

Chapter XVII

The Ends of the Story

That evening after dinner, Harry and Ellen met with his parents. "That was you in the Alley, I presume?" Harold asked.

Harry nodded. "Yes. Since I could confront Voldemort under glamours, I thought it better to do so. If I can destroy him without revealing that it was me who did it, I'll lead a much simpler, happier life." He took Ellen's hand.

Harry frowned as Ellen shivered. "What's wrong?"

"You're not upset?" she asked.

"About what?" Harry asked.

"Well, you only betrothed me to help support you in your fight," she said. "If you end it soon, you were sort of under incorrect assumptions."

"No," Harry said, "we were allowed to be betrothed for that reason. I was eager to betroth you because I love you, and this way, I know we'll always be together."

"Really?"

"Really," Harry assured her, hugging her.

"Even when Voldemort is gone, Harry will still have great power and great responsibility, even if it might not be overwhelming if this monster can seem to be destroyed by someone else," Mary pointed out. Ellen nodded.

"But Voldemort isn't dead, is he, Harry?" Harold asked.

"No, not yet," Harry said. He pointed to his scar. "When he gave this to me back in the original time line, it made a magical connection between us. The scar and the connection came back with me along with my magic and my memories. I've repressed the connection through Occlumency, but his feelings did bleed through twice, including today."

"I've let up on the Occlumency shields to some degree. I can feel that he is in agony, which is how I was able to slip a tracer on him without his noticing it. I should be able to trace the connection and end everything tonight. And I need to do so. He made the Horcruxes to extend his lifetime indefinitely. Had any existed, he could not have been injured as he was today, although he might not

realize that yet, but he will, sooner or later. So, if I allow him to recover, he will likely check on two of the Horcruxes, and he will find them gone. He will then make at least one, and then I won't be able to kill him until it's discovered and destroyed."

The three nodded in understanding. "When you will go?" Mary asked.

"Ellen and I will go back to our cottage," Harry said. "I'll leave from there when I feel Voldemort slipping into sleep again."

Mary turned to Ellen. "If you want company while you wait, send Dobby."

"You are welcome to come, Mother Potter," Ellen answered. "However, since I'm not worried, you don't have to."

Harry appeared in the ruins of an old abbey just before midnight. A very feverish Tom 'Voldemort' Riddle lay on a filthy cot near the area his followers had used for cooking. The cot had been used by Muggles once enslaved to do the basic work. His portkey was set for an alcove nearby, and this had been as far as he could stagger, as the adrenalin rush had ended, and the shock of his lost arm of course affected his system. Under the single burning torch, he looked pale and sweaty.

Harry looked at Voldemort. "You can stop faking, Riddle," he said.

Voldemort managed to turn his head as he opened his eyes. "Who are you, boy?"

"I am the entire Order of the Founders," Harry answered. "I am the heir to all Four, plus the Heir of Merlin."

"I knew you were under glamours in the Alley, but I would never have guess you were a child," Voldemort hissed angrily. His hiss turned into a Parseltongue command for Nagini to come and strike.

Merlin's staff appeared in Harry's hand, and a flash of light disintegrated the snake in her hiding place. "Nice try," Harry commented in Parseltongue.

Voldemort tried to activate his other emergency portkey.

"Sorry, anti-portkey wards," Harry said. "Say hello to your victims."

Wizarding Britain awoke to find another missive from the Order of the Founders.

After our Archdruid's battle with Riddle in Diagon Alley, we tracked him down and destroyed him. We left his body outside the building called 'the Shrieking Shack' in Hogsmeade and notified Albus Dumbledore.

One Dark Threat has been destroyed.

Do not count on us to save you again.

You have made the first steps towards making the magical government of Britain and Ireland more open and fair. If you keep on this road, no matter what the trials, your chances of providing good lives for yourselves and your descendants will increase.

We hope you never need hear from us again.

The mystery of the Order of the Founders was never solved, as they were never heard from again, at least by the public.

