

Choosing A Side

by AngelEyez3954

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Written as a combined response to AmeliaBlack's "The Life of the Phoenix" Challenge, and MagicMuggle12's "One Line of Dialogue" Challenge on HPFF.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: All the characters and the plot that you recognize belong to J.K. Rowling. Anything you do not recognize is my own...

A/N: A big thank you to my beta, Long_Live_Luna_Bellatrix!

The only sound in the room is the ticking of the clock on the wall, as the second hand completes another revolution, ticking away the minutes until eight o'clock. It's Friday evening, and I have been on duty all week long, trying to help the Ministry save face after the disastrous end to the Triwizard Tournament. Tons of Aurors were dispatched all over the country to follow up on leads that popped up everywhere.

I'm so exhausted and would climb right into bed now, if not for my meeting. I tap my foot impatiently and stare out the window, thinking over the events that led me to this point in time, while I wait to Floo to Hogwarts for a meeting with Professor Dumbledore.

I was eight years old when mum's favorite cousin, and the only family member that had not disowned her, was sent to Azkaban for murder. I had met Sirius on many occasions, and he had never seemed like a bad person to me and certainly not one that would commit murder. Mum never believed a word of the accusations against Sirius, and she constantly reminded me that he had not been given a fair trial. I think it was during this point in my life that I decided that I wanted to become an Auror. I felt that if I could become an Auror, I could rescue Sirius and make Mum happy again.

The door to my room opens, waking me from my reverie, and my mum enters, carrying a tray of tea and biscuits. She notices the tense look on my face, and she deposits the tray and leaves without a word. Mum knows what it is that I have planned for tonight; it was her idea to speak with Professor Dumbledore once I began to doubt everything that the Ministry stood for.

I was in between my second and third years of Auror Training when Sirius Black escaped from Azkaban. It was believed to be impossible, but all of a sudden, he was on the loose. Our instructors began to push us harder to pass our classes and our examinations. They wanted young blood out in the field to track and catch Sirius. My particular skill as a Metamorphmagus was very important to my superiors.

At that point in time, my mother was ecstatic that Sirius had escaped, but each day a bit of her happiness faded as she waited for Sirius to contact her. Some days her faith in Sirius wavered, as she knew that her Sirius would have contacted her by now. This just caused me to redouble my efforts in training, so that I could be the one to catch Sirius Black and bring him home to mum.

A bird screeches outside the window, causing me to jump and spill the tray of tea everywhere. I sigh and pull out my wand, flicking it at the mess so that the tea cup repairs itself and the liquid is cleaned off the floor. My wand feels heavy in my hand, and I briefly close my eyes before willing myself to move. I cannot be late to this meeting.

I stand and stretch, meandering over to the window, willing the clock to strike eight o'clock. I look down at the floor to find the most recent Daily Prophet. I shake my head at the headline, "Minister Reiterates: He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named Has Not Returned." I know that something isn't right, and Fudge's constant refusal to speak about the last task of the Triwizard Tournament just fuels my belief.

I was standing guard at the Third Triwizard Tournament Task with a number of other Aurors when Harry Potter reappeared with the dead body of Cedric Diggory, screaming very loudly that Lord Voldemort had returned. I gasped and found myself Silenced. Looking around, I saw Kingsley Shacklebolt, an experienced Auror, with his wand out. He shook his head severely and looked quickly at Professor Dumbledore.

I stood there confused, but didn't draw any more attention to myself. That evening seemed to drag on forever, but finally we were all dismissed. The next day, all Aurors were ordered into a meeting with Rufus Scrimgeour, Head of the Auror Department. Scrimgeour reminded us of Minister Fudge's stance that Lord Voldemort had not returned and that Harry Potter was emotionally exhausted, leading to his statements the previous night.

I left that meeting more confused than before. Too many things simply didn't make sense to me. I tried to catch up with Shacklebolt to confront him, but he was gone as soon as we were dismissed. I went home that evening not sure what to believe. I spoke with my mother, my closest confidante, and she encouraged me to speak with Professor Dumbledore.

That had been one week ago, and after sending an owl to Professor Dumbledore, I received instructions to arrive at his office at eight o'clock sharp on this very evening. I brush my hair out of my face and concentrate on turning it a natural brown color. The clock strikes eight o'clock, and I jump. I turn towards the Floo and straighten my robes.

I arrive at the Headmaster's Office and find Professor Dumbledore seated behind his desk, blue eyes looking tired, hands folded across his lap. I notice that there is no chair in front of his desk. He must not expect me to stay for very long. He does not speak, and instead nods for me to begin.

I draw in a deep breath to fight back my nerves and state quite plainly, "Professor Dumbledore, I believe what you and Harry Potter have been saying; I believe that Lord Voldemort is back, and I want to help."

I take a step back from the desk and wait for a response. It seems like a lifetime, but finally Professor Dumbledore smiles. He flicks his wand, so that a comfortable chair appears next to me. He gestures for me to sit. I let out a breath that I hadn't known I was holding and take a seat, relieved to know that I have come to the right place.