

Perseverant Aberforth

by MMADfan

A series of drabbles looking in on Aberforth Dumbledore at various points in his life.
Includes the tale of the "inappropriate charms."

A Drabble Series

Chapter 1 of 1

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Author's Note:

"Summer Pursuits" is a triple drabble (300 words) set during a summer holiday when both Aberforth and Albus are students at Hogwarts.

"Inappropriate Charms" is also a triple drabble, and takes place when Aberforth is in his early twenties.

"A Deal for Aberforth" is a double drabble set in the Hog's Head about twenty-five years after "Inappropriate Charms."

"Youthful Lesson Remembered" takes place in the late 1970s.

"An Heir to Burden" is set in early 1997.

"Summer Pursuits"

Aberforth flopped onto his bed and looked over at his brother, who was lying on his stomach, ankles crossed, chin resting on both his fists, engrossed in a book.

"Reading still?"

"Mmpf." Albus's nose wrinkled. "You've been to Powell's farm again."

"Helped him with his goats." Aberforth grubbed around in his pocket, pulled out a few Sickles, then reached under his pancake-flat pillow for a small drawstring bag. The Sickles clinked against a few others. "Grace was asking about yeh."

"Nice of her," Albus replied, not looking up from *Great Wizards of Antiquity*.

Aberforth tossed his socks at his brother. They landed on the open book. Albus sent them flying back.

"Tha's all yeh can say?" Aberforth asked. *Nice of her?*

"Say 'hello' for me."

"After all the time ye spent together last summer, and the way I found ye two behind her daddy's shed, come say it yerself."

"No time."

"She likes yeh."

"That's nice, but I haven't time for girls this summer."

"Yeh could pass yer NEWTs now. Yeh don't need to spend yer summer revising."

"It's not revision. Not for NEWTs, anyway."

"It's that new friend of yers." Aberforth scowled. "I don't like 'im."

"You don't have to. You should admire him, though. Gelly's brilliant." Albus looked up. "Really brilliant."

Aberforth snorted. "Just 'cause he flatters yeh doesn't make him brilliant."

Albus turned back to his book.

"Yeh should visit Gracie. She's even prettier than last year."

"If you like her, *you* visit her. But take a bath first. You stink."

"Do not. And I'm helpin' her daddy. Savin' for a new broomstick."

"You can have mine. I won't have time for Quidditch next year. Gelly's forming a club; he wants me to join."

"Yer cracked. He's no friend of yers. Yeh'll see."

Albus turned another page.

"Inappropriate Charms"

Aberforth sat on the stained mattress, head lowered, hands gripping the bedframe, knuckles white. Dust motes floated in pale bands of light from a high, barred window.

"Honestly, I know you like goats, Abbie, but that's going too far," Albus said, tugging his short beard and lifting a lip in disgust.

"That's not what I was doin'," Aberforth muttered. "I'd never do that to one o' me goats."

"Crawley said there was a witness."

"Don't believe yer own brother. 'Kay. S'fine."

Albus crouched down. "Tell me, then."

"Can't. 'Tis a matter of honour." He glanced up. "D'you still understand 'honour,' Albus?"

Albus touched his brother's jaw, raising his face to the light. "What did they do to you?"

Aberforth pushed his hand away. "I wouldn't agree to Veritaserum. They ga' me bruises instead."

"I'll speak to Chief Auror Prewett. He'll sack the scoundrels."

Shrugging, Aberforth said, "Doesn't really matter."

"At least tell me why they arrested you for, um, what they did. Wha*really* happened, Abbie?"

Aberforth's eyes met his brother's, then he nodded. "I was with Pearl. You know her father doesn't approve of me. We were in the barn ... busy. We didn't hear anyone coming till they were practically next to us. I Transfigured her into the first thing that came t' mind. Wanted t' save her modesty. I've never been the one with Transfiguration you are. Me spell just transformed her top half, not her ... legs and such." Aberforth reddened. "The second spell took; she run away. But Davies already seen me naked, her half-Transfigured. Probably wore off now."

