

Chapter 2

After a few of Narcissa's daily visits, she and the rest of her family left on a weeklong holiday to France. Without her constant companionship, Harry quickly found himself with little to occupy himself with but thinking about what he should do now that he was stuck in the past - something he had actively avoided doing since tumbling out of a fireplace into 1976. On top of that, he was now certain that the way the Elder Wand had brought him back by exploding was affecting him. His magic was stronger and came easier than ever before. Sometimes, he found himself not even needing his wand at all to cast simpler spells.

People also seemed to act differently around him now, and it wasn't just because he was no longer famous. Women, especially, suddenly seemed to be taking a greater interest in him. It wasn't just the constant flirting from Rosmerta, whose first name he'd learned was Rosalyn, or the extremely enjoyable nights he spent with Narcissa either. Even complete strangers, witches he considered way out of his league, acted as if they were drawn to him. After the second married witch sat down to flirt heavily with him, while her husband sat next to her angrily, he'd even gone to the library to see if there was such a thing as a male Veela. As it turned out, there wasn't; if a Veela had a daughter, they were one hundred percent Veela.

An interesting piece of information that helped him understand Fleur a bit better but did nothing to help him now, in Harry's mind. That was why he was currently on his way back to Hogwarts to talk to Dumbledore. If there was anyone who could make sense of this, it would be him. While Harry didn't trust the old man as much as he used to, he didn't really have any other choice.

As his feet led him down the all too familiar path to the headmaster's office, Harry found himself lost in thought, contemplating the conversation he was about to have. With Dumbledore, you had to make sure to ask just the right questions and listen carefully. Often what he didn't say was just as important, if not more so, than what he did tell you. A weary sigh left his lips as he rode the spiral staircase up to the office. Would it be too much to ask to just get a straight answer for once, he asked himself.

Still lost in thought, Harry didn't even bother to knock before pushing the door open and walking in. It wasn't until Fawkes trilled happily from his perch that Harry realized what he had done. His cheeks flushed lightly when he noticed that Dumbledore wasn't alone. A gorgeous,

full-figured blonde who looked to be in her mid-twenties was sitting across from the headmaster, looking as if she had just stepped off the cover of *Witch Weekly*.

“Er, sorry,” Harry said lamely. “I was a bit distracted, forgot to knock.”

“That’s quite alright, Harry,” Dumbledore said amusedly. “Connie and I were just finishing up if you’d like to take a seat.”

“Right,” said Harry before he turned to the blonde. “Sorry.”

Connie smiled at him and nodded in acceptance of his apology, then turned back to the professor. Harry, rather than taking a seat, walked over to Fawkes and began stroking his feathers. The phoenix leaned into his touch, warbling contentedly.

“As I was saying,” Dumbledore continued, “you’re more than qualified to take the post. I confess myself curious, however, as to why you only wish to take the post for a year. Most who would step away from a life of law wish to do so on a more permanent basis. In your case, one might think you were merely taking a sabbatical.”

“I had an- *incident*- with the Head Auror, Jacob Brookstone. He doesn’t much like the idea of witches doing a job as dangerous and difficult as that of an Auror,” Connie explained. “It’s his belief that we should all be wives and mothers, not dark wizard catchers. He’s made unwanted advances towards me numerous times, all of which I’ve rebuffed. The last time, he tried to take a few liberties, and I ended up putting him in Saint Mungo’s for a few days. Because of his position, and the power his family holds, Madam Bones was forced to give me a choice. I refuse to give him the satisfaction of quitting, so she suggested I take a year’s leave. I knew you’d been owling her about ex-Aurors looking for work, and figured I was the next best thing.”

“I see,” Dumbledore said, steepling his fingers with weary look. “It’s sad to see things have improved so little after so much hard work.”

Sitting back in his chair, Dumbledore stared thoughtfully out the window for several seconds, the only sound in the room the light, calming, quiet trills coming from Fawkes as Harry scratched his feathers.

“Normally, I'd be reluctant to hire a Defense Professor who only intends to stay for a year,” Dumbledore said eventually. “However, as I've yet to have one last longer than that for quite some time, I believe I can make an exception. Have you chosen books for your classes?”

“Yes,” Connie said, handing him several sheafs of parchment. “I've already outlined a basic lesson plan for each year.”

“Excellent,” said Dumbledore before standing up and extending his hand. “Everything things seems to be in order. Welcome to Hogwarts, Professor Hammer.”

Harry's ears perked up at the name. Connie Hammer had worked alongside Amelia Bones for years, and was a highly skilled and formidable witch. He remembered fighting shoulder to shoulder with her against the giants during the Battle of Hogwarts. Sadly, he couldn't recall if she was still among the living at the end. Between her looks and her skill, Defense Against the Dark Arts was certainly going to be a very interesting class.

“I'm afraid the castle has done a bit of rearranging since you were last here. The Defense classroom is now on the third floor, in the old vacant hallway. Do you know the way?” Dumbledore asked, breaking Harry from his thoughts.

“No, I'm afraid not,” Connie answered.

“I can show you,” said Harry, speaking up for the first time.

“Ah, most kind of you, Harry,” said Dumbledore, smiling pleasantly.

“Yes, thank you,” Connie said with a smile.

Giving Fawkes one last stroke along his plumage, Harry walked over to the door and waited for Connie to gather her things. A few moments later, they left the office together and headed for the grand staircase.

“So, I take it you’re the time traveler the headmaster told us about?” asked Connie as they walked.

Harry stumbled slightly in surprise and looked at her sharply.

“He told you about that?” he asked sharply.

“He told all the professors yesterday. Don’t worry,” she said quickly at his flabbergasted look, “all of us were sworn to secrecy. I think he knew it would be easier to hide it from the students if all the teachers knew. That, and he was trying to interest me in taking the job. Last year’s professor wasn’t very impressive, from what I hear. I have to admit, it did make me quite curious about you.”

Harry sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. While he could admit Dumbledore had a point, he would have liked to have at least been asked about it first. It was his life, after all. Mentally, he added it to the list of things he needed to talk to the old man about.

“So, I expect you’ll be one of my students?” Connie asked, changing the subject.

“Yeah, that’s actually partly why I came to talk to Professor Dumbledore,” Harry told her. “I’ve decided to start my sixth year here.”

