

## Chapter 8

“Riddle?” Harry asked sharply, the hair on the back of his neck raising at the sound of the name.

“Yes,” Delphini said, looking away worriedly at his narrowed gaze.

“Who are your parents?” Harry pressed.

“I don’t know,” she replied quietly.

“What do you mean you don’t know?” Tonks asked.

“I mean, I don’t know,” Delphini huffed. “My parents dumped me in an orphanage.”

“What orphanage?” Harry asked.

Delphini turned back and wilted under his intense stare.

“Why does it matter?” she asked, fidgeting in her seat.

“Delphini, please, it could be important,” Harry said in a calm but serious tone.

“Wool’s, in London,” she told him.

Harry felt his blood run cold. There was no way it was a coincidence that she was left at the same orphanage Tom had.

“Harry?” Hermione called out in concern.

Glancing at his wife, Harry cleared his throat and looked back at the young woman. As much as he wanted answers, he doubted she had any. Reluctantly, he palmed his wand and slipped into her mind just enough to scan her surface thoughts. He needed to make sure she was telling him the truth.

“Why were you taking hairs from Felix Renaud?” Harry asked.

“I was just sleeping with him for the money, why would I want-”

“Don’t lie,” Harry interrupted firmly. “We’ve been watching you for over a week. We saw you take his hair after he left and save it.”

Delphini looked away from him, and he could see her breath speeding up nervously.

“Do you know what those hairs were used for?” he asked, trying a different tact.

“No,” she answered quietly.

“Someone has been using them to make a make Polyjuice Potion,” Harry explained. “It’s a potion that allows the person who drinks it to take on the appearance of another for one hour. Whoever you’ve been giving those hairs to is impersonating a high-ranking Ministry official, hiring criminals to kidnap Veela, and selling them as sex slaves. The Ministry wants answers and, right now, you are the only one I have.”

Harry paused to give her time to think over what he’d told her. Despite being convinced she was Riddle’s daughter; he didn’t think she was evil because of that. Right now, she looked like a scared young woman who’d gotten in over her head.

"I need you to tell me who wanted those hairs," he said firmly.

"If I do, you won't turn me in?" Delphini asked.

"I give you my word, I won't mention your name," Harry promised.

"I only know his first name," she said, waiting for him to nod encouragingly before continuing. "He said his name is Draco."

"Draco?" Harry asked sharply. "Blonde hair, grey eyes, about my age?"

"Yeah, that's him," Delphini said with a nod.

Behind him, Hermione cursed under her breath. Malfoy had been a constant thorn in her side the last few years. He went out of his way to oppose any new laws she tried to get passed through the Wizengamot. Of course, he wasn't very effective with his family's reputation in ruins. Only a handful of the darker houses voted with him. Still, it irked her that he was still up to his old ways after Harry had spoken to keep him out of Azkaban at his mother's request.

"How did you meet him?" Harry asked.

"He found me in Calais and started telling me I was a witch and about the magical world," Delphini said. "At first, I thought he was a nutter, but then he showed me all this magic. Draco promised to get me a wand and teach me magic if I helped him. At first, he just wanted me to deliver messages for him, but a few weeks ago something changed. When I talked to him, he was really angry. That's when he asked me to sleep with Felix. When I told him I didn't want to, he threatened not to teach me anything. I—"

Delphini hesitated for a moment, fidgeting in her seat and taking a deep breath before she continued. Harry glanced over at Hermione and just from her face could see she was thinking the same thing he was. A few weeks ago was about the time they first arrived in France.

"I felt like I finally found the world I belonged to, and I didn't want to lose that, so I agreed. Draco told me all about Felix and gave me some special lipstick to make him interested. It didn't seem that bad. I swear, I had no idea what he was going to do with those hairs."

"Did he tell you anything else?" Hermione asked. "Did he mention anything about what he was planning or what he was doing with the Veela?"

"He never said anything about that," Delphini said, then looked away shyly. "I don't even know what a Veela is."

