I will tell you right now, you had best plan on sleeping with Harry, unless you're male. I managed to look into his mind. He will feel heart-broken if you reject him, although he will never admit it, even to himself. Still that, like your destination, is now your choice."

"I shall give you access to my library if you choose the cabin. You will no doubt learn slightly more in terms of what you study than you would in Rome. You will learn more about life in Rome. If you go to Rome or the cabin as a male, you will learn about the male sex drive."

Casey conjured up an hourglass. "You're just putting things off out of nerves, now. So, the sand runs out in one hour. You will first say either 'Rome' or 'cabin,' then either 'male' or 'female.' If you say nothing, you will be a slave in the most disgusting dockyard brothel over the last two thousand years I can find until Harry can discover and rescue you -- and I assure you, that might not happen before the two months run out."

"Wait!" Hermione shouted, "there must be some other choice! Some place . . . where we can live like two normal people in a normal community!"

"Normal? Or Muggle? And what would Harry do there for two months, if there wasn't someplace for him to at least fly and practice his dueling?" Hermione had no answer. "If I think of someplace, I'll send you there, but you had best plan on saying one of those choices, or else you end up in the brothel." He started the sand and disappeared.

Hermione swallowed nervously, and waited for the sand to run out. After half an hour, she stopped thinking and started to argue her options aloud. As she sometimes did when she had too much time to think, Hermione's arguments became more and more baroque and more and more difficult to conclude.

Finally, as the time had nearly run out, Hermione stopped her pacing and mutterings. She looked at the ceiling and took a deep breath. "If you can hear me, you bastard, then I get it! I know you can do to me whatever you want. You can make that body, and this body, do whatever you want! But you can't really control the inner me! The only reason I'm making a choice is to prevent Harry from having to rescue me! I will NOT be his plaything willingly. I will never just be the toy of some one ever again! And even if you presented my naked body, made willing by your power, Harry would still respect my personhood!"

The sand ran out, and Hermione made her choice.

Hermione caught sight of a bare concrete floor just as her nude body hit it.

## **Chapter XIII**

"Well, Harry, here we are again."

"It looks the same," Harry said, looking around the basement of the bungalow.

Casey gave Harry a twisted smile. "Since you left here all of thirty minutes ago, it should."

"Where's Hermione?"

"Ah," Casey said, "now there is a tale. She's a feisty one, that's for sure. She actually managed to anger me, which is NOT a good thing. I thought of various ways of punishing her, but in the end, I decided on just a little humiliation. I decided not to severely punish her partially because what she said was mostly true, partially from pity, and partially because I have come to like and respect you, Harry."

Harry had been on the verge of losing his temper, but managed to hold it in. "Why pity?" he managed to ask.

"Very wise not to attack me, Harry," Casey told him. "The Harry who started off would have been yelling at me by now, at the least. Now, nearly the last words Hermione said was that I could fling her naked body at your feet, and you would still respect her even if I made that body promiscuous. Well, I haven't done that, of course, but that opened a previously-hidden part of her mind to me. I leave it to you to discover what she has experienced; she both aches to tell you and is terrified you will find out. I will leave in a moment and you may go to your friend. I shall be back on the morning of March first. In two mornings, a booklist shall appear for Hermione to peruse. The pantry, cupboards, and refrigerator are full."

Harry nodded.

"I suggest you take Hermione a robe and slippers, or at least your cloak. Her naked body arrived in the woodshed nearly ten minutes ago. She seems to be in some emotional distress. Her wand and effects will appear with the book list." Casey disappeared.

Harry stared in shock for a few seconds, made a movement towards the stairs, and then stopped. They had allowed the fire in the woodstove to die down before leaving and had cleaned out the fireplace. If Hermione was out in the woodshed, where it was well below freezing, he had to have things well-prepared. Harry took a few seconds to rake the ashes to reveal the coals and the set some more wood in the stove.

Harry quickly ran up the cellar steps, noting the absence of any clothes other than his own. He grabbed his cloak but went on into the bathroom. His wand tapped the proper locales, and the bath started to fill with hot water. Harry knew it had an automatic stop, so he merely tapped the heating pipe to pull the hot air into the room. He then rushed out to the woodshed.

The cold air hit Harry. Harry then remembered it wasn't just chilly, but that it was about minus 10 C. He burst into the woodshed in a panic. Hermione, who had been laying on the freezing floor, crying, sat up and screamed in terror.

"Hermione!" Harry called. "It's me!" He quickly covered Hermione with his cloak and scooped her into his arms.

"Harry!" Hermione wailed. She grabbed a hold of Harry. "I was so afraid he'd sent me somewhere . . . horrible."

"No, we're safe in a mountain valley in North America."

"We're not in ancient Rome either?"

"No, now let me get you inside. You're shivering like mad."

As Harry took Hermione out the door, a hard sleet had started to fall. Harry carried Hermione into the house, and then ran out, despite Hermione's protests, to load up on firewood and coal. He knew it would become very icy very quickly, and didn't want to have to get wood or coal that afternoon or evening. In between trips, Harry stopped to reassure Hermione, who was crying again, huddled on the kitchen floor.

Hermione rarely cried, and whenever she did, it unnerved Harry almost as much as it used to Ron. After six trips, Harry guided Hermione to the bath room. "Please don't leave me again," Hermione asked. She sat on the steps going up to the tub, rocking back and forth and shivering under the cloak as Harry checked the water and checked to see if warm air was flowing into the room.

Harry quickly stripped, tapped the pipe to continue the hot air, and then pulled Hermione, whose skin was still very chilled, up to him. He carefully guided her into the hot water, which made her gasp. Harry settled back into the deepest portion of the large tub, and wrapped himself around Hermione's body. The tub was inclined there so Harry could lean back, and, with the water up to their chins, Hermione slowly started to warm up.

After more than five minutes, Hermione shivered again, but turned to Harry and kissed him passionately, deeply, thankfully.

Harry returned the kiss. Then Hermione shivered again, and it wasn't from passion.

Harry broke the kiss and stood up. "Stay here; I'll be right back."

Hermione watched Harry step out of the water and dry off with a look of fear on her face. He tapped some of the areas around faucets. Hermione felt some of the water drain out from behind her, while even hotter water came in from in front. Harry threw on his robe, and went out the door.

He was back some fifteen or twenty minutes later, with a robe and socks over one arm and a spoon and bottle in the other. "Casey must really be angry with you," Harry said. "I had a whole wardrobe before, but this is the only other indoor robe I have now, and you don't have anything. I only have six pairs of socks!" Harry took off his robe, and Hermione blushed as she realized where her eyes had again strayed.

"I built up the fire in the woodstove in the cellar -- you'll be nice and toasty there. I also started a fire in the fireplace in the parlor." Harry walked down into the pool, which to Hermione's discomposure put Harry's privates almost at eye level until Harry knelt down. "I'm glad he didn't remove this."

Hermione saw it was a bottle of pepper-up. She wrinkled her nose.

"It's not THAT bad, and you don't want to spend the next week sick, or worse, rely on my potion-making to make you feel better."

"That's true," Hermione agreed.

"You'll have to sit up."

Hermione grimaced and sat up straight, lifting her breasts above the water. Harry's eyes went large, but he said nothing, merely feeding Hermione the spoonful of medicine. Her face went red and steam came out of her ears, meaning it was working.

Harry sat the bottle against the wall, gathered Hermione back into a warm embrace. "Did you mean that kiss?"

"Yes; yes I did, Harry." Hermione's right hand grasped Harry gently, while her left pulled Harry's shoulder until he was close enough for another passionate kiss.

"What do we tell Ron?" Harry asked a few moments later.



After a few moments of thought, Hermione confirmed her decision, steeled herself, and asked. "What do you know about Ron and myself? As a couple, I mean."

"I know you've been dancing around each other since the Yule Ball," Harry answered. "I know Ron is still jealous about you and Viktor. I've never seen you hold hands or kiss, but I've always thought you might be in private, possibly as early as last summer, when you were spending time together at Grimmauld Place."

"Ron is very possessive, and even domineering," Hermione said slowly, her eyes averted. "The night after the Yule Ball, he and I both found ourselves back in the Common Room, alone. We argued very long and very brutally." Hermione tightened her hug around Harry. "In the end, Ron cast a silencing spell, pulled up my robe, pulled down my knickers, and spanked my arse so hard I could hardly sit down the next two days. Then . . . then he raped my mouth and throat. And not only didn't I report him, I came back for more the next night, and the night after that. He did it at least once every week the rest of the entire spring term. At Grimmauld Place, he started tying me up and sodomizing me. He's never deliberately helped me to an orgasm. He just loves to dominate me, and to hurt me. And I liked it, in general -- well, I went along with it, anyway -- but he's been getting too rough. But I can't go through life being just a sex toy for Ron Weasley, or anyone else for that matter! I would love to have that element in my sex life, but it would be better not to have a sex life than to just have that kind of abuse."

Harry was understandably angry. "I'll kill him . . . no, I won't, I'll bind him, shove a stick up his arse, and horsewhip him!"

"Harry, no!" Hermione pleaded. "I allowed this to happen. Help me break away from Ron, but don't hurt him."

"Why, Hermione? Why did you allow it? Why do you like it?"

"In part, because I did love him," Hermione said simply. "In part, because it's fun not to have to be in control all the time. In part because the light pain and being helpless turns me on; I don't know why. It may not be normal, but that seems to be the way I'm built. On the other hand, I've never had much physical affection before Ron; maybe that's part of it. Not that my parents are in any way abusive or neglectful, but neither are they very . . . physically affectionate." Hermione shrugged. "Or maybe that's just excuses, and I'm just built to enjoy it this way. It doesn't matter. Love me both ways, Harry. Help me understand myself."

