

# Uneasy Peace

*by blue artemis*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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It started on a Monday, in Flourish and Blotts. Quite mysteriously, some rare old books were knocked out of their place on an upper shelf. Pandemonium ensued!

For a people who could make almost every whim reality, magicals could be very superstitious. They were convinced the ghost of Voldemort was haunting Diagon Alley.

Hermione—who knew darn well that Voldemort was haunting the portrait of Albus Dumbledore—perused the fallen books, not even looking up when even the owner ran out the door, white as a sheet. “I’ve always wanted this one,” she said. “And this one is perfect for his birthday.”

Tuesday found Hermione in Madam Malkin’s. “I need a set of robes for the dance at the Ministry,” she informed the patroness, “but I don’t see any fabric here I really like. I’d like a pale green, like a new grass.” The three other customers ran screaming when bolts of fabric tumbled from their places high up on the racks. “Ooh, that’s it! That one is perfect.” Rumors to the contrary, it wasn’t the ghost of Sirius Black, either. He wouldn’t be caught dead in Madam Malkin’s.

Wednesday, it was proven it wasn’t Fred’s ghost when something chased all the Pygmy Puffs out of the store. Hermione was nowhere to be seen.

Thursday, the Alley was cleared when people strolling down the street swore something brushed against their ankles. The Ministry issued a decree offering a reward to anyone who could rid the Alley of the presence, after it hadn’t reacted to any spells cast, nor any of the exorcisms, burning of herbs, chanting, or—in one case—dancing naked. (Granted, after his dangly bits were attacked, the dancer swore it was the ghost of his ex-wife.)

Friday, Harry Potter and Ronald Weasley strode up Diagon Alley, bound and determined to rid it of the malignant presence. Fifteen minutes later, Ron was seen running back the way he came, screaming like a little girl, blood dripping from scratch wounds on his face. Harry was rolling on the cobblestones laughing.

“There is nothing to be afraid of. Ron deserved it, truly,” was the only statement the Man-Who-Lived-Again said.

“He’s only good for vanquishing Dark Lords. That evil presence is still here!” complained a hag. She then ran back into Knockturn Alley, hysterical, after she felt something lick her toes.

On Saturday, Neville ambled into Diagon Alley with a basket of catnip, stunned mice, and a can of tuna. He pointed his wand at the contents of the basket and said, “*Verto a Phasmatis!*” He set it down and said aloud, “If you’re interested, she set up your basket in the corner by the fireplace. You are always welcome.”

And on Sunday, peace returned to Diagon Alley.

“Thank you, love. I’ve missed him,” Hermione said, looking at the ghost of her beloved familiar curled up in his basket.

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A/N: Many thanks to J--- and P--- for the beta!

Week two prompt: An unseen presence unsettles the denizens of Diagon Alley.