"Veela are magical beings that are closely related to humans. They look like human women, and are known for their beauty, blonde hair, and the ability to attract men," Hermione explained, giving her the textbook description absently as she started to pace back and forth.

"Oh," Delphini said.

"Does Renaud know you're a witch?" Bella asked suddenly.

"No, he thinks I'm a Muggle," Delphini replied.

Pushing himself up from his chair, Harry turned to his wife.

"Hermione," he said, nodding towards the door.

She too stood and followed him as he walked towards the door.

"Wait! You said you'd let me go," Delphini called out, a worried look on her face.

"I said I wouldn't turn you in," Harry corrected her gently. "And I won't. Just wait here for a minute."

Delphini's shoulders slumped as Tonks moved over to take the seat across from her. He made eye contact and gave her a small, reassuring smile before closing the door.

"Harry, you don't think she's..." Hermione trailed off.

"She grew up in the same orphanage, has the same last name, and Malfoy just happens to find her?" he asked skeptically, then shook his head. "There's no way this is a coincidence."

"What if this is some kind of trick?" Hermione asked.

"What are you thinking?" Harry asked in return, folding his arms over his chest and leaning back against the wall.

"What if someone's using her to try and throw us off? We already know they have Polyjuice. Besides, we don't even know if she's actually a witch. She could just be some Muggle they messed with to lead us in the wrong direction," Hermione said, biting her lips as her mind ran wild.

"Right, here's what we'll do," Harry said. "We'll test her for magic. If she is a witch, I'll go back to England and get Narcissa. If Delphini's are know I think they are, a lineage test will tell us."

"Can't Tonks do it?" Hermione asked.

"It's more accurate the closer the relative," he reminded her. "Besides, if Bellatrix was her mother, I'm sure she'd like to meet her family. That, and I want to talk to her about Malfoy."

After looking at him thoughtfully for a long moment, she nodded. Stepping forward, Hermione pulled him into a soft, comforting hug before they separated, smiled, and walked back into the office.

“Delphini, we need to make sure you’re magical,” Harry told her.

“I am!” she declared firmly.

Smiling, he walked up and held out his wand, handle first. As Delphini eyed the offered wand, her violet eyes wide and glittering excitedly, Tonks stood and held her wand at her side.

“Go on, take it,” he said.

Slowly, Delphini reached out and took the wand with a look of excited anxiousness on her face.

“Now hold it up, twirl the tip in a clockwise circle, and say ‘Lumos,’” Harry instructed.

Taking a deep shuddering breath, Delphini twirled the wand.

“Lumos,” she incanted.

The tip of Harry’s wand lit up with a glowing white light. Delphini stared at the wand and smiled brightly with a look of wonder and awe.

“Now twirl it in the opposite direction and say ‘Nox’” Harry said, smiling at the look on her face.

She did as he instructed, and the light vanished. Reaching out, he took his wand back, feeling the Elder Wand hum at being back in his hand.

“I’ll be back in a few hours,” Harry said, turning to look at the girls. “Show Delphini around the Enclave and get her a wand while I’m gone.”

“Really?” she asked hopefully.

“Really,” Hermione said, giving the younger woman a small smile.

Having grown up in the Muggle world, both he and his wife knew exactly how it felt to finally find the world you felt you belonged in. After months of false promises, it felt wrong to keep magic from her any longer, no matter who her parents were.

“Where are you going?” Bella asked.

“England,” he answered. “Hermione can explain.”

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While Harry went to the Ministry to take an unscheduled International Portkey back to Britain, Hermione, Tonks, and Bella led Delphini out of Delacour manor and down to Aveline’s Wand Shop. Much like Ollivander’s, the front of the shop was small, with shelves stacked with thousands of wand boxes. The Vella behind the counter, though she looked just as young and beautiful as any of the others at the Enclave, had extremely pale blue eyes that belied her looks.

“Hello,” she greeted in flawless English, smiling as they entered. “I’m Maribelle Aveline, how can I help you?”