"Do you . . . stimulate yourself while Ron is pleasuring himself?" Harry demanded.

Hermione shook her head. "No, he won't let me."

Harry took her chin in his thumb and forefinger. "I'll let you. Shall I show you how I've learned a woman can be pleased?"

Hermione thought about what she wanted. "Stand up first, and lean against the wall. When we're done, help me orgasm."

"Alright," Harry said. "What did you have in mind?"

Hermione knelt in front of Harry and placed his hands on the back of her head.

Over an hour later, Hermione sat on a sofa cushion near the woodstove in the cellar, wearing Harry's socks and robe. She was leaning back against Harry's legs, while Harry brushed her hair with the brush from his kit.

"Are you alright?" Harry asked.

"Does the fact that I liked it both ways make me . . . odd?" Hermione asked.

"I wasn't too rough?"

"No, that would have been Ron at his most gentle," Hermione said. "It felt . . . right."

"I wasn't . . . too large?"

"You're larger than Ron, but that just made it better. And what you did after . . . that was really wonderful."

"I never realized how . . . well, what kind of relation you and Ron had gotten yourselves into," Harry said.

"I think Cassiwallan saw it," Hermione said. "He made me see the difference between submission and abuse by threatening me with the latter. I wanted to be submissive with Ron, and we let it devolve into use and abuse, in part because it started off that way. I could have stopped it -- I SHOULD have stopped it -- and I didn't, Harry. It's partly my fault."

"Do you watch much Muggle television during the summers, Hermione?"

"No, not really, why?"

"Aunt Petunia always has it on, although it doesn't seem she actually listens to it. And I know, what's on the telly isn't the most accurate sort of information. But from what I gather, many abuse victims think they're at fault. So just remember, it may be partly your fault, but it's mostly Ron's. And we shouldn't let ourselves fall into the same trap."

"What do you suggest?"

"Tomorrow is technically Thursday, the First of January, 1948. Pick any two days of the week other than Thursday and Fridays, and, on those two days, if you want to, we can play those kind of games. We'll have to decide on some rules, and maybe pick a safe word for you. That's a word. . . ."

"I KNOW what it means, Harry. I just surprised you know."

"Well, people do tend to give Dudley a lot of books, and they just get dumped into his 'spare' room, which is where I sleep. Someone gave him a complete set of Anne Rice books, including some that she wrote under other names. . . ."

"Exit to Eden and the Sleeping Beauty books? Oh, I LOVE them!"

"Maybe you should have been dating Malfoy instead of Ron," Harry teased. "He's probably a natural."

"No, I think he'd carry the torture even further than Ron did. The worst Ron did was melted wax after the battle at the Ministry -- I was too injured for much more than that until just before we left, that's when the spankings restarted -- although he was really starting to bruise and burn too much. I think that would be were Malfoy would start. I don't want to be mutilated, Harry. And I don't like the humiliation Ron was handing out. It had stopped being a game to him, and he was enjoying things too much. When we get back, if we're together at all, I'll have to loan you my copies of The Story of O and The Image. You can see the main characters there going over the line and not finding their way back. I might like reading about extreme relationships, but I wouldn't want to undergo them."

Harry, remembering what Casey had said, steered clear of the topic of future relationships. "Uncle Vernon actually has them, along with lots of other dirty books, squirreled away in what he likes to call his 'workbench' in the cellar. He can't keep magazines there, because Dudley started pinching them over my first Christmas at Hogwarts, but Dudley doesn't bother the books."

Hermione realized she had partially strayed into the wrong territory. "Harry, can you help me stay free of Ron, without hurting him?"

"If you're serious. I wouldn't want to be part of some game to get him to punish you more."

Hermione turned around and knelt in front of Harry. "I promise you, I'm not. I hope I can stay Ron's

friend, and that you and he will stay friends, too, but I can't go back to having a relationship with him. It would get too rough."

"In that case, I promise you I'll help." Harry stood. "Let's bank the fires and get some sleep. Tomorrow is the start of a new life for Hermione Granger."

Hermione took his hand. "Thank you, Harry. You will always be my best friend, no matter what."

Ron Weasley was busy de-gnoming the back garden at the Burrow. He was all alone and he was bored. Ginny was off with Harry on some adventure, and Hermione was apparently gone as well. There was little he could do about Ginny, but Ron was thinking about all the pleasant ways he could tease and torture Hermione for going away with Harry while leaving him behind. She had been injured too severely at the Department of Mysteries to discipline properly at the end of term, although the hot wax had been fun.

"I'm sure it was fun . . . for you," a menacing voice stated from behind Ron's back.

Ron swung around, realizing as he did so that he didn't have his wand.

"A wand would do you no good, Ron Weasley. My name is Cassiwallan. Does that mean anything to you?"

"No; should it?"

"If History of Magic were properly taught at Hogwarts, yes. Let me tell you what Harry and his friends are going through. And what I, and Harry, and learned from Miss Granger."

Ron went very pale.

"Then, I shall be telling your parents and Dumbledore. And then," Cassiwallan added, looking more menacing than anyone should ever look, "we'll start discussing what to do to you before Harry gets his hands on you."

"I'm not afraid of Harry!" Ron managed to protest.

"Considering Harry's powers, that is NOT wise. His first inclination was to magically bind you, shove a stick up your arse, and horsewhip you. But not to worry; you won't get off that easily."

## **Chapter XIV**

Hermione woke up and stretched, feeling more at ease in her body than she had in over a year and a half. She stretched, warm and secure under a heavy quilt, and wondered why she was nude. She never slept in the nude. Still, it was nice to feel so comfortable, no matter why she felt that way.

Then she remembered why. Hermione's eyes flew open. "Oh, my!" Hermione sat up and looked around. She was alone in the large bed. She remembered snuggling up to Harry when they had retired early the night before, and then nothing until now. No nightmares of cruel laughter or wizards punishing her. Just warm accepting oblivion.

Hermione looked around, and couldn't see a clock. She also couldn't see any note from Harry. She got out of bed and picked up Harry's too-long extra robe. After a quick trip to the WC, she went to investigate the house, and to see where Harry was.

The fireplace had been cleaned out, and a new fire laid. There was a note for her on the kitchen table, saying Harry was out flying ('Of course,' Hermione thought) and that her breakfast was in the oven. She also saw bread ready for toasting and found milk in the large old-style fridge.

Hermione poured herself a glass of milk and ate the omelet and a slice of toast, wondering what she had gotten herself into. Her feeling of security was gone. She had never felt so helpless, and this was not a good feeling. Throughout her experiences with Ron, Hermione had been able to keep her pride intact outside their sessions. That was pretty much gone, now. Her secret was out. Harry knew, and Casey either knew or would find out. She just hoped few other people would learn about her . . . predilections.

The kitchen was fortunately Muggle, although old fashioned. Hermione cleaned up, and then took an inventory of the kitchen. The cellar was a bit more interesting. A row of bookshelves ran across one side of the cellar (she was not to know that a number of the books were newly placed just for her). Hermione found that while many of books were general, and slightly out-dated for the most part, a few were rare and just the ones she'd wanted to get a hold of for years. After a few minutes, Hermione went back upstairs to get the pair of socks she'd worn the evening before.

That's where Harry found Hermione a short time later, in the cellar, studying while listening to Muggle radio. "Happy New Year," Harry said.

"Thank you," Hermione said, turning the radio off. "I hope we both have a better year, once we go back."

Harry handed Hermione his wand. "Do you want to try to transfigure something for your self?"

She shook her head and handed it back. "No, I'll start my penance. I'm not certain how I can regain myself. I've really messed up my life."

Harry looked at Hermione. "Perhaps we should keep our hands to ourselves."

Hermione thought about that for a few moments. "You mean, treat this like I'm an addict?"

"Something like that. How about we try it for two weeks. I can sleep on one of the sofas."

Hermione thought about that more quickly, and said, "Two weeks, yes; two beds, no." Hermione teared up a little. "I need you near me, Harry. Please; don't withhold yourself from me. We can be close without . . . sex."

"Deal. Do you want to read by yourself, or would you mind if I played the guitar?"

"Since when do you play the guitar?"

"Since Susan taught me. I actually have something of a knack for it."

Hermione forced a smile. "Play away. It won't bother me."

As Harry played a medley of waltzes, Bach, opera, rock, and magical ballads, Hermione decided she shouldn't be jealous of the other girls, just happy she had time with her best friend.

Hermione spent the next two weeks deep in study. Most of her time was spent with rare volumes from Casey's library. Part of her time was spent learning basic household spells from Harry. Part of her time was spent studying Harry.

However, her second largest chunk of time was spent studying herself. To the Hermione of two summers before, her choices with Ron would have been unimaginable. She had to explain those choices to herself. She had to explain what had happened, what she had liked, and why she had gone along with the parts that she hadn't liked by any standards.

It would have been easiest to simply blame Ron and try walk to away from her past. Hermione refused to take the easy way; she knew that burying her problems wouldn't work in the long run. She could therefore apportion most of the blame to Ron, but far from all of it. Some of it she worked through silently to herself. Most of it, however, she talked through with Harry. Harry wasn't able to contribute very much, but he was a good listener. And, with sex off the table for those two weeks, Hermione could accept Harry's physical comforting, which he was VERY good at. If she had partially accepted Ron's rough sex because she wanted to be close to someone, she found just being held by Harry as he stroked her hair was much more enjoyable in many ways, and emotionally much more rewarding.

