

Chapter 15

Slowly waking, the first thing Harry noticed was the warm, relaxing weight resting on top of him. His eyes cracked open, and he smiled at the heads of pink and blonde hair resting on his shoulder. In the week since he'd come to Grimmauld Place, Fleur had become a regular bed partner of theirs.

As much as he was enjoying her late-night visits, and he knew Tonks did too, he couldn't help but wonder just what was happening between the three of them. He loved Tonks and knew she loved him in return, but he wasn't sure how Fleur fit into it.

Certainly, they both cared for her. But was it just a bit of fun or something more serious, Harry wondered.

Tonks had been far more adventurous in bed this Summer, opening up and expressing herself in ways he knew she'd never felt comfortable doing with anyone else. He was touched she trusted him enough to show that side of herself to him, but it also brought up new questions. Questions he hadn't been brave enough to ask quite yet.

Smiling down at the girls, Harry trailed his fingers down their bare backs. Tonks moaned while Fleur cooed, both of them snuggling deeper into him. As they unconsciously reached out to wrap an arm around him, they ended up holding each other instead. Harry chuckled quietly as they pulled each other closer, sandwiching him between them.

He knew most men wouldn't question their good fortune at sharing a bed with a Veela and a Metamorphmagus, no matter how temporary it might be. Still, with the end of the Summer just a week away, Harry knew he and Tonks would have to have a talk. No matter how much he enjoyed what was happening, nothing was worth the risk of losing Tonks. She was far too important to him.

Before Harry could think on it too much more, there was a light, tentative knock at the door.

“Harry?” Hermione called from the other side hesitantly.

Sighing, he reached down and pulled the sheet up over them.

“Yeah?” Harry called back as quietly as he could, hoping to not wake his sleeping lovers.

The door cracked open about an inch, and he spotted a brown eye peeking cautiously through the gap. Harry couldn't help but grin. Ever since Tonks had sent her those pictures, she'd been acting more nervous around him.

It might have worried him if she didn't look so damn cute.

“It safe,” he told her softly.

Blushing, Hermione chewed her lip nervously as she crept closer to the bed. He noticed her eyes raking over his exposed chest before quickly looking away.

“Mr. Weasley needs to see you in the kitchen,” Hermione whispered.

Harry frowned, “Is something wrong?”

“I don't think so,” she replied, her brow furrowed thoughtfully. “I think it has something to do with Madam Bones. The Prophet said she was elected Minister last night.”

“Alright,” Harry nodded.

“Don't wanna git up,” Tonks murmured, her leg stretching out and entwining with his to trap him in place. “Too comfy.”

"I think it's important," Hermione told them.

Tonks cracked open a bleary, bright green eye and huffed.

"Fine," she whined petulantly.

Suddenly, Tonks threw back the sheet and rolled onto her back as she stretched, heedless of their nudity. Hermione gasped, her blush going all the way down to her chest and disappearing under her v-neck shirt, but she was still unable to pull her eyes away.

As would be expected of a young man waking up next to two stunningly gorgeous and naked women, he was already mostly erect. Despite his own blush, Harry made no move to cover himself as his best friend's wide-eyed gaze made him lurch with excitement. Swallowing thickly, Hermione tried to pull her eyes away from his bobbing erection, only to stop at Tonks' chest as she arched her back and stretched her arms over her head, thrusting her impossibly perky breasts into the air.

Her eyes continued to follow the smirking witch as she hopped out of bed and padded slowly over to the en suite bathroom, her hips swaying provocatively. Her mouth opening and closing like a fish, Hermione turned back to Harry with wide, brown eyes. Her eyes darted wildly around but always found their way back to his groin.

A giggle from Fleur finally seemed to bring some sense back to her.

When Hermione spun around, preparing to bolt from the room, Harry's hand shot out and grabbed her wrist, pulling her to a stop.

"Stay," he said firmly.

Hermione's mouth worked soundlessly for another few seconds before she finally found her voice.

“But-”

“You’ve already seen everything,” Harry pointed out. “Just give me a minute to get dressed.”

Without waiting for a reply, he let go of her wrist. Biting her lips hard enough that the skin turned white, Hermione stared down at the floor but stayed where she was. Satisfied that she wasn’t going to run from the room, Harry looked down at Fleur.

Her bright blue eyes sparkling with amusement and a smirk on her lips, she looked away from Hermione and gazed up at him. When she tilted her head up expectantly, Harry smiled and bent down to give her a gentle, affectionate kiss. As they broke apart a moment later, he caught Hermione whipping her head back around so she wasn’t caught looking.

Grinning, Harry slipped out from under Fleur, who moaned in disappointment, and climbed out of bed. Striding past Hermione without concern, he walked over to the wardrobe and picked out a set of clothes.

“Mhh, ‘e ‘as such a nice derrier, non?” Fleur asked.

Hermione squeaked in embarrassment, and Harry smirked to himself. He didn’t need to ask to know Fleur had caught her looking. Boxers in hand, Harry turned back around. Hermione, who had been peeking at him out of the corner of her eye, quickly looked back down as he turned to face her.

“I don’t mind if you look,” Harry said, the corners of his lips twitching as he fought back a smirk. “I wouldn’t have told you to stay if I did.”

