

Kite

by chivalric

A boy flies his kite and makes a life-changing decision.

One-shot Story

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: Thanks to my beta Dreamy_Dragon for the extra fast check. You're the best, dear!

It was a glorious day. A warm, golden shimmer had turned the light into something magical, and it was simply impossible to stay inside no matter how loudly his books seemed to call him. So he took his kite, fished it out from under the bed, where he hid it from his parents. If Dad found it, the kite would be history, and as he'd made it himself, using only a tiny little bit of magic, he was anxious not to lose it.

The wind was perfect. It took his kite up into the air. The breeze played with the toy, caressed it, carried it higher and higher; obviously, it didn't bother the wind that the kite wasn't the usual bright colours, but a deep, dark purple instead, that it didn't have a string and no merry patterns, either – the wind loved his kite.

And his kite loved the wind, too, and that was all that mattered. His magic connected it to the earth; the simple beauty of the day as well as seeing his kite dancing above him made him happy for the first time in weeks, if not months. Real life drifted away. He forgot school, which was just as well, as school meant hassle and trouble and depression all at once. He forgot that he was hungry, and he forgot the reason for it – his mum had been too drunk to cook lunch, and the mouldy piece of bread he'd found behind the kettle hadn't been enough for him. He'd gained two and a half inches in height during the past two months. Sometimes, he could feel his bones grow: crying with pain in the middle of the night didn't help to make him comfortable at school. Growing hurt just as much as the disinterested gaze his mother had for him whenever she became aware of his presence.

The kite dove through the air like a dolphin dove through waters. The sun was warm on his back; luckily, as the shirt he wore was thin. His mum hadn't bothered to buy him a new jacket when he'd outgrown his old one, and he wasn't allowed to wear robes at home. So thanks to the warmth, he even forgot about the coldness that usually claimed him and how it seemed to seep out of every corner in the house into his body. He forgot how the cold embraced him, how it pierced his heart and his soul and how it made him wish he'd never been born.

Today, none of this counted. He was here, on this hill. The mild autumn day turned him back into the child he actually still was. The wind played with the too-long strands of his ink-black hair, dried the sweat on his forehead, and his kite's tail brushed across his face.

His laughter rang through the warm autumn air – nothing and no one could take this day away from him, nor the happiness that washed through him and made him feel as if he were flying himself.

It was late when he came home, way after sunset. The wind had settled around seven, but he'd stayed outside, watching the moon come up. His kite was safely packed away in its bag. It would go back under his bed until he would find the time to fly it again. Which wouldn't be too soon – term would start next week.

He really wasn't sure whether he hated being at school more than being at home. At school, he'd at least get enough to eat and be warm. At home, he had – mostly – the leisure to do what he wanted. If given the choice, he'd probably hide in the Hogwarts dungeons. So he wouldn't have to see anyone or talk to anyone and could live undisturbed and without hassle.

Lost in thoughts and still with the spicy fragrance of fallen leaves in his nose, he stepped into the dark hallway and hoped he'd make it into his room before his mother realised he was home, when someone grabbed him and slammed him hard against the wall. The combined smells of an unwashed body, cheap gin, cold smoke, and sweat overwhelmed him; dread claimed his heart, and his happiness vanished as if it never had been there. "Dad," he croaked, trying to protect his kite as well as his chest: last time his father had been in that particularly nasty mood, he'd cracked three of his ribs.

"Little fucker," his father said coldly and switched on the hall-light. "Where have you been? Been robbing some old lady? Been selling your ugly little arse? I'll beat it out of you, boy."

Answering would be useless; whatever explanation he'd come up with, his father wouldn't believe him anyway.

Then, his father saw the bag and an ugly grin crossed his face. He snatched the bag and tore it open; instantly, a mixture of fear and loathing blazed up in his eyes. Maybe, he sensed the magic woven into the toy; maybe, he realised that his son had found a way to escape from his grip – at least for a little while.

Black eyes, fathomless and cruel, focussed on him, measured him, and found him wanting.

The boy didn't know it yet, but in a few years, he would have eyes just like that, and he would look at his pupils in the same, threatening way.

"Playing wizard again, eh?" his father bit out. He was drunk. No surprise there. "You're a loser, boy. Useless. A freak." A punch straight to his son's stomach accompanied the words. The boy groaned and let go of the kite's tail he'd still held clutched in his hands as if he could protect it that way.

Just like that, his father destroyed the kite. His hands were strong; he broke the slender, wooden bars, he shredded the thin paper until nothing but tiny bits were left, and he laughed whilst he did it.

It was too much. He'd always feared his father. Now, in this moment, he experienced what it meant to hate him. He remembered a spell he'd found in one of his mother's books, a forbidden book with horrific content. A Dark book. It was hidden in his room, and until now, he'd believed he'd never touch it again.

Now, he used the spell, and his father fell to his knees, bleeding, screaming.

Picking up the remains of his kite, he stepped over the stinking, weeping man. "You touch me again and I kill you," he hissed with the same cold note that had been in his father's voice just a few moments ago.

Then he went upstairs and threw the kite away. Why bother with childish trivia when there was such a universe of power to explore? Power would keep him alive. Power, Dark power, would make him strong enough to keep his enemies at bay.

Many years later, when he lay bleeding out his life onto the dusty planks of the Shrieking Shack, he remembered the kite and how it had danced with the wind.

The coldness of death claimed his heart and the rotten shards which were left of his soul. Taking his last breath, he wished he'd kept his kite, repaired it, and had thrown away the Dark books instead.