“This is Delphini, and she needs a wand,” Hermione replied, gesturing to the younger woman who was gazing around the shop.

Maribelle turned her eyes to Delphini, who approached the counter eagerly.

“It’s unusual to see a witch get their first wand so late,” she said, her gaze pinning Delphini in place. “No matter, if you are here, then so is your wand.”

“How do you know that?” Delphini asked.

“If it wasn’t, you would not be here,” Maribelle replied simply.

As the wandmaker began searching for wands, Hermione walked over to the corner with Tonks and Bella. Quietly, she explained why Harry had returned to Britain.

“You really think she’s...?” Bella asked leadingly.

“I don’t know,” Hermione said, looking back at Delphini as she tried wand after wand.

“It’s a hell of a coincidence if she isn’t,” Tonks said. “Are you going to tell her?”

“I’m sure Harry will when he gets back. I’ll let him handle this,” Hermione said. “He has a much better idea of what she’s going through than we do.”

Bella and Tonks nodded in agreement before changing the subject and settling in to wait. It was only a few minutes later that they all felt a pulse of magic when Delphini found her wand.

“Marvelous,” Maribelle cheered, clapping her hands together. “Holly and Thunderbird feather, eleven and one-quarter inches, a very impressive wand capable of powerful magic.”

“How much?” Hermione asked.



“After everything you and your husband have done for us, nothing,” Maribelle replied firmly. “I will not take your gold, Mrs. Potter.”

“Thank you,” Hermione said, knowing that arguing was useless. “Come on, Delphini.”

“Can you teach me how to use it?” the young woman asked eagerly.

“We can teach you some basic spells when we get back to the manor,” Hermione told her.

While Delphini smiled brightly and inspected her new wand intently, her mind was buzzing with thoughts. If she was a witch, then she should have gotten a Hogwarts letter. The fact she didn't, only gave credence to Harry's suspicion that she was Voldemort's daughter. Hermione was certain wards were blocking her mail at the least, and possibly her magic at the worst. The moment they got back to the manor, she led Delphini into the courtyard.

“Delphini, you should have gotten a letter inviting you to a school called Hogwarts. Do you remember getting one when you were at the orphanage?” she asked.

“I never got any letter,” Delphini answered. “Is it a magic school, can I still go?”

“You're a bit old to go to Hogwarts, you should have gone when you were eleven,” Hermione said, her heart aching as she saw Delphini's face fall. “Don't worry, we figure something out. We can't have you running around completely untrained now, can we? First, though, I need to know why you didn't get your letter. I'm going to need to cast a spell on you, alright?”

“Okay,” Delphini agreed.

Drawing her wand, Hermione cast a series of Detection Charms on her. There were two wards on her. The first was a Mail Deflection Ward, and the second was a Magic Suppression Ward. Thankfully, both were rather simple spells designed to a witch or wizard hide from other

magicals and were simple to remove. Hermione did so, causing Delphini to shiver and sneeze as the magic surrounding her for most of her life dissipated.

“There, all done,” Hermione said with a smile.

“Can I learn magic now?” Delphini asked eagerly.

“Alright,” Hermione gave in, smiling at the girl’s excitement before turning to Tonks and Bella. “What should we teach first?”

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“Harry, it’s good to see you again,” Narcissa said with a smile as she opened the door. “Come in. Bish!”

With a *pop*, the Malfoy’s house elf, Bish, appeared in the room.

“Bring us tea in the lounge,” Narcissa ordered, though not unkindly.

“Yes, mistress,” Bish replied with a low bow before vanishing with another *pop*.

Harry followed Narcissa as she led him into the lounge. Despite having visited many times to talk with her, he still felt a tad uncomfortable being in the house where he and Hermione had been held, prisoner.

“What brings you to my humble home?” Narcissa asked as they took seats on the same couch and turned to face each other.

"I'm working on an investigation in France, and we brought in a young woman today who claims to be Delphini Riddle," Harry said.