Hermione lifted her head just slightly and peeked up at him as he stepped into her boxers.

“Besides,” he added with a smile, “I’ve seen you. It’s only fair you get to look at me too.”

Impossibly, her blush grew even brighter at the reminder. Chuckling as she glared half-heartedly, Harry pulled on a shirt and threw on a pair of jeans. Thankfully, his excitement had gone down enough that he could wear them comfortably.

Of course, Fleur had to choose that moment to climb out of bed. Walking towards him with a sultry smirk, her large, jutting breasts bouncing alluringly with each step. His eyes riveted to her sinful curves, he had to reach down to adjust himself as she gave him a kiss on the way to the bathroom.

Interestingly, Hermione's eyes followed her as well and only left Fleur's jigging bum when the door clicked closed. As Hermione shook her head, he wondered just how much Fleur's Allure had to do with her staring.

"C - can we go now?" Hermione stammered.

As Harry opened his mouth to speak, they heard the toilet flush. The bathroom door opened a moment later, and Tonks walked over to him with a grin.

"Go ahead and see what they want. We'll be down in a minute," she said.

Smiling, Harry wrapped his arms around her waist and kissed her passionately. Sliding his hand down her smooth back, he gave her bum a playful squeeze. Squealing into his mouth, Tonks pulled back and smacked his arm lightly, even as a grin stretched across her lips. Chuckling, Harry made his way to the door.

"Prat," Tonks huffed.

"Love you too," Harry called over his shoulder.

Opening the door, he and Hermione slipped out into the hall just as Fleur exited the bathroom. Still grinning, Harry made his way down the stairs with Hermione just a half step behind him.

“So, are you dating Fleur now, too?” she asked curiously.

“Honestly, I’m not sure,” Harry admitted. “We haven’t really talked about it yet.”

“Do you want to?” Hermione asked.

“Part of me does,” he told her. “I mean, I like Fleur – I care about her – I just don’t want to muck things up with Tonks, you know. I’m not sure if she sees this as just a bit of fun, or if it’s something more serious.”

“It doesn’t seem like she has a problem with it,” Hermione muttered.

“It’s not that simple,” Harry said, running a hand through his hair with a sigh. “I’m the first boyfriend Tonks has really been able to trust, so she’d been exploring a lot of things she’s always wanted to try but couldn’t.”

“So you don’t know if he’s just exploring being with another girl, or if she wants a relationship with both of you,” she said, her eyes brightening in realization.

“Exactly,” Harry said. “We’ll probably have to sit down and talk about it soon. I think we’re both just trying to forget about everything for a bit and enjoy the Summer right now.”

“It’s going to be really hard going back to Hogwarts, isn’t it?” Hermione asked sympathetically.

“Yeah,” Harry sighed.

“I’m sorry,” she said.

Forcing a smile, Harry slung his arm over her shoulders and hugged her against his side. Hermione leaned her head on his shoulder as they reached the basement and paused in front of the kitchen door.

“Thanks,” Harry murmured before letting go. “It’s alright, though. We made it through last year; we can make it through this one.”

“I’m really glad you found someone who makes you so happy,” Hermione said, smiling wistfully.

“I’m sure you’ll find someone who makes you just as happy someday,” Harry assured her.

Sharing one last smile, Harry pushed open the door to the kitchen and bowed.

“After you, m’lady,” he said grandly.

Giggling at his antics, Hermione entered the kitchen with him following close behind.

“Good morning, dears,” Mrs. Weasley greeted them with a forced smile.

“Morning,” they replied in unison.

This early in the morning, only Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, Sirius, and Hestia - whose house had been destroyed in a Death Eater attack and was staying at Grimmauld Place – were awake.

“Harry,” Mr. Weasley said. “Madam Bones was elected Minister for Magic in last night’s election, and she wants to see you in her office today. I’ll take you into the Ministry today when I go to work.”

“Do you know what she wants?” Harry asked, his brow furrowed.

“The letter didn’t say, but I expect it has to do with what happened at the end of the Tournament,” Mr. Weasley replied.

“You don’t have to go if you don’t want to, dear,” Mrs. Weasley said, setting a place of eggs and sausage on the table with a kindly smile. “Maybe we should talk to Dumbledore and let him take care of it for you.”

“That’s okay, Mrs. Weasley,” Harry said, fighting back a sigh at her treating him like a child again. “I don’t mind going.”

“Dumbledore can’t go anyways,” Mr. Weasley said as Mrs. Weasley opened her mouth to argue. “He’s going to be out of town until the first.”

Mrs. Weasley frowned and turned back to the stove with a huff. Harry exchanged a look with Hermione, who shrugged.

“Where’s he going?” Harry asked.

“He didn’t say,” Mr. Weasley answered.

“It must be pretty important for him to leave at a time like this,” Hermione noted, her brow creased in thought.

“I’m sure it’s nothing you need to worry yourselves about,” Mrs. Weasley said firmly.

Harry glanced over at Hermione and rolled his eyes. With a small smile tugging at her lips, she turned back to her breakfast. A few minutes later, Tonks and Fleur walked into the kitchen. Harry was extremely relieved that whatever tension there had been between Tonks and Mrs. Weasley was now gone. She’d even stopped making attempts to set Tonks up to spend time with Bill, although he wasn’t entirely sure that wasn’t just because he was there now.

