

“You could postpone this, you know.” Sirius said with a troubled look.

“No. It has waited long enough. It’s time for House Potter to emerge from obscurity.” Harry said, nodding at the completed Potter Manor while sitting on a bench in the garden.

Winky popped next to their side and offered them orange juice.

“Thanks, Winky.” Harry smiled at the elf, who happily nodded at him before skipping towards Dobby, who was working on watering the plants in the garden.

“Don’t you think you’re setting up the manor for Voldemort to attack? It’d be better to ward the property using the Fidelius charm.” Sirius suggested.

Harry shrugged his shoulders.

“On the contrary, I’ll not use any wards on the property.”

Sirius stared at Harry with wide eyes when he heard that.

“Are you mad? It’ll be like a beacon goading Voldemort to attack this place.” Sirius said with alarm.

“Perfect. I want that party to happen within two weeks.” said Harry, taking a sip of the orange juice, completely disregarding the incredulous stare from Sirius.

“Two weeks! Harry, what are you doing?”

Sirius was on the edge now with worry. He feared what was going through the mind of his godson. Just blatantly disregarding all dangers was not how Harry operated.

“What? I’ve restored Potter Manor, and I want to hold a party to celebrate its revival,” said Harry like it was a trivial matter.

“Okay.” Sirius took a deep breath. “Then we can hold a ball inviting the people we trust. We can limit the invites so the word never gets to Voldemort’s ears.”

“No. I’ll have the date published in the Daily Prophet and send public invites. The party will be open for all.”

Sirius just gaped at his godson with a flabbergasted look. But before he could say anything else, Harry’s friends came out of the manor.

“So, how does it look?” Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Is it okay for me to admit I’m jealous of your game room?” Cedric asked.

“That’s the prevailing opinion among many people. You’re, of course, free to visit whenever you wish, Cedric. Any man who can take down Rabastan Lestrangle with a blasting curse has an open invite to the manor lasting a lifetime.” Said Harry.

“I’ll hold you to that promise, Harry.” Cedric grinned.

“What about you, Neville?” Harry asked.

“Well...there are too many fountains.” Neville said hesitantly, looking around the garden.

“Hmm... Let's say that those fountains might come in handy soon.” Harry said with a wink before turning his sights on Tracey.

“You could've gone with fewer lion sculptures.” Tracey commented.

“Well... let’s just say...”

“Let me guess. They have a specific purpose as well.” Tracey drawled.

“Yes.” Harry unashamedly agreed.

Tracey sighed and looked at Daphne.

“Honestly, what do you see in him?”

“In a vulnerable moment, I took pity on him.” said Daphne, rolling her eyes.

“Maybe it’s because of the Wrackspurts. They have the power to mess with your head.” Luna airily said, making everyone goggle at her.

“These sakura trees are a nice touch.” Tracey admitted, staring at the pink flowery trees in the garden.

“That was thanks to Sirius’ fiancé. I’ll have to think up a good gift for her.” Harry mused aloud.

“All right, kids. I want your attention.” Sirius said while clapping his hands. “Someone please tell my godson that it’s a bad idea to hold a party in the manor with an open invitation.”

“You’re doing what?” Neville gaped.

“When everyone is trying to keep their heads down, why are you painting a target on your back and inviting You-Know-Who to attack this place?” asked Cedric.

“Do you fear the Dark Lord?” Harry asked, casually leaning back against the bench.

“Of course I do. Are you saying you don’t?” Cedric frowned.

“Anyone who does not fear Lord Voldemort is an idiot with a death wish. The man is a sorcerer with decades of experience. But fear doesn’t mean I should run away and put my life on the ice.”

“Harry, you’ll be painting a huge target on yourself if you publicly declare Potter Manor’s rebuilt status.” Tracey slowly said as if she was speaking to a child. “He might attack you and your guests. He might even burn down your home.”

“I’m counting on his arrival.” Harry smirked.

Tracey rolled her eyes and stared at her friend with folded hands.

“Honestly! What do you see in him, Daphne? Not only is he an unthinking Gryffindor, he’s also suicidal.”

“Hey!” Neville protested.

“Oh, come on, Longbottom. Tell me I’m wrong.” Tracey challenged.

Neville looked at Tracey and then at Harry apologetically before shrugging his shoulders.

“She has a point.”

“At least tell us you have a plan.” Cedric said earnestly.