Every night, as Hermione cuddled up next to Harry's warm presence, she felt just a little more secure, a little more disgusted by her more extreme behaviors with Ron, a little more in love with Harry. And, although sex with Harry was out, snogging was not after a day or two. Hermione found herself wishing she could at least relieve the tensions growing within her, but she interpreted the ban on sex as absolute.

Thursday, January 15, 1948

"Good morning, Harry, did you have a good flight?"

"Good flying and good practicing," Harry answered, carefully dropping a load of wood near the wood stove. "Are you sure you don't want to launch some attacks? I can use the practice against a good opponent."

"Considering your recent dueling experience, I still don't think I'd be much of an opponent," Hermione told Harry yet again.

Harry shrugged. "It's my turn to cook; would you like anything special for lunch or dinner?"

"No; I'd like to talk with you for a few minutes."

Harry shrugged again, and followed Hermione up the stairs and into the parlor. He sat next to Hermione on the largest sofa at her gesture.

"Harry," Hermione said a bit shyly, "we've been together two weeks."

"So we have," Harry agreed.

Hermione sought out his eyes. "Are you angry with me, or ashamed of me, Harry?"

"Of course I'm not," Harry answered. "Ron took all, or at least most, of the initiative away from you. Anything we do is up to you, Hermione. I may say no, but I am not going to ask. We don't have to do anything more, if you don't feel like it. I would hope we could at least avoid . . . anything coercive. My first idea wasn't my best one."

Hermione nodded. "No force, no violence, no bondage, no pain, no real . . . roughness." Hermione

placed a hand on Harry's arm. "But please, Harry. Take my virginity. Now; here."

"Are you certain?"

Hermione stood and let her gown drop onto the floor. She was now wearing nothing but the slippers she had gotten on her third day, along with the rest of her wardrobe and her wand. She slipped off her slippers, laid out her robe to protect the sofa, and then leaned back on the sofa. "I'm certain, Harry. Let's make love."

Harry smiled and stood up, slowly peeling off his clothes. Hermione returned the smile. The next six weeks would be fun.

"Hello, Hermione."

Hermione took a deep breath and stretched. She looked around the small cavern room. It didn't seem nearly as oppressive had it had a subjective two months before. "Hello, Casey."

"Feeling better about yourself?"

"A lot better. Thank you for leaving us alone." She looked at Casey. "You didn't really leave us alone, did you?"

"I didn't interfere or visit you, but no, I did not leave you entirely alone. I therefore overheard your confession of your relationship with Ron Weasley. Only his parents and Dumbledore have been made aware of the situation. He will not be imprisoned or otherwise officially punished. However, he will NOT be returning to Hogwarts. Dumbledore will be arranging a transfer to the Matilda Academy of Magic." Casey smiled nastily. "Do you know of it?"

"No, not really," Hermione had to admit. "I know the name, and that's about it, other than it's somewhere in Australia."

"Despite the name, it's an all-boys school in the Australian outback," Casey told her. "He will be repeating the second half of his Fifth year, although he will not have to retake any O.W.L.s he did well in."

"How can the Weasleys afford that?" Hermione asked.

"I'm taking care of the costs, although he will NOT becoming home for the Yule holidays." Casey shrugged. "He doesn't seem like an evil boy. Perhaps he can straighten himself out."

Hermione was glad that Harry's accounts would not get stuck with the charges, and that Ron would have a chance to rebuild his life. "And what about me?" Hermione asked.

"I informed your parents that you went through an abusive relationship, without giving away the details. They are arranging to send you to what they believe is a Muggle counselor. In actuality, she is a Squib. I will brief her before your first meeting with her. After that, it's up to you. I am very powerful, but I am not a god."

"Thank you." Hermione looked Casey right in the eye. "Is Harry with Luna yet?"

"Not yet. He is spending what to him is a subjective day getting ready to tackle his last adventure. Still, in real time, it will all be over in less than an hour. If you have no objection, I will tell Harry about all the arrangements."

"Of course," Hermione said. "It would be . . . silly for me to keep it from him, especially considering all he knows anyway. And I hope never to keep a secret from Harry again, no matter what our relationship might be."

"He is an amazing boy in some ways, isn't he?" Casey said. "Intelligent, but no intellectual. As self-

absorbed as any teen-aged boy, and yet caring. And very likeable."

"So, you'll help him?"

"I have helped him. By this time tomorrow, in Harry's subjective time-line, he will be well-able to defeat Voldemort."

"But does he HAVE to kill? Could you do it in such a way that the prophecy is fulfilled? Don't make Harry a killer, unless you have to," Hermione pleaded.

"I shall consider it. Good day to you. I shall see you in two months, or less than an hour, depending on how you wish to look at things." Casey disappeared.

Hermione sat down, and started figuring out how she should approach her parents, the therapist, and above all, Harry.

## **Chapter XV**

"Good afternoon, Luna."

"Hello," Luna answered absently.

"No questions? No statements?"

Luna smiled her small smile. "I believe I am destined to be with Harry. Perhaps I merely foresaw this two month excursion; perhaps it meant more. In any case, where Harry goes, I go. The same is true of Hermione and Ginny to a great degree. We love Harry. We are bound to Harry. Only one of us can spend our lives with him as a full partner; the others will be friends and supporters. So, I am taking this chance to be with him, and I'll have my answer."

Bemused, Casey apparated Luna's future self. She glanced at it. "Is that really me, or your concept of me?" 23 year old Luna was an inch taller, and still thin.

"That should roughly be you. Now I remind you, this is not totally real. You will have the memories, but your bodies will be just as they are now. You are a virgin. You will remain one, except in your memories, assuming you and Harry decide to make love. Do you want the adventure, or not?"

"You've said that to the others. Very rehearsed." Luna cocked her head to the right and looked at Casey. "I'm last, aren't I?"

"You are." Casey was impressed, knowing this was more than a guess.

Luna just smiled and looked at Casey. Then her smile faded. "Hermione told Harry about her secret life with Ron, didn't she?" She frowned. "This might change things."

Casey was floored. "How did you know?"

"About Ronald abusing Hermione? I didn't even guess until just after Christmas. I knew there was a dark side to Ronald, of course, but I didn't know it was directed against Hermione until I saw the way they looked at each other just after we returned from the Christmas holidays. It did cure me of my childhood infatuation with him, but I didn't think I could tell anyone. Then, while they were in the infirmary in June, I went to visit. I overheard Ronald tell Hermione . . . how he planned to torture her with hot wax, since they couldn't indulge in their usual 'games'."

"And you still told no one?"

Luna hung her head in shame. "I tried talking to Hermione about it, but she kept changing the subject. I should have tried harder, or told someone, but I wasn't sure how."

"Well, I have taken care of Mister Weasley. I had a certain scenario in mind, but now I believe I should change it."

"As you think best." Luna looked at Casey curiously.

"Question?"

"Do you enjoy your life?"

"Actually, I do."

"Good." Luna stood. "I'm ready."

"I shall summons you in a moment." Casey disappeared, and then a few seconds later, Luna felt herself leave her body.

Luna found herself in a very hot, very bright, very colorful garden. She squinted, and soon located Casey, standing wrapped in what could only be a toga.



"Roma?" Luna asked.

"A villa just north of Rome," Casey replied in Latin. "Here, I am calling myself Caius Cassius Carbo. Harry is Publius Herennius Glaucia. You are Luna Livia. Ah, here comes Glaucia."

Harry looked a little self-conscious in his toga. Since he was only wearing the blanket-like toga and sandals, Harry felt a bit exposed.

"Caius Cassius," Harry said.

"Publius Herennius," Casey nodded. "Today is the Ides of June, in the year Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus is consul for the third time, and Lucius Vitellius is the other consul for the second time, or as you would say, the Thirteenth of June in the year 43. The Emperor you would know as Claudius has been ruling for about two years, and the conquest of most of England is just being started."

"Wow," was all Harry could say.

"Isn't that a bit . . . drafty?" Luna asked Harry. A slight breeze stirred the hem of the toga. Luna giggled and Harry blushed a little.

"Now, this will be somewhat difficult for both of you at first," Casey told them, ignoring Luna and sticking to Latin. "There are two groups of slaves here. The larger staff, nine males and nine females, take care of the outdoors and the general cleaning and cooking. They do not know that we are magical. The smaller staff, three males and six females, do know, although you should perform as little magic in front of them as possible. Their tunics have blue around the collars, the others have plain cloth. Roman wizards do not use a wand as such. They use a staff or a baton; the subtle wand work you are both already well-trained in is beyond them."

"Now, Luna here has some remarkable talent with Second Sight, and some slight ability as a divine. There is a very talented Gallo-Etruscan seer who will be giving her lessons. Harry will be completing his training in psychic magic, Legilmency and associated magics. Any questions?"

"How are we here?" Luna asked. "I mean, is this real?"

"How I will not tell you. Your minds are here. Your bodies are over nineteen hundred and fifty years in the future. I can not send matter into the past. Harry only went about a hundred and fifteen years into the past at most before this. Therefore, it has been easy to preserve the odds and ends he and the girls asked to preserve. That will be much more difficult here."

"So," Harry said with a smile, "no photos."

"If you know how to build a camera, you may try," Casey replied, "but I cannot promise how well they will be preserved."

"How do we get into Rome itself?" Harry asked. "Isn't private transportation banned somehow around Rome?"

"We can get near to Rome by wagon or gig, but the only ways to travel inside the city during the day is by foot or by sedan chair. We will portkey into the city. No one will notice the activity, since portkeys haven't actually been invented yet. Even disappearance is in a fairly primitive stage of development, since there are no accurate maps."