Narcissa stiffened at the name, not even flinching when Bish appeared in the room, set down the tea tray, and then vanished again.

"Do you believe her?" she asked.

"I do," Harry nodded. "She was raised in the same orphanage Tom was. There's just too much to be a coincidence. Did – did Bellatrix ever leave for a few months?"

"You believe she is the girl's mother?" Narcissa asked stiffly, her face and tone devoid of all emotion.

"Yes," Harry said.

Standing, Narcissa walked over to the window where she stared out at the lawn, her eyes following the movement of the peacocks pecking at the dirt.

"I knew Bellatrix was with child," she said quietly. "The Dark Lord sent her away for months. I begged her not to go, but she wouldn't listen. When she came back, she told me she lost it, and I believed her."

There was a long moment of silence before Narcissa turned to face him.

"I want to meet her," she demanded.

"You'll have to come to France," Harry replied, to which she nodded quickly. "I was hoping you'd perform a lineage test on her."

“Of course,” Narcissa said, straightening her robes. “I’ll pack my things. When can we leave?”

“I have a Portkey scheduled for two thirty this afternoon,” Harry said, licking his lips nervously. “There’s something else you need to know.”

Narcissa silently raised a brow in question.

“She said Draco was the one to find her,” he said, then continued quickly when her eyes narrowed. “We don’t know that it’s him, the people we’re after have already used Polyjuice more than once. But if Delphini *is* Bellatrix’s daughter, it makes it more likely he is involved somehow. Have you spoken with him lately?”

“I won’t help you catch my son,” Narcissa told him firmly. “I’ll meet you at the Ministry.”

Harry opened his mouth, but the words died on his lips as Narcissa turned and left. Sighing, he stood and headed for the door.

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A couple of hours later, Harry and Narcissa Apparated just outside the Vella Enclave. Together, they walked in silence towards Delacour manor in the center of the small village. As they approached the house, they spotted Bella instructing Delphini while Hermione and Tonks stood nearby, talking quietly.

“Hello, Hermione, Nymphadora,” Narcissa said politely even as her eyes remained locked on the young woman practicing the Levitation Charm.

“Narcissa,” Hermione said with a kind smile while Tonks grimaced at her first name.

“Is that her?” Narcissa asked.

“That’s Delphini,” Hermione nodded.

“I’ll go get her,” Harry said.

Walking over, he stopped for a moment and watched as Delphini struggled to levitate a small stone. Her face reddening with effort, the rock trembled but failed to rise.

“You need to relax,” Harry advised, startling Delphini who hadn’t heard him approach. “Your magic is a part of you, you don’t need to force it. Just focus on what you want to happen and let your magic do the rest.”

Nodding, Delphini turned back to the fist-sized stone and aimed her wand at it.

“Wingardium Leviosa,” she incanted.

“Relax,” Harry repeated when he saw her shoulders tense.

Blowing out a breath, Delphini relaxed just as the stone began shaking lightly. A second later, the rock stilled and slowly lifted off the ground. An excited gasp left her lips as she watched the rock rise higher and higher until her concentration slipped and it fell to the ground with a dull *thud*.

“I did it!” Delphini cheered.

Spinning around she surprised Harry by practically leaping at him and hugging him tightly.

“Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!” she squealed.

“Er, you’re welcome,” Harry said, desperately trying to not enjoy the way her breasts rubbed against his chest as she bounced on the balls of her feet.

Pulling back, he cleared his throat awkwardly while Bella smirked at him knowingly.

“There’s someone I want you to meet,” Harry said, gesturing to Narcissa. “This is Narcissa Malfoy, she’s going to do a lineage test to see if figure out who your parents are.”

Delphini’s excitement at learning a new spell died quickly as she looked over at Narcissa with a mixture of trepidation and hopefulness.

“Perhaps we should take this inside,” Narcissa suggested with a small, nervous smile.

