

Mortal Peril

by ConstantComment

It's an odd feeling, James thought, knowing your fate. Feeling it in your bones.

One-shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: *Not mine.*

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The clock that never read time ticked and tocked up atop the bookshelf. James' miniature face was under **'MORTAL PERIL'**, as it always was, for this was the time of the Dark Lord. He was out fighting Death Eaters with the other Aurors. Lily would have been out there fighting alongside him, but alas, she was with child. A little baby boy.

Lily and James were married. They had been for only nine months, but that's just enough time for a baby to hatch.

She fingered through both ancient, magical, and Muggle baby name books, but could find none that suited her. Nothing felt right. Too cheesy: Timothy; too trendy: Michael; too downright awful: Draco; or even... urgh: Asklepiades.

Bless the poor child who was dumped with a name like that.

She began reading *Witch Weekly*...guilty pleasure, honest...which had many household tips for 'You-Know-Proofing your house!' She ignored these stupid attempts to cheer the people of the magical world and turned to page twenty-four, where she found parenting tips. She had begun making cut outs and pasting them to the fridge, lately. The excuse was her 'nesting process', but she'd never really learned how to cook (her mum was a fifties housewife...canned dinner and everything). The section editors had a less-motherly view to the whole thing, though, than asking her mum would. But, she hadn't spoken to her mum in a while. The women on the typewriters in downtown Wizarding London weren't the ones going through pickles and ice cream cravings atop swelling feet and breaking backs!

Speaking of cravings, she had a hankering for watermelon.

The refrigerator was cool and held the necessities of life. Her breath was visible within the frigid walls as she took the watermelon and sliced a large piece off for her and the baby. As she ate, James' face went from **'MORTAL PERIL'** to *'travelling'* to **'home'**.

"Darling!" He appeared in the living room with a box of wanted Death Eater posters and articles. He dropped them on the floor and came over to her. "How's the baby, love?" He Summoned a Fuji apple from the bowl on their dining table and gave it to Lily.

"I dunno about the baby, but I'm wallowing in my own misery, I am." She began peeling the apple by whipping her wand about. James put the books away and then came back to embrace her around the back. He rubbed her stomach lovingly.

A moment of silence passed.

"...So, how *is* the baby, actually?" he asked again. He towered over Lily; she liked that. He kissed her temple and held her hands.

"The baby is *fine*, James. He's never been hungrier. I have to keep telling myself that I have a human in my stomach and not just peanut butter and cheese sandwiches," she laughed.

Little did she know that her son was a part of the prophecy. The means to the end of Lord Voldemort.

"Lily, I'm sorry that you're all cooped up at home, but we can't have a pregnant Auror fighting evil. That would be a scandal." James smiled and took out the *Evening Prophet* from his briefcase. "Seven new Muggle rapes and three murders in the Ministry," he muttered, handing it to her.

Lily tossed it on the coffee table.

She closed her eyes tightly and continued peeling the apple. "It's just the fact that I have given up my career so early for this child. I will never be able to be an Auror again and stop this injustice!" she pouted and took a bite out of the sweet fruit. "James, how are we going to raise a child in the middle of a *war*?"

"Puck up, Evans. He'll be a beautiful little boy, and you'll forget all about Voldy."

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JAMES HARRISON POTTER

BORN July 31, 12:00am

TO Mr. James Kittredge and Lily Evans Potter

3.2 kg; 53.3 cm

Lily stared at the certificate. The bold letters stood out like fire in the dark.

HEALERS: *Melinda Quaggle, Archibald Frift, Horace Enesco*

Head Healer: *Hr. Cassandra Plofker*

Little Harry lay sound asleep in his new crib, eyes fluttering as he dreamed, making no noise at all.

Such a quiet little thing.

The clock that told not time but present moved from **'MORTAL PERIL'** to *'travelling'* to **'home'**. The door slammed and a sweet smell came from downstairs.

"Darling?" James whispered up the stairs.

Lily tiptoed to the stairwell and smiled weakly at the champagne and strawberries he held in his hands. She went to the closet where her lingerie was and looked into her drawers for his favourite: an aubergine silk slip. She didn't put it on.

James came up behind her and guided her towards the bed. They'd not made love in a long time. Too much baby, too much 'mortal peril'... they'd no time to themselves.

"Just like old times, eh?" He opened the champagne, but Lily did not move.

"I don't know if tonight's good for me." She stared out the window.

"The *one* night I come home early and you're not in the mood? C'mon, Lils!" He dropped his hands, disappointed.

"I don't... know." She felt that something just wasn't right. James dropped the champagne on the bed and shoved his hands in his pockets. Eyes that were glowing before now were dull, again.

Lily still stared out the open window into the foggy night.

Her husband quickly became worried with her strange behaviour and went to the window. "What a chilly evening," he said too cheerfully and closed the green shutters on the lonely street.

Lily inched over to Harry's crib and stroked his hair for a while. He sneezed suddenly, getting a bit of bogies on her favourite jumper.

"That's okay," she murmured resignedly, "I never really liked this old thing, anyway." She went to wash up, and while passing James, she noticed his quiet frustration. She could do nothing but ignore the fact that she was ignoring him. Again. Lily put on her pyjamas and got into bed.

James finally gave in and got into bed with her. They peered around the tiny room, reminiscing. Their house was small, but it was home. Just then the fire sparked. Lily sat bolt upright. It was an unusual spark. One that meant there was a message to be read. James got out of bed to examine the scorched parchment hanging precariously above the flames. He read it. A cold and stony expression came across his face. He looked up at Lily, who quickly came to his side.

"He knows."

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The bags were packed. It was five in the morning...they'd not slept a wink. James ruffled his hair and looked at the clock that did not tell time but present showed all three members of his family under **'MORTAL PERIL'**. Lily put Harry on the bed and packed up his diaper bag and other little necessities. The tyke was curled up, as one-year-olds are wont to do, in a ball that greatly resembled an unborn child in his mother's womb. He was suckling his thumb, and his eyes flickered in a deep sleep. At times he purred, letting off little cooing noises and soft giggles to Lily's delight. He was still happy...despite the circumstances.

"James, we have to go," his wife finally said, picking up the baby and throwing the diaper bag over her shoulder. James stared out the window, not moving. "We can wait in the car for some of the Aurors to come by, though... to say our goodbyes before we go."

"You make it sound like we're never going to see them again. Once the Aurors have got You-Know-Who under control, then we can come back out. You could become an Auror again and leave Harry with Alice or Molly at their house while we fight." He spat out words he knew weren't true, and suddenly his eyes were brimming with tears.

Lily could see the hopelessness in them. "We aren't going to die, James." She came over to him, bouncing the now wide-awake Harry in her arms to calm him. Harry could tell there was a different air to the room now. He frowned a little bit, frustrated that he wasn't being paid attention to, but still quiet all the same.

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"Let's go." He held her hand, levitated the two duffels off the porch and headed out to the car that was pulling up in the driveway. It was imperative that they not use

magic...that they leave *without a trace*. Sirius waved at them from an unfamiliar Volvo, but there was a lack of flamboyance that usually curved his lips and lit up his eyes. James tossed the bags in the trunk and opened the back door for Lily. Harry soon fell asleep again, which Lily was grateful for. He was a quiet baby...wouldn't bring too much attention to himself. She bundled him up in a quilt and lay down, cradling the baby in her arms. They pulled out of the driveway and began on a two-hour journey to Godric's Hollow.

The dawn was glum and hazy.

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*Finite Incantatem*