The Ministry and old elite were very glad of that, but kept looking over their shoulder. Just in case.

Saturday, June 27, 1998

Hermione Granger and Luna Lovegood were puzzled. They had thought they had known why they had been summoned to meet with Professor Potter the morning of the last Saturday of the school year. After all, Hermione was dating the eldest of the Professor's sons. John James, known to everyone as 'JJ', was a very Gryffindor young man. In some ways, he was more like his Uncle James than his father, although without the arrogant streak that James Potter had sometimes exhibited while at school. He and Hermione had become friends during their First year, as he acted as her guide to wizarding life, and as they grew close, she helped give his life direction, while he tempered her occasional stodginess and bossiness.

Quidditch Captain (Seeker for three years, and since then Keeper) and Seventh Year Boy's Prefect, JJ hoped for a short career as a professional player before going into auror training. Hermione had already been accepted into an

apprentice program at the Ministry, which could lead to various research careers. They hoped to become engaged by Christmas.

Although less than 30 minutes younger than JJ, Ronald Herman had been born on New Year's Day 1980, while JJ had been born on New Year's Eve, 1979. Except for slightly different shades of blue eyes (JJ's matched Harry's, while Ron's matched Ellen's), they were identical -- slightly huskier versions of their father and uncle. Ron (only Luna called him Ronald) had become the first Potter Sorted ever into Ravenclaw. Except when playing Quidditch (Beater), he was regarded by most as a rather stolid, even boring scholar. Both of the Potter boys excelled at Defense, but JJ was superior in Charms, while Ron was superior in Transfiguration. Both had vied with Hermione for the position of ranking first in their class over-all. Since Ron also had a magical gift for languages, it looked like his far-superior scores in 'Runes and Languages' might outstrip even Hermione's record scores in Arithmancy.

No one had been more surprised than Luna that Ron had come to her defense when some of the other girls had started picking on her during her First year. Even though she was slightly less- eccentric than her counterpart in the other time-stream, she was still a Seer and just as dreamy as she went through life. Ron had protected her, and the pair now extended that same chivalry to others, as Head Boy and Sixth year girls' prefect.

Both girls had been thrilled when their boyfriends' father had come to Hogwarts to teach Charms for a year, while Professor Flitwick took a sabbatical. Harry Potter was famous. He was the public face of Magi-Watch! Security, and had brought down several gangs and dark practitioners throughout the world over the years. He had also championed the rights of intelligent magical beings, and had helped end the out-right slavery of house elves in Europe (they had long been emancipated elsewhere). He was also known to dedicated readers of *Hogwarts: A History* as the only person in the last 800 years to have taught more than two subjects at Hogwarts, for he had held sabbatical appointments in Defense, Flying, and Transfiguration as well as Charms. He had also been selected to one of the open seats in the Wizengamot in 1984, the youngest person to take such a seat in over four hundred years. From there, he had broken the news of the islands where slaves were still held by many of the Darker families, and used the scandal to break their hold over the Ministry.

He had already turned down the position of Minister once, as well as the position of Director of the MLES three times, despite his young age. In short, he was easily the most famous wizard in Britain, if not western Europe, after Dumbledore. Only Ron Weasley and a few others were in awe of him because he had flown for the Chudley Canons, leading them to their only Quidditch finals in over a century. (They had lost, 300-180, but Harry had caught the snitch.)

So meeting with their boyfriends' father along with their boyfriends had not been surprising, if slightly unexpected because of the timing. Nor was the fact that his wife, heavily pregnant with her twelfth and final child (tenth pregnancy), was present a surprise. James and Lily Potter were surprising,

however. True, three of their six children were in Hogwarts (Rose was a Sixth year Hufflepuff, James Harold a Third year Gryffindor, Melody a First year), but it was still unexpected. Professor Lupin, the Defense teacher for the last twelve years, was also surprising, even if he was Harry Potter's best friend.