“Oh, I’ve got a plan.” Harry said confidently. “But Voldemort is not one to be underestimated. He’ll be cautious after what transpired in the Ministry.”

“So, what’s the plan?” Tracey asked with a sceptical look. “Does it involve getting blasted into the past and returning as an old man?”

“You’ll see.” Harry said enigmatically, letting her jab at his older appearance pass.

“Maybe we could hold the celebration elsewhere instead of risking your newly built home.” Sirius suggested again.

“We’ll be holding the party here as well as your wedding. I think enough delays have pushed back your wedding with Brigitte.” said Harry.

Sure enough, Sirius’ postponed wedding plans became the centre of discussion instead of the impending party or Voldemort.

Before long, his friends departed one by one, leaving only Daphne and Sirius in his home. Harry took a stroll through the manor with Sirius and Daphne accompanying him. The floor was layered with red granite that gleamed under the sunlight, while the walls were made of pitch-black stone. The windows were stained with a multitude of colours from chamber to chamber with intricate artworks. Sumptuous adornments, plush cushions, detailed curtains and rugs of velvet covered the manor, and all of that was Daphne’s selection with some help from Tracey.

“You’ll need to fill in the wine cellar. It won’t be much of a wine cellar if there is now wine, firewhisky, or butterbeer.” Daphne pointed out.

“Hmm. Can you make a list of wine that...”

“I’ll be happy to.” Daphne said eagerly.

Adopting a bashful look when he looked at her amusedly, she defended, “I know a thing or two about wine.”

“All right then. I’ll leave the wine cellar in your capable hands.” said Harry, happy to dump that work on Daphne.

“You’ll also need to add more chandeliers and furniture. Having some wall scones should also lighten up the place.” Daphne suggested.

“All the furniture will be delivered by tomorrow, but I don’t know about the chandeliers. Seems a bit excessive to me.” Sirius commented, taking an apple from the fruit bowl and taking a bite.

“I agree. I’m not a fan of candlelight. I’ve another thing in mind.” said Harry.

“What other thing?” Sirius asked curiously.

“He is just itching to show off his lighting stones.” Daphne said with a snort.

Sirius perked up.

“Lighting stones?”

“It’s just something I’ve been working on for smokeless light.” Harry explained.

“But...scented candles are the best. People buy them because of their fresh scent.” Sirius said, looking lost.

“Don’t bother. He just wants to show off his rune skills.” Daphne said with a sigh.

“Hey! Do you want to help me send out the invites, or are you too busy disparaging me?” Harry asked.

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It took an entire week for Harry to invite some prominent personalities in the wizarding world. In some cases, Harry sent an invite using owl post, but in rare cases, he personally went to invite them and their families. The Wizengamot members in the ministry got a personal invite from Harry, and it was also a convenient time for learning Apparition. Though he had the capability of flight, apparition was a faster mode of transportation.

He also visited some of his friends and their families in person to deliver the invitation cards. The first family he saw was the Weasley family. They were the first family to host

him in the wizarding world, so Harry felt it was better to start from the roots. It was followed by the Lovegoods because their house was closer to the Weasleys. After that, he visited Cedric and his parents to deliver the invite in person. Tracking down the rest of the Knights proved to be a hassle as most lived in the muggle world.

So, he stopped delivering invites in person after tracking down Katie Bell's home. The rest of the invites went by owl or using the floo network except for one last invite. It was the one he reserved for the Minister of Magic. But before he went to the Ministry to deliver the invite in person, he had to do one more thing.

Taking a handful of floo powder, he threw it into the fireplace of Potter Manor.

“Rita Skeeter's office, Daily Prophet.”

The yellow flames turned green for a brief moment, and Harry allowed the flames to wash over his face.

“Rita.”

“Harry Potter?”

Harry took notice of the woman on his payroll.

“I'll be at the Ministry meeting with Minister Bones. You might get an interesting bit of news if you're not tardy.” said Harry before abruptly cutting the call.

With a flick of his wand, he vanished the flames and sealed off the floo with wards. With that tip-off delivered, he set forth to Grimmauld Place to find Sirius. While he had every right to be confident in his abilities in case of any Death Eater, he was not foolish enough to discard the help of another skilled wizard.

Therefore, he picked up Sirius along for the ride, and together, they arrived at the Ministry.

