

Ozymandias

by Doomspark

Post-war ruminations

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Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!

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Chapter 1 of 1

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I don't know how long it's been. I suppose it only seems like forever. I used to try to keep track of time. The walls of my bedroom are covered with hatch marks all nicely lined up to form weeks... months... years. I think I quit counting at twenty years. Sometimes, if I think about it, I get a sense that much more time has passed. I don't think about it often. Blast him anyway. Why couldn't he have done this! He'd be so much the better martyr.

Oh, let's be honest. He didn't know it was going to be this long. Albus always was an incurable optimist. He told me it might be "a while", and that's when he gave me the Philosopher's Stone. He said he didn't want Voldemort getting his hands on it, and told me to take care of it. I think he was hedging his bets; he knew I might need it.

He'd stored any number of odd things in here. Some are useful, some are meant to be amusing - though why he thought I'd have any use for fifty packets of Ice Mice is beyond me. Some things I haven't figured out yet.

I didn't volunteer to go into this sanctuary in the first place. Albus asked me to. I was surprised at first - I wondered why he didn't send some of the students here instead. I think he was wiser than he knew. Years on years of solitude wear on the soul like few things can. Perhaps he felt I would be the least likely to succumb to loneliness and grief.

All my old friends and colleagues have died, most slain by Voldemort and his followers during the War. Even Albus was finally brought down, though Voldemort's "army" paid dearly for that. I find it all too ironic that Voldemort was defeated in turn by the very Muggles he hated so much. Yes, Muggles. People without a drop of wizard blood in their veins.

He thought they were inferior - animals, almost. So he didn't truly bother them until after he'd brought the wizard world to heel. Or, rather, ground the wizard world under his heel. Hogwarts was the last bastion for those who opposed him, and when it fell I truly thought Voldemort would be unstoppable.

I watched much of the war. One of the odder items that Albus stored here was an old mirror. It looks vaguely oriental in style and coloring, and has a single word gracefully chiseled into the frame: *Ozymandias*. I've no idea what that means, but I was able to figure out how to use the mirror anyway. If you think about a place - France, for example - it will show you a map of France, and then show you where Voldemort and his followers are. You can improve the "focus" of the mirror by thinking about more specific locations - a city, a street, even a specific house. Quite a powerful object!

Albus made me promise to stay in the Sanctuary till it was "safe" to leave. So I stayed here and watched the war. At times I hated myself for not doing anything but watching. I hated Albus for making me promise to stay safe. In hindsight, I wouldn't have made a difference in the long scheme of things.

I've thought long and hard about what happened next. Evidently as long as Voldemort was picking up stray Muggles by ones or twos, no one had really suspected anything. But after Hogwarts, he and his followers torched an entire town. To use an old, hackneyed phrase, the streets ran red with blood. It was a massacre, and the Muggles realized they were at war.

They probably never realized exactly how many of their people they lost to Voldemort. Their regular military forces were useless - they had no idea how to fight against magic. Britain fell within a few weeks, its leaders either controlled by spells or replaced with polyjuiced Death Eaters. Spain and France followed shortly thereafter. Germany took longer, though that was mostly due to some of the inhabitants of the Schwarzwald - the Black Forest. There are things in there that make the worst of the Forbidden Forest look like a child's toy.

So... Germany, Switzerland, Italy... Voldemort slowly worked his way around the Mediterranean. After Italy, he elected to continue eastwards. Maybe his time in Albania was on his mind.

It was four years after Hogwarts, and I was still keeping track of time when it happened. The Muggles weren't quite as easy to destroy as Voldemort had thought. They fought hard. So that night the Death Eaters came back to where Hogwarts had stood, celebrating another "victory" over the Muggles. At the height of the revel, a whine filled the air. No one was listening. They were too busy celebrating. Only when the sleek black shape appeared overhead did they stop, look up, and point. Even then, they didn't realize.

Miss Granger told me once about nuclear weapons and the devastation they wrought. I think she has a genius for understatement.