Nodding, Harry led the group back into the manor and into the living room. As everyone took seats, Narcissa pulled a thick, yellowed sheaf of parchment out of her bag and set it down on the low coffee table. Reaching into her pocket, she took out a small, elaborately decorated knife. Pricking her index finger with a wince, she pushed on the cut with her thumb until three drops of blood fell onto the parchment. Delphini watched with trepidation, her eyes wide as Narcissa tapped her finger with her wand and healed the cut.

“You’ll need to put three drops of blood on the parchment, but make sure that they don’t touch mine,” Narcissa instructed.

Delphini looked over at Harry questioningly. When he nodded encouragingly, she knelt down next to the table, picked up the knife, and pricked her finger with a grimace. After she put three drops of blood on the parchment, Hermione took her hand and healed the cut.

“Can you teach me to do that?” she asked, marveling at her unblemished skin.

“We’ll get to it,” Hermione assured her with a smile.

Narcissa, meanwhile, tapped her wand to the parchment and muttered a long, complex incantation. Slowly, the blood on the parchment turned black and began to form lines. Everyone leaned forward and watched with bated breath as a family tree formed. At the top, Delphini's name sat connected by clear, black lines to the names Bellatrix Lestrange and Tom Riddle. Delphini gasped and covered her mouth, her eyes glittering with unshed tears as more and more names began to form, including Narcissa and Draco Malfoy, along with Andromeda and Nymphadora Tonks.

Delphini finally looked up and stared at Narcissa who smiled softly.

"Hello, niece," she said.

After a brief pause, Delphini leaped forward and hugged Narcissa tightly. Harry and the girls smiled at the tearful reunion.

"What, no hug for your cousin?" Tonks teased.

With a tearful laugh, Delphini moved over and hugged her as well. When she pulled back with a bright smile, she looked back over at the parchment and stared at the names. Slowly, her smile dimmed when she traced her fingers over the names.

"My parents - are they...?" she asked hesitantly.

"I'm sorry, but your parents passed away many years ago," Narcissa told her.

Delphini sniffled as she nodded, clearly having expected it.

"Draco... why didn't he tell me we were related?" she asked.

"We're not entirely convinced that was him," Narcissa answered, giving Harry a pointed look.

He sighed, but let it go for now. They could talk about that later when Delphini wasn't in the room.

"Can you tell me about my parents?" Delphini asked hopefully.

Narcissa hesitated, giving Harry a chance to answer.

"Delphini, there's something you need to know," Harry said slowly.

"Harry –"

"I'm not hiding it from her," Harry interrupted Narcissa firmly before turning back to Delphini.

Taking a deep breath, Harry told her everything he knew about Tom Riddle and Bellatrix Lestrange. He held nothing back, even admitting to being the one to kill her father. His heart broke as he watched her face pale and tears streak down her cheeks. He hated it, but he knew if he was in her place, he would want to know the truth, no matter how terrible it was.

"Bellatrix wasn't always that way," Narcissa said when he finished. "She was actually quite nice as a child. It wasn't until she joined the Dark Lord that she began to lose her grip on sanity."

"The Dark Lord?" Delphini asked, her brow furrowed.

"That's what some people called Voldemort," Hermione explained.

Nodding, she tucked her knees up to her chest from her spot on the floor and hugged them with her arms. Slipping down next to her, Tonks wrapped an arm around her shoulders and rubbed her back soothingly.



“Delphini,” Harry called out softly. “Until we figure out exactly what’s going on, I think it would be best if you stayed someplace safe. You can stay here, with us, if you want, or you can go back to England and stay with Narcissa.”

Delphini looked torn as she looked between Tonks and Narcissa.

“Would it be alright if I stayed here?” Narcissa asked.

Delphini turned to Harry and looked at him hopefully. He suspected Narcissa, in addition to spending time with Delphini, wanted to stay to try and get in contact with Draco to find out just what he was up to. In fact, he expected she would do that whether she stayed there or not. At least this way, he had the means to keep a better eye on her.