“Are you sure this is what you want to do?” Sirius asked once they were in the lift. “I still think this is a terrible idea.”

“Was it a bad idea to sneak into the Department of Mysteries and remove the prophecy orb? If we hadn't acted and hoped Dumbledore's half-ass plan to post some untrained wizards as guards would work, then Voldemort would be in possession of the orb. We could've never exposed him to the public.” Harry pointed out.

“This is different, Harry. You're directly daring Voldemort to attack your home. What is to say that he won't use his entire army to overwhelm you with sheer numbers?”

“I've planned for that scenario.” Harry said.

“I think you’re underestimating Voldemort and his army. His Death Eaters might be fresh recruits, but he has the allegiance of werewolves, vampires, dementors and other dark creatures.”

“I’ve accounted for them as well. Trust me, you’ll be pleasantly surprised by my preparedness should Voldemort take the bait.” Harry promised.

“I hope you’re right. Because I don’t think James and Lily will let me off the hook in the beyond if something happened to you.”

“You sound like a mother hen, Sirius. Are you sure you’re a Marauder?” Harry asked with a chuckle.

“I’m pretty sure even your father would say this is madness.” Sirius muttered.

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“You want to do what!”

Amelia Bones looked at Harry like he was the dumbest person on planet Earth.

“As I told you, Minister. I’ve restored Potter Manor, and I’m holding a party..”

“A party? Are you insane?” Minister Bones shouted.

“The thought had crossed my mind.” Sirius said while eyeing Harry from the corner of his eyes.

Harry merely shook his head and made himself comfortable on his seat while watching Minister Bones walking back and forth behind her desk, muttering something under her breath.

“Do one thing, Mr Potter. You send an invite to the Dark Lord while you’re at it.” Madam Bones grumbled as she angrily sat back in her chair.

“I don’t have his address.” Harry drawled.

“You! Do you care to know that we are at war?” Minister Bones thundered.

“That’s your problem, Madam Bones. You thought the war started last year. As far as I’m concerned, it never ended, and I’ve been fighting it ever since I stepped into the wizarding world.” Harry said, forcing the Minister of Magic to fall silent.

“The party will go on as planned. You’re cordially invited to attend the party. Good day, Minister.” said Harry, climbing to his feet and extending the invitation card to the Minister.

“Tell me, Mr Potter. If the Dark Lord attacks your home during this party of yours, what do you think will happen?” Minister Bones asked with a raised eyebrow.

Harry grinned at the leader of wizarding Britain.

“The last time we duelled, Voldemort lost his arm. Maybe this time, he’ll lose his head.” Harry said with a shrug.

Minister Bones let out a long-suffering sigh when she heard that.

“I’ll have an auror detail posted outside your home if you’re intent on going through with this party.”

Harry let out an internal scoff. The aurors were most likely to cut loose and run or join in with the Death Eaters if there was an attack.

“It’s unnecessary, but do what you must.” said Harry. “However, I’ve got a request.”

“Let’s hear it then.”

“I’ll need a blanket pardon for my actions from here on out.”

Minister Bones looked gobsmacked by the demand.

“Pardon? What for?” she asked incredulously.

“You don’t expect me to fight a war and destroy the most powerful Dark Lord born in our isles with the disarming charm or the stunning charm, do you?” Harry asked with a pointed look.

“I don’t have the power to…” Minister Bones started protesting.

“Of course you do. Wartime powers allow the Minister of Magic to pardon someone without a trial.” Harry cut in.

“That provision only applies to hit wizards and aurors under my command. It does not apply to a civilian.” Minister Bones argued.

“Then it’s quite simple, isn’t it? You can accept me as a hit wizard.” Harry smiled triumphantly.

“Tell me he’s joking.” Minister Bones looked at Sirius.

“I wish that was the case.” Sirius said with an uneasy look.

Minister Bones took a deep breath before staring at Harry with a troubled look.

“You look like I’m asking you to sell me your firstborn Minister. You’ll do as I ask, yes? It’ll only benefit you in the end. Think of all the publicity you stand to gain when the news breaks that you recruited the “Chosen One” into the Ministry’s army against Voldemort and his Death Eaters.”

“You mean the one where I get grilled by the Wizengamot for recruiting an underage wizard into a branch of the DMLE, flouting laws and traditions that were followed for centuries.” Minister Bones said, her eyes twitching with irritation.

