

King's Cross Again

by Bola

"Ah, Harry. Here we meet again." ... "You're still the same," Dumbledore stated, still smiling. "Still just as modest as I remember." Harry/Albus

Chapter 1

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"Ah, Harry. Here we meet again." ... "You're still the same," Dumbledore stated, still smiling. "Still just as modest as I remember." Harry/Albus

Harry immediately recognized his surroundings. The one difference he could perceive between now and fifty years back was the absence of the whimpering and thumping of the helpless, agonized creature once known as Voldemort. He looked down at himself and seemed to be clothed, unlike last time. He suddenly noticed the two seats under the high, sparkling ceiling on which he and Dumbledore had sat half a century before. He swore they hadn't been there before, just like last time.

He sighed, for he knew this time there would be no going back. He wouldn't return to life, never again. He just hoped Ginny would be strong enough to let herself grieve and go on. He didn't want her to spend the rest of her life in misery just because he'd – he knew she was strong enough. She'd survive, though the thought of her made tears sting behind his eyes. He'd loved her for nearly all his life, and although he was a wizard, one of the best some said, he thought the best magic was love. Dumbledore had taught him so many years back that love was the strongest power. And he'd been right.

And still the mystery about love was something which Lord Voldemort hadn't understood in his life. Harry's brow crinkled. He wondered... Where would Voldemort be right now? Would he effectively have ended up as the needy creature Harry had eyed fifty years back? He couldn't stop wracking his brain over it. He, the Dark Lord, who had considered himself as the best magician in magical history. Harry snorted. He hadn't been the best magician. If he had, how could he have allowed a seventeen-year-old, non-graduated Harry to steal his life? The best wizard in the world had been Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore... the best Headmaster Hogwarts had ever known. He had been convinced of that half a century ago, when the old man had died, being blown into the air much like an old doll by the green light from Snape's spell of Death. And still when he had seen Dumbledore's limbs lying there spread-eagled at the foot of the Tower. Even seeing him dead, Harry felt Dumbledore was still the greatest wizard ever. He had long known he would never meet such a great wizard as Albus Dumbledore ever again. And now he could look back on the fifty years he had lived after the wizard he had known so well had passed, Harry was quite certain that he had been right all along.

Harry, however, had to admit that his youngest son wasn't far from stepping into the old, grey haired and bearded man's shoes. What with Albus being your first name and Severus being your second... He'd become a fine man, just like his older brother and sister, both Aurors at the Ministry of Magic. Harry's initial impression of the Auror corps – when he became an Auror – was that it did protect people and ensure there was justice in the Wizarding world, but strayed from these goals at some point. Albus had been unlike his brother and sister, and had started teaching at Hogwarts as a Defence Against the Dark Arts professor for a couple of years. He hadn't directly found his place and had had to do some searching until he had found his calling, too.

Harry thought of his grandchildren, too: Finley, Hayley and little Evelyn, Lily and Philip's children, and Phoenix and Mallow, James and Gabrielle's children. Last time Harry had visited the household, he remembered they had been trying to decide about one of two name spellings, Sean or Shawn, for their unborn son, who would be arriving in less than a month. Unfortunately, he would never see that newest asset of the family, but he was sure that little boy would find a happy home in the loving family of James Potter II. Harry thought his oldest son was the best father to his children. He would have never expected that, because he had been so wild in his young years, like Harry's father, who had died protecting his wife and son. He must have been a good father, too.

His oldest children had both found love and settled down, but not Albus – not yet. He wanted to wait until the right person crossed his path, Harry suspected, though they

had never talked about that. And then he remembered that Albus Dumbledore, the great defender of love, never seemed to have found his equal himself. Maybe he had, long before Harry had been born. Harry didn't know. He had never asked. It hadn't ever come to question before.

Harry sat down on one of the two familiar seats and sighed. From where he sat, he looked around to find a possible sign as to where he should go. He chuckled to himself, imagining a sign on the wall saying 'Dead men, this way!' He closed his bright green eyes and shook his head at this. It could have been a joke of Ron or Hugo, who was just like his father.

"Ah, Harry. Here we meet again," a low voice sounded from the seat beside Harry. "It has been a little while," the voice continued in the same kind tone. "Fifty years, if I recall well."

Harry looked aside to see Albus Dumbledore sitting there beside him, wearing the same sweeping robes of midnight blue as he had the last time Harry had been there. Dumbledore smiled kindly, and Harry smiled back, a warm feeling of happiness welling up into his chest.

