

The Unseen Guardian

by sunny33

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Chapter 1 of 1

Someone is out there, watching over the residents of Diagon Alley.

They remain far too careless, these fools churning through their mundane lives as if evil holds no thrall in their bubble of denial. A mere word, spoken without thought of uninvited ears, or an unguarded moment of tenderness directed toward an undesirable, and a hovering cloud of malice will be found over the home of their loved ones – a lesson too late in the learning.

Can they not hear whispers slinking from doorway to doorway, words barely discernible yet pregnant with ominous intent? Do they not sense the unravelling threads in the fabric of their society even as they dream of a future ever more tenuous?

Do they not remember?

A flick of the wrist and a loose shutter taps its vulnerability against the casement. Before securing the window, wary eyes glance down at the street, suddenly mindful of its dark menace. Loitering passers-by hasten to their destination, frowning as a sudden chill embraces them with dour promise. Turning back, the lonely street lamps stand sentinel over the empty footpath, but the sense of impending doom lingers.

A wisp of movement in the corner of the eye startles, sending gazes darting into gloomy corners, seeking the source of anxiety but never succeeding. Fingers grip more tightly to wands kept unsheathed and ready for use. Reflexes sharpen, concentration escalates, and long-forgotten hexes and jinxes are recalled.

Constant vigilance! Constant vigilance!

The refrain murmurs in the breeze, drifting to mothers rushing their little ones into places of safety and fathers clinging to the hope their family will remain inconspicuous.

Constant vigilance! Constant vigilance!

Shop owners board windows as the cry sees them fleeing for the anonymity of tiny villages far from the reach of silver-masked figures bearing green execution in two words. The pulse of life in Diagon Alley slowly bleeds unease from the very cobblestones of its existence until it lies whimpering under the false sun of pureblood supremacy.

Constant vigilance!

The spectre patrols the Alley for nine long months, forbidden the blessed release of the Veil until duty has been fulfilled and either Light or Dark succumbs to the unforgiving hand of the other. Alone and unappreciated, ceaseless in a task unseen, the invisible presence stirs anxiety and promulgates caution with but one objective.

Constant vigilance.

At last, the battle is joined. Magic thrums through the atmosphere; crackling ozone and sheets of all-coloured light joining in a display as spectacular as it is surreal.

As the final *Expelliarmus* echoes into the sunrise many miles to the north, the spirit of Alastor Moody sighs into a trickle of ectoplasm. A staunch defender to the end, his life's mission is now complete.

A/N: Prompt – An unseen presence unsettles the denizens of Diagon Alley. Thanks to my beta.