“Ah, you forgot, Minister. I’m no longer underage.” Harry waved his hand dismissively.

“That’s true.” Minister Bones said, looking intrigued at the possibilities that now lay open before her.

“All right. I think it’s a reasonable request to issue pardons for using lethal force against the enemies that you face, Mr Potter, considering we have a war to win. But I can’t issue a blanket pardon no matter the circumstances.”

“Hmm... I’m sure we can come to an understanding of sorts on the scope of legality should I use deadly force against the Death Eaters.” said Harry.

“Yes, an understanding would be perfect.” Minister Bones nodded with a sigh. “Now, I need to know something. What’ve you done with Bellatrix Lestrange?”

“You’ll soon have her in your possession, Minister.”

“But...”

“When I’m finished with her, I’ll deliver her to you. For now, know that I need Bellatrix to make Voldemort vulnerable.” Harry cut in smoothly.

After the meeting with Minister Bones, Harry and Sirius made a swift exit towards the Ministry atrium. Many eyes followed their every move, and Harry kept a tight leash on his magical power to keep himself from reacting. In the branch reality, he was used to people bowing and scrapping before him. It came to a point where some of the muggles and even wizards started to see him more as a god or a demigod rather than a powerful sorcerer. The constant battles he was involved in had also taken a toll on him as he was always in a warrior mode most of the time. Anything that made him fall back into those instincts made Harry very uncomfortable.

While Occlumency had helped him recover somewhat, years of behavioural patterns could not be quickly suppressed over a few weeks.

Thankfully, they passed by the people in the Ministry without incident until they found Rita Skeeter and a photographer by the Fountain of Magical Brethren in the atrium.

The resident bug journalist was in her element as she skipped past many in the crowd and positioned herself before Harry and Sirius. Her quill and a notepad were out in a flash, and the photographer positioned himself behind her.

“Mr potter. Mr Potter. Rita Skeeter for the Daily Prophet. Do you think you have a few moments for some questions?”



“I suppose I could spare a few moments of my time.”

“The people are calling you the Chosen One. Do you agree with that title?” Rita asked with a sparkle in her eyes.

“No.” Harry answered shortly.

“Any particular reason?” Rita asked with a strained smile.

Harry knew the woman was only trying to get something juicy out of his mouth and making the most of the chance.

“I’ve got a wonderful name. I urge people to use that instead of silly titles made up by some interesting personalities.”

Here, Harry stared pointedly at Skeeter to get the point across.

“There are rumours that there was a prophecy in the Department of Mysteries, which was why you were fighting the Dark Lord in the atrium. Is this true?”

“Yes, there is a prophesy, and yes, that's why we were duelling. I won't be sharing the details of that prophesy, and no, it's not in the Department of Mysteries. I've taken custody of the prophecy so it won't fall into the wrong hands.” He answered truthfully.

Harry saw no reason to deny any knowledge of the prophecy. Frankly, he saw no reason to publicise the prophecy either. Whether Voldemort knew its contents or not didn't make much difference. Either way, Voldemort wouldn't stop trying to kill him.

For now, the only use of the prophecy was the psychological warfare aspect. The fear of the prophecy's contents kept Voldemort in flux, making him act irrationally.

“So you admit you're destined to fight the Dark Lord?” Rita asked excitedly.

“I wouldn't call it destiny. Voldemort chose to attack my family more than a decade ago. He set everything in motion. You could say Voldemort chose his destiny that night when he attacked my family at Godric's Hollow.”

Rita Skeeter just smiled wickedly as she furiously scribbled on her notepad.

“Why did you come to the Ministry, Harry?” she suddenly asked, switching to a topic he wanted all along.

“To meet Minister Bones and deliver an invite in person.”

“An invite?”

Harry furnished a card he had made for the public.

“Potter Manor was destroyed after my grandparents passed away during the last war. I've restored it to its former glory to the best of my abilities. Though I had lost all my

family's precious history and my ancestors' portraits, I believe it'll be a new beginning for House Potter. Therefore, I cordially invite you all for a party to celebrate the restoration of Potter Manor on the 20th of this month.”

“More details are available on the card, and I hope everyone can partake.”

Skeeter had more questions, but Harry was on a schedule here. He had one final invite to deliver, and that required him to visit Hogwarts. It was finally time he checked in on Albus Dumbledore.