

Rowena/Salazar: The Halcyon Days

by pdrs56

Summary: A founders pairing story written in response to the prompt: Rowena and Salazar. It is written completely from Rowena's perspective as she reflects on the initial 30 years of the school's operation. From the personality components of the 4 elements, air, water, fire, and earth, the basic characteristics of the founders presented in the Sorting Hat Songs, and the characteristics of known house members, Rowena's predominating element is Air and Earth as the predominating element for Salazar. These two elements are essential to the personality and relationship aspects between Rowena and Salazar built within this pairing. At this time, Rowena remains the Headmistress of Ravenclaw but is considering the possibility of retiring. The story utilizes a memory flashback technique to bridge time sequences between the present and the early years, a time of passionate intimacy, between she and Salazar. The memory sequences all reflect the time before Salazar left the school.

Prologue and Story

Chapter 1 of 1

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Written by: PDRSJ56 as a special exchange gift request for Potter_Wars: Prompt Rowena and Salazar

AN: A very special thank you to Stellarlyssa(PI beta) for her beta assistance and content suggestions. I am in awe of her generosity and willingness to beta a story from a stranger, in the LJ community space. I only hope my story will be worthy of the time she gave so freely.

A second thank you, as well, to Timestep, DH, and Poultrygeist(PI beta) for their reading, editing, and suggestions. Some of the childhood play ideas were inspired by Poultrygeist's story 'Ethelred, The Unready', many thanks.

AN 2nd: All the historical time period data related to England, France, the Islamic Empire, the ancient Celt origins, and life style issues have been thoroughly researched and are accurate within the time frame, 950 CE to 1050 CE.

Kything: To make the hidden or unknown parts of oneself completely known to another.

Lanamnas fir Thathigtheo is the 4th level of ancient Celtic bonding rituals and best fits a potentially possible love bond between Salazar and Rowena.

Author's Warnings: Intimate Sexual Situations, Violence within a Specific Cultural Setting, Some Non-Canon Content.

Rowena and Salazar, The Halcyon Days

Prologue

30 years prior: A Beginning of Love and Choices

Found within Salazar's secret chamber was an intimate space designed specifically for their time together and Rowena's pleasure. A small, intricately constructed pool filled by channeling the waters from a hot spring some distance away was central to the room. The hypnotic warmth, a very intimately shared luncheon, and a deep pallet of luxuriously soft silks covering the sensual fur pelts left them dozing contentedly and secure within each other's arms.

Slowly opening her eyes, Rowena gazed around the cleverly constructed chamber. Salazar was right. His was an elemental need for the absolute privacy and contact with the secret heated spring waters the chamber provided. He would soon require an answer from her, and she knew not how to explain what must be said. She knew from within the core of her being that he could not stay and she could not go. This time of personal closeness and connection with the others and herself was only a small part of his greater destiny.

She watched as he awakened, gently caressed her hair, and played kisses in her ear. Her body reveled in his ability to arouse her again so quickly. The depth of his knowledge and skill that discerned her every known and unknown desire left her breathless and satiated beyond her wildest imagination. Who could ever have known such tenderness, such exquisite sensuality existed behind that usual cynical aloofness displayed in his interactions with others. No, that was unfair, she had always known, even if others did not.

Responding with wanton abandon to her deepest desires, Rowena discovered she was again captured within a timeless bond that existed only in the realm of Salazar's loving sensuality. Together, one body and soul, they plunged to the depths and soared to the heights of sexual ecstasy, satiating their senses, that surpassed the boundaries of time and space. Slowly, Rowena regained the ability of rational thought; she took several deep breaths and whispered his name.

"Salazar?" He looked at her carefully as she continued, "It is not to be. We are not like others: we are so much more and perhaps in some ways so much less. Our destinies are forever entwined, bonded, but our needs and future paths are solitary and separate."