"What were you thinking about, dear boy?" Dumbledore wondered. "Well, dear man, I should say, I guess." He smiled wider, grabbing hold of Harry's arm, giving it a light squeeze. "Nevertheless I'm still proud of you. That last time we sat here, you dared go back and fulfilled the Prophecy by killing Lord Voldemort, possibly the most evil wizard ever known in history. You were already a man when we last met, but I'm afraid I didn't want to really admit that to myself."

"I've had help. Without Ron and Hermione, the Order and the members of the DA, I wouldn't have succeeded in your mission, nor without the help of Snape and yourself," Harry said, looking up at his old Headmaster, in whose eyes the customary twinkle seemed to be more visible than Harry had ever seen when they were both still alive.

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Chapter 2

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Dumbledore's smile faded. "What are you thinking about, Harry?"

Harry looked up at the old Headmaster and sighed. "What happened to Voldemort?" he questioned, lines of worry wrinkling his forehead.

The old man next to him sighed, too. "I could have guessed you would be asking this, but I'm afraid that I don't have an answer to that. I don't have the faintest idea, honestly. Old Tom never made it here, insofar as I have noticed."

"I don't understand."

"And neither do I, Harry, but I guess it had to do with the way you finished it. You did so, not wanting him to hurt others any more than he already had. Even though we both saw what a helpless, agonized creature he would have become when you succeeded in the difficult mission I gave you fifty years back – and you really did," Dumbledore added, smiling again, "He'd still hurt many by the mere thought of his presence here. Voldemort brought them here, you see, and ripped apart their families without dwelling on what he did. I can imagine the emotional toll was an unbearable torture, even without having to look at the one whose wand caused it."

Harry nodded, heavy-heartedly. Dumbledore understood without words. "I'm afraid that feeling's unavoidable. It is what those who are capable to love must endure. I've seen many who went insane from being able to see, but not touch."

"Wait... You're saying..."

"Ah, yes," Dumbledore replied. "If we really want."

Harry contemplated this, then uttered, "How?"

The older man beside him merely smiled. "From where we are going to—" "And where... are we going to?" Harry interrupted, getting even more confused each moment, with each word that passed between them, and this suddenly seemed more important than his previous question.

"On."

Harry nodded to the simple reply, and a silence fell between the two wizards. "When are we going?" Harry questioned when the lack of further clarification started getting uncomfortable.

"On the next train, I guess," Dumbledore answered. "And no, I have no idea when precisely that is," he added, upon seeing Harry's mouth open to ask.

He nodded again, then wondered, "Why here? Why you? I assume you reckon it is still... my party?"

Dumbledore laughed at this. "Yes, Harry. I'm convinced it is, still. I assure you that at my old age, I am quite partied out already."

Yet another silence fell between both men.

"He loved you. I know he loved you."

"I don't know who he loved, Hermione, but it was never me. This isn't love, the mess he's left me in. He shared a damn sight more of what he was thinking with Gellert Grindelwald than he ever shared with me."

Harry unsuccessfully tried to push his thoughts aside, and when he looked up at Dumbledore again, he noticed the piercing blue eyes filled with tears. "Forgive me, Harry," the grey man sadly whispered. "I perhaps should have paid more attention to you than to the mission that was so imperative to our survival. I didn't mean to make you feel like that. I didn't want you to feel unloved. I must admit I had hoped the presence of your friends to be enough. Foolish. I should have realized the complexity of love, and the need for you to have love from more than just your friends. I'm sorry, Harry. I did love you, and I haven't stopped doing that through dying. Miss Granger – now Mrs. Weasley – was again, as usual, right."

"Wait. How... You... saw it?"

Dumbledore's head shook. "No. I didn't. Professor Snape surely was a much more accomplished Occlumens than I once was, but that doesn't mean I'm not still adept. The fact that you aren't – I'm sorry, Harry – doesn't make it really hard for anyone to read you."

Harry didn't smile. "You're adept in anything that has to do with magic."

"Maybe I am," Dumbledore confessed, "but what does it matter if you use magic towards faulty ends?"

"You didn't," Harry whispered.

"Thank you for saying that, Harry, but even you should realize... Oh, but... that's right. You already did find truth behind all secrets I had."

