

Lies

by Doomspark

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Chapter 1 of 1

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The Hogwarts Express pulled out of Kings Cross Station, and Molly Weasley watched it leave with mixed feelings. On the one hand, it was good to know that her youngest child, her only daughter was entering her final year at Hogwarts. On the other hand, after this year, Ginny – like her older brothers – would be moving out. The Burrow, for so many years the noisy bastion of the Weasley family, would be silent and empty except for Arthur and herself.

And, she reminded herself, Arthur was so busy at work these days that he might as well be living at the Ministry of Magic. Voldemort's defeat had resulted in a Stalinistic purge at the Ministry as Death Eaters and their sympathizers and supporters were rounded up and sent off to Azkaban. The remaining Ministry employees were putting in incredibly long hours just to keep the government functioning.

Molly Apparated back to The Burrow and went into the kitchen. It was still a bit of a mess from their hasty breakfast. For the past six years, she'd celebrated the peace and quiet of an empty house by thoroughly cleaning it from top to bottom. It generally stayed clean until the end of the school year.

The kitchen was easily put to rights, and she went upstairs into Ron's room. It was still relatively clean, as he was now living in a flat near London with his girlfriend. In fact, the messiest room in the house was now the master bedroom.

"Looking a bit ragged around the edges there, aren't you?"

Molly whirled and glared at the mirror over the bureau. It was a wedding gift. "Who asked you?"

"It's my job," the mirror huffed. "Look for yourself!"

Never one to be vain, she usually ignored the mirror. But now she came closer and peered at it, seeing the onset of grey in her hair, the lines and wrinkles around her mouth, and the dark circles under her eyes.

"I look old," she whispered.

"You're certainly not what you used to be," the mirror replied. "You haven't bought new robes for yourself in years."

"I..."

"You wear the same robes day in and day out unless it's an occasion, and then you wear those red velvet ones with the twice let-down hem. And you're planning to wear them to the Ministry Ball this Friday."

"I got them off the second-hand rack at Gladrags. They were a good price."

"Hmph. It's not just the way you dress. You've let yourself go dreadfully." The mirror sniffed. "I remember what you looked like on your wedding day. Thin. And pretty."

There didn't seem to be any reply to this. Molly leaned on the bureau, tears glistening in the corners of her eyes. When the mirror fell silent, she left the room and went back downstairs to put the kettle on. Tea was the great cure-all for the blues.

The house was quiet. Almost too quiet. The clock ticked in the corner. She sat at the table and cupped her mug in her hands, finding the warmth soothing.

There was a rush of displaced air, and Arthur appeared just outside the kitchen door. "Molly! I'm home!" He banged open the door and greeted her with a big smile that faded as he saw the tear streaks on her face. "What's wrong?"

She shook her head slowly. "It's nothing."

"Nonsense." He took her hands and gently pulled her to her feet and into his arms. "Lonely?"

She looked up at him. He was almost completely bald now, and what hair remained was the same faded red as her own. He had more lines on his forehead too. And yes, he'd put on some weight. But the love and concern that showed on his face was overwhelming.

"Not any more." She gave him a genuine smile as she realized that the mirror, for all its vaunted magic had been telling lies.