

CHAPTER 20

MIRROR, MIRROR

Come early Tuesday morning, Harry was all primed and fully prepared to resume his usual routine of setting off down the staircase of the dormitory, meeting up with Hannah in the common room, and heading to breakfast in the Great Hall hitched firmly to the stunning green-eyed beauty's side.

Yesterday's private breakfast with her by the shores of the Black Lake was just the assurance he needed to confirm his and Hermione's suspicions that their relationship had superseded the bonds of mere comradeship. Yes, Harry now agreed with Hermione; his relationship with Hannah had reached a rolling boil and Hannah's will had become about as thin as an eggshell. He figured it wouldn't be long before she cracked and conceded to her romantic feelings for him. It was only a matter of days now. He was certain of it.

But, as he descended the dormitory staircase and touched down upon the landing to the Gryffindor common room, he received an unexpected and unwelcome rude awakening.

"Remus!" he exclaimed with a start.

"Good morning, Harry!" called Remus cheerfully, his hands jingling the galleons in his pockets while he proceeded to distribute his weight back and forth from his heels to his toes.

After taking a good look around the common room and noting he and Remus were alone, Harry inquired anxiously, "What's going on? Where's Hannah?"

"Ah," sighed Remus. "Well, Harry, Hannah has been *reassigned*."

"Reassigned?!" echoed Harry in distress.

"Yes. She's been put in charge of supervising the Order of the Phoenix guards in the castle."

"By who?"

"By me."

"By *you*?! But, why?" Harry inquired in distress.

"Settle down, Harry," said Remus gently. "Arthur and I felt that Hannah was finding the duties of being your personal sentinel overly taxing. Therefore, we instructed her to take a bit of time off...to recharge."

“That’s a load of rubbish and you know it!” spat Harry. “This is about the other day when you accused me and Hannah of getting off on each other in the Grimmauld secret kitchen!” Remembering Remus’s cheerful exterior, Harry declared further, “THAT’S why you were so happy! You finally managed to get her sacked so that you could take over her post!”

“Harry, you must understand—”

“Oh, I understand alright! You’ve been picking on Hannah from the minute she joined the Order! You’re *jealous*! It’s just like she said when we left Godric’s Hollow over the summer holiday; you’re afraid she’s to be the one who will see me through this mess with Voldemort, and then you’ll *never* compensate for screwing up with my parents!”

“Harry, *that’s enough!*” shouted Lupin. “I have NEVER done anything but what I believe is to be in your best interest! I loved your parents and I love you as though you were my own son! There is far more at stake here than you can possibly realize!”

Harry scoffed. “The only thing at stake here is my regard for you!”

“Harry-James-Potter!” exclaimed Remus, astounded, looking literally devastated by Harry’s callous decree.

Nevertheless, Harry paid no mind to Remus. He stomped out of the common room, up the dormitory staircase, and into his room.

He threw open the drawer to his nightstand, snapped up his enchanted two-way mirror, and spoke anxiously into it, “I wish to speak with Hannah.”

There was no response.

“I said, I wish to speak with Hannah!” said Harry, growing more restless by the second. He started to shake the mirror, calling out heatedly, “Come on, Hannah! Are you there? Talk to me!”

“She won’t answer you,” murmured Remus, holding out the mirror’s twin.

Harry’s face bubbled with outrage.

“Why-do-you-have-that?” he inquired in an eerie and unsteady growl.

“That was to be my question for *you*. How long have you and Ms. Morley been carrying on with these?”

Harry’s face soured and he swiftly threw his back to Remus.

“Harry, I asked you a question,” pushed Remus firmly.

Still, Harry gave no reply.

“Harry, you must understand that as your guardian, it is my responsibility to see to your safety. Stealing around behind the Order’s back in such a negligible fashion and disregarding school rules is not acceptable behavior!”

“Hah!” snapped Harry. “This coming from a man who helped my Dad create the Marauder’s Map in order to sneak about the castle grounds all ours of the night!”

“This is a different day and age, Harry! Voldemort was not the threat to this school that he has become today!”

“Blah! Blah! Blah!” jeered Harry. “So, what are you saying? Messing around with two-way mirrors is going to get me killed?”

“This mirror, in the wrong hands, could prove to be a grave danger to you, Harry!

Harry scoffed. “Sirius gave me that mirror! He gave it to me to talk to him whenever I wanted! He never would have done so if he knew it would bring me harm!”

“Sirius is DEAD, Harry! He’s **DEAD!** I’m your guardian now and I have a responsibility to see to your safety! That responsibility extends to the disposal of anything and everything that I believe could prove to be a grave danger to you!”

Harry’s expression burned beyond the realm of outrage. “Why didn’t Hannah tell me you were taking over her post?”

“Because, Hannah and I believed it would be an easier transition for you if we didn’t make a major issue of it; if I just sort of...took over.”

“I know Hannah! She would have told me if she could! This is all your doing! YOU told her not to tell me! I saw her face after she talked to you last; she was completely despondent, and *you*, you were ecstatic!”

“Harry, *enough!* It’s settled. I am to be your guard from this moment forward.”

“Yeah, and I bet you’re reveling in the fact that you finally managed to drive a wedge between her and me, aren’t you?”

Remus’s face fell as he responded in a hoarse and disillusioned tenor, “What has she done to you!”

“SHE hasn’t done anything but treat me absolutely brilliantly, which is more than I can say of you! Now, bugger off and leave me alone!”

“You have class in under an hour! We must to get you to the Great Hall for breakfast, and then—”

“I’m not going anywhere until I talk to Hannah! Where is she?” said Harry, heading for the door of his dormitory.

“Harry, Hannah is not in the castle.”

“Where is she?”

Remus sighed heavily. “She’s at Grimmauld, I think.”

“I thought you said she was in charge of supervising the guards in the castle? How is she to tend to such a task from there?” said Harry cheekily.

“She also has other responsibilities, Harry.”

Harry reached for his knapsack and pulled out his invisibility cloak.

“Just what do you think it is you’re doing?” asked Remus.

“I’m going to talk to Hannah,” said Harry defiantly.

“No, you’re not,” said Remus.

“YES, I am!”

Remus grabbed Harry by the arm and said sternly, “Harry, I’m sorry, but you and Hannah are no longer permitted to see one another.”

Harry’s face erupted into a fiery display of emotional torment as his voice rumbled out low and jarringly, “What-do-you-mean-by-that?”

Remus cleared his throat and placed his hands on Harry’s shoulders consolingly as he said, “From this point on, you are to spend your weekends here in the castle. You are not to see to, or speak to Hannah outside of your holiday retreats, or your emergency meetings for the Order of the Phoenix. I’m sorry, Harry, but Arthur and I believe it is in your best interest.”

“Get out!” snarled Harry.

“What?” said Remus with a start.

“You heard me. GET-OUT-OF-MY-ROOM, *NOW!*” bellowed Harry, shoving Remus roughly through the door, banging it shut, and sealing it with a Sticking Spell to keep him from re-entering.

Harry needed some time alone to think. He wasn't quite sure what to make of this devastating turn of events, but he knew one thing was for certain; he was not about to roll over and concede to the wishes of a guardian who seemed to be entirely intent on draining his life of what little joy was left in it. He refused to consent to the prospect of having the woman of his dreams slip through his fingers, all because some overprotective parental wannabe decided it was in his best interest.

So, he made pact with himself, right then and there. Remus Lupin may have held the keys to the power over his destiny, but Harry held the lock, and he wasn't going down without a fight.