“You look a bit old to be a sixth year,” she said curiously.

"I am, but I was pretty distracted with the war during my actual sixth year, and I missed my seventh entirely," he explained. "I could probably pass my NEWTs now if I took them, but when Dumbledore offered to let me come here, I decided to make the most out of it."

"That's a wise decision," said Connie with an approving smile. "Most wizards your age think they're ready to take on the world."

"I like to think I know just enough to know I don't know enough," Harry joked.

Connie giggled and looked over at him, her striking, pale blue eyes glittering.

"Then you're already far smarter than wizards twice your age," she told him. "How are you at Defense?"

"It's my best subject," Harry said with modest shrug.

"Good, then I hope to see you do well in my class," she said with a smile. "You wouldn't happen to be staying in the castle, would you?"

"No, I'm staying at the Three Broomsticks until school starts, why?" Harry asked curiously.

"I've never really taught outside of tutoring some of the cadets and, honestly, I'm a bit nervous about teaching such large classes," Connie admitted. "If you have time, would you mind stopping by the castle and helping me practice? I can offer you some extra credit."

"Sure. I've been looking for something to keep me busy anyways," he said. "When do you want to start?"

"Give me a couple of days to get set up and I'll send you an owl," Connie said.

Nodding, Harry turned left at the top of the stairs and led her down to the corridor where they took a right.

“Here you are,” said Harry, pointing to the second door on the right.

Turning the knob, he pushed the door open to find the Defense classroom looking exactly as it had in his time. There were five rows of six desks, all facing the blackboard at the front. The familiar, white dragon’s skeleton hung overhead, and a spiral staircase at the back led to the professor’s private quarters.

“Hasn’t changed a bit,” said Connie, echoing his thoughts.

“Well, I should get back and talk to Dumbledore,” Harry said. “Send me an owl when you need me. I’m in room four.”

“I will,” she said, smiling gratefully. “Thanks for all your help.”

“Anytime,” he said, smiling back.

A few minutes later, he was back in Dumbledore’s office, sitting across the desk from him with Fawkes perched on his knee. As he ran his fingers through the bird's soft feathers, he told Dumbledore about the odd things happening to him. When he finished a short while later, the professor sat back and stroked his beard while he gazed past him, and out the window.

“Hmm. Most curious, indeed. I wonder-” he said to himself before focusing on Harry. “Tell me Harry, how much do you know about the Deathly Hallows?”

“Just what the story says,” Harry said. “Although, I don’t think they were actually created by Death.”

“Nor do I,” the professor agreed. “While I’ve never had the opportunity to examine the ring or the cloak, I have studied the Elder Wand extensively. It is my belief that the Peverell brothers were extremely gifted wizards who used an ancient, and highly controversial form of magic to create the Hallows. Although I cannot truly ever know for sure, I’m certain sacrificial magic was used in the creation of the wand.”

“They killed someone to make the wand!?” exclaimed Harry, aghast.

He was suddenly very conscious of the weight of the Elder Wand in his pocket, and it left him feeling dirty, tainted for having it on him.

“Sacrificial Magic is a very old and varied form of Ritualistic Magic.” Dumbledore explained. “A sacrifice does not necessarily have to be a life, and it usually isn’t. Most often the person performing the ritual will give up an object of great sentimental value to them. Even when it does require a life, some people are quite willing to sacrifice themselves to help their loved ones. Imagine you lived a long and full life, and you knew your end was near. You could simply wait to die, possibly in great pain, as your loved ones watched helplessly. Or, you could say your goodbyes, and use what little time you have remaining to power wards, remove a curse, ensure fertility for your descendants, or any number of things that come to mind.

“Only the darkest and most vile Dark Rituals require an unwilling sacrifice, and only the worst of those require the taking of a life.”

“Like a Horcrux,” Harry interjected.

“Precisely,” Dumbledore said with a nod. “Now, back to the Hallows. While the wand and the ring in particular may seem Dark, given the bloody history behind both of them, I do not believe a Dark Ritual was used to create them. I am certain, however, a very powerful sacrifice was used in the creation of all three. Whether the story of Death gifting them the Hallows was created by the brothers themselves to conceal the magic they used, or simply a myth that arose years later, we may never know. “

“But how would it affect me like it is?” Harry asked.

“Magical artifacts grow and change over time, much like this castle. The Hallows, being very old, very powerful, and having been passed from one person to the next for generations, have taken on a life of their own. The Elder Wand in particular: being used to channel magic cast by many of the most powerful witches and wizards to have ever lived would make it especially powerful. Have you ever had need of a specific spell you had no prior knowledge of, and found that the wand guided you into casting it perfectly?” he asked, raising a grey, bushy eyebrow.

“Yeah, a few times,” Harry admitted.

“Legend says the Elder Wand is unbeatable, yet I know this to be untrue. Of course, the wand most often changed hands through duplicitous means, but it has been lost and won before in duels past. What if the wand is not unbeatable in the sense that the wielder cannot lose, but in that there can be no better wand? What if the wand retains the knowledge of every spell it has ever cast, and then guides the wielder into using those spells, even if they have no knowledge of them?”

“Bloody hell,” Harry breathed.

Reaching into his pocket, Harry pulled out the Elder Wand and spun it between his fingers, staring at the intricately carved elder berries along the shaft. The wand hummed at his touch. For a brief moment, he could feel the limitless potential beneath his fingertips. An endless well of spells and knowledge just a thought away from being made a reality. It thrummed with the beat of his heart, seductively whispering promises of power and glory.

Clack Clack

Harry dropped the wand as if it had burned him, the fabled Hallow falling with a clatter to the stone floor. His breathing was heavy, and his hands trembled at his first true glimpse of the power within the Elder Wand.

“Impressive,” said Dumbledore quietly. “I can see why the wand has chosen you. I've never met a witch or wizard who could resist the temptation.”

“I’ve seen what that kind of power does to people.” Harry said softly before shaking his head. “But you still haven’t explained why it’s affecting me.”

“I’m getting there,” said Dumbledore.

As if intentionally testing Harry’s patience, the headmaster pulled out his wand and waved it in an arc. A full tea tray, including biscuits, appeared out of thin air. The tea poured itself into cups before one floated over to each of them. Dumbledore took a long sip, set down his cup, and wiped his mustache.