Neither spoke, until Harry's voice sounded, "No. I didn't." He looked up at his old Headmaster, and continued, quoting McGonagall, Hogwarts' best Headmistress, who had been Harry's strict – if caring – supporter, teacher and Head of House. "Dumbledore would have been happier than anybody to think that there was a little more love in the world." She'd said it right after hearing about Albus' death, and Harry had taken comfort from those words. He'd never forget them either.

Dumbledore became quiet almost instantly.

"I long knew you would ask that question sooner or later; that you would put pieces together sometime. And I feared for it all these years back. I never told you about it for the same reason I never told you about my past: I was afraid that you'd judge me. That was, however, just another mistake of mine. Forgive me, Harry. I should have known you wouldn't abandon me."

Dumbledore sighed, and suddenly he looked so ancient and fragile. "Forgive me," he repeated, placing his entwined hands into his lap, looking down at them as he spoke again. "I should have trusted you." Another short silence fell before the old wizard continued, "You kept believing in me... believing that I knew what I was doing, even though what you heard or rather read – I'm mainly speaking of the farcical writings of Rita Skeeter's – contradicted what you thought was true. Things no longer seemed to be truthful in the narrow light they were shown. I imagine it must have confused you, and it must have been really hard upon you to continue while the environment you were in encouraged you so much to do the opposite. Sadly enough, perhaps most of what you heard was nothing less but true."

"You changed."

"Yes, Harry," Dumbledore whispered, smiling sadly. "I changed. Suddenly, I realized just about what I was doing, and changed. Years later, I would put even the man I loved in Nurmengard to try and make up for the mistakes I had made. Youthful mistakes, yet I don't think them any less wrong."

Chapter 3

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"Ah, Harry. Here we meet again." ... "You're still the same," Dumbledore stated, still smiling. "Still just as modest as I remember." Harry/Albus

"You were about the same age when you revolted against Lord Voldemort. Yet you weren't blinded and led by the thought of might." Dumbledore slowly looked up at Harry with his piercing blue eyes. "I wasn't only blinded by the greater good, but by love as well, Harry," the old Headmaster admitted. "Unluckily, I fell for the wrong person and thus found myself forced to hide my true feelings from not only others, but from myself as well. I would not allow myself to admit my feelings of love anymore because I knew what love – just as well as might – could do to me. Both are rather amazing to have, but blinding and dangerous for those as selfish to let themselves lead by their desires like me. I didn't think I could be trusted with either of gifts."

Harry was hard-pressed to ask his next question. "I'm wondering, have you ever fallen in love again? And..." he stopped.

"Because I kept in mind what would have happened, had I let my feelings of love over-rule my mind and my actions the last time I had loved another human being, I never allowed myself to give in to it again and let it all over-rule my mind and thoughts like before, but yes. I did. And yes," Dumbledore emitted, "all of them happened to be men."

Harry swallowed, as the old man sadly dropped his head again. "Isn't it... nearly impossible to contain such feelings?" He asked, thinking of Ginny.

Dumbledore nodded in response. "Yes, Harry, but when I was young – in more ancient times – people... weren't exactly... keen on... anything different – not in that aspect... not even in the Wizarding world. Witches or wizards falling in love... with anyone of their own gender was different and unacceptable. People have become more flexible, but back then it was much better to keep it hidden. When people finally started to open their minds more and accept such differences, maybe abnormalities for some back then and now – just think about the Tales of Beedle the Beard: men belong with women, and women with men – I already was an old man, and my time to love was over."

"No," Harry spoke. "It wasn't. It isn't. It's never too late... not for love."

The grey haired and bearded wizard smiled. "I have met enough men whom I could love, but I couldn't imagine any of them to be like me. For the aforementioned reasons, I suppose I feared I would be spurned. Well... I, too, think that your first is one you don't forget."

"Yeah," Harry agreed, thinking about his wife and children. She hadn't really been his first, and he hadn't been hers, but she'd surely been the one whom he had loved most and longest, considering the two of them had been together for more than half a century.

Out of the corners of his bright green eyes, which he had inherited from Lily, Harry suddenly noticed Dumbledore getting up from the seat beside him, looking out. He stood hugging himself for an instant, as if he were cold. Then, he turned around again, and Harry consequently found his old Headmaster's pain lingering in the penetrating blue eyes. It hurt. He understood. It hurt remembering.

He had always known Dumbledore as an old man. Sure, Harry had seen pictures of him in younger years – different times. He'd been quite recognizable then, but still hard to imagine as a spirited young wizard, without middle-length silvery grey hair and beard, before his nose had become crooked and before he'd started wearing half-moon spectacles.