Harry explained to the girls that he would be going to the Ministry with Mr. Weasley, and Tonks immediately volunteered to escort him since it was her day off. Fleur wanted to go as well, but she had a pile of artifacts to examine and catalog at Gringotts. That led to Hermione peppering her with questions about what she would be working on and what spells she used while Harry and Tonks made small talk with Sirius.

As they finished eating, several other Order members, along with Ron and Ginny, trickled into the kitchen to get their orders for the day and pick up a bit of breakfast. Once they were done, Harry and Tonks grabbed their cloaks and met Mr. Weasley by the front door.

“I’ll Side-Along Harry and meet you at the guest entrance?” Tonks asked.

“Alright,” Mr. Weasley replied with an easy smile.

Tonks held Harry back a few steps as they left the house and walked across the street to the delapidated park. Leaning over, she placed her lips right next to his ear.

“Wait until Arthur’s gone, then you Apparate us,” she whispered.

Harry nodded and gave her hand a grateful squeeze.

“Alright, on three,” Mr. Weasley said when they reached the park. “One... two... three.”

After Mr. Weasley Disapparated with a loud *crack*, Harry gripped Tonks’ hand, took a deep breath, and focused on his destination. Twisting on the spot, he was sucked into nothingness with Tonks at his side. An uncomfortable moment later, they appeared a few feet away from Mr. Weasley with a muted *pop*.

“What took so long?” Mr. Weasley asked.

“Sorry, I had to sneeze,” Tonks said, wrinkling her nose cutely.

Smiling and shaking his head, he turned to the phone booth. When his back was to them, Tonks beamed at Harry with the brightest smile he’d ever seen and bounced excitedly on the balls of her feet.

“You did it!” she whispered, her eyes gleaming brightly.

Harry grinned and hugged her close, realizing this was the first time he’d Side-Along Apparated without needing her help. Cupping his cheeks, Tonks kissed him fiercely until they were interrupted by Mr. Weasley clearing his throat loudly. Harry grinned sheepishly while Tonks looked completely unfazed. Together, the three of them squeezed into the elevator.

Pinning their badges on their robes, Mr. Weasley quickly through the Atrium to the golden elevators at the back.

“Are you sure you’ll be okay meeting with the Minister alone?” Mr. Weasley asked nervously.

“I’ve met with her before,” Harry said. “I’ll be fine. Besides, Tonks’ll be with me.”

“Well, if you need anything, you know where my office is,” Mr. Weasley said, looking relieved. “I really do have a lot of work to catch up on.”

Getting off on level two, Mr. Weasley waved as the elevator doors closed. Now alone, Tonks took Harry’s hand and leaned against him while rubbing the inside of his forearm with her free hand. Smiling and grateful for her calming presence Harry kissed her temple.

“You know, she’ll probably ask about the prophecy,” Tonks whispered.

"I didn't think of that," Harry frowned.

"What are you going to tell her?" she asked quietly.

"Level one, Minister for Magic offices and administrative staff," came the cool female voice before Harry could answer.

Straightening up and letting go of his hand just as the door opened, Harry followed Tonks as she led him through a maze of cubicles and offices. The place was buzzing with activity as dozens of interdepartmental memos zipped over their heads in flocks, and witches and wizards rushed from place to place.

Harry pulled Tonks out of the way as a harried-looking witch with greying hair bustled past with a stack of papers four feet high in her arms, nearly running them over.

"Sorry," she called.

"I've never seen this place so busy," Tonks remarked. "Even with Azkaban break out, there weren't this many people."

"Is that a good thing?" Harry asked.

Tonks shrugged before dancing out of the way of a wizard staring at a clipboard instead of looking where he was going while another floated after him.

"Watch it!" she called out angrily.

Making their way carefully through the administrative offices, Tonks led him to the back of the room, where there was a set of decorative double doors. Just to the left sat a desk with a familiar looking witch sat.

“Penny?” Harry asked.

Penelope Clearwater looked up from her desk and smiled prettily.

“Harry!” she said brightly, then tapped her wand to her desk. “Minister, Harry Potter is here to see you. I’m so glad I got to see you today. I’ve been meaning to thank you.”

“For what?” Harry asked.

He hadn’t seen Penny since she graduated and couldn’t think of anything he’d done that would’ve helped her.

“That hag Umbridge had me stuck in the mail room when she found out I was a Muggleborn,” she said, her smile widening as she flipped her flowing blonde hair over her shoulder. “I was seriously thinking about quitting and going back to the Muggle world when you pulled that stunt over the Wireless. I can’t tell you how happy I was – a lot of Muggleborns and Half-bloods were stuck in dead-end jobs or outright fired because of her.”

Tonks snorted, “Yeah, half the Aurors threw a party when that toad was hauled off to Azkaban. Wonderboy here made himself a lot of friends when he got rid of that bitch.”

“Really?” Harry asked, getting emphatic nods from both witches. “Oh. Er, you’re welcome. I’m glad things worked out for you. How’re things with Percy?”