“I’ll ask Apolline, but I don’t think she’ll have a problem with it,” Harry said.

Delphini smiled at him brightly as he stood and walked over to the other wing of the manor, where Apolline was working. She happily agreed to let Narcissa stay when he asked. While he was there, he also asked about a way to teach Delphini magic. She suggested the school they had at the Enclave, something Harry had missed despite staying there for several weeks now. She would have to take classes with younger students, but since the school was small, they would be able to move her around as needed.

Delphini was ecstatic at the news, jumping up to hug Harry tightly. After getting Narcissa set up in one of the many bedrooms, he left Delphini to talk with Narcissa and Tonks while he went to talk about what to do next with Hermione and Bella.

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“We need to keep an eye on Narcissa,” Harry said quietly. “She’ll try to contact Draco at some point.”

“Do you think she knows anything?” Bella asked.

“No,” Harry said, shaking his head. “She wouldn’t get involved with something like this after the war. She will try to talk him out of whatever he’s doing, though.”

“Assuming it’s not another imposter,” Hermione added.

Harry nodded, acknowledging her point.

“So, what do we do while waiting for Malfoy to turn up?” Bella asked.

“We keep looking for those missing Veela, they’re the priority,” Harry said. “We’ll start by looking at Rêves Brises tomorrow. Tonks and I will go in for a quick look while you and Hermione wait close by in case there’s trouble.”

Getting nods of agreement, the three of them got up and rejoined the others.

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Delphini felt completely emotionally exhausted as she finished getting ready for bed. In one day, she’d gotten her own wand, learned her first spells, and discovered a family she thought she’d never find. Finding out the truth about her parents hurt, but it was a relief to finally know the truth.

She wasn’t sure how she felt about Narcissa or Tonks yet, but both of them seemed genuine when she talked to them. It was shocking just how different they were. Where Tonks was brash and laid back, Narcissa was more still and formal. The person who had made the biggest impression on her, however, was Harry. Delphini could tell how honest he was being just by looking in his eyes. When he told her about her parents, he looked almost pained, as if he understood how she felt all too well.

She wished Harry had been the one to find her first instead of Draco. Delphini knew he'd been using her, but the draw of magic, of finally understanding all of the odd things that happened to her, was too strong for her to ignore. It was even enough to make her do things she had a strong feeling were illegal.

But that didn't matter now, she thought, shaking her head.

Even after getting all the information he could out of her, Harry still had his wife and friends get her a wand and teach her magic while he went out of his way to find her family. There was just something about him that told her she could trust him.

Washing her face, Delphini picked her wand up off the sink and left the bathroom. As she stepped into the hall, she smiled when she spotted the man she'd just been thinking about.

"Hi, Harry," she said with a smile, suddenly feeling like a schoolgirl with a crush.

"Hey, you holding up okay?" he asked with genuine concern.

"I think so," Delphini replied. "Honestly, it doesn't even feel real yet."

"It will," Harry said, smiling kindly.

"Did you ever feel that way?" she asked.

"Constantly," he admitted. "I grew up with my aunt and uncle who hated magic. Every summer I worried I'd wake up and it would have been a dream."

Delphini nodded, knowing exactly what he was talking about.

“Why did your family hate magic?” she asked curiously.

“That’s a long story, and we need to get to bed,” Harry said with a small smile. “I have a lot of work to do tomorrow, and you have your first real magic lessons.”

Delphini nodded while smiling excitedly.

“Alright, good night, Harry,” she said. “And thanks, for everything.”

“You’re welcome,” he said. “Night.”

Harry walked into his bedroom as Delphini continued on to her own. Glancing inside, hoping to say good night to Hermione, she froze at what she saw. Hermione and Tonks were on the bed, topless as they kissed each other heatedly. Just before Harry closed the door, she saw Bella walk up and kiss him on the lips.

Was that normal in the magical world, Delphini wondered.

Biting her lip, she walked quickly down the hall to her room, hoping to relieve the pleasant ache between her legs before she went to sleep.