

Viktor and the Spider

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1

Chapter 1 of 1

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Viktor looked at the walls of his cell. The spider that had been spinning her web for the last few weeks had captured another insect. He had been a prisoner for almost four months now, out of contact with the Order and his beloved Hermione.

He hadn't expected one of his old schoolmates to have joined the Death Eaters, but that was exactly what Poliakoff had done.

Viktor couldn't change anything from his cell. He wasn't even sure where he was. Poliakoff had dosed his coffee with Dreamless Sleep during their meeting back in January. It was three years after the Triwizard Tournament, and Poliakoff was asking questions about Hermione and her connection to Harry Potter.

'I should have seen what he was about' Viktor thought for the thousandth time.

When he looked back at his only companion, the spider had moved to the iron anchor in the wall for the shackle that held him prisoner. She was spinning her web around the chain, and there were more spiders coming into the cell.

Mesmerised, Viktor watched the spiders all work together to form a connected web from the wall anchor to the bars on the windows. All day he watched, until finally falling asleep.

In the strange dream that came to him, he heard a voice unlike any he had ever heard before.

"You must help us, young master. We have been sent to aid in your escape, but you must assist."

"What must I do?" he asked.

"Must use edge of shackle on wrist to chip away at corner of window with bars. Mortar is weak. We take care of shackle once you have loosened mortar. The one who sent us desires your presence at her side again."

In the morning, Viktor acted on the voice's request. He found that the mortar was very weak, indeed. By noon, he had loosened two of the bars in the window.

The house-elf appeared with food and offered again to cut his hair and shave him. This time, he agreed. He talked to the house-elf while she was cutting his hair, and she promised him a bath the next day. Once the house-elf had gone, he spoke to the room, knowing that the voice had come from there, somehow.

"I have only two more bars to loosen; will you help me with the shackle now?"

However, there was no answer.

The next morning, he again went to work on the mortar holding the two remaining bars on the window. The last two bars worked loose in record time. In fact, he had just completed loosening the last bar when the house-elf appeared with his bath. She retreated after setting up the copper tub with steaming water, soap, shampoo, and towels.

Gratefully, Viktor immersed himself in the bath, leaving his right wrist out of the water so the shackle would not rust. As he soaked, he watched the army of spiders make their way up the side of the tub and several of them scurried into the lock portion of the shackle. They emerged a few seconds later pulling what looked like a slender rope of spider-web. More spiders were adding their silk to the rope now, and then they started reeling in the rope. There was a loud click and the shackle was unlocked.

Realising that he could now escape, Viktor hurriedly finished his bath and dressed in the clean clothes the house-elf had left for him. He thanked the spiders for their help and heard again that strange voice.

"Young master, outside, more of my sister/children have retrieved your wand and broom. Take care. You are not far from where a great battle rages. You must go there. She has need of your strength."

Viktor scrambled out the tiny window and found his wand and broomstick leaning against the wall of his prison. Almost giddily, he pocketed the wand and took off into the air.

Once airborne, he recognised the area. He was, indeed, not far from Hogwarts. The Black Lake lay off to his right, and he could see the castle dimly on the other side.

He flew higher and turned his heading to the castle. The village of Hogsmeade lay between him and the castle. As he flew over the village, he saw Death Eaters fighting the villagers. With a few silent spells, he soon had the Death Eaters fighting amongst themselves instead of the villagers. The last of the Death Eaters fell to a spell from an old man who waved at Viktor.

"There's fighting at the school, Krum. We are heading over there now," the old man called out.

Viktor waved back and flew directly to the school. What he saw from the air appalled him. The school itself was a casualty. Walls were down; there were bodies on the ground numerous places. He began picking off any Death Eaters he could find.

When he finally landed and made his way into the school, he saw how very young some of the defenders were. He Disillusioned himself and began to move through the school.

Any Death Eater who got in his way died very rapidly. If he wasn't sure of an unknown person's affiliation, he waited to see which side they were attacking.

A particularly nasty looking woman in a pink suit soon fell to his wand when she attacked several small defenders of the school.

He ran outside to throw protective spells for some of the teachers he recognised. Minerva McGonagall sent him a wave of recognition, as did Filius Flitwick.

The night was working its way toward morning when he took to the air again, Disillusioned. He saw footprints appearing in the springy new grass without a person attached to them. Someone was Disillusioned or wearing an Invisibility Cloak. He followed slowly.

In a tiny clearing in the forest, he saw Harry pull off his Invisibility Cloak and take something out of his pocket. The boy then straightened his shoulders and made his way toward the campfire burning some distance away.