“Where were we? Ah, yes. Now, keep in mind, this is only a theory,” he said, to which Harry waved impatiently for him to continue. “The Elder Wand sees you as its true master for a number of reasons. First, you bested its previous master. Then, you possessed all three hallows simultaneously, something which likely hasn’t occurred since they were originally created. And finally, you conquered death through sacrifice, twice. Perhaps even being a descendant of the Peverells has some effect as well. To the elder Wand, it sees you as a brother.”

“What do you mean?” Harry asked curiously.

“The Deathly Hallows were made, as a set, to conquer death, something you’ve done on more than one occasion. Once as a child, and then again as an adult. The Hallows were forged through a powerful sacrifice, much like yourself. First, your mother’s sacrifice protected you from Voldemort, and then your own sacrifice vanquished him for good. There is also Peverell blood running through your veins. You didn’t control the Hallows simply through possessing them, or winning them in a duel, you earned their loyalty. The wand sees you as its true master, and yet it did not wish to be destroyed.” Dumbledore explained. “Tell me Harry, what were you thinking when you destroyed the wand?”

“I was thinking about... all the friends I’d lost, and how I wanted to make sure it could never happen again.” Harry said.

“As I told you earlier, powerful artifacts take on a life of their own as they get older. I believe that as the wand was destroyed, in an attempt to preserve itself, and to serve its master, it granted your greatest wish. You were thinking about the people you lost, and your desire to protect those around you, so it sent you here, and gave you its power.” Dumbledore concluded.

“It gave me its power!?” Harry exclaimed dumbfoundedly. “So, what, *I’m* the Elder Wand now?”

“No,” the professor said with a smile. “Though I do not think it would be entirely inaccurate to refer to you as a ‘fourth Hallow.’”

“I- you- what!?” Harry yelled.

Fawkes took to the air and sang a calming song as Harry jumped to his feet and began pacing back and forth.

“Please, calm yourself, Harry,” Dumbledore said soothingly. “I realize this is a lot to take in, but it does not change who you are. You have simply been blessed with a very powerful gift.”

“What about the way I’m affecting other people?” Harry asked worriedly.

“Ah, well, I’ve always heard women are attracted to powerful men,” he said with a shrug, earning him a glare. “I’m sorry, Harry. Contrary to popular belief, I do not have all the answers. Especially when it comes to women. I’m afraid it’s just something you’re going to have to learn to live with.”

“Great,” Harry said sardonically.

“You know, as far as problems go, it could be much worse,” Dumbledore reminded him.

Huffing, Harry continued pacing, though he had calmed down significantly.

“So, you think I know every spell the Elder Wand did when I broke it?” he asked for clarification.

“I believe the knowledge is in you, yes,” the headmaster said, stroking his beard. “Of course, you won’t remember it all at once, the human mind can only take so much. Most likely you’ll find it comes to you as you need it, much the same way the wand works.”

Sighing, Harry sat back down and bit into a biscuit, the two of them sitting in companionable silence for a short while. The only sound in the room was Fawkes’ singing and the occasional whiz, whir, and puff from the many instruments around the office.

“Harry, could you try something for me?” Dumbledore asked eventually.

“Sure,” Harry said with a shrug.

“Where is your cloak?” he asked.

“In my pocket.” Harry answered.

“May I see it?” Dumbledore asked.

Shrugging again, Harry pulled the folded, gossamer cloak from his pocket and handed it to him.

“Close your eyes, please.” Dumbledore asked.

He eyed the old man oddly but gave in and closed his eyes. He heard the professor moving around the office, opening and closing a number of doors and cabinets before sitting back down behind his desk.

“You can open your eyes now,” Dumbledore told him. “Now, I would like you to try and call the cloak to you. Don't summon it, or use any other spell, just focus on needing the cloak.”

Furrowing his brow, Harry thought about how badly he wanted his father's cloak back. Feeling a tingle in his hand, he looked down to see the familiar, flowing cloak materialize in his hand out of thin air.

“Marvelous!” Dumbledore clapped. “I suspect the wand and ring would do the same.”

“Wicked,” Harry said.

Not only could he always summon his wand, but he also now had a way of getting one of Voldemort's Horcruxes without having to go through the defenses around the Gaunt Shack. That would be something to deal with later, however.

“As much as I enjoy your company, Harry, I'm afraid I really must get back to work,” Dumbledore said a moment later. “Feel free to stop by any time.”

“Sure, thanks for the help, Professor,” Harry said as he stood.

Giving Fawkes on last pet, he turned to leave, only to stop halfway to the door.

“Oh, I almost forgot,” Harry said. “I've decided to start sixth year in September, if the offer still stands.”

“Of course,” Dumbledore said with a nod.

Opening one of his desk drawers, the headmaster pulled out a Hogwarts letter and handed it to Harry. Before he could take it, Fawkes swooped in and snatched it in his beak. Flying in a short

circle overhead, he glided gracefully down to land almost weightlessly on Harry's shoulder. With an elegant bow, Fawkes dropped the letter into his hand and chirped happily.

"You could have just asked," Dumbledore said amusedly with a shake of his head. "I take it you'll be joining Gryffindor?"

"Yeah, thanks, professor," Harry said, watching as Fawkes returned to his perch behind Dumbledore.

"You're quite welcome," Dumbledore replied, just before the door closed.

Turning to Fawkes, he smiled and stroked his beard.

"My friend, I believe this year shall be quite interesting," he said, to which the phoenix chirped in agreement. "Yes, most interesting, indeed."

Leaving the grounds, Harry walked back to his room at the Three Broomsticks, waving to Rosmerta as he passed. Up in his room, he took stock of his supplies. Not for the first time, he was eternally grateful to Hagrid for his mokeskin pouch. He made a mental note to stop by and visit his oldest, and largest friend when he got a chance.

While he had a few schoolbooks and a handful of basic potions ingredients, he was going to need to buy all new school equipment, including robes. Fortunately, he'd had the foresight to take all of his gold out of Gringotts before the war broke out in earnest. He still had more than enough to last several lifetimes. Briefly, he considered buying a house, but decided to wait, seeing as he would be spending most of the year at Hogwarts.