The final person present, a young auror named Nymphadora Tonks, was confusing to everyone but Harry, including her.

They were also all meeting in a room none, save Harry and Ellen, had ever known existed. The Room of Requirement was not even marked on the copies of the Marauder's Map s each twin had.

"Thank you all for showing up," Harry said. The Room had set up loveseats for two, all facing the one Ellen was gratefully sitting on (she was due in less than three weeks) and Harry was standing in front of. After briefly explaining the abilities of the Room of Requirement, Harry went on, "Some of you have noticed some anomalies in me, or abilities I shouldn't have. All of you, except Ron and JJ, are directly concerned in my story. As you two seem determined to cleave to Hermione and Luna, I thought I would include the two of you as well."

"But sir," Tonks protested, a little uncomfortable seated next to Professor Lupin, whom she'd always had a crush on, "we've never even interacted, outside of your being my teacher my First and Sixth years."

"You haven't interacted with me, but I have with you," Harry said. "Ellen knows most of the story, but I did promise James, Lily, and Remus explanations of certain things someday. Today, I explain. This will take all day, so we'll eat here." Harry thought, and note pads and self-inking quills appeared. "Jot down any questions you might have, because if I answer them as I go along, we'll be here through Monday morning."

And with that, Harry told his story. He started with the death of Henry John Potter in May, 1971, and told the story of the alternative time line. That took from 9:16 that morning until nearly 2:45. From then until just after 6:00, he told the story of their time line from his prospective.

After an early dinner, the room changed back to the loveseat configuration. "JJ, Ron, you two don't get to ask questions." JJ scowled, but Ron was still stunned by the earlier revelation that he was named for Ron Weasley, whom he didn't especially like, and Hermione of all people.

"Let me go first," Tonks said. "I probably have the fewest questions."

"Alright," Harry agreed.

She turned to Remus. "You're a werewolf?"

"I was," Remus agreed. "Somehow, Harry modified the curse so that I became a wolf Animagus, the summer between our Second and Third years."

"The ritual only works if the caster has great power, is a mammalian Animagus, and has affection for the werewolf. The werewolf, in turn, has to have affection and great trust in the caster," Harry explained.

Tonks nodded and said, "And I was married to him?" Harry nodded. "Cool," she said, winking at Remus. "We can talk about that, later, if you're interested."

Remus blushed, which made James and JJ laugh.

Tonks looked at Harry. "And you and I were also intimate, and I gave my life to bring all of this about?" Harry nodded again. "I made the right choice," Tonks said, and gestured that she was done.

"Let me go next," Luna suggested. "You and I were also intimate, weren't we. You, you, myself, and Hermione."

Harry wasn't surprised that Luna had somehow known this, even if he hadn't mentioned it. "After Ginny was killed, you and Hermione both took it upon yourselves to bring me out of my depression and anger together." Hermione colored. "I hope that doesn't change how you four feel for each other," Harry went on. "After all, they were different versions of the two of you, and from my perspective, it was nearly forty years ago."

"At least we know why you never teased us about these two, like you have all the other kids about who they date," Ron said.

"Dad said the same thing to both of us," JJ agreed, turning to Hermione. "You're dating one of the most special girls in the world. Hurt her, and you will regret it'."

"You haven't been threatened properly until Dad does it," Ron agreed.

"You two are special," Harry said. He looked at Hermione.

"I guess I don't have any personal questions," she said. "Should I wait with the more general ones?"

"Really?" Harry asked, surprised. "None?"

Ron sniggered.

"None that you could probably answer," Hermione replied. "And I'm sure we'll all want to know more about the Founders, the Triad Council, Merlin, and the like."

"True," most of the group agreed, while others expressed similar sentiments.

"Okay," Harry said, "we'll come back to Hermione. Remus?"

"I had a few pieces figured out, although I have to admit I'm surprised I was actually right," Remus said. "I figured you were in contact with the Order of Founders, but I never figured you for the entire Order, including the Heir of Merlin who did in Voldemort!"