"So it's only used for traveling to previously visited sites?" Luna asked.

"Exactly," Casey agreed, "plus line of sight."

"You haven't taught Harry to apparate?" Luna asked, a bit puzzled.

"No," Casey admitted. "It would be technically illegal for him to do so once we return, so I haven't bothered. I can teach, if you would like to learn," he said to Harry. "We will be portkeying to a small apartment with a private entrance, near what even in your day is a well-warded magical area."

It is one of the few I do NOT own by your time."

"Don't I get to wear SOMETHING besides this blanket?" Harry complained.

"It's a toga, as you very well know," Casey corrected. "And yes, normally you get to wear a tunic. But no loincloth; they just don't work with togas. You will also notice you're not circumcised here. I'm actually surprised your parents had you done. It's not as common among British Muggles as it is with Americans, and very rare in most Pure-Blood circles."

Harry colored slightly. "Oh, don't worry," Casey teased, "you can have any of the slaves keep you clean and fresh." Harry really did blush now. Casey picked up a bronze handbell and rang it.

The twenty-seven slaves came quickly and quietly out into the large garden. Casey introduced the slaves, and assigned two of the young women to Luna and a young man and woman to Harry. Casey had the oldest slave, a man of perhaps thirty, and the youngest, a girl of perhaps thirteen. Turning to the remaining male slave with a blue collar, Casey instructed, "The others may go back to their duties. Bring some bread, cheese, and well-watered wine to us, as dinner will not be until the tenth hour." The steward merely bowed, and ushered the slaves away.

Casey turned to the body servants. "Show your master and mistress to their chambers. We are to be shaved, massaged, and oiled." He turned to Harry's female body servant. "Make certain your master is clean everywhere, but still well-able to do his duties tonight."

Harry remained blushing, while Luna, for once, blinked rapidly from surprise. Casey herded them into the villa, smiling evilly.

Casey collected Harry and Luna some ninety minutes later. Both seemed rather embarrassed by the ministrations of their slaves, especially Harry. Harry was very glad Hermione had not been sent to this period, and personally happy he was finally wearing slightly more than a toga.

The trio took a walk around the villa, starting from in front of the front door. The villa was on a circular gravel drive on the top of a slight incline, a paved Roman road some quarter of a mile away. The area between the villa and road was a well-regulated grove of various trees. They could see there were a number of other villas nearby. The pair noted there were no windows on the outside of the one storey building. Roman villas faced inward.

The entrance had a large bronze door, with a small spy slit for a slave to peer out when called upon. The entrance hall, or atrium, was the tallest part of the building, and opened to the sky. A small pool collected rain water for ritual purposes. To the left-side of the villa was the formal dining room and then a smaller, informal dining room. Running back from the informal dining room were the slave quarters, kitchens, storage areas, etc.

To the right was first a large library and a smaller study. Running back from the study were the small sleeping and dressing rooms the upper class Romans favored. A small colonnade ran around the inside of the square that made up the villa. Inside the area was a typical small peristyle garden, with flowers, vegetables, a reflecting pool, and several statues. The back of the villa had the latrines, small baths, furnaces and ovens. Other slaves ran a small farm attached to the villa, and located well behind it.

The furniture was expensive-looking, but there was very little of it. There were a few cabinets and statues, but all the art were mosaics on the floors and frescos on the walls of the front rooms. It was a very different sense of style from what Luna was used to from the late twentieth-century wizarding world, or Harry used to from his experiences. It was simpler, and yet seemed to speak to Harry as more luxurious in many aspects.

When they had circled through the building, they climbed a hidden set of stairs behind the informal dining room. The trio surveyed the area from the top of the dining rooms. "I wish I had a pair of omnoculars," Luna said, staring off towards Rome, just a few miles in the distance.

Harry said nothing, but transfigured a pair of ceramic drinking goblets into a telescope. "That's the best I can do," Harry said.

"How did you learn that?" Luna asked.

"You will learn it just before Christmas," Harry said simply. Luna smiled her happiest smile, one that belong to a happy innocent child, rather than a teen-aged witch who had seen too much pain. Looking through the telescope, she wandered down over the roof of the slave quarters.

"I have to say, you brought along the most interesting set of witches I have ever encountered," Casey said softly.

"Really?"

"Really. Susan, Eloise, and Daphne aren't too different from the typical run of witches, but they are still a cut above. Each would have been outstanding in any previous group. Ginny is a delicious creature. She would have made a perfect Irish witch of this period. Right now, the me of this period is secretly moving the magical Druid community to western North America. . . ."

"British Columbia?"

"Eventually," Casey acknowledged. "The Irish druids were a wilder, more egalitarian group in this period, compared to what the Gallic had been before I drew away so much power. The British were rather in between, although once the most powerful. The Irish witches could not of course be druids, but they had their own solidity. It took me almost thirty years to convince them to help me with my plan, but once they decided, the rest had to go along or risk more than my wrath. Your Ginny would have been a brilliant member of that tribe."

"Hermione, well, Hermione has made some very unfortunate decision, and had some bad luck, with her relationship with Weasley -- in that, she is very similar to many of the witches who have made their way to me. Many have suffered physical, mental, emotional, and sexual abuse. They were willing to come, and perhaps sacrifice themselves, just as Hermione was willing to come for you."

"Dumbledore didn't say anything about them being 'sacrifices'," Harry protested.

"Really? He didn't say some never came back?"

Harry frowned. "He did, but he certainly walked around it!"

"Shame on him! But beyond that, she is one of the most brilliant people I have met for her age, when it comes to formal learning. She's passionate, about the most passionate woman I have ever seen. I only hope she does not again bury that aspect of her. If so, it will rebound on her in some terrible way again."

"You should get her some kind of professional help," Harry stated.

"Why me?"

"Who else is there that I can trust?" Harry asked.

Casey smiled. "It has already been arranged, Harry." He looked up. "This one is very special, too. There are depths here. Approach her with honor, my young friend."

"May I ask you something?"

"Certainly."

"Why can't you save Sirius?"

"Because he is dead, Harry. I might be able to go to that time and rescue the essential Sirius, just as I have moved you here. I do not know for certain, but it might be possible. However, where do I put him? These bodies I have created for us only last four months, and take a huge amount of power and life-force to create for very little return. Over time, his mind would degrade and fade, and he would die in about two years or less."

"You couldn't pull his body out, substitute one of these, and keep him safe until we return to your cave?"

"I see you have thought this through. From what I have seen of it in your mind, I do not believe it likely. I will see what I can do, however. If I can, I will do so."

"That is the most I can ask for," Harry said.

Casey materialized a pair of binoculars. "Here, you may as well join Luna. I shall have you called for dinner." He went down the stairs.

Harry smiled, and walked over to talk with Luna.

"Harry," Luna said in English, "we need to talk."

"Uh, sure," Harry said, coming over to stand next to her.

"Harry, did you have sex with the other five girls?" Luna asked bluntly.

"Well, yes; yes I did."

"And do you expect to have sex with me, Harry?"

"Well, I had at least hoped you'd be interested."

Luna almost smiled. "I like you, Harry. I like you a lot. Objectively, I would have admitted, if asked, that some day I would have relations with a man, a lover, a husband, and that I would probably like it very much. But until last December, I never even thought about actually kissing a particular male on the lips."

"I thought you had some sort of crush on Ron," Harry said.

"I did," Luna acknowledged, "but it was a very childish thing. I saw myself holding Ronald's hand, and getting kissed on the cheek or forehead. Then, as I started getting close to Ronald, I saw dark areas in his soul. I didn't know what they were, but I started losing interest in him. And then, there you were, handsome if nervous, under the mistletoe."

"No nargles?" Harry asked.

"No, no nargles," she admitted. "I care for you, Harry. But I cannot imagine having sex with you just because we can with no physical repercussions. I care for you, but I cannot bring myself to try to win you that way, or gamble on your falling in love with me."

"I see. . . ."

"I hope you do," Luna said seriously. "I want to use this time to get to really know you."

"Would you . . . would you mind terribly if I kissed you?" Harry asked.

"Would you mean it, or do you want to only because we're together?"

Harry leaned close to Luna. "I would mean it, Luna. Can't you See it in my heart?"

Luna trembled. It wasn't fear. She had felt all types of fear that horrible June before this adventure, and this was not the same. It was an awareness; awareness of her own body, and the warmth of Harry's body. Awareness of his aura, his power, his affection for her, his lust for her, her affection and lust for him.

Harry's lips had stopped less than a quarter of an inch away from hers. "I would like to kiss you, Luna. But I will never force myself on you. Please, may I kiss you?"

She not only heard the husky whisper, she could feel and smell the words. It took no thought on her part, and even less movement than she thought it would, for her to lean into the kiss.

Luna's world exploded around her, as Harry pulled her close and kissed her gently, yet deeply. She didn't know if they kissed for five minutes or an hour, and didn't care.

When they broke slightly apart, Luna could only say, "Wow!" before clutching Harry close, and going back for more. They would kiss for over an hour, moving on top of a purple sleeping bag Harry materialized. Then, they went further.

Casey smiled after their second kiss. 'That was a bit harder than I expected,' he said to himself, 'but they can't stop themselves now. And I can finish Harry off.'

## **Chapter XVI**

Several hours later, a slave nervously went up to the roof to summons her temporary master and mistress. She saw they were asleep, tangled up in the master's toga and laying in the shade on some sort of lurid purple mattress she had never seen before.

Even though they had entered the villa without proper ceremony (since it wasn't theirs), the slave understood they were just married. Therefore she wasn't surprised to see them nude, or that there were some splotches of blood on the master's toga. She was just happy it wasn't her job to try and get it clean.