Throwing a few handfuls of gold coins in his money bag, he replaced everything back in his mokeskin pouch and left his room.

“Will you be staying for lunch, Harry?” Rosmerta asked with a friendly smile.

“Not today, I have some shopping to do. I’ll be back for dinner though,” he told her.

“Finally made up your mind then?” she asked, knowing he’d been debating about going back to school.

“Yeah,” he said.

“You better still come visit me on Hogsmeade weekends,” said Rosmerta with a faux sternness.

“I will,” Harry assured her.

Leaving the pub, he walked down to the end of the road and apparated to Diagon Alley. Appearing in the alley behind The Leaky Cauldron, Harry tapped the bricks in the correct pattern and watched as they folded back on themselves. He had a moment of shock seeing the alley bustling with lively chatter and happy shoppers. The last time he had seen it, the mood was much more somber, and people stayed clustered in tight groups as they rushed from shop to shop. Shaking off his surprise, Harry smiled softly as he walked off to get his supplies.

Despite being over twenty years in the past, everything looked, felt, and even smelled just as he remembered it. The only thing that seemed different were the faces, the prices, and the exuberance of Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes. Everything was much cheaper here though, which led to Harry splurging a little more than he intended.

After getting his supplies, he decided to stop and look at brooms. Normally, this would have excited him, but here, the newest model for sale was the Cleansweep Seven. It was a good, solid broom, but nothing compared to his Firebolt. As he held the broom in his hands, he wondered if he could learn to tune it up a bit, or even build one of his own. Immediately, several spells he never remembered learning or using sprang to mind. Shaking his head, he felt a sense of unease at knowing things he shouldn’t.

Before he could think on it further, a pretty, brunette sales witch named Brenda came over to him. Harry smiled as she flirted with him, all while trying to sell him a broom he had already decided to buy. It might not be a Firebolt, but any broom was better than nothing. When the witch wrapped up his new broom, along with a free broom polishing kit, she slipped her owl address on a bit of parchment into the package with a wink. Giving her a crooked smile, he tucked the broom in his expanded pocket and left the shop.

Maybe Dumbledore was right, he thought, there were certainly worse problems he could have.

“Come on, mum! It’s this way!” he heard a girl yell.

Harry turned out of curiosity, only to have something solid collide with him forcefully, knocking him flat on his back. He felt a *thunk* as something hit his forehead sharply, and then just a second later, the back of his head came to a sudden stop when it hit the hard ground. The breath was knocked out of him as a weight landed on top of him. Harry groaned dazedly while the person on top of him moaned in pain.

“Oh my goodness, are you two alright?” a woman asked in concern.

Catching his breath, Harry looked up just as the girl on top of him pushed herself up onto her arms. His eyes locked with a pair of beautiful, hauntingly familiar green eyes while a curtain of long red hair did its best to shroud them from view. It took him a moment to get over the shock of seeing the same eyes he saw every day in the mirror and recognize the face staring down at him. She looked younger than he was used to seeing her, but the girl on top of him was undeniably Lily Evans.

Electricity shot between them, and Harry could feel his magic unconsciously reaching out to her. His pulse raced and his heart leapt into his throat as if it was beating so hard it was trying to escape his chest. Harry gazed at her in awe, taking in every last detail and feature of her beautiful face. For her part, Lily seemed just as enraptured with him as he was with her.

He wanted to reach out, to hold her tight and never let her go, but his muscles refused to work. All he could do was stare at her in wonder, elated and terrified all at the same time. His head

and his heart were filled with so many powerful, conflicting emotions he didn't know what to do.

Lily held herself over him, watching his face in a mixture of curiosity and confusion. People always told him he looked just like his father, but he had his mother's eyes. It must be quite odd for her to meet someone who seemed so familiar and yet not, all at the same time.

"Lily, you can get off of him now," said an amused voice.

Both of their cheeks flushed red as they were brought back down to reality.

"S-sorry," Lily stammered in embarrassment while climbing to her feet.

"S'alright," Harry murmured, sitting up.

"You didn't mention anything about this one in your letters home," the red-haired woman behind Lily said amusedly.

"Mum!" Lily whined.

"Er, hi. I'm Harry, Harry Potter" he said a bit lamely.

"I'm Lily. Sorry for running into you like that," she said. "This is my mum."

"Cynthia," her mother introduced herself.

Harry held out his hand and shook hers, fighting the urge to stare at his grandmother's face for the first time. He didn't even have a picture of her in his photo album, as she and his

grandfather had passed before his parents' wedding. Aunt Petunia hardly ever mentioned her parents, and she certainly never showed him any pictures of them.

"You're not related to James Potter, are you?" asked Lily with a hint of trepidation. "You look a lot like him."

"Distantly," Harry said, fighting a smile, "I think we might be cousins or something."

"You know, Lily and I were just on our way to get some ice cream. Would you like to join us?" Cynthia asked. "It's the least we can do."

"I don't want to intrude," he said.

"Nonsense, I insist," she told him.

He glanced over at Lily, wondering how she felt about it, and got a smile in return. Turning back to Cynthia, he nodded. Together, the three of them walked the short distance to Floean Fortescue's Ice Cream shop. Grabbing a table, Harry sat down next to Lily while Cynthia sat down across from them. A much younger Floean Fortescue came and took their order, looking both familiar and yet not. While Harry and Lily ordered quickly, Cynthia asked about nearly every option on the menu with a childlike wonder, fascinated by even the simplest items. Lily looked slightly embarrassed, but Harry smiled at her excitement. Since the day he first set foot in the magical world, he had vowed to never take it for granted.

"So, do you go to Hogwarts, Harry?" Cynthia asked once the owner had left to fulfill their order.

"Actually, I just transferred," he told her.

"Reall? What school did you go to before?" Lily asked interestedly.

Harry opened his mouth to talk, but the background story he had crafted with Dumbledore stalled on the tip of his tongue. Looking at her face, and gazing into her striking green eyes, he just couldn't bring himself to lie to her. Closing his mouth, he cleared his throat while palming his wand in his pocket and casting a silent Muffliato Charm around their table.

"I could tell you the truth, but I don't think you'd believe me," Harry told her, his lips quirking into a nervous smile.