He moved slightly, allowing a space to open between them as a look of concerned anger flashed across his face. Although Rowena's mind registered his look, she continued to verbalize her thoughts with quiet and careful deliberation.

"I, my Lord Salazar, am an Eagle with my nature and destiny found soaring high within the element of air. You, as a Lord of Serpents, have your nature and destiny found deep within the element of earth. It is only in the now that we can be entwined as one and live the ecstatic joy found in this elemental bond. Please, my love, let us rejoice in the gifts of the now for as long as they are ours to share and be free to let go when it is our time."

The Story

30 Years After Hogwart's Opening

Rowena's thoughts return to the present as she leans on the sill of the large bay window central to her personal chambers to look out into the dark. The night sky is adorned by the most spectacular and gracefully tranquil dances of the Northern Lights she has ever witnessed. Her gaze is distracted as she notices the unicorn and centaur just beyond the forest's edge, watching this night's celestial delight and recording the mystical meanings known only to them. The merpeople are just below the water's surface along the lake's bank, and their song is heard as it melds into the glory of the dance of lights.

The brisk, invigorating November evening air provides clarity to her thoughts as the night sky tantalizes her senses. Tonight, her thoughts, as they have so often in recent months, focus on the many events, relationships, changes, and accomplishments the years have brought to their school. It has been nearly 30 years since she, Helga, Godric, and Salazar first envisioned a school for the education of young witches and wizards.

She seriously considers that the time is near for the school to continue on without her direct involvement. The teaching and house management has been capably handled by her Assistant Head of House for many years as she pursued her personal love of knowledge. Their school has flourished, and its academic reputation soared with their decision to accept a Headmaster. A learned and fearsome wizard, their choice of Headmaster had brilliantly managed the administrative matters and provided a subtle, strong unifying factor between the individual houses while fiercely defending their individual characteristics. Rowena, considering these facts, recognizes how increasingly autonomous the school has become from the founders' oversight.

Their school, their passion, has become so much greater than any of them could ever have imagined as they met, drank, danced, talked, and planned together so long ago. Although she remained, many years earlier Helga and Godric moved on to pursue their other joint interests. Rowena wonders if this part of her destiny is now nearly complete. She has remained true to her ideals and the vows made to her friends. As her thoughts drift on, she thinks again of the most sacred vows between Salazar and herself.

Rowena contemplates these thoughts tonight as she watches the sky and sits by her fire. Slowly the Dance of the Lights shimmers away, the magical creatures return to their lairs, and the dreams of age come alive once again in the light of her fire. As the fire diminishes to nothing but glowing embers, she barely notices the coolness surrounding her.

"Salazar," her mind whispers. "Come, join with my mind as you are with my soul and watch, this night, the dance of our love, lived then, yet bonded forever."

She muses quietly as their minds become one. "No one, neither Helga nor Godric, ever knew our truth. Your story was yours to share or withhold and our bonding vows never mine alone to share if you did not." Smiling gently, she thinks about their friends. "I know they wondered, but never broke trust with me to ask or demand answers I did not give. They only loved and accepted that which was and did not ask for more."

Rowena looks deeply into her mind's eye and speaks with great gentleness and strength. "Oh, my Lord Salazar, you wondered once if I would feel sad, alone, abandoned, or regret the choices made and paths never taken?"

"And did you?" Salazar asks. Is it sadness she hears as he continues? "Are these regrets and dreams unfulfilled that plague your thoughts tonight?"

Alarmed that Salazar can still ask this question, Rowena's thoughts respond without doubt or hesitation. "How could sadness, loneliness, or regrets ever exist within perfection? When there is distance, there is no separation? We, together as one, accomplished all that was destined to be."

Noticing the reflection of the setting moon in her mirror, Rowena realizes the lateness of the hour and chill of the night. She rises slowly and deliberately, entering her bed to sleep with Salazar in her dreams.

