

The More I See You

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Author's Notes: Written for restlessme for LJ rarepair_shorts. Thank you Mhazie for betaing this.

After a series of frantic Apparitions, Bill Weasley reached out and clenched his fingers around a slim upper arm. He was dragged through another few desperate Apparitions while the owner of the arm attempted to wrench it out of his grip. Bill tried to relax, tried not to think about when they would Splinch, and at the same time not to lose his mark.

The nauseating journey ended as abruptly as it had started, and Bill, still half-blind and with stomach in his throat, leaned down and yanked the wand from the girl's hand, hoping that she wouldn't decide to Disapparate again in that moment.

He heard a gasp and took a few steps back, aiming his own wand at the delinquent. Blinking furiously, he swallowed hard, trying to gain back his sight and appease his upset stomach. A spell, even cast blindly, would reach her anyway. He had her.

"You didn't expect us to learn how to follow an Apparition, huh?" he muttered, mostly to himself.

When his eyes focused enough for him to be able to see not only the shapes but also details, he looked at her, standing there panting after their wild chase. Her right hand was still loosely clenched, her hair was dishevelled, but otherwise she looked quite smug for someone who had just been caught.

Bill cleared his throat and took one step forward. "Pansy Parkinson?"

She moved as well, smoothing her hair and righting her cloak. Her hands didn't stray under the sides of it, nor into her pockets, giving him no excuse to bind her.

"Nah, ain't the lass ye're looking fer," she said, poorly feigning the Scottish brogue and gave him an insolent smile.

"Right." He twirled her wand and walked to her. "I'm afraid I have to search you."

"ere?" She spread her arms slightly, tilting her head to the side.

Bill pressed his lips, annoyed at himself. They were standing in the middle of a road, houses and shops on both sides, and he hadn't even bothered to look around to see if they were causing a sensation. Everything seemed to be all right, though. The street was mostly empty. Only a small group of local drunkards stood by the entrance to the pub, not willing to leave, or maybe not allowed to go inside.

Bill hid his wand in his sleeve, but made sure she saw it was still trained on her. "No, in there." He indicated the pub with a sharp jerk of his head. He wanted to end it as

soon as possible. The control was slipping from him quickly. It had begun to slip from him from the moment he had caught her.

"Inviting me fera drink?" At his disapproving glare she sighed and dropped all pretence at Scottish. "Do you expect me to let you grope me in front of the patrons?"

For a moment Bill considered doing just that, to teach this snotty-nosed chick to mind her mouth. Struggling to keep his mind focused on his duty, he corrected her, "We will go upstairs."

Pansy threw her head back at that and gave a heartfelt laugh, exclaiming, "I wish your wife could hear that!"

This drew the attention of the drunkards, and Bill feared that a few people might be peering from behind the curtains by now.

"There are spells for that, and there's no groping involved." He made a gesture as if to usher her into the pub, but she sidestepped him, and now it looked as if he were bothering her.

"I'm sure you know what you're talking about. A brand new Auror's procedure: take your detainee to the pub and then upstairs. I'm not sure it's a standard procedure. Or maybe you're not a standard Auror. Or maybe you're not an Auror at all." She lifted her eyebrow. "Last time I checked, your name wasn't on the list of officially approved Aurors. Now. I need my wand." She reached out her hand palm up and waited.

Bill cursed silently for yet another time this day. He tapped her wand against his thigh, making up his mind. He had to try one more time.

"Your wand remains in my custody. You are under arrest and will be transported..."

"Weasley, wake up!" Pansy snapped her fingers in his face. "You're no Auror, and hold my wand a second longer and I'll have you in Wizengamot in no time. My wand," she repeated.

Bill was seething internally, but even through the thick wool of his rage the rational thought emerged that there was nothing he could do aside from doing exactly what she had demanded.

He outstretched his hand, offering her the wand. She took one step forward, looking into his eyes cautiously but without fear, took her wand and walked away into the alley between the two buildings. He didn't hear the characteristic 'pop' but was sure that she had Disapparated from there.

"See you soon," he muttered under his breath and followed suit.

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Five minutes later Bill weaved his way among the many desks scattered in the open space they had for an office. Head Auror Shacklebolt was in his glass compartment, leaning along with the other Aurors over the maps spread on the table.

"Kingsley!" Bill shouted. A few paper planes fluttered away from him, as if afraid.

Everyone raised their heads and looked at him with surprise.

Bill didn't bother to lower his voice. "Where's my license?"

"You know better than I. You brought the papers to the Wizengamot yourself," Kingsley answered in an even tone.

"Exactly. And where's the answer?"

"They take their time."

"Why don't you persuade them to hurry the fuck up!"

"Because the Wizengamot is independent? Do I have to explain the Ministry procedures to you?" asked Kingsley, clearly trying to keep calm but managing only barely. "What happened?" he asked, propping himself on his fists against the table.

"I had her." Bill raised his clenched fist in front of himself. "But I couldn't detain her and bring her here for a hearing because, technically, I'm not an Auror yet." He raised his eyebrows at Kingsley.

"Had whom?"

"Pansy Parkinson," answered Bill and then added after a pause, "Probably."

It was Kingsley's turn to raise his eyebrows. "Probably?"