“We broke up,” Penny said, looking far from upset. “Apparently, thinking that we should at least hear you out and look at the evidence for You-Know-Who’s return was ‘treasonous’ and ‘bad for his career.’”

“What a git,” Tonks said while Harry shook his head.

"I'm sorry-"

"Don't be," Penny interrupted with a smile. "It's not your fault. I was getting sick of watching him suck up to people like Umbridge and Malfoy anyways."

"What old Perc up to nowadays anyway?" Tonks asked curiously.

Penny's grin took on an almost predatory gleam.

"Minister Bones tore him a new one the moment she met him," she explained gleefully. "She was not happy he didn't get punished after basically taking over for Crouch when he was sick and not telling anyone. She also found out he was helping Fudge skirt around a few laws and withholding evidence. His excuse that it was the Minister's order, therefore perfectly legal, didn't go down well."

"Oh, I bet Bonsey just *loved* that!" Tonks cackled.

Harry chuckled. Though a part of him felt bad for the Weasleys as a whole, he had no sympathy for Percy himself.

"Did he get fired?" Tonks asked.

"Not quite," Penny smirked, lifting her wand and tapping it on her desk again. "I need two cups of tea for the Minister's guests."

A portion of the wall behind Penny opened up and, instead of the House Elf Harry expected, Percy Weasley stepped out with a loaded tea tray in his hands. The redhead stiffened when he spotted Harry and seemed to freeze in place. When Tonks let out a loud snort of laughter and covered her mouth, Percy just into motion, his movements wooden and lips pursed.

“Sugar or milk?” he asked robotically.

“No, thanks,” Harry said while Tonks shook her head, her shoulders practically vibrating from suppressed laughter.

“Two sugars and a dash of milk,” Penny said, smiling innocently.

After pouring their tea and handing out the cups, Percy picked up his tray and marched back over to the wall.

“Oh, that’s priceless,” Tonks laughed the moment the door was closed.

Harry allowed himself a smile as Penny giggled and sipped her tea. He didn’t usually like to revel in someone else’s misery, but after the way Percy had turned on his family, he thought it was well deserved.

“You know, I always thought you could do better than him,” Harry said.

Penny blushed and gave him a pleased smile.

“Thanks, Harry,” she said.

“Smooth, lover boy,” Tonks said.

Harry rolled his eyes, “You know I didn’t mean it like that.”

“I know,” Tonks grinned, then turned to Penny. “Harry’s right, though. You’re way too pretty to be with a stuck-up berk like that.”

Penny blushed again and smiled prettily right before the doors to the Minister's office were thrown open. Harry and Tonks stared as Narcissa Malfoy stormed from the room. Spotting Harry, she glowered at him.

"You!" Narcissa snarled. "You'll pay for what you've done to my family!"

"I didn't do anything to your family," Harry said firmly. "If you're going to destroy the lives of innocent people just because of what family they were born into, don't be surprised when they fight back."

"How dare you!" Narcissa screamed. "I'll –"

"That's enough!" Madam Bones barked sharply. "Leave, Mrs. Malfoy, or I'll have you removed."

Scowling furiously, Narcissa gave him a disdainful glare before marching away, her nose held high in the air. As Harry watched her go, Madam Bones sighed behind him.

"Sorry about that," she said. "Come on in. Penelope, hold all my appointments unless it's an emergency."

"Yes, ma'am," Penny replied.

Harry gave the blonde witch a smile as he followed Madam Bones back into her office. The Minister's office was massive and draped in opulence. The molding along the wall looked like it was made of actual gold, there were enchanted windows all over, giving the room an open, airy feel, and the furniture looked as if it would fit right in at Buckingham Palace. There was a large mahogany desk along the right-hand wall, along with eight packed bookshelves. To the left sat two couches facing each other with a low coffee table in between, a gold and ivory encrusted fireplace, and three closed doors between the windows.

Following Madam Bones over to the desk, he and Tonks sat in comfortable wingbacked chairs while the Minister took her seat behind the desk.

"I take it my aunt was here to try and bribe you to let dear old Lucius go free?" Tonks asked.

"Not in so many words, but yes," Madam Bones sat with a sigh. "As if I don't have enough problems right now."

"Is it that bad?" Harry asked worriedly.

"Officially, I'm not supposed to divulge that information," Madam Bones said, looking tired and worn as she cleaned her monocle. "But, since I blame you for putting me in this position anyways, you can share my worries. This place is a mess. Fudge ran this government into the ground. Nearly half of the people who worked here were incompetent for the positions they were hired for, corrupt, or both. I don't even want to think about how bad some of the other departments might be. It's going to take months to get this place straightened out, and that's not taking into account that we now have a war to fight."

Harry frowned as Madam Bones seemed to age five years in the time she spoke. Glancing over at Tonks, he noticed she looked just as worried.

"Is there anything I can do to help?" Harry asked.

"That's actually why I asked you here," Madam Bones said, putting her monocle back in place and straightening her posture. "I want to know everything you can tell me about You-Know-Who and any Death Eaters you know about. I want to start hitting back at these bastards, and I want to hit them hard. Hopefully, most of them are so used to the previous administration and won't have thought to go into hiding yet."