Harry shrugged.

"I'll just say you played your hand very well," Remus said, "and thank you, on behalf of all werewolves and this former werewolf for bringing the Wolfsbane Potion back in time twenty years, and arranging for subsidized distribution."

"You're welcome," Harry said.

"I'd always wondered why you were so interested in werewolf rights," James admitted. He looked at Remus. "I have to admit, you had me and Sirius fooled. We never suspected." He glared at Harry. "And now I know why you and Remus became Animagi so easily! Over two years before Sirius and me. 'Superior ability and brains' my arse!"

The group laughed, and JJ chided, "Uncle James! And you believed him?"

"Yes, well, your father does have a way with getting his points across and making people believe just about anything he says," James pointed out.

Harry smirked. It faltered when he saw the look James and Lily were giving him.

"I think I'll let Lily deal with the more obvious issue," James said, knowing that Lily had always had a less difficult time dealing with Harry than he had. "I always knew you were bloody noble, but I can't believe that you saved Snivellus and Pettigrew."

"After twenty-seven years, you'd think you and Sirius would have dropped that nickname," Harry complained.

"You used it first!"

"It slipped out by accident! And I never used it to his face, like you two!"

"He's still a greasy git, even if he does wash his hair every once in a while," James declared, "even if he finally did stop snivelling about how Lestrangle and Malfoy threatened him."

Harry sighed, knowing he wasn't going to win James over. "Snape is one of the most brilliant potions creators there is, and I'm glad he's the chief potions researcher at Magi-Watch! He's made a fortune for us, and for himself."

"He's still a greasy git."

"No, he's not," Harry insisted. "Greasy, that is."

"So we can at least agree he's a git?" James asked hopefully.

"He's moody, snarky, rude, and at times just plain nasty, and the rest of the time, he's anti-social," Harry agreed. "'Git' sounds about right. As long as you remember he's a very talented one."

"Fair enough," James agreed unhappily. "Whatever happened to Pettigrew?"

"He's a low-level employee of the Department of Magical Transport," Harry said. "He does maintenance work on the floo network."

James shrugged Pettigrew away.

"At least I know why you never liked Petunia," Lily said. "Still, you have at least made an effort."

Harry nodded, but added, "She isn't quite as nasty as she was in the other time stream, and neither is Vernon. Dudley isn't as spoiled or nearly as fat, either. Not to mention they have the two younger kids. They ruined my original childhood, but it looks like Dumbledore didn't do them any favors my dumping me on them, either."

Harry and Lily looked at each other in silence for a few moments. "We're stalling, aren't we?" Lily asked.

Harry nodded.

"That time back in First year, when you were hurt . . . that's why you called me 'Mum' when you woke up, isn't it?"

Harry nodded. "You and James were both always two sets of people. The parents I didn't know, and the two of you. So, every once in a while, the line got a little blurry, especially with you."

"At least it explains why you always have let me mother and pamper you, even more so than Ellen in most ways," Lily said. "I am your mother."

"My Wendy-lady," Harry said with a smile.

"I have to admit, I don't know how to feel," James said. "I mean, the Henry I shared the womb with and lived with for eleven years died twenty-seven years ago, and I never mourned him, and you're my son from an alternate time-stream." James struggled with the ideas for a few moments, as he had all day, but just went on, "Still, at least now I understand a lot more."

"Understanding is a good start," Luna said.

James looked at Harry curiously. "What did you look like?"

"Before I was crippled, which was actually today in the other time-stream, I probably looked like an even skinnier version of how you looked when you were about sixteen, except that I had Lily's eyes." He smiled and added, "You married six months later in this time stream, and none of your children look all that much like I did."

James, Remus, Lily, and Ellen envisioned that for a moment. Harry concentrated, and the room provided a pensieve. Harry pulled out a memory and placed it into the bowl.