Rowena: Head of Ravenclaw

For many weeks now, Rowena has found she seldom desires to join in the daily Ravenclaw House activities. She finds quiet peacefulness within her soul as she spends greater amounts of time secluded in her personal conservatory and library. This is a sacred place that fills her with life, continuity, and connection with her ancient Celtic origins. More often than not, Rowena requests that meals be brought to her so she can continue her work without interruptions.

Carefully placing the newly dried and prepared herbs, roots, and other items from this year's harvest in their proper drawers and pouches, Rowena checks each with her notes and sources about their uses and origin. She laughs softly to herself as she realizes that Salazar, not the notes, is the origin of this information and her own extensive knowledge. With Salazar's help, Rowena started to develop this personal conservatory and library of translations almost the moment he was old enough to join and study with his learned family of wizards in Syria and Egypt. Refocusing on the task before her, Rowena brings mind and thoughts back to the present. This library of her work, his work, their work, and translations from the ancients must be completed before she can seriously consider her desire to leave Hogwarts.

As she continues with her day's tasks, Rowena finds great difficulty focusing her thoughts surrounded by the compelling memories of Salazar and their love. Each note and plant returns her thoughts to the brief weeks each summer when holidays brought them together. Hiding in the crags among the cliffs, they stole away for hours where neither family nor friends could find them. She and Salazar could talk endlessly about the great centers of learning and the tolerance of differences that allowed for such shared learning within these eastern centers. During these stolen hours Rowena found such joy in Salazar's ability to celebrate and encourage her need to know everything.

At Day's End.

Rowena, quiet and pensive, remains at her desk

Completing this day's work, thoughts return once again to time together with Salazar and their friends as young children and recalls letters shared while she studied in Gaul and he in Mesopotamia. No matter how isolated his life, he found time to send her translations and new perspectives, expanding the knowledge she was gleaming from Celtic Ancients.

Her thoughts take a darker turn as she remembers Salazar's steady withdrawal from feelings and relationships with each passing year. Coupled with the withdrawal was increasing dependence on her to mediate feelings and relationships. Even as young children, Rowena could picture Salazar, the quiet observer, in their play with Helga and Godric. Godric fostered with Salazar's father for a time in Cairo and Salazar with Godric's warrior uncle Jhevard at the fortress on Gwynthal.

Though they remained the closest of friends, Salazar never fully shared Godric's love of the ancient warrior wizards just as Godric never fully shared Salazar's absorption with the ancient mystic scholar wizards. The more she ponders those years, Rowena can see Salazar's behaviors wove a pattern of interactions with others based on need and attainment of goals, not want of fellowship. Sadness envelops her when she thinks, once again, that his only experience of inner freedom to respond and openly share emotion was in the love they shared. Rowena becomes aware as the afternoon grows late and dusk rapidly approaches.

Memories Left Behind, She Joins Her House Dinner

Leaving the comfort of the conservatory, Rowena moves to join her Ravenclaw students for their evening meal. This was the night each week when the Headmaster, Lord Aethelstan, joined their house for dinner. Having absented herself the past several weeks, there would be uncomfortable questions if she was not present tonight.

She is thankful she designed the changing staircase pattern when the stair positions moved just as she was leaving her chamber. Her smile broadens as she looks around their wonderful school and listens to the jumble of excited young voices waft up from the dining room. Rowena can sense the usual childish spells flying about, the intensity of others practicing transformation spells on the cutlery and the frustration of the Head Girl and Boy attempting to regain order. Within this warm, chaotic cacophony of sound and activity, their young have such freedom to learn and mature in a protective, safe, and stimulating environment.

Following the staircase maze toward the dining area, the meal's savory smells stimulate her appetite and desire to commune with her students and staff. There is an immediate hushed silence, signaling to her that both Lord Aethelstan and her assistant must have just entered the room. Rowena laughs as she thinks about her students' abrupt behavior change, knowing they will slowly return to their former activities once dinner is served.

