Retrospection

by HermioneWeasley1972

Faced with his own death, Peter thinks over his life.

A/N - Winner of the Wizardtales Beyond the Veil challenge.

Retrospection

Chapter 1 of 1

Faced with his own death, Peter thinks over his life.

A/N - Winner of the Wizardtales Beyond the Veil challenge.

His wand is pointed at me -- a simple piece of wood not much more than a foot long, but the power and hatred with which its wielder bears it makes it so much more. I have known for a long time that this day was coming; it has been a source of both my dreams and my nightmares. It's funny, isn't it? Who would have thought that death could be such a relief and a terror all at the same time?

It's been an internal conflict ever since the day that I betrayed them, betrayed two of the best friends that I could have ever asked for. I turned them over to him and sealed their fate. I killed them just as surely as if I had used my own wand to cast the curse.

Why did I do it? It's simple -- I'm a coward. I would rather do the Dark Lord's bidding than to face him and take the Cruciatus Curse or the Killing Curse, which I now face. Where did it get me? It got me exactly where I am now. I have come full circle.

I think back to my days at Hogwarts… what fond memories I still have! I was an outsider, and yet I was invited to join the most exclusive club there was -- James, Remus and Sirius took me in and I became one of the infamous Marauders. Me! A shy, bumbling boy who would have rather hidden than to let himself be caught doing anything wrong. They brought me out of my shell, and it wasn't long before I was joining in the pranks with the rest of them.

And what did I do to show them my gratitude? I betrayed Lily and James, and then I framed Sirius for the murder. Why did I do it? I'd like to say that it was all because of the Dark Lord. But it wasn't. It was jealousy.

I was angry that James and Lily had made Sirius Harry's godfather. Why Sirius? Why pick the womanizer? Why not me? I could understand why they didn't pick Remus, but what was wrong with me? After all, they had made me their Secret Keeper when Lily was still pregnant, but that was before I started to do the Dark Lord's bidding. Perhaps they didn't make me Harry's godfather because they saw the darkness inside me, which I so desperately tried to hide.

Twice now I have escaped death. The first time was shortly after my betrayal of James and Lily. As I scurried along the London street in my rat form, a cat had cornered me, and I was rescued by a red-haired boy who had named me Scabbers. For the next thirteen years, I had remained a loyal pet first to Percy, and then I was passed on to Ron.

How tiresome it was to be a rat all that time, but life was good. After all, the man who I had framed for my murder was in Azkaban, and though I was afraid that my new family might question my longevity, it never came up.

I never was a big believer in Divination or fate, but somehow the fact that I was found and taken in by a wizarding family seemed fitting. I was able to keep an eye on the

goings on in the wizarding world and, lo and behold, I was handed down to the best friend of Harry Potter! I could hear everything that was going on, and it was quite interesting to me that somehow Harry seemed tuned to the Dark Lord.

Everything was fine until Ron's third year at Hogwarts when Sirius Black escaped from Azkaban.

That darn cat of Hermione Granger's knew that I wasn't a real rat. It was just my luck that she'd get a cat who was part kneazle, so if I wasn't hiding from Sirius Black, I was hiding from that bloody cat! I thought I had them all fooled when I bit myself and made it look like the cat had eaten me. I was eventually discovered in Hagrid's hut and later found myself in the Shrieking Shack with Hermione, Ron, Harry Potter, and... Sirius Black. That is when I escaped death for the second time.

After forcing me back to human form, Black wanted to kill me, but I pleaded with him for my life. It was Potter, surprisingly enough, who saved me, telling him to leave me for the Dementors. On the way back to Hogwarts, I escaped once again, determined to find out what had happened to my Master, the Dark Lord.

I know that I will be going behind the veil soon. What will I find when I get there? I remember how Sirius treated me that night at the Shrieking Shack. What will Lily and James say? Do they know that I was the one who turned them over to the Dark Lord? Do they know that I nearly killed their son? Do they know what a coward I am?

Do they know that I am the one who brought the Dark Lord back? So many faces are flashing through my head. Sirius, James, Lily, Cedric, Severus Snape, Harry -- but the face which comes up the most is the Dark Lord's. The Dark Lord who I served faithfully. The Dark Lord who I killed for. The Dark Lord who I betrayed James and Lily for. The Dark Lord who took advantage of my cowardice.

The Dark Lord who now stands before me as I shield Harry with my body.

His inhuman voice jolts me back to reality. "Get out of the way, you fool! Don't you know that this is fate? It will either be him or me!"

"I won't let you do it! I let you take James and Lily... "

"Let me? You handed them over to me!" The Dark Lord's eyes narrow as he looks at me. "You were my most loyal servant, Wormtail. Even if it was because you had no other options."

"I was! But no more! I can't let you kill him!"

"Crucio!"

The curse flies from his wand into my body, and I writhe on the ground with pain. After what seems like an eternity, it's over. The pain ends, and I reluctantly open my eyes, afraid that I will see Harry lying on the ground. There is a figure on the ground, but it isn't Harry.

It's the Dark Lord.

I don't know how he did it, but the Dark Lord is no more. Painfully, I attempt to struggle to my feet, but then I feel a hand grasping mine. I look up to see the astonished face of Harry.

"You... risked your life to save me. Why?"

"I was...only repaying a debt." I look around on the ground for my wand and find it a few feet away. I see a figure approaching me -- it's Remus.

"It's over," Harry says to him. I can hear the relief in his voice. "Peter stepped in between us, and because of him, I was able to cast the spell to defeat Voldemort."

Remus comes over to me and embraces me. It's as if time has melted away and we are Marauders again. "That took real courage, Peter. I'll testify at your hearing; I'm quite certain that once the news of what you did for Harry gets out..."

"There won't be a hearing, Remus. It's time to say goodbye. You are the last true Marauder. Remember me from my Hogwarts days, don't remember me for the monster I have become." Going over to Harry, I clap him on the back. "You have done well. Your parents will be so proud when I tell them about you, and of course Sirius. Please forgive me for what I have done."

Standing before them, I smile sadly. "I will tell them that you say hello and that you give them your best." Before they can stop me, I take my wand and point it straight at my heart. *"Avada Kedavra!"*

A light encompasses me, and I see three figures walking towards me, welcoming me. One with black, messy hair and glasses, one with long red hair, and one with a scruffy look. They are welcoming me home.