Viktor knew what was about to happen, instinctively. Without landing, Viktor sent the one spell he could think of that might tell him why.

"*Legilimens!*"

Harry looked up when he felt Viktor enter his mind. Seeing nothing, he stopped for a minute.

"Viktor? I have to do this. It is the only way to stop him. Tell Hermione... Never mind. I have to do this."

"I will stand witness, then. I will avenge you, my friend. This I swear."

"Viktor, my death will protect them all. They'll be able to beat him. This is what the prophecy was all about. Thank you for standing witness."

Viktor followed Harry's progress to the Dark Lord's campsite. He saw how bravely the boy stood before the maniac, and the way he did not flinch when the killing curse was cast.

What surprised Viktor was that the connection to Harry's mind still existed. The boy had not died.

Immediately, Viktor turned back to the school to find Hermione. He sent a mental message to Harry that he would warn the defenders.

He flew back and set the broom down on the lawn of the school. He strapped it to his back and went to look for Hermione. She was tending the injured, just as he'd expected.

He quickly removed the Disillusioning spell and went to kneel beside her. Her smile of welcome lit a fire in his heart.

"Oh, Viktor, I am so very glad to see you. Arachne sent word that you were free. Have you seen Harry?"

"Harry lives, love. He has a plan. You are not to worry. He went to meet the Dark Lord. The Dark Lord thinks he killed Harry, but Harry is not dead. Tell me what you need me to do."

"Stay close. I think Ron may be too upset over Fred's death to be much use. We've lost so many, Viktor. I want to go away from here when this is over. I have missed you so much."

"I will take you away, love. I think I should Disillusion myself again, just so the Weasley boy does not let his grief and jealousy interfere with what we must do. I love you, Hermione."

"Obicham te, Viktor. Yes, Disillusion yourself; I can't deal with Ron's infantile fits right now. There are much more important things going on."

As Viktor again Disillusioned himself, they heard McGonagall scream. Rushing to the great doors, they saw Hagrid carrying the body of Harry Potter.

Ron was screaming, everyone was screaming. Hermione felt Viktor take her hand and squeeze. "He isn't dead, love."

The next few minutes were chaotic. Harry lay on the ground, seemingly dead. Neville defied the Dark Lord; the Centaurs and the villagers from Hogsmeade all came thundering on to the grounds to scatter the Dark Lord's forces.

Neville broke free from the Body Bind Curse and drew the Sword of Gryffindor from the Sorting Hat as Harry had done in the Chamber of Secrets.

The head of Nagini came to rest at the feet of the Dark Lord, who went wild with fury.

Viktor sent a shield spell to protect Neville. Hermione gasped and dug her fingers into Viktor's arm.

"He twitched, Viktor, and now he is gone. You're right; he must have had the Invisibility Cloak with him. He is alive."

"Come, love, we must move into the building. Harry just brushed past me. The Great Hall is where it must end, I think."

Defenders and Death Eaters were all pushing their way into the Great Hall. Ginny, Luna and Hermione were fighting Bellatrix Lestrange when Viktor saw Molly Weasley rushing to take over from them.

He was sending spells to assist the other fighters, and when it seemed to him that Molly might not be able to finish Bellatrix, he sent the Killing Curse at almost the same time as she did, to finish the Dark Lord's favourite.

He sent a protective shield for Molly at the same time as another shield shimmered up in front of the Weasley matriarch. He knew it was Harry who had done it.

When Harry appeared in the room to take on the Dark Lord, Viktor grabbed Hermione's hand and moved them both to the sidelines.

Silently, they watched Harry take the Dark Lord to task for his shortcomings. Harry vindicated Severus Snape and explained many things to the people watching the fight.

Then suddenly, it was upon them: the Dark Lord cast his Killing Curse, and Harry cast his signature *Expelliarmus*; the spells collided in mid-air, and the green light backtracked to envelope the Dark Lord in his own curse. He fell dead at Harry's feet.

The room erupted in shouts. Harry was mobbed.

Viktor took that opportunity to Disillusion Hermione. They walked out of the wrecked school to the gates now hanging loosely open.

Once outside the gates, Viktor put his arms around Hermione and turned with appropriate destination, determination, and deliberation.

Once they had stopped moving, Hermione sagged in Viktor's arms. He held her close until the sensation of being pulled apart ceased.

"Where are we, Viktor?" she asked quietly.

"My home, love. Your home, too, if you want."

"Yes, oh, yes, Viktor."

May 22nd Amita mentioned Viktor and a Spider in chat. I ran with it and have now finished it.