The slave gently prodded the mistress. A slave in a long line of slaves, she knew that while mistresses could be more petty, they were also more used to petty inconveniences. Like being prodded by a nervous slave.

Luna opened an eye, and saw one of the slaves. "Yes?" she managed to mutter in Latin.

"Sorry to bother the young Master and Mistress, but the Master asked that you be notified that dinner will be served in an hour or so."

"Thank you," Luna said. The slave, taking that as a dismissal, bowed and left.

Luna closed her eyes, and smiled, loving the warmth she and Harry were sharing. Then, a slight movement reminded her of what had happened; what had happened several times in fact. They had done the very thing she had sworn she would NOT do, at least until she knew Harry much much better.

Harry woke up holding a sobbing Luna. It took some minutes to calm and comfort her. When Harry figured out why Luna had been crying, he shushed her, dressed her, and escorted her to their sleeping cubicle.

Then, he went looking for Casey.

"Ah! Publius Heren. . . ."

"Stuff it!" Harry snarled in English. "Why did you hurt Luna?"

Casey frowned nastily. "I have hurt no one. . . ."

"Bullshit! At the least, you lowered the girls' resistance and inhibitions -- at the most. . . . Just admit it!"

"Fine," Casey said with a grin, "I admit it. I didn't make anyone do anything they didn't want to do."

"Do you think Ginny WANTED to get gang-banged!" Harry yelled, "or that I wanted to help? Do you think Luna wanted to have sex with me just now? No; Ginny was carried away by her hormones because YOU knocked out the checks and balances. Ginny, Daphne, Susan, Hermione, and even Eloise to a degree, were willing to hump with me like rabbits, not so much because they really wanted to, but because YOU took away any brakes; so we could screw instead of thinking things through! Luna is in love with me, but she's been hurt by life nearly as much as I have. She didn't want to be used, and right now she's beating herself up, wondering if anything we might have will ever be real! Damn you! You're so powerful, why do you play with people like this!"

"It helped Hermione," Casey reminded Harry. "And you didn't seem to mind before."

Harry glowered. Magic crackled around his head. Sparks shot off around the room.

"Most impressive," Casey said, still calmly. He waved his hand, and the magic dissipated. "And again, you are keeping your temper, to a degree."

"If I thought I had any chance of beating you, I'd be beating the shit out of you right now," Harry

snarled.

"You're right, of course," Casey said simply. "No ten wizards who have ever lived could even challenge me as a group. And you should never forget that in many ways you'll never be the wizard Albus Dumbledore is or Merlin was. That takes talent, study, and discipline as much as power. But in terms of raw power, you are a more powerful natural wizard than either of those two. I sent for you, in part, because that power was about to break loose, and it would have destroyed you, either before or after you destroyed Tom Riddle."

"Explain!" Harry demanded.

"Every once in a while, a freak of a wizard is born. It is nearly always a wizard. A wizard so powerful that they burn out and destroy themselves somewhere between the age of seventeen and twenty, when they come into their full power. Merlin and Dumbledore were well above nearly anyone else, but still under that limit. Tom Riddle is the only border-line case I have ever known, and that power helped derange him a bit."

"You mean Voldemort IS more powerful than Dumbledore?"

"Oh, yes," Casey said, "but not as thorough in his study as a general rule."

"So I am just a tool, created by fate or Higher Magic or whatever, to destroy Voldemort," Harry said softly, shocked.

"In some senses, you WERE," Casey told Harry. "This was not Dumbledore's choice. He has been searching for some way to save you, not just from Voldemort, but from your own powers once they peak."

"And you can save me?" Harry asked.

"I have saved you," Casey said a bit smugly. "I have distracted you with sex and affection while remolding and adjusting your body and your magic in the necessary ways so that it should not kill you, and training you to control the powers that you do have. I have done so in each of these bodies, and then transferred the positive results to the real you." Casey looked at the stunned Harry. "You have not really lost any power, Harry. You are still stronger than any natural wizard alive, including Tom Riddle. When you return, you will have your full power. And, barring injury, you should easily live to two hundred now, or longer, instead of being dead before you are twenty. That is the final secret Dumbledore kept from you."

Casey glanced over at the door. "I know you heard all that, Luna. Please, come in."

Luna came, hesitatingly, into the room. She was only wearing the long tunic, and her face was again tear-stained.

"I'm sorry you were hurt," Casey said, "but it was necessary to distract Harry -- I made the last adjustments while you were making love, because it is only during sex that Harry's defenses are lowered enough and he is distracted enough for me to accomplish them. I still need another month or so to finish his training. Your lovemaking fulfilled both of your desires while I made the final physical changes, but it seems it may have injured your feelings of self-worth. If so, I apologize."

"Do I have to stay?" Luna asked.

Harry walked over to Luna. "Please stay. I do want to know you better, Luna. The real you, including the checks and balances."

"I will not tamper with either of your feelings again, and I will explain some of the circumstances to the others, especially Ginny," Casey promised.

"Alright," Luna said in a slightly 'lost little girl voice,' "I'll stay."

"It's time to eat," Casey said. "This will seem a bit odd to you."

Harry was glad to see that aroused Luna's interest, although she still looked a bit lost.

It was the oddest meal Harry had ever had to that point in his life. The dining room had three wide mattresses, set as three sides of a square. Each had a low table in front of it.

"From the time of the mid-Republic until perhaps three generations ago, the ideal was to have no more than three men dining," Casey explained in English. "Women either ate separately, or sat on low chairs. That started to change a hundred years ago, and by sixty years ago, women also reclined. Proper dinners have no more than nine recliners, three on a couch."

They sat on the center couch, and the slaves knelt, took off their sandals, and washed their hands and feet, much to Harry and Luna's great embarrassment.

Casey explained the principles of Roman eating (soups and things that could be eaten with the hands, with at least five courses: eggs; soup; lightly cooked veggies; meat; and dessert, usually something with apples). Harry and Luna liked the food (although they stayed away from the sauce, garum, made from fermented fish guts), and submitted to having their hands washed between courses.

Luna went to bed early, sleeping in a separate cubical from Harry. She didn't sleep well, spending most of the night thinking.

Casey was a bit surprised the next morning to have Luna waiting for him when he came back from greeting the dawn. "Where is Harry?"

Luna looked like she hadn't slept very much. "He's still asleep, and I cast enough drowsy spells that he should stay asleep."

Casey smiled, then gestured at a bench in the peristyle. They walked over and sat. "What is on your mind?"

"When you took the life force from all those people, you also took their magic, correct?"

Casey nodded.

"You can still do both, can't you?"

Casey hesitated, but again nodded.

"Could you please take my magic?"

Casey was severely shocked and puzzled. "Why . . . why would you want to lose your magic?"

"Because then I want you to modify my memories of ever being magic, of ever knowing and loving Harry. Help me become some unknown Muggle girl in Australia or someplace!"

She said all this in a very distressed, agitated, pleading tone, which pulled a bit on Casey's heartstrings. "Why?" he asked simply.

"Look into my heart," Luna told him, her tone now fierce, "look and see what you've done to me!"

Casey rolled his eyes, and did what he was told. After a moment, his eyes went wide with shock. Then he sought out Harry. "I . . . I must admit, I have rarely seen such a powerful magical bonding." He frowned. "I am amazed it would work in these bodies." The love-making had bound Luna to Harry with nearly unbreakable magical bonds. Harry was bound to Luna, almost as strongly.

Luna said nothing.

"Harry's connection to you as strong as your's is to him, so it is very strong," Casey said. "From the beginning, he felt that if he chose anyone this summer, it would likely be you. Why are you giving up?"



"You don't understand Harry very well, do you?" Luna stated. "It would not matter if Harry was MORE bound to me, more in love with me, than I am with him. Hermione, one of his two closest friends, has been badly hurt. Not only has she been hurt, but she was hurt by Harry's other best and closest friend, over a long period of time, and Harry never had the slightest clue about it. It doesn't matter that no one else had any idea about the abuse until the very end, when I found out. What matters is that Harry cares for Hermione, and will feel that he MUST take care of her. Perhaps, if it hadn't been Ronald, he wouldn't feel as strongly, but it was Ronald."

"You may be correct, on the surface," Casey admitted. "But there are alternatives, assuming both Harry and Hermione still feel that way after Hermione has gone through therapy. He already knows that Hermione does NOT have to deal with this by herself. She will have the best help available. I also reminded him after you left us last night that Hermione might decide that resuming a relationship with him might tend her towards the same behaviors."

"Nonsense," Luna told him. "Harry is too honorable to ever treat Hermione with the same abuse as Ronald and Hermione knows that. Even if he . . . whatever it is she likes to her every day at her request, he would never go over whatever line she drew, and he would heal her so lovingly. . . ." Luna started to gently cry.

Casey comforted Luna, and again sought Harry's mind. Luna, when she realized what he was doing, stopped sniffing.

"You know, Hermione faced a similar problem, wanting both Harry and Ron. Harry wants you, Luna. Yet he also wants Hermione to a slightly lesser degree. Neither you nor Hermione seem to be very bisexually inclined, but perhaps. . . ."

"We could share Harry?" Luna asked, slightly scandalized.

Casey shrugged. "It's a possible solution, assuming Hermione even will want Harry after all this -- she is a very proud woman, after all. We would put it to Hermione as her one option to be with Harry, because of the magical bonding the two of you share. Even if she really has designs on Harry, and I think she may, she cares for him too much to be willing to hurt him by breaking your bonds. She may prefer to seek out someone else. Don't assume that the future is planned out. There are still a number of possibilities."

