

Blitz

by lady_rhian

'You want to know why Dumbledore will never fully trust you? This is why. Because there's a part of you that *wants* to come with me.'

Blitz

Chapter 1 of 1

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If she closed her eyes, they were as timpani. Not that she could see them, but she could feel the *thunk* of crashing buildings, the ricochet of debris. At times, could even hear the screams. Some idiotic bureaucrat had decided that the denizens of Diagon Alley were better off hearing German bombs, as if the sound were less horrifying than the sight.

She felt useless, powerless, but even more so when she was alone in her flat. So she came down to the street and sat on this bench, closed her eyes, and prayed.

Hoped.

'You're not doing what I think you're doing?'

She knew that presence. That cold.

'Tom,' she said, eyes still closed.

His coat ruffled as he sat; she felt it brush against her hand. Could almost feel his fingers, if she tried.

Best not to try.

'Aren't you going to ask where I've been?'

'No,' she said.

'I've never asked anyone for help.'

Rumble.

'I've never asked anyone to come with me.'

'You can't pick me apart and put me back together. I'm not an experiment.' She heard his breath, the thrum of his thoughts. She'd known them so well, once.

She swallowed hard.

'Dumbledore will never fully trust you,' he said.

'Found someone who can read tea leaves properly, have you?'

'You're curious. I know you, Min—'

'I don't know what you're doing, and I don't care,' she said. 'You frighten me, Tom. There. Happy? You frighten me.'

'No I don't. That's what's different about you. I don't frighten you. I think what you're really frightened of is in here.' She felt his warmth as he slid closer to her, put his arm around her shoulder, traced her chin with his finger—

'Stop.'

'But you don't want me to,' he said, his voice soft, his lips brushing against her ear.

She scooted away from him.

'You want to know why Dumbledore will never fully trust you? This is why. Because there's a part of you that *wants* to come with me. There's a part of you that's still in school, pushing me against a wall in the tower—'

'And to you, this is just a game.'

'You're different.'

'And you're a cold-blooded killer,' she said. 'Don't think I don't know it.'

She heard him stand up and zip his coat.

'Last chance.'

She turned her head to the sky.

'You do know this means I'll have to kill you.'

She said nothing.

She heard the *pop* of Apparition and opened her eyes. Tears leaked out, and she struggled to get a deep breath.

Boom.

People ducked; children screamed.

Enough.

She stood from the bench, Disillusioned herself, and pointed her wand at the sky.

Fireworks lit up over Diagon Alley. People looked up in wonder, and she heard *pops* of Apparition, saw bureaucrats waving their wands. Much good may it do them.

She made to leave, but then she saw him standing in the middle of the crowd, staring at her—

Applauding.

A/N: I've adjusted the timeline to age these characters; according to JKR's timeline, they were still in their early teens during the Blitz. But I chased this plot bunny down the rabbit hole, and, well, their creator never did much mind her timelines, either. That's my excuse and I'm sticking to it.

Many thanks to my betas sshg316 and Machshefa, whose compassion and criticism make me a better writer.

Prompt: An unseen presence unsettles the denizens of Diagon Alley.