"Why don't you just tell them?"

"Can't. Pearl's ... virtuous. And her father would ... He'd do somethin'."

"I'll go talk to her. She'll speak up for you."

Aberforth hesitated. "Be kind to her. I'm savin' fer our wedding, see."

"A Deal for Aberforth"

Aberforth wiped down the bar again. It hardly helped, the surface was so scarred, but it gave him something to do.

He jumped as the door behind him opened and his boss stepped from his office.

"Need to talk to yeh, Dumbledore." Mackay's cigar wagged but didn't fall from his mouth; it never did.

Aberforth followed him into the backroom.

"Rosier an' Crabbe both offered more'n you."

Blanching, Aberforth swallowed. He might have to sell his goats to raise money.

"And dinnae think o' sellin' off yer goats. Those shilpit creatures wouldna bring enough."

"How much more?" He hated asking Albus for a loan, but Aberforth knew he'd make up the difference if possible.

The chair groaned ominously as Mackay sat. Removing his cigar from between clenched teeth, Mackay flicked a long, heavy ash on the floor.

"How lang yeh worked fer me, Dumbledore?"

"Eighteen years, nine months."

Mackay nodded. "Yer a dour body, but yer true. These English pureblood nyaffs, on t'other hand ..." Mackay made a face, shoving his stogie between his teeth again. "If yeh agree, yeh can buy sixty percent o' the pub wi' what yeh have noo, an' ten percent each year after."

"It's a deal."

"Youthful Lesson Remembered"

"Yer better off."

Surprised, the wizards at the bar looked up. Abe wasn't a chatty barman, and his vehemence was strong and bitter.

"Lucy is a wonderful witch," Caradoc protested.

"You think Dearborn shouldn't make up with her?" Benjy asked.

"S his business." Aberforth flicked his rag at the counter. "Bu' women, they're chancey critters, an' more trouble than they're worth."

"It's my fault," Caradoc said. "I neglected her, stood her up."

"Don't matter. Yeh c'uld go through Hades fer one, and she'd find yeh wantin'."

"Unlucky in love?"

"Lucky I learnt it young! I stick wi' me faithful goats."

"An Heir to Burden"

"Wha's the occasion, Albus?"

"At our age, does there need to be one?"

Aberforth took a swallow of ale. "There is, though. I see it in yer eye."

"Perhaps. But I did want to see you, see how things are at the Hog's Head."

"Well enough. I'm throwin' out more bad apples than us'al, an' there are a few I'd like to toss but daren't, if yeh know what I mean."

"Unfortunately, yes. Overhear anything interesting lately?"

"Naught since Christmas." Aberforth looked at his brother's blackened hand. "Yeh don' expect t' see another, do yeh?" he asked softly.

"It would be a surprise ... and not necessarily a pleasant one."

"So, it's like that, is it?" Aberforth exhaled slowly. "If yeh need anythin' ... I'm never you, but if there's aught I can do, I hate them Dark lot as much as the next wizard."

"Keep an eye on Harry." Albus handed him a small mirror. "Harry and Severus. They'll both need you. Wait till the right moment to help them openly. Don't waste yourself early, Abbie, or you'll be no help to anyone when the crisis comes."

"If I must choose?"

Albus grimaced. "Harry."

"Hope I don't have t' choose."

"So do I."

Author's Note: Benjy Fenwick and Caradoc Dearborn are both canon characters, members of the Order of the Phoenix during the seventies. They and Aberforth all appeared in the photograph that Moody showed Harry in *The Order of the Phoenix*.

Drabbles are one-hundred word mini-stories. Sometimes people use the word "drabble" to describe any kind of very short story, but technically, a drabble should be exactly one-hundred words, not including the title. There are also double-drabbles of two-hundred words, triple-drabbles of three-hundred, etc. Rather than meticulously hand-count each word and determine whether hyphenated words count as one or two words, for the sake of simplicity, I have used WordPerfect's word count.