"Of course," Harry nodded. "This might be easier if you have Pensieve. There were a lot of Death Eaters that showed up in the graveyard, but I didn't recognize most of them."

Madam Bones nodded and pressed her wand to her desk.

“Penelope, send a letter to Shacklebolt in the DMLE and tell him to get a Pensieve here ASAP,” she said.

“Yes, ma’am,” Penny replied, her voice coming from the desk.

“Now, while we’re waiting on that, there’s something else I wanted to bring up. More than one, actually,” Madam Bones said, gazing at him intently. “I spoke with my niece over the Summer about you, and she told me some disturbing rumors. Rumors about you killing a professor in your first year and fighting Slytherin’s monster in your second.”

“Er...,” Harry hummed, scratching the back of his neck awkwardly. “Both of those are true, actually.”

At her raised eyebrow, Harry told her quickly about his first two years at Hogwarts.

“Why the *hell* was I not informed of any of this?” she growled.

Harry shrugged, “I know Dumbledore told Fudge about the Basilisk, and I’m pretty sure he told him about Quirrell as well, but I’m not positive.”

Madam Bones closed her eyes and rubbed her forehead tiredly.

“That useless bastard,” she grumbled, getting surprised looks from Harry and Tonks. “I’ll want to see those memories as well, if you don’t mind.”

Just as Harry nodded, the doors to the office swung open, and Kingsley walked in with a Pensieve floating in front of him.

“Just set it down on the desk,” Madam Bones told him.

Nodding, Kingsley levitated the Pensieve onto the desk and gave him and Tonks a quick smile before leaving the office.

“Do you know how to copy and extract memories?” Tonks asked.

Harry shook his head.

“Just press your wand to your temple, think of the memory you want to extract, and remember it as clearly as you can. When you’re ready, say the incantation *Retinentia* and slowly pull your wand away,” Tonks instructed.

Nodding, Harry stood and pulled several memories from his mind. Since he had the chance, he also included memories of Hagrid’s arrest in second year, and Fudge admitting to ordering Crouch Jr. Kissed by a Dementor, both things he was sure were illegal.

“Ready?” Madam Bones asked.

Receiving nods from both of them, they all dipped their heads into the silvery liquid. The memory of Quirrell was over quickly since he only showed her the actual confrontation. Madam Bones was not happy, but she already knew Fudge had allowed Dumbledore to hide the Philosopher’s Stone at Hogwarts.

The Memories from second year took longer. Madam Bones was furious when she found out Fudge had abused his power to have Hagrid thrown in Azkaban without a trial. That fury reached new levels when Lockhart tried to Obliviate Ron and cause the tunnel to collapse.

“I don’t care if the man’s a vegetable in St Mungo’s. I’m bringing him up on charges,” Madam Bones growled.

Tonks and Madam Bones both looked worried when Tom made an appearance, but Harry had no answers beyond what they were watching. Moments later, they both cursed and paled when the Basilisk made an appearance. Tonks had seen it before during their Occlumency lessons, but she was still shocked by it. Heedless to the presence of the Minister, she wrapped her arm around his waist and held onto him like he was an anchor while her eyes remained riveted to the fight.

When the memory ended with Lucius Malfoy getting tossed on his ass by Dobby, Madam Bones pulled them out of the Pensieve. With trembling hands, she took a bottle of Firewhiskey out of her desk and poured three glasses. As Harry and Tonks sipped their drink, the Minister pulled out a sheaf of parchment and began making notes. When she finished, she sat back and stared at him intently for a long moment.

“Mr. Potter – Harry, that has to be the single bravest act I’ve ever witnessed,” Madam Bones said.

Harry ducked his head and blushed while Tonk smiled and reached over for his hand.

“It really was incredibly impressive, Harry,” she said softly.

Harry gave her a small smile and downed the rest of his drink. Tonks caressed the back of his hand with her thumb as they sat in silence for a couple of minutes. When they returned to the Pensieve, Madam Bones brought a clipboard and quill with her. Thankfully, she never reacted to the fact that Tonks was still holding his hand, though he thought he saw her smile when she glanced at them.

For third year, Harry showed her his memory of meeting Sirius and Pettigrew in the Shrieking Shack. Fortunately, nothing he showed her involved the use of the Time Turner. As friendly as she was acting, he doubted he would get away unscathed for playing with time and helping Sirius to escape, innocent or not. He also threw in the class where Malfoy provoked Buckbeak. It might have seemed petty in the grand scheme of things, but he wanted to help the gentle Hippogriff that was still residing in Grimmauld place. He was heartened when Madam Bones clucked her tongue and made a note on her clipboard.

They went straight into fourth year after that, and Harry stood stiffly as they watched the events after the Third Task. This was one memory that Tonks hadn't watched because she knew how badly it affected him. A small whine left her throat as they watched Cedric's body fall to the ground, his eyes open and lifeless. While they wrapped their arms around each other, taking comfort from one another, Madam Bones watched it all with an emotionless mask. Harry knew she was simply hiding her emotions for now, though she couldn't stop her hand from trembling as she took notes.

When the Death Eaters arrived, the Minister paused the memory with her wand. The scratching of her quill filled their ears as she walked amongst the crowd, identifying as many Death Eaters as possible.

