

Doom!

by ApollinaV

Sybill sees doom!

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Whoops! This was originally prompted by debjunk back on 27 June, and I just got around to writing it.

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Life was a fleeting, fragile thing. To be held and treasured for a shining moment before death came – dragging its chains to claim the price of drawing breath. Life, death – were in all things. Earth turned over her bounty. Cleared away dry and brittle leaves to make way for new. The ground sprung up with life, and accepted the shrouded dead.

Too few could understand the thin veil between the realm of the living and the domain of the dead. And of those who were warned of the impending Grim – lurking behind them, clawing at their robes, nipping at their ankles – none took the dire warnings to heed.

Sybill did.

She was but a humble messenger, imparting truth and wisdom one prophecy at a time. A gift left out to spoil amongst the nonbelievers.

When Jessica Holstein fell from her broom, did anyone remember her great prediction of 'there will be crying over spilt milk'? No.

When her third eye foresaw 'shadows lengthen over the castle,' not a soul connected it with the presence of Dementors.

(And they had the temerity to call her a charlatan!)

It mattered not.

All could be forgiven.

But blatantly ignoring the signs, the heralds of impending doom that lingered in doorways, was unconscionable. She had heard a cuckoo singing out of season. A mourning augury had passed over the Astronomy tower! Mars was in retrograde! The cards... oh the cards! Every turn brought forth another dire warning. Each cycloptic gaze into the crystals begged for her intercession.

Oh, she had tried!

Hastening to tell everyone whose aura was tainted by the touch of death, Sybill had spread prophetic omens of warning, but it was to no avail. How was she, a mortal woman though incredibly gifted with 'the Sight' and imbued with the knowledge of the other world, to sway the fates?

It was too much to ask of one exceedingly talented Seer.

And then she *knew*. Sybill had gone to the Headmaster to plead with him. Shut down the school. Send everyone home. But as soon as she saw him, he had 'the touch' on him. A wizard marked for death. The Grim beckoned for him. It was as obvious as her sherry-inspired dreams.

"The hands of fate on life's ticking clock are winding down, Headmaster."

Those were the ominous words she had used. Fairly poignant! Certainly concerning. And she would have thought he would have stopped and taken her seriously. Rational thinking was called for in these uncertain times. A Seer pronouncing death was not something to be taken lightly at all!

And yet he had. Albus had nodded as if agreeing before kindly offering to share his sweets and a bottle of wine with her, which at the time seemed appropriate gratitude – and the wine was a particularly good vintage. But then he'd dismissed her! Sent her away!

'That's alright,' Sybill thought, slipping a bit on the narrow stairwell down to the school's main floor. Avoidance and denial were coping mechanisms, and accepting one's own death was a hard stone to swallow. But now as she sought him out, feet moving instinctively, guided by her third eye, Sybill clutched her crystal ball.

The image of his doom had coalesced, formed completely. It was nigh. One glance and surely he'd see it.

The gods above approved of her quick-witted actions to save his life, because her third eye had indeed led her to him. The Headmaster, with the Potter boy in tow, were making their way to the front entrance.

"Headmaster!" Sybill urgently shrieked, her lilting voice carrying along the echoing limestone. "Headmaster, wait! A moment."

Albus turned, looking impatient, his hand withered with the touch of the Grim on Harry's shoulder.

Sybill hastened to meet them, rushing down the last bit of the stairs. "You must come and look!" Raising the ball above her head to show the dire need of the situation.

"Sybill," he sighed wearily, "please go back to your tower. I regret I don't have time for the interruption."

Interruption? Death was not an interruption.

"But Albus! It's there! It's time! The darkened shroud of death gathers around your shoulders, already claiming your arm."

Holding out an arm to forestall her, the Headmaster cut her off. "Another time, Sybill. Run along."

Urgency warred with desperation.

One solid thought formed in her mind. He had to see. He had to know. If only Albus had the proof for himself...

Without questioning the action, Sybill threw the crystal ball to him.

And missed.

Eyes widened, she watched him drop. The ball striking his temple to shatter on the flagstone.

Dead.

"Oh, well, I didn't see that coming," Sybill muttered.

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A/N:

Original prompt came from debjunk. I kinda rolled her two into one:

- 1) Trelawney goes on a 'You are in grave danger' spree. Who are the lucky recipients?
- 2) Snape didn't kill Dumbledore, Trelawney did... with a crystal ball to the head. How did THAT happen?

My humble appreciation to Christev for beta'ing this for me. She is, as always, a love.

Thank you for reading. AV