Bill met his gaze calmly. Their squad had set off abruptly earlier today, taking even those who didn't have their badges yet. They hadn't had time to prepare; they hadn't known exactly what they would face, except for the fact that there had been a huge gathering of ex-Death Eaters and their sympathisers in one of the towns in the south.

Kingsley sighed and Summoned one of the photographs from his desk. "Here." He handed it to Bill.

Bill took it and dispersed the scowling Slytherins with his index finger until the girl with black bob cut couldn't hide any longer behind her classmates' backs. "It was her."

Ron peered over his eldest brother's shoulder. "I knew I saw the bitch's pug face," he said darkly.

Bill rounded on him, "Language!" before turning back to Shacklebolt. "I had her and I had to let her go because I didn't have the bloody licence."

"And what exactly happened?"

"We Apparated there. Everyone started for the group and the fighting began. I wasn't allowed to engage in any kind of direct fight, so I circled them to ensure that no one would escape." Kingsley nodded, and Bill continued. "I saw one figure slipping from the crowd and going away. I went after her. I was close enough to follow her when she Disapparated. And then I wanted to bring her here, but she knew that I wasn't an Auror. That's it."

"Where did she take you?"

Bill grimaced at the choice of words, and then gritted his teeth, realising something. "I don't know."

Kingsley nodded again with resignation. "It seems that we were tricked a bit. Quite a few of our men were led away this way, dispersing our forces considerably, while those we wanted the most left England, breaching the terms of their parole. Only others knew where they had landed." Amusement flickered in Shacklebolt's eyes, and Bill huffed through his nose. "Go find out. I'm awaiting your full report in two hours."

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Bill already knew where he had been Apparated earlier that day, and there was nothing for him to do here any more. He should return to the Ministry to fill in his report with the one missing bit.

Only his gaze kept on returning to the pub, and he couldn't focus on even one of the three D's required for a successful Apparition. Accustomed to listening to his instincts, he entered the pub.

He didn't know if he was surprised to see Pansy there. He bought a pint of lager and came to the table she occupied alone. There were five empty glasses placed neatly in a row at her left and in front of her stood a sixth, still half-full.

She must have seen him approaching but didn't even raise her eyes.

He stopped. "May I?"

"No."

Bill sat down anyway and took a gulp of his cold beer.

"Why Scottish?" he asked after a while.

Pansy sipped at her drink.

"Doesn't it sound sexy?" she asked back without looking at him.

Bill chuckled. "I prefer French."

Pansy *tsk*-ed at him and swirled the ice cubes in her glass. "Cliché."

She downed the rest of her drink in one go, gestured for the barman for another one and looked at Bill.

He could tell that she was pissed, even if he couldn't hear it in her voice. Her eyes were glassy and fevered. She examined the scars on his face carefully, from his forehead, to the ones around his eyes, to his cheeks and chin. When she met his gaze again, Bill wondered briefly if he would be able to stop himself from hexing her after her comment.

"You were lucky," she said.

Her drink arrived, and Bill, astounded at her words, sloshed it a bit, pushing it to her. Pansy hissed her disapproval over the loss and took a gulp as if she really needed it.

"Pacey doesn't even have a face, only a hole where he pops his food," she finished, putting the glass aside.

She dipped her index finger in the puddle of alcohol and started to write with it on the table.

Bill didn't ask who Pacey was. He tilted his head and squinted at her scribble.

"What's 'D' for?"

"'D' is for Draco."

"Your boyfriend?" Bill vaguely remembered Ron's malicious remarks.

"Ex." Pansy was still busy smearing across the table.

"And 'W'?"

"'W' is for me, and me alone."

Bill didn't question her further, as the younger Malfoy's name reminded him about today's skeddadle.

"It doesn't do to escape, you know? It's better to stay, face everything and be done with it."

"How long have you been in Egypt?"

Bill pressed his lips in annoyance: she was being stubborn. He tried to think of words that would persuade her, but Pansy didn't give him time. She stood up abruptly, fished out a very red lipstick from her bag and corrected her make up.

"It was lovely chatting to you. Must dash," she said, smacking her lips. She tossed a few coins on the table and was gone.

Bill sat there for a while, turning his unfinished beer in his hand and contemplating the row of glasses Pansy had left. The print of her lips was very distinct on the first one, and then it became fainter and fainter with each next one, until it was completely invisible on the last one she had left unfinished.

Bill reached for it, knocked it back and got up.

The report wouldn't write itself.

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The next morning Fleur handed him the *Prophet* over the breakfast.

"Ere! Front page!"

The list of the Death Eaters and their associates who had escaped the previous day had been leaked to the press. It would be a very long day at work, with an internal disciplinary investigation.

Bill sighed and searched the list. Both Malfoys, father and son, were there, and just above them Macnair, Walden. Walden. Bill scanned the list carefully, looking for other names and surnames beginning with 'W'. He found none.

"Shit!" Bill tossed the paper on the table, suddenly not hungry and anxious to get to work.

Fleur hummed in sympathy over her coffee.

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Bill's desk was cluttered with parchments, but he easily spotted a new addition. After a quick revealing spell, he could read the missive. Another group escaped tonight. There was Pansy's name on the list.

Crumpling the note in his fist, Bill leant heavily against his desk.

"Foolish girl," he whispered.

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