

Thistle Seeds

by shefa

In the Department of Mysteries, it waits.

Written for Paya who asked for a story from the POV of a Dark object in the Department of Mysteries. Written for Dark Month (October) on OWL.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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The surface of my skin tingles, even cushioned beneath the shimmering surface of my nutrient bath.

They are near.

It has been weeks since either one has been back here. Weeks filled with loneliness. Endless days of echoing silence, rattling the transparent walls of my cage.

It may have taken four Unspeakables to enchant the glass of my tank so that it would hold me, but I don't need to leave this box to do my work.

Oh, no. I need only whisper.

Suggest.

One stray thought is all it takes for the glorious avalanche to crash around us all.

~~*~~

She shivers crossing the threshold, and I cannot stop myself from undulating in unholy glee. As perfect a specimen as she rarely crosses my path—how can I resist?

Her hesitation thrills me, but I school myself to lay still.

Her craving to *know* is her undoing. Her stubborn certainty leaves her mind open.

Unlocked.

Receptive to barely perceptible wisps of doubt that seep from me, winding their way through the heavy air until they slip under her skin like a stone in deep water.

Keening cries nourish me with tears that fall into my bath, tasting faintly of lemon.

~~*~~

He can't find her now.

Oh, he tries. He surely does.

I feel him cradling her on the hard stone floor, frantic thoughts racing as quickly as his pounding heart. The fool believes he might reach her still, if only—

He knows better than most that thoughts are like seeds. Nurtured in the dark, forcing their way through even the narrowest cracks. Mine bear thistles, poisonous tips shredding the tissue-thin fabric of nascent hopes and dreams until only gossamer tatters remain.

Safe in my warded tank, I revel at the wreckage wrapped in the shroud of silence that enabled it.