"I thought I understood Hermione, until two months ago," Luna said. "Still, I suppose she MIGHT go along."

"I think I should talk to Harry, after apologizing yet again, and then talk with Hermione, and then you again."

"Would it be possible to talk with Hermione first?"

Casey considered that. "Very well."

Luna felt Casey leave his body for an instant, and then return. "Hermione understands, and agrees. Unsurprisingly, she is clinging to Harry emotionally. . . ."

"Harry is loving, caring, and VERY safe," Luna said simply.

"But she does want Harry to be happy. Once she knew of your connections, she actually made the same request you did, and for the same reasons. I talked her out of leaving the magical world. You are both very wonderful, and magically talented, young women, living in an age when you can share Harry, or do without men, or just about anything else. Be brave and see this through to the end, Luna." He smiled. "Harry is a very lucky young man."

"Why?" Luna asked. "Oh, of course, you came from a polygamous culture; you probably think it's the way things should be." Casey didn't think even Hermione could have said that with more contempt, both for him and the idea.

"Perhaps that makes me more willing to entertain the idea," Casey admitted, "but Harry is lucky

because the two of you know him so well, and love him all the more because of it. Most people fall in love, and then say, when they learn about aspects of their lover, 'I love him in spite of those things'. Well, yes, you two love Harry despite his occasional fits of temper. Even though you two girls are in many ways mirror images of each other, even though in some ways you arrived at your knowledge of Harry in two very different ways, you both know him almost as well as it is possible for some one your age to know anyone. And you both now know your true selves."

"You have known at least since Harry offered you kindness; Hermione learned over her years with Harry. And the more you know Harry, with all his faults, the more you both love him, in some part because of them." He smiled. "That came as a greater surprise to Hermione than it did to you. And she is willing to love Harry and for you to love Harry. It's up to Harry if he feels he can love the pair of you, or if he feels he has to choose between the woman he is totally, romantically in love with and the woman he shares a loving, symbiotic partnership with." He shrugged. "And remember, it is very possible that Hermione will cling to Harry emotionally, but not sexually."

"That I could live with . . . I think."

Casey shrugged again. "I will be happy to advise him, but I had best not interfere -- I have caused enough problems for Harry and the two of you."

"You will at least explain things to Harry, won't you?"

Casey smiled. "Don't worry. Harry has been listening in since we came out here. Your drowsy spells can't affect someone as powerful as Harry is now." He glanced towards a statue of Venus on a plinth. "Come over, Harry. I'll try to stay out of both of your heads." Casey stood and walked off.

Harry stood up and walked over to Luna, his face set. Luna sighed. "I overheard Hermione and Ronald in the Infirmary," Luna said worriedly. "I was . . . shocked. I didn't know what to do, or who to tell, or. . . ." She started to cry and shake, afraid Harry would blame her for not halting the abuse sooner.

Harry embraced Luna. "It's alright. It's not your fault." Harry turned to Casey. "Could you please leave us alone for a while?"

"I will be back tomorrow morning. I'll talk to the slaves; they should be alright unsupervised for a day." He left them alone.

Harry guided Luna to a bench. "Let's talk."

Luna smiled bravely.

Harry and Luna saw very little of Casey over the next forty days, although he was present every day to give the slaves their orders for the day. Each night, the pair fell asleep in each other's arms. Early each morning, they were portkeyed to their studies. Luna was studying with an ancient priestess of Etruscan and Gallic ancestry and training. Harry was being trained with a Chaldean Magi, who had also studied in India.

For several afternoons, they walked the streets of Rome. Both knew a little about Rome (Harry had studied it at the cabin), but the Rome of the 40s was the pre-fire Rome. It was the Rome after Nero that Harry and Luna were used to reading about. Most of the great buildings they knew the ruins of would be built or rebuilt after the fire of 64.

After eight days, they tired of seeing Rome, and spent the afternoon and evenings together in the peristyle of the small villa outside Rome. Harry and Luna both felt they had violated their trusts, in each other and in themselves. They wanted to rebuild that trust.

Harry told Luna stories of his time with the other girls (although not in erotic detail). In retrospect, he realized he should have had a better idea what Casey had been up to. He had, in part, been under Casey's influence, but not nearly to the degree as the girls. Instead, he had primarily been under the

influence of his hormones. He felt he could probably not feel too guilty, unless one of the girls was really upset.

Luna had decided to forgive Harry his hormones, provided he understood that such behavior would NOT be acceptable once they returned to 1996. The subject of Hermione was shelved for the time being. This allowed the pair to be intimate, although they were not sexual after the first afternoon they had arrived.

For the last twenty days, Casey worked with Harry late each afternoon, teaching him the basis for apparation. Casey assured Harry that he could arrange for him to be granted his apparation licence early.

On their sixtieth day in the past, Casey approached them and brought them to the present.

## **Chapter XVII**

Friday, July 19, 1996

Harry and the six girls, now again virginal in body if not in memory, appeared back in the original cavern, in the same seats they had originally sat down in.

Casey was standing. "I have apologized to each of you separately for manipulating your moral resistance. I now apologize to you seven as a group. As I told you, this period has allowed me to evaluate Harry and to make some small physical changes in him which will allow him to channel his extraordinary power without burning out. I did so, not so that he could destroy Voldemort, for it was easy to bring him to his full power, which would have allowed him to defeat anyone except myself. No, I wanted to see if Harry could be trusted to live with that greater power. I believe he has the moral and psychological traits he will need to handle that power."

Casey suddenly transformed, and he was wearing a robe of pure white. A small gold sickle was stuck in his belt, and he wore a necklace that held three small orbs -- representing the sun, the earth, and the moon. More importantly, he threw off his diffidence. He literally radiated power. Casey was gone; Cassiwallan the Druid Berserker was with them.

"I am glad that you gathered today -- if you aren't certain, it is still the Nineteenth of July, although it is a few minutes before midnight in this time zone. I brought you together today rather than waiting for your arrival because your friend Voldemort is just now starting a ceremony which has brought nearly all his supporters together." He looked at Harry. "His followers were freed from Azkaban prison early this morning, although your Ministry is still trying to keep that secret. Since they were all going to be together, tonight is a good time to take care of them. That is another reason why we went into the past rather than test you in the present."

Harry found himself in a robe similar to Cassiwallan's, a sickle in the belt. "This is your destiny, Harry. I will do most of the work, but this is your world more than it is mine. Are you prepared to do what needs to be done?"

Harry squared his shoulders. "I am, Cassiwallan."

"Say your goodbyes. When we return, you will be a different person."

Harry nodded. He went over and shook hands with Eloise first, thanking her for helping him. He shook hands and thanked Susan and Daphne as well, although he kissed both on the cheek. Harry embraced Ginny in a warm hug, and whispered words of his friendship before kissing her warmly. Ginny smiled weakly as Harry moved away.

Harry repeated the performance with Hermione, who kept a wary eye on Luna when she embraced Harry. Finally, Harry moved to Luna, who merely extended her hands to him. They clasped hands, and then Harry raised them and kissed each of Luna's hands before turning back to Cassiwallan. "I am ready," Harry stated.

Cassiwallan pulled the sickle from his belt. "Touch the oak handle." Harry did so without hesitation, and the pair disappeared. A table appeared, filled with juices and sandwiches in their place.

The six girls stood looking at the spot for several seconds. Hermione broke the silence first. "Ginny, I need to talk to you."

Ginny looked at her friend, but then came over to her. Hermione took Ginny to the furthest corner, so she could inform her about how her relationship with Ron had turned out so wrong, and why Ron was being sent to Australia.

The others watched while pretending not to. Ginny took the news without flinching. She did stalk

away from Hermione some ten minutes after they had started talking.

Luna intercepted her and comforted her childhood friend for a few minutes. Ginny recovered her equilibrium, and walked back to the chairs, with Luna following.

"I'm not going to tell everything we did," Ginny told the group, "and I don't want to hear everything you did, but I do have a lot of Muggle photos to show. I know I was with Harry first, so I'll start." She opened the bag Casey had given to her when she had returned. "We took something four hundred photos between us, if anyone is interested in America in 1969." Ginny took a deep breath and looked over at Hermione. Ginny forced herself to smile at her best friend. "Come on, Hermione. I know you'll be interested."

Hermione put on a brave face and came over to be with the others.

Cassiwallan first materialized Harry in a well-furnished apartment. "This is a flat I keep near Diagon Alley. It is just Eleven at night, London time. Close your eyes, Harry."

Harry did so.

"Feel the powers you have, and that you have mastered. They are under your control. Most wizards can only apparate perhaps two hundred miles at their best. A hundred miles is actually considered the maximum safe range for common apparation to map coordinates. You, on the other hand, may, under the right circumstances, apparate several thousand miles. Here." Cassiwallan handed Harry two small carved stones. "You may apparate to whatever locations these stones are located at, anywhere on Earth. There are actually three stones. The third is back in the cabin in North America. I have given you the valley for your lifetime. It is very Muggle-repellant, and fairly unplottable. There are only three easy ways for a wizard or Muggle to get in. First of all, someone may apparate there in your arms, or mine. Second, you or I may create a portkey that can carry anyone. Third, they may come in via the contact stone. I have set its sister into your Gringotts vault, along with the instructions. House elves may enter the valley only if they have your permission or if they enter the valley in one of the first three ways."

"Thank you," Harry said.

"You are welcome. Now, as for tonight. A group of youngsters is being initiated into the Death Eaters. We will enter their meeting just before the first is tested. They must kill a Muggle to join. I will freeze things at that point, save the Muggles, and bring you in. Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will give you a little notice, so feel free to use the toilet if you need to -- I won't just whisk you out. If you're hungry or thirsty, the kitchen is through that door. The bedroom and bathroom are beyond the kitchen."