Harry secretly wished he could have seen him back then. The thought had just formed into his head when suddenly, a so much younger Dumbledore stood in front of him, looking down at himself.

"I forgot how it felt like to be young," the young Dumbledore smiled. He didn't seem surprised.

He would have been around this age when he'd fallen in love with his later rival Grindelwald, not all that much older as Harry had been when he fell in love with his best friend's little sister. Harry, however, had already been in love with his Ginny years before he'd dared admit it. And he knew it had been the same for her. He smiled to himself. He understood just how deep love could go and felt sorry for Dumbledore, who'd always stood up for love, yet never obtained it himself.

Harry suddenly felt so old in the company of the young Albus Dumbledore, and within an instant, he, too, had turned seventeen all over again. The mere thought of being young again appeared to have been enough to make this change.

Chapter 4

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Harry stood up as well, slowly walking over to the young Dumbledore, gripping his arm tightly to comfort him. He soon found the other boy hugging him, and Harry hugged him back. Hesitantly, yet yearningly at the same time, their lips found each other. Harry pulled back at first, then found himself liking it, and pressed more against Dumbledore, struggling for more touch. When they had to break apart to breathe, Dumbledore looked at his companion and apologized, "I'm sorry, Harry. I..."

"Me, too," Harry replied, hanging his head, feeling guilty.

Dumbledore shook his head back and forth, disagreeing. "No, Harry, if anyone should apologize, it would, and should, be me."

Without either of them realizing it, they were kissing again and found themselves in a comfortable double bed that hadn't been there moments before. They were practically losing themselves with lust by the time they were lying next to each other in the bed. Neither of them were really thinking at that moment. Dumbledore seemed to be very eager to try and get Harry out of his robes, which was more than enough to encourage Harry to do the same to him. Struggling to free one another from the fabric straining them and keeping their skin from each other, they never stopped kissing.

Finally they were out of their clothes, stroking each other tenderly, deepening the other's kisses, tongues dueling, trying to touch as much of the other in the process of curling and uncurling around each other.

"Wait," the young Dumbledore interrupted, pushing Harry a couple of inches away from him.

Harry looked back rather confusedly. Had he done anything wrong? He didn't understand.

"Harry... Are you really sure you want this?" Dumbledore questioned. "We don't have to do this," he added, the truth within the deep ocean blue eyes visible.

"I want to," Harry breathed in his old – yet young – Headmaster's ear. He nuzzled into Dumbledore's neck, sending shivers over the blond boy's skin. A thin shine of sweat appeared on both young men's body as they started tonguing, connecting them. They rolled over in the bed, Harry on top. His teeth sank into Dumbledore's exposed neck, marking him, while his companion's hand disappeared between them, searching for something steel hard and throbbing that wasn't his. When Albus had managed to find what he had been looking for, he carefully got hold of the sensitive male flesh, and dragged his fingers back and forth. When the younger version of the wise, old Headmaster nearly reached the tip of Harry's hardness, a moan erupted from above him. He knew he was doing the right thing.

Harry's mouth planted pecks all over the other boy's chest and abdomen, down to what he was after most. The length of his companion's hardness invaded his mouth, bumping against the back of his throat. For a moment he thought he was going to vomit, yet at the same time his mouth being filled by another man felt special, and he wanted to contain it. Slowly, he started bringing his lips up and down the shaft, while cupping his mate's balls. It didn't take long before the latter started convulsing in pleasure as he desperately searched for something to get hold of. He tightly caught the sheets, although he'd rather catch something else. "Harry..." Dumbledore pleaded.

Harry stopped for a second and looked up into those bright blue eyes. He climbed back up the young Dumbledore's body and shifted his body before leaning over the other boy's, allowing the same hardness to push into his mouth again, as he used one hand to lead his own into the blond's throat. He moaned as it did and he felt elated, then resumed his task, bobbing his head up and down the other boy's shaft, faster and harder every time, being exhorted by his own approaching climax.

They came about the same time and both of them swallowed, trembling for a little while, before Harry turned around again, facing a smiling young Albus, and laid his own untidy black head onto the other boy's chest, fingers combing quietly through Dumbledore's hair. Harry didn't know where he'd be when he woke up. He didn't have the faintest idea, but he felt certain that Dumbledore would be with him. Maybe he'd see his parents again. And Sirius. And Remus. And Tonks. He smiled as sleep overtook him.