"That's Jacob Weathers," Tonks pointed out with a glare. "He works in the Floo Network Authority."

"A frightening amount of the people here work for the Ministry," Madam Bones said.

"Will you be able to arrest them with this?" Harry asked.

"I can bring them in for questioning, but I can't press charges based on a memory," she told him. "Fortunately, the Wizengamot granted me executive power with the return of You-Know-Who. I can have them questioned under Veritaserum."

"Good," Harry nodded. "Way too many Death Eaters got off on claims of the Imperius Curse last time."

"That won't be happening under my watch," the Minister growled.

"I know you didn't want the job, boss, but I'm glad you took it," Tonks said sincerely. "We need someone like you as Minister right now. I don't think I'd've stayed on as an Auror if someone like Scrimgeour had taken the post."

Madam Bones sighed and lowered her clipboard for a moment.

“I always thought I could do the most good running the DMLE,” she admitted. “Seeing this and the mess Fudge left behind, I’m glad you talked me into it. Scrimgeour’s a good Auror, but he’d be too worried about politics to go after these people.”

After a few more minutes of taking down names, Madam Bones restarted the memory. With the worst of the memory over, Harry focused on watching himself, looking at where he could have done better. By the time the memory came to an end, Harry had realized that, until the very end, Voldemort had been playing with him. He still couldn’t believe that he had beaten him in a battle of wills, but it was heartening to know that there was at least one area where he was actually stronger than Voldemort.

“Again, that was incredibly brave of you,” Madam Bones said, looking at him as if she were seeing him for the first time. “I’ll be nominating you for an Order of Merlin, first class during the next Wizengamot meeting.”

“You really don’t need to do that,” Harry said pleadingly. “I’d rather not have all the extra attention.”

“I’d rather not be Minister,” Madam Bones countered.

Harry worked his jaw several times before closing it with a *click* and dropping his head into his hands with a groan. Next to him, Tonks laughed and rubbed his back soothingly.

“Sorry, Har, but I don’t think the boss is going to take no for an answer on this one,” she said.

“No, I won’t,” Madam Bones agreed. “This isn’t just about giving you the recognition you deserve. Having an Order of Merlin can help you. It grants you a seat on the Wizengamot, future Ministers will be less inclined to try and railroad you with outrageous charges, and any country that’s part of the ICW will be more willing to make you a citizen, should the worst happen.”

"If Voldemort's taken over Britain, then I'll probably already be dead," Harry told her.

"Would that have anything to do with the rumors of a prophecy?" Madam Bones asked, arching her brow.

Harry sighed and sat back in his chair.

"Yes," he said, nodding.

"I don't suppose you'd be willing to tell me what it says, would you?" she pressed.

Harry looked over at Tonks, who shrugged, before he turned back to the Minister.

"This needs to stay between us," Harry said.

Madam Bones stared at him for a long moment before nodding.

"I give you my word," she said.

"The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies...," Harry recited.

"That's not much to go on," Madam Bones said after a long moment of thought.

“Honestly, I think it’s all bullshit,” Harry said. “The only reason it means anything is because Voldemort believes in it. If it wasn’t for that, I’d ignore the stupid thing.”

Reaching out, Tonks took his hand in hers and gave it a squeeze.

“Then you’re smarter than most men,” Madam Bones nodded. “Prophecies, even when it’s a true prophecy, are clouded in uncertainty until after they’re fulfilled. Unfortunately, since You-Know-Who believes in it, he won’t stop until one of you is dead.”

“I know,” Harry nodded.

“Any idea what this ‘power the Dark Lord knows not’ is?” she asked.

“No idea,” Harry said with a shake of his head.

The Minister nodded and sat back with a thoughtful look on her face.

“Auror Tonks, would it be safe to assume that you and Mr. Potter are – involved?” she asked.

“Yes, ma’am,” Tonks replied without hesitation, her hand still holding Harry’s.

Madam Bones pursed her lips thoughtfully for a moment as she looked back and forth between the two of them. Harry met her gaze, refusing to blush under the scrutiny.

“Very well,” she said eventually. “After hearing the prophecy and seeing what’s happened at that school the last few years, I’m sending a team of Aurors for extra protection. Auror Tonks, I’m putting you in charge.”

“Me!?” Tonks gasped incredulously.

“Yes. Do *not* make me regret this,” Madam Bones replied sternly. “If I knew even half of what’s been happening over there, I’d have pulled Susan out after her first year and sent her to Beauxbatons. I will not allow this war to spill over into the halls of a school. Your team will protect the students while you, personally, will protect Mr. Potter.”

Harry opened his mouth, unsure if he wanted to argue with her or thank her for giving him and Tonks a way to stay close.

“If you don’t like it, you shouldn’t have made me Minister,” Madam Bones interrupted. “As much as you or I might not like it, the prophecy cannot be ignored. Beyond that, I’m appalled that you’ve had to do so much on your own. It’s time you had some help. If anything happens, I want to know about it.”

“Thank you,” Tonks said gratefully.

Harry snapped his mouth closed, swallowing his protest as Madam Bones pressed her wand to her desk.

“Penelope, send in Barrister Tonks,” she said.