"Try me," Lily replied, lifting a single brow.

"Well, the thing is, I did go to Hogwarts before, just not now," Harry said, garnering confused looks from both mother and daughter. "There was a bit of an accident, and I was sent back in time."

"Is this some sort of joke?" asked Lily, her eyes narrowing.

"Nope. No joke. You can ask Dumbledore if you want," he assured her.

"Really?" Cynthia asked, her green eyes sparkling with curiosity. "How far in the future are you from?"

"I'm sorry, but I really can't tell you too much about the future," Harry told her apologetically. "I can't risk changing things too much. Let's just say none of my friends from school have even been born yet."

"You'll be able to go back though, won't you?" she asked him worriedly.

"Professor Dumbledore is looking into it, but no one's ever time traveled back more than a few days. It gets really complicated, and I don't understand all of it, but he doesn't think it's possible." Harry said sadly.

"That's awful. Your parents must be worried sick." Cynthia said, glancing over at Lily as if imagining her disappearing into the past, never to be seen again.

"Er, my parents were killed by a Dark Wizard when I was a baby," he told her awkwardly.

Harry felt quite odd saying that for a couple of reasons. First, he couldn't remember the last time he'd met someone who didn't already know about what had happened to his parents. Secondly, the woman who would eventually become his mother was sitting just a few inches to his left.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," said Cynthia, looking mortified.

"It's all right, you couldn't have known," he assured her.

There was an awkward silence for a moment that, fortunately, was broken when Mr. Fortescue showed up with their ice cream. After a couple bites of their magical treats, all of the awkwardness seemed to melt away.

"So what year are you going into?" Lily asked.

"Sixth," he told her.

"That's the year I'm in," she said excitedly. "What house?"

"Gryffindor," said Harry with a smile, her enthusiasm infectious.

"Brilliant! We'll be housemates," Lily said happily, only for her smile to fall a moment later. "Oh no, you'll be sharing a dorm with *Potter*."

Harry raised an eyebrow at stress she put on the name. He knew his mum hadn't gotten along with his dad until later, but he hadn't expected her to say his name with the same level of disgust Malfoy held for Hermione.

"Oh, no, I didn't mean you," she said quickly, misinterpreting his look. "I mean James Potter. I can't stand him. He's an arrogant, bullying git that won't leave me alone. Please don't end up like him. I don't think I could survive two of him strutting around the castle."

"I'll do my best," Harry said with a smile.

Oddly, he found the fact she didn't like James more amusing than worrying.

"So, what classes are you taking?" he asked.

While Harry had learned quite a bit about his father from Sirius and Remus, he knew virtually nothing about his mother. For a long while, they talked and got to know each other. He felt an instant connection to her, a familiarity that had them getting on like the best of friends.

She shared a lot of similarities with Hermione in her love of knowledge and her drive to change the world for the better, but they were nowhere near identical. As they talked, discussing classes, magic, hobbies, and everything in between, neither of them noticed the knowing smile Cynthia had on her face as she watched the two of them.

"I hate to interrupt you two," she said nearly an hour later, "but we really do need to finish our shopping. You're more than welcome to join us, Harry."

"Er, sure. If that's alright with you," he said, looking to Lily.

"Of course," she said as she stood.

Lily stood and stretched, standing on her toes as she raised her arms over her head. As a result, her large breasts jutted out right at Harry's eye level. Catching himself staring, his cheeks flushed as he quickly looked away. Running a hand through his hair self-consciously, Harry stood and followed the pair over to Flourish and Blott's.

Although Harry already had all the school supplies he needed, he still picked up a few other things, just so as to not feel out of place. He greatly enjoyed spending time with Lily, as he had decided to call her in his head. It was difficult to reconcile the image he had of his mother, of a loving, courageous woman capable of great sacrifice, with the happy, innocent girl he saw prancing around the book shop.

It was quite an eye-opening experience for Harry, to finally see his mother as a real person. For so long, she had been an angelic, larger than life figure that he'd built up in his mind as a scared boy locked in a cupboard. He tried not to hold her to the level of perfection he and everyone else who had spoken of her held her to, Merlin knew his father had made mistakes. So far, however, Lily was just as brilliant and wonderful as he could have dared to hope.

Harry found himself staring at her constantly to memorize everything about her. He'd ask her questions, just to hear the sound of her voice. Every time she caught him looking at her, his cheeks would burn as he looked away. He knew he'd see her again; he knew he'd be spending the better part of a year sharing classes with her, and yet, he just couldn't bring himself to waste a moment of his time with her. So much had gone wrong so often in his life, the thought that this might be the only time he would ever spend with her niggled at the back of his mind like a gnat.

From the knowing looks and girlish smiles Cynthia gave him, Harry knew he must have looked like a clot. Fortunately, Lily didn't seem to mind. She was just as interested in learning about him as he was about her. He stuck to the truth as much as he could, and he never outright lied, but he certainly left out a lot. The fear of scaring her off kept him from telling her anything about Voldemort. Although he was never one to brag, he did find himself opening up to her more readily about his accomplishments.

A part of him, a very large part, wanted nothing more than to tell her everything. While he'd spoken to her, of a sort, in the Forbidden Forest just before he walked to his death, a part of him still questioned if she had been real. He wanted her to know everything about him, and, more importantly, he wanted to know if she was proud of what he'd done.

As they finished at their last stop, the Apothecary, Cynthia pulled Lily aside for a moment.

“So, you and Harry seem to be getting along well,” she said to Lily once they were out of earshot from him.

“He’s a nice guy,” Lily said. “It’s really interesting he’s from the future, but I feel really bad for him. It must be horrible to lose everything like that and have to start over.”

“You think it’s true?” she asked her daughter.

“Yeah, I do,” Lily said, biting her lip as she glanced over at the dark-haired young man. “There’s just something about him that feels so- familiar.”

“You know, he probably feels really alone, being trapped here. Why don’t you invite him over for your birthday party this weekend,” Cynthia suggested. “You can introduce him to some of your friends.”

“That’s brilliant,” she exclaimed quietly. “Why didn’t I think of that?”

“Probably because you were too busy looking at his bum,” Cynthia said teasingly.

“Mum,” Lily hissed, her face flushing as red as her hair.