Harry nodded, and Cassiwallan disappeared. Harry collapsed in a chair.

It was difficult to believe he was back in his old body, not quite sixteen, after spending about a year as an adult. Part of him wanted to exercise his powers, but he knew that was a bad idea. Part of him wanted to think about Luna, and Hermione (and Ginny, Daphne, Susan, and Eloise), but he knew under the circumstances that was even a worse idea.

Harry watched the clock. He went and found some milk in the refrigerator, and drank a glass. That made him realize he was hungry. There wasn't much that was ready to eat, so he had another glass of milk and some chocolate biscuits. He used the bathroom. Mostly, he paced.

He paced until it was 12:33. It was then that the call came, and Harry allowed himself to be pulled towards Cassiwallan.

Saturday, July 20, 1996

Harry saw he was back in the graveyard near the old Riddle House. A quick glance showed there seemed at first glance to be some seventy or eighty people, very unevenly divided between three groups, spread throughout the area. A few magical torches lit the scene. All the people were standing totally still, as if they were petrified. Not even Voldemort, standing near the grave of his father, was moving.

Cassiwallan escorted Harry to what was by far the largest group. "Here we have most of the so-called Death Eaters. Take a look at each one carefully, Harry. Tell me if there are any you think deserving of mercy, or of special punishment."

Harry hesitated a moment, but then walked around the mass of Death Eaters. He knew some of them -- Macnair, Nott, Avery, the Lestrangle brothers, Dolohov, the senior Crabbe and Goyle, and a few others. And Snape.

"This one," Harry said of Snape alone.

"Mercy or punishment?"

"Mercy, as you know very well," Harry answered.

"Do I? Do you know how many people he has killed? How many he has tortured? And I do NOT mean abused in the classroom, like you, I mean genuinely tortured? He may have earned a partial reprieve, but never think him innocent."

"I don't. You asked if there were any I thought deserved mercy. I think he does."

Cassiwallan smiled coldly. "Then use the sickle instead of your wand and move him if you wish to save him. Any future crimes he commits will partially be on your soul."

Harry held the sickle a little doubtfully, but intoned the levitation spell. It worked, and Harry maneuvered Snape out of the group while Cassiwallan moved the group closer together.

"You can all hear me, so hear me pronounce judgement. I am Cassiwallan the Druid, revenger of the Celts, teacher of Merlin and Harry Potter, the black agent of the Cartel of Magic. You have all murdered; you have all tortured. None deserve mercy. Therefore, I condemn you all to death."

With his wand in his left hand and the sickle in his right, Cassiwallan lifted his arms to the sky and murmured a long set of incantations. After nearly five minutes, he stopped speaking, and a dark purple haze rose from the group. It swirled around the group, and finally was absorbed by Cassiwallan.

As the purple haze started to move away from them, a sickly green haze mist took its place over the group. It too swirled around the group, and then was absorbed by Cassiwallan. The Death Eaters collapsed, dead.

"You can still do it!"

"I can," Cassiwallan intoned, setting up privacy wards so that the others couldn't hear. "The purple was their magic; the green their life forces. Sixty-three Death Eaters, average age forty-five. They should have had at least ninety years of prospective life ahead of them, so that nearly fifty-seven hundred years of life just about replaces what I had to spend on your training."

Harry blinked.

"What, you think creating those bodies was just a magic trick? Or that sending you, and girls, and myself back into the past was easy? If it was easy, anyone could do it, and only I can. You spent a subjective year in the past, your friends a year in total. I spent six, with all the work involved. The energy to create those bodies and move us back and forth through time all came from my life force. All together, this probably cost me about six thousand years of life. Well, I just recaptured part of it. Well, most of it, actually."

"And the power?"

"That will keep me young." Cassiwallan grinned. "Who wants to live for millennia as an old man?"

He cut the privacy wards. "Let's deal with the new initiates. I already sent their potential victims to safety."

There were eleven young men and a woman awaiting initiation. Harry knew all twelve, at least by sight.

"Bletchely, Corner, Cornfoot, Crabbe, Goyle, Malfoy, Montague, Nott, Parkinson, Pucey, Smith, and Summersby," Cassiwallan intoned. "Miles Bletchley, Seventh year Slytherin. He was nervous about killing, but willing to go through with it. He saw it was a way to gain power easily. Michael Corner, Sixth year Ravenclaw, anxious to get the initiation over with. He was worried because Ginny Weasley and he broke up before he could turn her over to his new Lord. He was very much hoping he would get the chance to rape her. Stephen Cornfoot, another Sixth year Hufflepuff. He got in on this because Corner and Smith convinced him. A weak-willed follower."

Cassiwallan set them aside and separated out the next three. "Vincent Crabbe, Gregory Goyle, and Draco Malfoy, Sixth year Slytherins and your personal annoyances. Malfoy was disappointed; he had hoped Hermione Granger or Ginny Weasley would be here tonight to be ravished, tortured, and killed. Crabbe was the most eager of all the recruits to rape and torture. Goyle here was the least eager. He is here only because of his father's orders and because he was conditioned to accept Draco's lead. He was hoping a miracle would help him, but without one, he probably would have killed."

"St. John Montague, Seventh year Slytherin, and Theodore Nott and Pansy Parkinson, Sixth years. Montague is a bit out of his depth here, wondering a little what he had gotten himself into. He thought it was a game, until about an hour ago, and was looking for some way out. He might have refused, at least until he was hit by a Crucio or two. Nott was anxious to get the initiation over with. To him, killing is a necessary but not very pleasurable part of the deal he was willing to make for power. Parkinson was also upset Hermione wasn't here. She was hoping to literally skin her alive. Quite the nasty disposition!"

"Adrian Pucey, Seventh year Slytherin; Zacharias Smith, Sixth year Hufflepuff; and John Summersby, Seventh year Hufflepuff. Summersby helped recruit Smith, who in turn recruited Corner and Cornfoot. A very able schemer, rather upset by the sight of blood, however. Pucey has been the main intelligence gatherer, taking the observations of all these others, and the ones who had been ahead of them, and collating the data. Smith is probably the most ambitious of all of them, and the one who hates you most, after Malfoy."

Cassiwallan considered them, and moved Goyle and Montague over to one side. "Do you mind if I spare their lives, Harry?"

"No," Harry answered. "Do you HAVE to kill the others."

"On the whole, I'd say yes. Malfoy was already wondering if he has any chance of becoming the next Dark Lord if something happens to Voldemort. Smith and Pucey were wondering how to find a stronger movement."

"May I suggest an alternative?"

Cassiwallan cocked his head at Harry. "Alright, what?"

Harry gave Cassiwallan an evil grin. "Take their magic. Make them Squibs."

Cassiwallan smiled. "I like it! I will have to take about a fifth to a quarter of their life forces, just to insure they do not get any of their power back. Please move Goyle, Montague, and Snape further away."

Harry did, and in less than twenty minutes, the ten teens had lost their magic forever.

"This leaves us with just three special cases before the finale, my young apprentice." Cassiwallan levitated Snape and moved him to a position where he could watch, and then went over to the smallest group. "Bellatrix LeStrange, Lucius Malfoy, Peter Pettigrew. Is there anything you wish to say, my young apprentice?"

"Can you shove LeStrange through the Veil?"

"I could," Cassiwallan admitted, "but the effect here is the same. And it would cause quite a stir in your Ministry."

"Alright," Harry agreed. He turned to Wormtail. "Does he have a reason why he betrayed my parents, why he didn't honor his Wizard's Debt to me?"

Cassiwallan studied Wormtail for nearly a minute. "He wanted to serve Voldemort only because he thought Voldemort would win," Cassiwallan said simply. "He would have preferred NOT to have betrayed your parents, but was more afraid not to. He made a few half-hearted efforts to deflect Voldemort away from you, but that was as far as he could go. He is a weak, pathetic little man."

"Is there any way you can punish them without torturing them?" Harry asked.

"These two are too dangerous to let live, Harry, even without magic, and Pettigrew is little better."

Harry then had a horrible thought. "Why not drain them of their magic and MOST of their life forces. Nearly all of it, I mean."

Cassiwallan considered. "I like this idea, too. Please move Snape over next to his former master."

As Harry did so, Cassiwallan repeated the ceremony a third time. When he was done, he addressed the trio. "You have no powers. You each have about seventy-two to seventy-eight hours to live. There is nothing you can do to stop it, unless you hurry things along. Feel each moment of life ticking away." He considered, then smiled. "No, draining away." An hour glass appeared over each of their heads. "The time runs out in eighty hours. You will not live to see the time run out, but you will know your time is coming."

He turned, and walked over to Voldemort. "Tom Riddle. I wish I had taken the time to kill you years ago. Harry, it is time to fulfill prophecy. Come here, and put your right hand, with the sickle still in it, over his shoulder."

Harry hesitated, but did as he was told. Cassiwallan did the same on the other side, and hooked the two sickles together, so that the tip of each blade touched Voldemort's head.

"When you're ready, Harry, close your eyes and think of the love inside you. Think of the love you have for Luna and Hermione, the affection you have for Ginny and the other Weasleys, for Lupin and Tonks and Hagrid. Of the love you shared with six special women. And, when you're ready, just take a hold of my right hand with your left."

Harry did as he was told. The warm feelings took a hold of him. When he clasped Cassiwallan's hand, a slight tremor of fear and hatred rippled through him, but the love blanketed him, and he ignored the bad feelings.