Harry looked over at Tonks and lifted an eyebrow. His girlfriend shrugged with a puzzled look on her face. It was only a second later that the door opened, and Ted Tonks poked his head inside.

“You wanted to see me, Minister,” he said, smiling when he spotted Harry and his daughter.

“Yes. Come in, Ted,” Madam Bones said.

As the balding, pot-bellied wizard approached the desk, Madam Bones held out a sheaf of parchment.

"I want arrest warrants issued for everyone on this list," she instructed. "Keep it quiet for now. When you have all of them, bring them directly to me."

"This will take some time," Ted said before his eyes widened. "Fudge!?"

"Yes," Madam Bones nodded firmly. "I've more than enough evidence to have him brought in for corruption and abuse of power."

"R – right," Ted stammered as Harry looked over at his girlfriend and grinned.

Harry grinned at the thought of Fudge finally getting what he deserved.

"I also want Rubius Hagrid's juvenile record expunged," Madam Bones said. "New evidence revealed that he was innocent of all charges filed against him. Send him a notification and let him know he can pick up a new wand if he wishes. The conviction of the Hippogriff known as Buckbeak is also to be overturned, and the execution order rescinded. Any questions?"

"No, ma'am," Ted said. "It'll take a couple of days to get all this done."

"I'd offer you help, but I need people I trust working on this," Madam Bones sighed. "If word of this gets out, those people will go into hiding before we can arrest them. Let me know if you have any problems."

"Yes, ma'am," Ted nodded.

Smiling at Harry and giving Tonks a wave, he turned and left the office.

"Now, is there anything else you can tell me about You-Know-Who or his Death Eaters?" Madam Bones asked.

Harry felt Tonks' eyes on him as he sat thoughtfully for a moment.

"Not really," he said eventually. "It might help to tell the press about his real history. Finding out he's really a Half-Blood might make some people less likely to join him."

Madam Bones nodded and made a note.

"If you learn anything else, please, let me know immediately," she said. "I know you haven't had much reason to trust the Ministry, but I promise you, I'll do everything I can to see this monster stopped."

Harry nodded, for once feeling good about dealing with the Minister for Magic.

"On a personal note," Madam Bones continued, "I'd like to thank you again for saving my life and for helping Susan. She's much more confident this Summer, and she's put a lot of that down to your Defense club. If you weren't already taken, I'd be worried about how much she talks about you."

Harry blushed, surprised by the playful smirk that crossed the Minister's lips.

"That's okay, boss," Tonks said, her eyes sparkling mischievously. "I don't mind sharing."

Rather than getting upset, Madam Bones snorted and shook her head.

"Alright, get out of here, you two," she said, her lips twitching into a smile. "Tonks, go see Shack about picking your team tomorrow. He should be moved into my old office by then."

"Sure thing, thanks, boss," Tonks said, smiling gratefully.

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After saying goodbye to Penny and tracking down Mr. Weasley to tell him what happened, Harry and Tonks returned to Grimmauld Place. Mrs. Weasley wasn't too pleased he was being so involved in things once again, but she relaxed considerably when they told her about Aurors protecting Hogwarts.

"Do you really think Voldemort will try something at Hogwarts?" Hermione asked worriedly.

"Who knows," Tonks shrugged. "It's possible, but I think Bones is more worried about the students that were probably marked over the Summer."

"What?" Hermione asked in disbelief. "I don't think Voldemort would be interested in marking students."

"He would," Sirius told her heavily. "He likes to get to them young, before they really know what they're getting themselves into. My brother, Regulus, took his mark before starting his fifth year. Hell, half the Slytherins in my year were marked before they graduated."

"Oh," Hermione said with a troubled look.

"You can bet the kids of the Death Eaters we captured at the Ministry have taken the mark," Tonks added. "You-Know-Who would need them to keep control of their family vaults if nothing else."

Hermione bit her lips and stared down at her hands as they played with the hem of her shirt.

"Hermione?" Harry called out gently. "What's wrong?"

“Hmm? Oh,” she said, looking up. “It’s just – I know they can be horrible, but to join the Death Eaters?”

She’s scared, Harry realized guiltily.

“I’m sorry,” he said, wrapping an arm around her shoulders and pulling her against his side.

“It’s not your fault,” Hermione murmured, leaning into his embrace and resting her head on his chest. “It just really hit me that things are changing. I mean – we really are at war, aren’t we?”

Harry rubbed her arm as she sniffled. Harry felt like a lead weight had settled in the pit of his stomach.

“Hermione,” Harry whispered softly, “if it’s too much –”

“Don’t you dare finish that sentence, Harry Potter,” Hermione growled. “Even if I wasn’t your friend, I’d still be a target because I’m a Muggleborn.”

Selfishly, relief flooded through him.

Sitting up, she wiped away her tears and smiled.

“You’ll just have to teach me everything you learned over the Summer when we get back to Hogwarts,” she said decisively, bringing a smile to Harry’s face.

“That’s the spirit,” Sirius grinned.

“Count me in, too,” Ron added. “Hey, if we can prove Malfoy has the mark, do you think we could get him expelled?”

Sirius snorted, "Don't count on it. Dumbledore won't expel anyone without proof of a crime."

"Having the mark itself isn't a crime," Tonks said at Ron's crestfallen look. "We'll just have to keep an eye on him."