“He likes you too, you know. He certainly did his fair share of looking at you,” Cynthia said, repressing a laugh.

“Can you stop? Please?” her daughter begged before hiding her face in her hands.

“Oh, fine. Ruin my fun,” she said dramatically. “Now, are you going to invite him to your party? We’ve been gone for six hours, and your father is probably getting worried.”

“Six hours?” asked Lily in surprise as she checked her watch.

“Yes, now go,” Cynthia said, nudging Lily’s shoulder.

As she walked over to Harry, Lily felt suddenly nervous for some reason. Making sure her hair was straight and taking a deep breath, she came to a stop beside him.

“Hey, Harry?” she asked

“Yeah?” he said as he turned to her.

Lily felt her stomach flutter as he looked at her with his bright green eyes and crooked smile.

“Um, I’m having my birthday party at my house this Saturday and I was wondering if you wanted to come?” she asked.

“Yeah, sure. I’d love to,” he said brightly.

“Great,” Lily said with a smile

Digging into her bags, she pulled out a quill, ink, and a sheaf of parchment. Jotting down her address, she blew on it to make sure the ink was dry before folding it in half and handing it to him.

“Here’s my address, the party starts at two. Do you need a ride?” she asked.

“No, I’ll just apparate.” he said.

“That’s so unfair,” Lily pouted. “I can’t wait to learn how to apparate this year.”

“It’s convenient, but it’s really not that fun.” he told her.

“Really, what’s it like?” she asked curiously.

“It feels like you’re being sucked through a really small, cold tube,” he said, his face scrunching up at the thought.

Before Lily could say anything else, her mother finished paying for the potions ingredients and walked over to them.

“Sorry, Harry, but we really need to get going,” her mum told him with a sympathetic look.

“Oh, okay,” he said.

Though he hid it well, Lily could still see the disappointment in his eyes.

“It was really nice meeting you. Will we see you at the party?” her mother asked.

“Yeah, I’ll be there.” Harry said before his eyes lit up. “Did you guys drive here?”

“No, we took the bus. Why?” she asked.

He smiled mischievously and glanced at her, then turned back to her mother.

“How about I apparate you home?” he asked.

“Apparate?” her mum asked while Lily perked up.

“It’s a form of magical teleportation. Can we Mum, please? I’ve always wanted to see what it’s like.” Lily said rapidly in her excitement.

At the mention of teleportation, her mum looked just as enthusiastic about the idea as she did.

“You won’t get in trouble for it, will you?” her mother asked.

“No, I’m of age and I have my license. Don’t worry, I’ve done this hundreds of times, it’s perfectly safe,” Harry assured her.

“Well, if you’re sure.” she said.

“Yes! Thanks Mum,” Lily said, hugging her mum tightly.

Harry chuckled and led them back through the alley to the entrance. As the brick wall folded closed behind them, he took out his wand.

“Here, let me shrink your bags. It’ll make the trip easier, and I can enlarge them when we get to your house.” he said.

Lily nodded as her mother looked at her in askance. Setting their bags down on the ground, Harry shrunk them with a lazy wave of his wand. While it was a simple bit of magic, the fact that he did it on over a dozen bags at once, and silently, with such ease, was pretty impressive. She smiled at the look of awe on her mum’s face as she picked up the miniature bags and delicately tucked them into her purse.

“Alright, ready?” Harry asked, to which they nodded. “Take my arm.”

Lily grabbed hold of his right arm, while her mother took his left. She felt that thrill of nervous excitement she always got when experiencing a new kind of magic.

“Just focus on holding onto my arm, okay?” he asked. “On three. One-”

Suddenly, Lily felt as if she was being sucked into a vacuum hose. She nearly panicked when she couldn't take a breath, and her hand clamped on to Harry's arm like a lifeline. Just as suddenly as it started, she came to an abrupt stop. Sucking in a sharp breath, Lily bent over with her hands on her knees, her stomach roiling.

“Deep breaths, the nausea will go away in a second.” he told them.

“That- was- far less pleasant- than I thought it would be,” her mother said.

Harry chuckled and Lily looked over to see her mum in the same position she was, her pale face slowly regaining its color.

“You get used to it, but I'd never call it fun. I much prefer flying,” he said.

“I can see why,” her mother said.

Feeling her stomach calm, Lily looked around and realized she was standing in her back yard.

“Let's go inside,” Lily said. “I need a glass of water.”

Humming in agreement, her mum straightened up and opened the door. Lily followed her in to find her dad and sister sitting at the kitchen table.

“Why are you coming in the back door?” Petunia asked, her nose wrinkling at the oddity.

“Harry brought us home,” Her mother said as she headed straight for the sink.

“Harry?” her dad asked curiously.

“Lily’s new friend- Oh Harry dear, you can come in,” she said.

Lily turned back to find Harry waiting just outside the door.

“Hello,” he said a tad shyly, pulling one hand out of his pocket to wave before jamming it back in.

“Harry, this is my husband, Gerald, and my eldest daughter, Petunia. This is Harry, Lily ran into him in Diagon Alley. He teleported us home,” she explained before gulping down half a glass of water.

“It’s called apparating, Mum,” Lily corrected her.

“O-kay,” her dad said slowly. “Nice to meet you Harry.”

“Nice to meet you too, Mr Evans,” Harry said before turning to her mum. “Do you want me to enlarge your bags now?”

“Oh, right. I almost forgot,” she said, pulling the shrunken bags out of her purse. “Although, it would have been quite something to see Lily try and read her new books with a magnifying glass.”

Harry chuckled and, as he pulled out his wand, Petunia yelped and leapt out of her chair. He froze with his wand hovering over the bags and looked at her oddly.

“Oh, stop being such a drama queen,” Lily said, rolling her eyes at her sister’s overreaction.

“You're not allowed to do magic outside of school,” Petunia hissed at Harry with a glare.

“Actually, you can use magic when you turn seventeen,” Harry told her calmly.

With that said, he waved his wand, and the bags grew back to their normal size.

“Neat,” her dad said. “I don’t suppose you could fix my chair while you’re here?”

Although it was clearly meant as a joke, Harry smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

“Sure, which chair,” he asked as he walked towards the living room.