Then Harry opened his eyes, and saw Voldemort was gone. All that was left was his robes, an old bone, Pettigrew's hand, and blood.

"That's it? It's over?"

Casey smiled. "Most of it. Now comes the long, boring part -- explanations. I'll send you and your friends back to where I took you, but first, here."

Harry took what looked like a small leather wallet. He opened it, and a badge flashed red, and then black. "You are no longer an acting red agent of the Cartel of Magic, you are a black agent. You do not answer to the British Ministry, you answer only to me, since you are now the only other black agent there has ever been besides me. So, have no fear of there being any legal retribution for



tonight. I shall also inform the Ministry that you have been granted my permission to apparate and to use magic despite your age. I do ask that you have Lupin give you some pointers in apparating around Britain. There is a letter in the credentials for Lupin and Dumbledore which explain your status."

"Thank you." Harry looked into Cassiwallan's eyes. "When will I see you again?"

"Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps never. Live well, Harry Potter. Love well. Try and find some internal peace."

## **Chapter XVIII**

Tuesday, July 19, 2146

"But Grandfather, maybe you should rest. . . ."

"Yes, I'm almost a hundred and sixty-six, but I am NOT in my dotage! I'm as capable now as you are, which is a bit of a decrease on my part. . . ."

"Grandfather!"

"They should have named you Percy," Harry Potter grumbled at his oldest grandson.

"He's worried about your emotion health, not your physical capabilities," one of his granddaughters-in-law told him. Harry smiled at her. One of Ginny and Neville's granddaughters on one side, and of Eloise Midgin and Oliver Wood on the other, she was one of his favorites.

"Please be careful, Pappy," his favorite descendent asked him. In large part, it was her bubbling personality. In part, it was because she was descended from all six of the women Harry had spent time with a hundred and fifty years before.

Harry had married Luna the year after she left Hogwarts. Hermione had lived with Harry for the year before and for Harry and Luna for two years, before she left them to work for, and live with, a universal rights activist from Canada. Daphne had married George Weasley, who had left much of the day to day running of the Weasley Wizard Wheezes to Fred and become a powerful mover in the European wizarding business world. Susan had married Ernie Macmillan.

And now, Luna was gone, and had been for several weeks. All the girls, all his close friends, were gone, except for Ginny, who now most sat in a rocking chair and oversaw a huge extended family. Harry, on the other hand, looked in magical terms about a hundred, or in his mid-fifties by Muggle standards.

Harry had done everything that was expected from him. He had fought against Dark magic for nearly a hundred and fifty years, starting at age 11. He had fought for the rights of werewolves, house elves, those of mixed human/giant/elf/goblin/others, Muggle-borns, and to preserve the Crumple-Horned Snorkack. He had been a good husband, a good lover, a good friend (even to Ron Weasley, when he came back to Britain in 2010), a good parent, and a role model.

Harry was tired of doing what was expected of him, and so he was taking a vacation, despite the pleas of his decedents and the warnings of two or three of them. Harry finally just waved goodbye, and let himself be drawn to the small cabin in the northeastern part of North America.

Harry found himself in the woodshed. A small colony of free and retired house elves lived in two small areas of the valley, and kept the cabin clean and functioning, and the wood piles full. Harry took a deep breath, and walked over to the door. He rang a small bell that was hanging on the wall.

"Master Harry!"

"Hello, Meadow," Harry said with a slight smile. Meadow was his favorite elf, a granddaughter of Dobby who had inherited much of his kind nature but not the manic portion of that nature.

"The elves are sorry about Mistress Luna."

"Thank you, Meadow. I plan on staying for a while."

"We will organize the food, Master Harry. Do you wish a cook, or to cook?"

Harry thought. "Help with dinner would really be appreciated, Meadow."

"As Master wishes. Meadow will arrange. Shall Meadow also move in wood? Some evenings are chilly."

"Yes, thank you."

Meadow bowed, and disappeared.

Harry smiled and walked out of the shed and into the house. He had remodeled the kitchen just three times, the last time in 2130. The rest of the house had, for the most part, just been reconditioned every twenty years or so. Harry walked into the parlor and past the fireplace. Through the arch leading to the hallway, he could see the guardian of the house.

"Harry!"

"Hello, Daphne." Harry had wondered, back in 1913, what Daphne had been up to. She had had three wizarding portraits made of her in her silk evening robe. She had kept one, giving one to Harry and the other to Cassiwallan. Harry didn't know about the others, but his could, and often did, remove her robe just for Harry.

"Hi, Harry!" a choir greeted him. Harry wasn't certain how Casey had arranged it, but when Harry had first visited the cabin over the Christmas holiday in 1998, he had found a second painting on the wall next to the life size portrait of Daphne. This one had each of the six girls he had traveled into the past with, as they had appeared in the past and in their period costumes.

"Good morning, ladies."

"What's wrong, Harry?" Hermione asked.

"Luna, I'm sorry, but you died three weeks ago."

Luna in the painting pouted. Ginny, however, gave a small cheer. "Ginny!" Hermione and Susan admonished.

"Sorry, Harry, but Luna and I have been fighting about who would last longer for over thirty years." That was when Eloise, who had gone first, died.

Harry smiled. "That's alright. I understand." The painted girls had elements of the real women, but were very competitive with each other, in friendly ways. It was one way to get them to function together. "I just wanted you to know. . . ."

"You're not leaving already, are you?" Luna asked.

"Oh, no," Harry assured them. "I think I might stay for a few months, actually. I'm going to change and go flying."

"Be careful with those Wonky Faints," Hermione admonished. "You aren't as young as you used to be."

"I will," Harry said with a smile. It was good to have Hermione tell what to do again.

Harry flew back to the house some three hours later, hungry. Still, he wasn't totally surprised to see a full buffet laid out, and Cassiwallan sitting down at the kitchen table, having a roast beef, tomato, and horseradish sandwich, along with a beer.

"Hi, Harry. Long time, no see."

"It's been almost a hundred years since the last time I saw you, but I've seen your work more recently," Harry retorted, making himself a ham sandwich.

"Really?" Casey retorted, with exaggerated surprise.

"Really," Harry retorted drily. "It was you who destroyed that Muggle Soul Center a few years ago. I recognized your magical signature."

"I didn't destroy it! I just shorted one of the memory fields for a tenth of a second, so that the so-called souls stopped imitating the people they were based on. All the data was still there."

"You mean souls weren't being stored there?" Harry asked, curious.

"No," Casey answered. "The whole idea is flawed. You can copy the data of a human memory, and even imitate the personality. But, as you know, the brain is destroyed in the process. I don't know with absolute certainty that there is such a thing as a soul. I believe there is, for I sense something leaving when an intelligent being dies. And if there is, it flees during that damnable process. It did not reside inside that machine."

"I thought as much. That's why I didn't mention you."

"Thank you," Casey said, before going back to his sandwich. The pair ate in silence for several minutes.

Harry studied Casey. The man seemed not to have aged a minute in the hundred and fifty years since they had first met. Casey caught him looking, and smiled. "Haven't changed much, have I?"

"Not at all," Harry admitted.

"So tell me, Harry, have you had a decent life?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I know you just lost Luna, but the pair of you were married for almost a hundred and fifty years. You had a good relationship with Hermione even after she moved away from you and Luna. You stayed friends with the other four girls. You made up with Ron Weasley, and stayed friends with him until he died. Your children and other descendants seem to have turned out well and had moderate to very successful lives. You were very successful in your career." He paused for a moment. "Let me put it this way, which would you have preferred? Your life as you have lived it, or your defeating Voldemort at the end of your Seventh year and your dying soon thereafter?"

"Well, when you put it that way, I guess I don't mind my life too much," Harry said with a slight grimace.

"What more could you want?"

"From before I met you? Quite a lot. But since then, well, it's been far from perfect, but I don't have any major complaints." Harry paused in thought. "I guess I did pretty much what people hoped I would. I would have preferred more friends, more celebrations, and fewer Dark wizards, but some one had to take on those wizards." He shrugged. "Why? Are you offering to take me back to try again?"

"No," Casey replied. "I'm not that powerful. If I was, I would have restored Sirius to you. You're really the only person who knows even a little about the real me. There are only a few dozen people and a few score goblins and house elves who even know that Cassiwallan exists. You know the real me best."

Harry felt a little sorry for the powerful being. But just a little. "Tell me, how well do you remember Merlin?"

"I have an excellent memory, so I remember him very well. Why? Wondering how long you'll be remembered?"

"Something like that."

"You've had a long and successful life, Harry. You'll likely be remembered, to some degree, for quite some time. Who can say for how long?"

Harry just stared.

"What do you want to do with the rest of your life, Harry? You have somewhere between forty and sixty years. Care to come live amongst the Muggles with me for a while? There are a couple of places that aren't as sterile as so much of advanced Muggle society has become, or as depressingly impoverished as much of the rest of it."

"Still going through the motions, using sex as a distraction?" Harry half asked, half scolded.

"Well, the motions are usually pretty nice."

Harry decided to ignore that. "I know I'm old and fragile, but the one thing I like to do is fly. I know it's something of a meaningless activity, but I'd just like to fly as much as I'd like to, and work a bit on my memoirs."

"Harry, if life has deep meaning, you have fulfilled your duty to the world many times over. If life had no real meaning, then flying is as good an activity as any other. At least it doesn't harm anyone."

"True!"

Cassiwallan stood up. "Perhaps I'll see you later, my young friend."

"I know you'll see me, you sneak," Harry teased. "I just might not see you."

"True. Farewell, Harry. I promise, I'll long remember you. And coming from me, that means something."