"I doubt he'll try anything with Dumbledore and Aurors in the school," Hermione said.

"You're probably right," Harry agreed. "We should be careful anyways. He's likely to be upset we got dear old daddy arrested. I wouldn't put it past him to think he could get away with something."

"True," Hermione said, rolling her eyes. "He's always lived in a world of his own. At least he's not nearly as skilled as he likes to think he is. If he had a brain to match that ego of his, we might actually have to worry."

Harry and the others chuckled as he filled Sirius in on some of the times they'd gotten one over on the blonde ponce.

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Later that night, as Harry closed the door to the bedroom, Tonks jumped into his arms with a grin, her arms and legs wrapping around him.

"I can't believe we get to spend the whole year together," she said with an infectious smile.

Leaning down, Tonks kissed him passionately. Walking her over to the bed, Harry banished their clothes before tossing his wand on the nightstand and laying her down on the mattress. As he kissed down her jaw and throat, Tonks moaned and combed her fingers through his hair.

“You think I could talk Dumbledore into giving you a private room?” she asked. “You know, for security?”

“You know, you’re going to have to have your own rooms in the castle,” Harry reminded her as he made his way down to her chest.

“Oh,” Tonks blushed. “I didn’t think of that.”

Chuckling, Harry took her nipple between his lips and sucked lightly.

“I’m so glad you’re going to be there,” Harry breathed over her skin. “I really wasn’t looking forward to leaving you at the end of the Summer.”

“Me neither,” Tonks smiled. “Now, just think of all the broom cupboards we get to visit. You know, I’ve never actually been in one.”

Harry chuckled as he buried his face between her perky breasts, enjoying the way her smooth, soft globes sandwiched his face.

“Neither have I,” he said, his voice slightly muffled.

Giggling, Tonks tugged his hair, pulling him up until his lips met hers.

“Then we’ll just have to explore them together,” she smirked.

Suddenly, Tonks threw her weight to the side, rolling them over so she straddled his hips.

“Maybe I can even talk Aurora into joining us in bed,” she said, wiggling her eyebrows.

A smirk stretched across her lips when Harry's erection lurched excitedly under her.

"Ooh, someone likes that idea," Tonks giggled, causing her breasts to jiggle enticingly.

"That's entirely your fault," Harry smirked.

Tonks hummed and bent down, kissing him as her breasts dragged along his chest.

"It is, isn't it," she mumbled against his lips.

With one last peck on the lips, Tonks sat up straight and rolled her hips, sliding her damp folds along his length. Grinning, she raised herself up and lined him up with her entrance. With a moan, she lowered herself down on his throbbing length, wiggling her hips as she settled on his lap.

Harry slid his hands up from where they rested on her hips, his caressing her sides and tickling her ribs until he reached her breasts. Tonks threw back her head with a moan, rolling her hips as he teased her soft pink nipples. Raising herself up, she stopped with just his engorged head trapped between her folds before dropping back down, driving his cock into her sweltering depths.

Tonks' hair shifted through a rainbow of colors as she tilted her head forward and stared down at him. With a look that managed to be both playful and sultry, her insides shifted around him, her silky walls tightening around his shaft. When she moved again, his flared head scraped against her clutching walls, drawing a gasp from both of them.

"Bloody hell," Harry grunted.

Tonks gasped as she reached his tip, then slowly lowered herself with a shuddering moan.

“Harry,” she moaned, drawing out his name.

Collapsing on his chest and burying her head in the crook of his neck, Tonks rocked back and forth with short, fast movements, her hips rolling as she reached his base. Harry closed his eyes and hissed in pleasure, one hand caressing her back while the other cupped her bum. As her movements continued and her breathing hitched, he turned and kissed her temple lovingly.

The feelings of Tonks’ overly tight depths strangling his cock were incredibly intense. As much as he enjoyed her playful side, he loved moments like this just as much. Moments where he could hold her tight, her soft curves giving way to his firm muscles. Harry luxuriated in the closeness he felt with Tonks at times like these. Her slow, gentle movements were in sharp contrast to the intense sensations they were feeling, reminding him of those first few nights she had suffered under the aftereffects of the Curciatus Curse.

“I love you,” Harry whispered, his fingers ghosting over her back and sending a shiver up her spine.

“I love you, too,” Tonks replied just as softly.

Turning her head, she kissed and sucked at the side of his neck. Planting his feet on the bed, Harry thrust up in time with the rocking of her hips. Tonks gasped, her body trembling as she gripped his shoulders and hugged him tightly. A whine worked its way up her throat and escaped her lips only a moment before she stiffened.

Harry grunted as her walls fluttered around his cock, drenching it in her arousal. Tonks’ hips jerked back and forth frantically, gasping in his ear while she rode out her climax. Grabbing her ass roughly, Harry slammed his hips up, driving himself as deep as possible as he erupted inside of her. A contented moan escaped Tonks’ lips as he filled her. His cock swelled with each burst, stretching her depths and extending her climax.

Despite how little they had moved, both of them sagged breathlessly by the time their peaks waned.

“Wow,” Tonks breathed. “We should do this more often.”

Harry hummed in agreement, cradling her tightly to his chest.