“I was only kidding,” Gerald said, Cynthia glaring at him.

Rolling her eyes, she followed after Harry, with Gerald and Lily right behind her.

“He means that ugly brown one, but you really don’t have to,” she told him.

“I don’t mind,” Harry said with a smile.

Pointing his wand at the lumpy, worn chair that Lily’s dad loved, they watched as it mended itself until it looked brand new. Her dad walked over and sat down, wiggling to get comfortable.

“Oh, that’s nice,” he said with a smile.

“I suppose I’m stuck with that ugly thing for another twenty years,” her mum said with a sigh.

“I could change the color,” Harry offered.

“I meant my husband,” she replied with a teasing smile as her husband harrumphed good naturedly.

With a loud, disapproving huff, Petunia stomped up the stairs.

“I’m sorry about, her. Petunia’s not a fan of magic,” her mum said apologetically.

Lily snorted quietly at the understatement.

“That’s okay,” Harry said. “I should probably get going anyways. I promised Rosmerta I’d be back for dinner.”

“Oh, okay,” Lily said, feeling a surprising amount of disappointment. “So, I’ll see you Saturday?”

“Definitely,” he said with a smile.

After saying goodbye to her parents, he Disapparated silently from the living room. Her dad raised his eyebrow.

“That’s how you got here?” he asked.

“Yes, and it’s far more unpleasant than it looks,” her mother said.

"I'm going to go put my things away," Lily said, heading for the kitchen.

"Dinner will be ready soon," her mother called after her.

"Okay," Lily yelled back.

Gathering her bags, she raced up the stairs and closed the door to her room. Setting her bags down, she laid down on her bed as thoughts of a dark-haired boy with green eyes danced through her head. There was just something about him that drew her to him. From the first moment they quite literally ran into each other, and their eyes met, she felt comfortable around him in a way she'd never felt with anyone else. Lily wasn't quite sure what she felt for him, but one thing was for certain. She couldn't wait to see him again.

Back in Hogsmeade, Harry sat down in the Three Broomsticks and ate his dinner quietly. His emotions were a chaotic mess. He was beyond elated to have met and made friends with Lily, but it was his other feelings towards her that were causing him grief. It was so easy to see her as just a beautiful, smart, funny girl, and forget just who she was to him.

A part of his mind tried to convince himself that it was alright, that she wasn't really his mother, while another part told him he should be disgusted with himself. Harry had no idea how he was supposed to feel, and there really wasn't anyone he could turn to for advice. Even the people he knew and trusted that were still around saw him as a virtual stranger.

Rosmerta noticed his troubles and did her best to get him to talk, but he knew he couldn't without sounding insane. In the end, she fell back on what worked on most of her other patrons when they had problems she couldn't solve: alcohol.

Admittedly, Harry wasn't much of a drinker, never really having had much opportunity to do so. Now though, he gladly accepted and allowed the burning liquid to numb his troubled mind. He spent most of the night at the bar, trading humorous stories with Rosmerta when she wasn't busy with other customers as he steadily sipped his drinks.

As day turned to night, the amount of flirting between them increased, as did the number of times his eyes dropped to her enticing cleavage whenever she leaned on the bar. From the pretty smirk on her lips, he thought she was doing it on purpose. Eventually, the pub emptied and Rosmerta closed up for the night. Instead of sending Harry off to his room, she pulled up a chair and a drink, and talked to him some more. She sat so close, that their shoulders continually rubbed together.

Thanks to the alcohol, Harry ended up telling her nearly his entire life story. Everything from the Dursleys, to his death, to flying back through time. The only thing he didn't talk about was Lily. Through it all, Rosmerta listened supportively. By the time he was done, he felt as if a massive weight had been lifted from his shoulders. He felt lighter and freer than he had in years.

"I always knew you had a story to tell," she said eventually. "It's all in the eyes. You're an old soul in a young body. I just had no idea it would be that incredible."

Rosmerta poured another glass of mead for both of them. While Harry felt good and buzzed, she hardly looked affected at all, aside from her slightly rosy cheeks.

"You're a good man Harry Potter," she said, patting the back of his hand. "Most men would've gone mad or dark if they went through a tenth of what you have. Let me ask you something though. Do you think this happened for a reason?"

"What do you mean?" Harry asked.

"You've been to hell and back, quite literally. What if this is fate's grand way of giving you a chance to fix things, save the people you lost?" she asked. "If you were given the choice to stay in your time and rebuild after the war, or go back and stop it all from happening, even if it meant you'd lose everything, what would you do?"

Harry was silent for a long time as he thought over her words. He knew the answer almost straight away, he just didn't want to say it aloud.

“You’d go back and stop it, wouldn’t you?” she asked when he still didn’t answer.

He sighed, “Yeah, I suppose I would. I just want to be the one to make the choice, you know? All my life, I’ve never had a choice. It’s like the world just expects me to do the right thing. What about me? What about what I want?”

“What do you want?” Rosmerta asked.

“I-I want to be happy.” he admitted quietly. “I want a family- a big family.”

“Then do it,” she told him. “You’ve fought so hard for everyone else, it’s about time you fought for yourself. Find yourself a good woman and keep her close. Hell, you could probably get away with having a few women to keep you happy.”

“I can’t do that,” Harry said, shaking his head.

“Why not?” Rosmerta asked. “As long as you’re happy, and they’re happy, who cares what anyone else thinks. It’s okay to be a little selfish, Harry. What’s the point of fighting for everyone else if you end up miserable and alone?”

He had to admit she made a good point. There was just one problem.

“I don’t even know where to start,” he admitted.

“You seemed to do fine with that girl you were with last week,” she said with a smirk, causing Harry to blush but smile at the memory of his nights with Narcissa.

Rosmerta tipped her glass back and the rest of her mead poured down her throat. Setting the glass down, she rested her hand on the inside of his thigh, her fingers brushing his cock.

“How ‘bout I give you some pointers,” she asked huskily. “Tell me, Harry, what do you want right now?”

Harry swallowed thickly as he hardened under her soft touch. Whether it was her speech, or the alcohol, or a combination of the two, he was feeling particularly confident tonight. Maybe she was right, and it was time for him to be a bit more selfish.

“I want to take you upstairs and see how loud I can make you scream,” he said with such confidence that it surprised even him.