As she enters the dining area, Aethelstan remarks, "Rowena, I sense your thoughts have flown far from us even as you join us this evening. Is there something you've yet to share with me?"

Taking a moment to shield her thoughts, she answers lightly, "No, of course not. I'm devoting much time this term to placing the knowledge and translations of the ancients and from Salazar's eastern studies in a useable form for teachers and students. I never really used the Pensieve as I ought over the years. With so much to review, I become quite lost in my thoughts and memories at times." Thoughtfully she points to her head and sighs.

Others at the head table add a few additional observations before the Headmaster continues. "We all need access to the knowledge and wisdom stored in your remarkable mind. I think we can forgive your preoccupation with the task at hand. It is your quiet beauty, your mind, and your wit that has been much missed this term."

"Aethelstan, you are the master of subtle reprimand and flattery. It is you, not I, a lowly founder, who have this school, students and teachers alike, in the palm of your hand. But alas, you are correct. I have been, as always, too much in my thoughts and absent from the present moment. It is my most grievous and poorly corrected fault."

Shaking his head, he redirects the conversation, countering Rowena's attempts to avoid the original question. "Rowena, the supreme master of the last word. The meal and conversation are excellent and stimulating as usual. Are there any announcements you wish made before we end tonight's meal?"

Rowena shakes her head in response to evening announcements. She knows she had neither the last word nor given an adequate answer to Aethelstan's gentle inquiries. Hoping this sufficient at present and grateful a premature confrontation regarding her thoughts is temporarily avoided, she rises, gives Aethelstan a parting curtsy, and turns to retire to her private chambers.

A Night of Deep Reflection

Reentering her chambers, she feels the familiar warmth and peacefulness of the evening. As always, the fires are lit, and the bed is warming in preparation for her night ahead. Sitting quietly by the fire, she finds her mind unable to resist the memories of Salazar and those magical loving times.

Rowena smiles when the visions of their absolute lust and wanton behaviors burst into her mind. Her cheeks blush as she remembers the time in Helga's library and then later in Godric's common room. She stops the memories just long enough to wonder if there is any place in the castle or castle grounds where they hadn't taken their pleasure. Briefly she wonders, "How could it be we were never seen?" Then to herself she laughs and answers, "I don't doubt Salazar had enchantments to protect our privacy."

'Privacy' brings another whole realm of memories. These memories and private places shared are her most sacred trust. Privacy, exclusiveness, cold and calculated thoughts, closed off feelings, refusal to form relationships; these were learned and burnt into his brain at such a painful cost. No, she knows, even now he will never be free of these restraints, can't be free and still live. Only with her, and then only for a few short years, was there enough safety to let go and love.

Memories flood her mind as she thinks about the quiet moments of passion when Salazar would speak openly and almost reverently about his studies and scholars in Byzantium and Baghdad. She always felt pain and sadness when he described his education as a duty to be executed with excellence as his father accepted no exceptions. But there was a gentle softness in his voice when he shared memories about his tutor and their friendship.

The Memory of Despair and Hope

Rowena's thoughts transport her to one awful night of truth. Remembering those particular revelations, she is, as always, awed by Salazar, the man. She sees them lying closely together, feels the warmth of his skin, the fullness within her, and the painful withdrawal in his face as he begins to speak softly. There is such anguish in his voice, and as the tears flow freely, she is unsure, even now, if they are hers alone.

Rowena returned a questioning look as she says, "Salazar, I don't understand. Let me see what is causing you such pain through your own eyes." He held her closer, caressing her hair, her skin, and moved deep within her as he looked straight into her eyes. Becoming one body, mind, and soul, he allowed Rowena to enter his thoughts and memories. As Salazar kythed himself to Rowena, she entered his consciousness and experienced the ultimate intimacy and vulnerability that bonded their souls as one. Salazar continued to hold and caress so they couldn't withdraw one from the other despite the horror, guilt, and pain they experienced together within.

