

Nightmares

by A Collins Vampire

An AU that follows after HBP. Another sect is fighting against the Dark Lord, but they are outnumbered. Can a Half-blood prince and a disgraced woman help Harry to finally defeat Voldemort?

The First Nightmare

Chapter 1 of 3

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Chapter One: Nightmares

The night was clear with a cold breeze coming in from the north. Small neighborhoods were silent and dark. A lone figure was still up and pacing around her room. Long, red hair swayed gently behind her. She wore only a long black robe. Sighing, she moved back to her bed and lay down, trying to sleep.

Below in the street, everything was quiet. The small cul-de-sac had only ten houses on it, five on each side. All the lights were off. Even the shadows that moved were silent. Rows of them walked in the street, shoulder to shoulder. With the moon full, their white masks were glowing. Two were leading the large group. They spread themselves over the lawns, looking into windows. Some seemed to glide over the asphalt.

"There."

A long, skeletal hand pointed to a two-story house with blue trim. A small car was parked in the driveway. The woman turned over in bed, finally able to drift on to oblivion. The figures surrounded the house. A white light flared for a second, and one of the figures entered the house. A dark shadow tailing the group disappeared as quickly as it was noticed... It appeared in the woman's room. Looking around, it spotted the woman sleeping. A long-fingered, pale hand appeared holding a wand.

"*Silencio*," whispered the shadow.

The woman's eyes flickered open. She tried to yell, but no sound came out of her mouth. She couldn't see the face under the cloak. She tried reaching for her wand—

"*Stupefy*."

She didn't remember anything after that.

Waking Up

Chapter 2 of 3

The mysterious woman wanted by the Dark Lord wakes up in another unwelcomed place...

Chapter Two: Waking Up

Vivian McGonagall woke up alone, cold, and frightened in a small room that badly needed painting. The comforter that covered her was gray and very care-worn. Looking around, she saw that there were no windows and only one door, the only way out. She ran a hand through her mussed hair and tried to think. *Where am I, and how the hell am I supposed to get out?* She flinched as the door to the room opened slowly. A girl with very bushy hair peeked in and then smiled at her.

"Oh, I see you've awoken. Are you okay?"

Vivian studied the girl closely. She did have a wand hidden in her robe but looked completely harmless to her.

"I'm fine. Could you tell me where I am?" *Hopefully courtesy will get her to talk to me...*

"Of course. You're presently staying at the headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix. Your aunt should be up here soon. She'll explain everything."

The girl looked at her as if she were looking at some weird specimen on display. Vivian noticed and became quickly unnerved.

"Do you find something interesting?" she snapped.

The girl's eyes widened, and she stepped back involuntarily.

"No! I—I just have never seen any of the professor's relatives before. I would have never guessed."

"Good. Now scram unless you have something else to say."

The girl puffed up for a moment with righteous indignation but did not say anything else. She turned from the door and walked away *Stupid girl left it open!* Vivian got up quickly and ran to the door. She was stopped dead by her aunt.

"Going somewhere, are you?"

The stern looking witch glared down at her niece. She wore her usual green robes and black hat which were slightly rumbled.

"No," lied Vivian unconvincingly.

"You haven't changed at bit. You are still as stubborn as your mother, but at least she was kind to people when they helped her."

"I didn't need help..."

"You didn't need help! The Death Eaters nearly got you! Voldemort was even there! You slept through the whole thing! If it wasn't for—"

She stopped abruptly and looked away.

"For who, Aunt? One of your precious Order members? There doesn't seem to be a lot of them, these days. And now you're recruiting from the student body..."

Smack!

Vivian's head jerked back as her aunt's hand made contact with her face. Wide-eyed and a little disoriented, Vivian stepped back and brought a hand to her face. A red welt started to appear on her cheek.

"You watch your tongue around me, girl," she whispered dangerously. "For your information, it wasn't one of ours. It was one of his who seemed to take pity on you..."

"Who was it?" Vivian said quietly.

"The Half-Blood Prince."

"The Half-Blood Prince? What he doesn't have a real name? And since when do we have a monarchy?"

"His mother's name was Prince. He does have a real name, but... I don't know this person anymore..."

"Whatever, Aunt."

Vivian stood up straight, her arms crossed. Professor McGonagall wasn't nearly as angry at her niece as she was afraid for her. Vivian was a stubborn thick-skinned woman of twenty-seven. Her mother and father had both died in the first war of "unknown causes." That just meant they were poisoned with an unidentifiable potion. Minerva McGonagall sighed and tried one last attempt to make her niece see sense.

"He left you on the doorstep of number 11. That's the house next door. You were unconscious. He also left a letter explaining why they were after you and then what they had done to your house. There's nothing left there; just a pile of ashes. He didn't sign the letter, but we know it is him because he left his cloak covering you."

A large black cloak hung on the door.

Vivian sat down and sighed.

"So what else did you find out?"

His First Nightmare

Chapter 3 of 3

The Prince and The Dark Lord have a chat about snakes, the War, and horcruxes.

A/N: I'd just like to first thank charmed3 for being a wonderful beta! I'd also like to thank all those who have read the story so far. More is coming soon.

Disclaimer: I am not JKR. I just wish I am.

Chapter Three: His First Nightmare

He woke up damp and cold. His back ached, and his arm was twisted painfully underneath him. The concrete he'd slept on felt like ice rather than stone. He should have never left his cloak with that ungrateful brat. He winced slightly as he sat up, his joints popping as he stretched. He shivered, wrapping his arms around himself, watching as his breath clouded in the chilly air. He got shakily to his feet and saw a small square mirror to his left. The Prince saw only a beaten man.

His robes were dirty and frayed, and his hair was even greasier than it had ever been before. He had three day's worth of stubble on his face, bags under his eyes, and he noticed that the lines of his face were more deeply etched than he remembered.