The others hesitatingly touched it, and were drawn into a static scene. It was the front lawn of Hogwarts, a moment before the actual battle had started. Voldemort, his Death Eaters, dementors, giants, trolls, and inferi had swarmed the grounds. The students, staff, and Order of the Phoenix were drawn up in a defensive position.

Remus and the students recognized nearly all of the students of that alternate date. Hermione noted that she looked a bit fitter in the memory than she was now.

Still, the attention was on the scrawny boy in glasses, his face one of determination, and there was power literally glowing in his green eyes.

"It could have gone so much better," Harry said sadly. "Ginny was determined to be at my side, and Voldemort repossessed her. He used her to almost destroy me. I managed to kill him, and that killed all the Death Eaters, and it also killed Ginny. Ron Weasley never forgave me, and I suppose I still haven't forgiven me, either."

"And who exactly knows, outside of us?" James asked.

"The only people who know most of this are Dumbledore and Mum and Dad," Harry answered. He still didn't know what had happened to Harold and Mary Potter in the original time stream, but they were still going strong. "Oh, Dobby knows as well. The Sorting Hat and the Headmaster and Headmistress portraits know, as do the Vault Guardians and Hogwarts herself," Harry said. "The higher ranking goblins know about my being the Heir to the Vaults, but not about the time travel."

"You haven't told Jean, have you?" (The Potters, being in an arranged marriage, had given into their feelings and formally Bonded during the Easter break their Seventh year. Ellen had been over two months pregnant when she left school, and their eldest child, Jean Lilac, had been born in early January, 1979.) "And you're not going to tell the other kids when they hit seventeen?" Ron asked.

"I wasn't planning on it, any more than I plan to tell your Aunt Holly." This was James' younger sister, born a few minutes before Christmas back in 1971.

"I think you should," JJ said. "If not when they turn seventeen, then when they leave Hogwarts, and you should tell Jean soon." The twins looked at each other. "As for Aunt Holly. . . ."

"She's flightly, but trust-worthy," Ellen said.

"You should, since Mum and Dad know," James pointed out.

"And you really have to tell Sirius, if he ever stays in one place and shows any sign of growing up," Remus said. Harry had always thought that Azkaban had made Sirius a perpetual adolescent, but it turned out that it was merely his nature. When his parents had tried to arrange a marriage between him and Narcissa, he had fled the country, coming back only after Narcissa and Regulus had married in 1982.

"Harry," Luna started, to the surprise of everyone except for Harry and Ron. "What? The term is essentially over and it was only a one-year appointment."

James snorted.

"What?" Luna asked.

"Albus will announce his own and Filius' retirement at the Feast Thursday," Harry said.

"I'll be taking over Charms for Filius," Lily added.

"And Harry will be taking over Hogwarts for Albus," James snickered.

"You . . . you're going to be the Headmaster?" Hermione asked, eyes wide.

Harry grinned and nodded. "Wait for it," Harry and JJ whispered to each other as Hermione gathered steam.

"According to. . . ."

"Hogwarts: A History," Harry, JJ, and Ron chanted together.

"Stop that!" Hermione demanded.

"I know, I'll be the youngest Headmaster in the history of the school," Harry agreed. He turned to Luna. "Still, in private, feel free to call me Harry."

"Thank you, Harry," Luna replied. She looked at him. "This world sounds better than the one you left. If so, that was due to you, and to the sacrifices Professor Lupin and Miss Tonks made."

"And the faith you and Hermione had in me," Harry agreed. "And yes, this is far from being a perfect world. Relations between the various sections of the population can be tense, the Muggles are still a potential danger, and on and on and on. Still, the government is more responsive and slightly more representative, the Ministry has fairer hiring practices, and not only isn't there any current sign of any Dark Lords in Britain, there really aren't any signs of any anywhere. Sooner or later there will be one, but we'll keep hoping it's later."

Luna stood up and walked over to Harry, kissing him on the cheek. "Then thank you, Harry James/Henry John Potter," she said.

THE END