Salazar asked, "Can you see it? Can you continue knowing you are safe with my arms about you and me deep inside you? Can you endure and remain whole?"

Rowena couldn't answer, but made no move to break the bond. They continued together as one, and she saw what he knew. The new Caliph governing the Islamic Empire ordered the persecution, torture, and death of Christians, Jews, those perceived witches or wizards, creatures of the damned. There was chaos, burnings, and confusion initiating mass conversions, denials, and betrayals within families and destruction of whole villages. She could see the hatred, pain, fear and feel the overwhelming power of evil. There was more, so much more, but Rowena could not move. As she traveled with him together through the memories, Rowena finally understood why, how these times left Salazar so scarred and closed off from his feelings.

The frequent purges at the House of Wisdom, Al-Azhar, and Al-Andalus ended in torture and death, many his friends, innocent students and great scholars. His own tutor was stripped, beaten to death, and dismembered before his eyes. Rowena could hear Salazar's inner screams of anguish as his father and uncles held him mute within an invisibility and immobility enchantment. He was forced to watch, powerless to protect or save his friend. His power was not yet strong enough to break through. He had failed his friend.

His father's words struck the final blow: "His death was his own fault and the punishment deserved. Your tutor's actions brought shame on his family, scholars and tutors for young wizards throughout the centuries. He knew it forbidden to become friends with his student. You both knew there could be consequences, yet you chose to accept his friendship. He died because you cared about him, but didn't care enough to not care. Learn from this and go."

From somewhere deep inside, Rowena knew it was this quiet, gentle tutor who had obtained the books and translations Salazar brought her through the years. Now, she too knew loss, sadness, and a great dark anger that could not be changed.

Their bonding was so complete, she could not say where her body ended or his began. Salazar was so deep and hard inside her that they began to move in a unified fierceness neither had known before. They felt suspended in time and space, alone in unity. When Salazar spoke the words, Rowena knew them to be his truth.

In a voice, cold and hard as granite, he said, "Rowena, I killed him. Feelings and relationships show weakness in this world. Here, now, with you it is different, but only for a time. I understand, but can not reconcile this within myself, how the direct descendants of the Magi Wizards would not protect another from harm. From them, I learned that knowledge is power, and never again will I be powerless against others."

He continued with such strength of conviction that it continues to hold her now as it did so long ago. "Rowena, you must know that I can teach young witches as well as wizards because I have known you. Your knowledge and power is greater than that of most wizards, and each young witch must be allowed this same opportunity. I can not teach and nor allow any who are not of full blood wizard families. Children of the mundane, even those gifted with wizard and witch blood, bring with them too much risk and potential destruction of our school. The killing will happen here too."

Stopping a moment, Salazar sighed painfully. "Rowena, your passion for knowledge is astounding as it defines you, and within it, you find your freedom to soar. For me, knowledge is the source of power and freedom, and my freedom is within that power. These issues will ultimately force me to leave, but I will leave, my house, you, and our friends, lasting protection when I go."

All was silent, the tension between them nearly insurmountable. Although still in each other's arms, it was distance and fear she felt as Salazar stared ahead.

Rowena knew she had to say something that would breach this issue if only for the two of them. "Salazar, we both have natures that must be free to follow our own destiny. In this present time we share the same path and together must follow its course."

After a brief pause, Rowena continued, "My Lord, we are one for all times even in our separate and solitary future destinies. Our vow, the Lanamnas fir Thatigtheo, freely taken and given, is part of the future lives growing within us. Salazar, I give to you, to us, your freedom to be as you must."

As she does each night, Rowena rises slowly and deliberately, enters her bed, and sleeps with Salazar in her dreams.

When these memories fill her mind, as they did this night, there are moments when she wishes she hadn't seen, didn't know the events that battered his soul and returned to his friends this dark, silent, uncompromising, and angry man.