The stupid girl didn't even have proper wards up, he thought. He was lucky to have been able to Apparate into her house, and even more so into her room. What if the Dark Lord had tried that? There would have been nothing he could do.

The room the Prince occupied was bare. There was only one window with moth eaten curtains hanging from it, and the only light that entered the room came from the street lamp below. He heard the faintest rustle of robes and turned on his feet in a flash, wand at the ready.

"It is only I, Severus."

The room's temperature seemed to have dropped another ten degrees at the sound of the cold, high voice. Snape knelt as fast as he could.

"My Lord."

"Rise, Severus. We have much to discuss."

"Yes, my Lord."

"A different setting is in order though. Take my arm. I know you cannot Apparate."

Snape took the Dark Lord's arm and suppressed a shudder. It felt like marble. Almost instantly, they appeared in another room. This one was modestly furnished with a high-backed chair, a table in the middle of the room, and another chair upholstered in soft brown fabric. Voldemort seated himself and motioned to Snape to do the same. Snape did, noticing how sore he still was.

"Why did you hide away these past days, Severus?"

"Some of my fellows are trying to — dispose of me. I'm hunted by both sides, my Lord."

"Do not worry about my Death Eaters. I have told them that if you were killed, then all of them will die."

Snape's face did not change, but his eyes showed his skepticism.

Voldemort waved his hand idly at the empty fireplace, and the grate burst into flames. Warmth flooded the room, and Snape began to relax. *He's stalling*, thought Snape.

Voldemort waved his hand again, and a tea service appeared, fully set. His long, pale fingers wrapped around a delicate cup, and he brought it to his almost non-existent lips.

"Your loyalty to me is of no question, Severus. That is why I want you to find one of my Horcruxes."

Those pitiless red eyes told him not to disagree. He heard a hiss near their feet and looked down to see Nagini winding herself around the hems of their robes before she settled near the fire.

"I will do what my Lord asks."

The Dark Lord moved his chair closer to the fire.

"Snakes are such magnificent creatures: hardly any weakness, and yet, so many enemies. I have enemies, even within my own ranks, and sadly, I have to watch them more than Potter. The boy wanders around the British Isles looking for the remaining Horcruxes. I can feel him. I know where he is. Be wary of him, Severus. He wants to kill you as much as he does me."

"I am aware of it, my Lord. Potter has become quite skilled, but he lacks self-control. No doubt he is powerful, as we know he shares some of your gifts; but the boy has been lucky. The only thing I can do is avoid him since, according to the prophecy, only you can kill him."

The Dark Lord chuckled softly. He placed his cup back on its saucer and looked directly at Snape.

"How long has it been since you slept properly?"

"Three days, four nights."

Voldemort nodded. He waved his wand and, in an empty corner, a bed made up with black linens appeared. Voldemort put his wand away and brought something else out from under his thick cloak. It was a purple bottle.

"Drink this, Severus. A Sleeping Draught of my own brew."

Severus reluctantly took the bottle and placed it to his lips. He couldn't smell any trace of poison. It was only when he tasted it that he detected something added to the potion. He couldn't tell what it was, and it scared him. The last thing he could remember before his eyes closed was Voldemort's snake-like face leering at him.

"Severus."

Snape opened his eyes. He was in the Lightning Tower. He could barely see the stone walls surrounding him and the ramparts.

"Severus."

He heard his name again.

He turned around slowly; there was a body lying on the floor roughly two meters away. Against his will, he moved towards it. He stepped into something sticky. The body twitched. He looked closer and saw that it was a young man covered in blood and dirt. The boy's hair was so dark, it appeared blue to his eyes. He felt bile rise into his throat, but he choked it back. The boy had been slashed violently all over his body; his clothes barely covered him. Grimly, Snape noticed the boy had no eyes. The body moved again.

"You could have saved me."

"No, I came too late. I could do nothing."

"You always come too late."

He mechanically moved his head to the left and saw a figure slightly taller than himself next to him.

"You did all you could," it whispered to him.

"No, I didn't," he tried to say back.

The figure stepped closer to him. He could smell rotting and diseased flesh. Something on the figure gleamed silver when it moved slightly.

"You did all that you could; no one will ever blame you for that."

"I blame HIM!" screamed the young man on the floor suddenly.

The bloodied mass on the floor had turned onto its stomach and started crawling towards him.

Snape couldn't move.

"He killed you! He killed ME!" the man screamed again.

"Severus," the figure started, "Remember that you are the only one who can help Harry understand. Don't let him be reduced to this."

The figure motioned with a blackened hand. Snape gasped as he realized who it was. Dumbledore...

"No! Get away from me! I can't take this right now!"

"You already know where one of the Horcruxes is. Save Harry, and maybe you can save her as well."

"I CAN'T! GET THE BLOODY HELL AWAY FROM ME!"

Snape tried to move away from Dumbledore, but he was unable to; something had wrapped tightly around his left ankle.

"You're a coward! You've always been one!"

The grotesque mass of flesh had reached out with one mangled arm and grasped Snape's ankle. The hand only had three fingers. The face of the boy looked up.

Snape noted in horror that the scar on his forehead had been enlarged and now covered most of the battered skin on his head.

Snape tried to get away and flung his arms out—

He awoke in a dark room with modest furnishings. His chest was heaving, and sweat covered his whole body. He blinked a couple of times to adjust his eyes to the lack of light.

Voldemort was still sitting in his chair, his long white fingers together.

"Go back to sleep, Severus," said Voldemort. "It was just a nightmare."

charmed3-Oh WOW! I really like this a lot – the horror and darkness, and the nightmare terrifies me, truly. I can't wait to read more!