“I was hoping you would say that,” Rosmerta purred sultrily.

Harry shivered at her seductive tone and his rigid shaft pulsed against her fingers. Nibbling on his ear, she stood up and took his hand in hers. Tugging him out of his seat, she led him up the stairs. His eyes were glued to the swaying of her wide hips and round ass as she walked in front of him. As they walked into his room, and Harry closed the door behind him, Rosmerta led him over to the bed and pushed him into sitting on the edge. Hiking up her dress, she straddled him on her knees, leaving her breasts, bulging out of the top of her bodice, directly in front of his face.

Harry couldn't help himself. Wrapping his arms around her waist, he buried his face in her lush cleavage, nuzzling and kissing at the firm, smooth mounds. Rosmerta moaned and ran her fingers through his hair, holding him in place. After letting him enjoy her breasts for a while, she tugged his hair, tilting his head up. Bending down, she pressed her lips to his in a slow, passionate kiss. Harry's hands explored her back and bum over her dress. Pulling her head back a long moment later, she smiled down at him, her blue eyes sparkling brightly.

Scooting back, Rosmerta climbed to her feet. With a snap of her fingers, the laces holding her bodice together untied themselves and loosened. Slipping her arms through the short, puffy sleeves, she slowly pulled the dress down over her chest. Rosmerta's ample breasts bounced free, jutting straight out despite their size. Even the slightest movement caused them to bounce and tremble, her thick red nipples and wide, light pink areolas dancing enticingly. Pushing the top of her dress down past her thin waist, the neck caught on her wide hips.

Shaking her hips side to side, Rosmerta shimmied the dress down over her round, plump ass before letting it fall to the floor. Harry could only stare in awe at the buxom, curvaceous blonde standing in front of him, completely nude. Her voluptuous figure was the most incredible thing he had ever seen. With a predatory smile, she stalked forward a couple of steps before dropping to her knees. Immediately, her nimble fingers went to work on his belt, button, and zipper. When she tugged at his waistband, he lifted his hips so she could pull them down his legs.

Rosmerta licked her plump red lips as Harry's towering pillar of flesh came free and snapped to attention. Wrapping her hand around his hot, thick shaft, she eyed him hungrily before looking up at him with lust filled eyes. Maintaining eye contact, she opened her hot mouth and wrapped it around his sensitive tip. Her lipstick left bright red streaks down the sides of his shaft, showing her progress as she descended further and further.

Harry moaned and threaded his fingers through her curly blonde hair, his fingertips lightly scraping her scalp. When the majority of his length was glistening with her spit, Rosmerta opened her throat and took him to the base with shocking ease. Harry gasped at the feeling of her tight throat enveloping his entire length. Staring into his eyes, Rosmerta shook her head side to side, her petite nose rubbing in the short, curly hairs covering his groin.

Sealing her lips tightly around his base, and leaving a bright red mark of her achievement, she dragged her full lips slowly up his shaft, sucking hard as her tongue massaged the underside of his cock. Reaching the tip, she stopped and moved back down, swallowing the entirety of his length once again.

"Fuck, Rosie," Harry groaned.

Chuckling around him, she bobbed her head up and down in short, sharp movements several times before pulling all the way off of him with a smirk.

"As much as I love sucking your beautiful cock, and I really do," she told him. "I really need you to fuck me."

As Rosmerta stood, Harry quickly stripped off his shirt. Shoving his shoulder, she pushed him onto his back and straddled his waist again, this time with his damp, rigid cock pressed against her steaming core. Reaching up, Harry cupped her magnificent breasts, caressing them as she ground her slick lips along his shaft. Shifting around until his head was pressed against her entrance, Rosmerta threw her head back and moaned salaciously as her lips stretched around his girth.

“Oh, Merlin. Yes!” she hissed.

Slowly, she sank down onto him, her sweltering depths conforming around his considerable size. When her ass came to rest on his thighs, she leaned down and kissed him heatedly. After taking a moment to adjust to his size, Rosmerta raised and lowered herself on his cock, her tight lips clinging to his shaft. Pulling her lips away from his with a loud moan, she sat up, giving him a glorious view of her bouncing tits as she rode his length.

“Harry,” she moaned sultrily.

Gripping her hips, Harry helped her bounce while bucking his hips, driving his towering erection into her fluttering core. With every gasp and moan that left her lips, Harry felt a primal urge to make them louder. When Rosmerta came unexpectedly, her body trembled, and her hips jerked in an unsteady rhythm.

Clouded in an alcohol and lust fueled haze, Harry rolled her over onto her back and pulled her to the edge of the mattress so that he was standing on the floor. With his hands on her shoulders, his hips hammered forward with powerful thrusts. Rosmerta, still in the midst of her climax, clawed at the sheets as his relentless pounding prolonged her orgasm. Harry grunted and groaned in pleasure as she spasmed around him, swiftly driving him closer to his own climax.

Although he could feel himself nearing his peak, he just couldn't tip over the edge. Rosmerta, on the other hand, has a wild look in her eyes as she seemed to go from one climax to the next. The bed under her was soaked, and her arousal drenched his shaft and thighs, adding a wet slapping to the cacophony of moans, groans, and gasps filling the room.

On the bed, Rosmerta writhed, her body jerking back and forth, her jutting tits bouncing wildly with each savage thrust. With a feral growl, Harry climbed at a torturously slow pace towards his own peak. Sweat dripped down his face as his lungs burned from his furious thrusting. Collapsing on top of Rosmerta, he hugged her body tightly, her tits squashed against his chest as his energy waned. Wrapping her arms and legs around him, she muttered nonsensically while her nails dug into his skin.

Finally, Harry tipped over the edge. His cock swelled inside of her a moment before a torrent of cum hosed her depths. His hips jerked forward, driving his pulsating length deeper into her core as he filled her. It was easily the longest, most intense orgasm he had ever experienced. By the time he was done, he nearly passed out on top of the still quivering blonde under him.

Minutes later, when he'd regained some of his strength and his senses, Harry climbed onto the bed properly. Dragging the pillows and blankets over to them, Rosmerta curled up to his side as he got comfortable. Holding her close, he closed his eyes and fell into a peaceful doze, his mind blissfully blank.