

Albus, I've Got Something to Tell You...

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Summary: Minerva McGonagall is in love with Albus Dumbledore, but he is married and not in love with her. Working on a project, she travels sideways through time and falls in love with someone who actually loves her back.

Relationships and Regulations

Chapter 1 of 8

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DISCLAIMER: Everything HP belongs to JK Rowling. I got the idea from Griselda La Fey's challenge on Infinite Incantatem.

Chapter One: Relationships and Regulations

Although it wasn't a commonly-known fact, all Hogwarts professors were required to conduct research projects in our chosen fields during our breaks in the school year. Most of my colleagues chose projects which required very little effort on their parts, using their apprentices, instead of themselves, to collect the data and run day-to-day experiments. As far as I know, I'm the only professor who would rather use her breaks to conduct research, instead of relaxing. However, I am the only professor without a family to relax with during break time. My parents died when I was nine, as they fought against Grindelwald, and, as I was a "mistake" they had made, they took great care to ensure they'd never have any more children. Most of the time, they'd forget about me. I was raised by house-elves in the desolate McGonagall Manor in the far north of Scotland. Once I had entered Hogwarts, I never wanted to return to my old home. After all, there was nothing to live for there.

I was sorted into Gryffindor, and, as my entire family on both my mother and father's sides were sorted into Ravenclaw, it was beneficial that I was the last McGonagall left, for there was no one to reprimand me for not being like the rest of my family. However, I had found my niche in Gryffindor. Although I had the best marks in my year, and in some cases (like Transfiguration) in the history of the school (excepting, of course, Albus Dumbledore), I was also Head Girl, a Chaser on the Gryffindor Quidditch team, and, by the beginning of my sixth year at Hogwarts, a tabby cat Animagus. Albus Dumbledore, my Transfiguration professor, helped to train me. Yes, that Albus Dumbledore. The one who discovered the twelve uses of dragon's blood, helped created the Philosopher's Stone with Nicholas Flamel, and the one who defeated Grindelwald. I was in love with him. He hated me.

By the time I became an Animagus, I had realised I was in love with him. Not some little schoolgirl crush, mind you, but full-fledged love. After he took me to the Ministry of Magic so I could register my Animagus form, he did not talk to me outside of class for the rest of my education at Hogwarts, even though he was my Head of House. I thought that maybe he knew about my feelings for him, but I couldn't see how he could, unless he used Legilimency on me. And I had good enough Occlumency shields that I would have known if he had tried to read my mind.

Whether Albus knew of my feelings for him or not, he hired me as the Transfiguration professor after he became Headmaster following the retirement, and subsequent death, of Armando Dippet. And he appointed me Head of Gryffindor House and, three years later, Deputy Headmistress. However, he did not speak to me any more than

absolutely necessary. He didn't even call me by my first name, like he did with the rest of the staff. I was always "Professor McGonagall".

Although Albus was so cold to me, my love for him only grew, even after his marriage to Janet Huntleigh. Janet was the exact opposite of me—blonde, pretty, talkative, friendly, and Albus's wife. Janet was friendly with everyone, except me. I didn't have many friends at Hogwarts, neither when I was a student nor when I was a Professor. By the time Albus and Janet had a child, I was lonelier than I ever had been. That was when I began working on my latest project. Even though it wasn't solely Transfiguration, but also Arithmancy and various other subjects, this was the project I had been most interested in ever.

My project dealt with the concept of travelling through time. Not using a Time-Turner to go back in time, nor a Dialry to go forward, but a device that would allow me to travel sideways through time. I had just finished my time traveller, but had yet to come up with a name, when a knock sounded at my door.

"Come in!" I called, feeling triumphant for accomplishing a project that had taken me five years.

Albus Dumbledore walked into my workroom with a stern look on his face. As I looked up, he frowned, causing my triumph to vanish immediately.

"Professor McGonagall, it has come to my attention that your latest project has violated Ministry time-travel regulations. I must insist that you halt this experiment immediately and destroy all information on your project, as it violates time-travel security regulations," Albus said in a chilly voice.

I was stunned. Five years of my life had just been wasted, and for what? Everything to be destroyed because of a Ministry regulation! Albus rarely ever listened to the Ministry, and here he was telling me to stop my research because it broke one of their regulations?

"No, Headmaster," I replied. I will not destroy all information regarding my project. I have spent five years of my life on this, and I will not destroy it because of a Ministry regulation!"

Albus's eyes narrowed. "You will, Professor, or else you shall find yourself charged by the Ministry."

I grabbed my completed time traveller and flung the chain around my neck. "Sorry, Headmaster, but you see, I've just completed it. I will not destroy it until I at least test it. Destroy all my work, but don't expect to figure out what my project does." At that, I closed my eyes and turned my time traveller around twice. As the room began to spin, I opened my eyes slightly and saw Albus's shocked expression. As the speed increased, I was forced to close my eyes again and wrap my arms around myself. Suddenly, everything was still, and as I cautiously peeked out from under my closed eyelids, I saw a dark, yet very recognisable office.

"Who are you?" hissed a familiar voice. "Why are you here?"

Different Times, Different Lives

Chapter 2 of 8

Minerva finds herself in an alternate time period where she and Albus are on good terms, and there is something in their relationship that is definitely not present in Minerva's time period...

Chapter Two: Different Times, Different Lives

I froze hearing that oh-so-familiar voice. I heard someone snap their fingers, causing all of the lights to turn on at once. Closing my eyes against the blinding light, I was unable to verify the identity of that voice. Slowly opening my eyes a few moments after being blinded, I looked up into the most astounded and shocked face I had ever seen. I gasped, just as shocked as he was. It was Albus Dumbledore.

Taking in his appearance with quick glances from underneath my lowered eyelids, I noticed that Albus seemed older than he did back in my own time. He had more white hairs running through his auburn mane as well as fine wrinkles lining his otherwise unaged face. The twinkle so often present in his eyes (though not around me) was not present, either, but the way he was looking at me gave me hope that he didn't hate me as much as the Albus of my time did.

"Min-min-erva?" Albus stuttered. "Is it really you?" He took a few steps forward, almost involuntarily, and touched my face.

I suppose I must have looked confused – after all, the Albus of my time had never called me by my first name.

"Yes, Headmaster... but I'm not from this time. I made a device to allow me to travel sideways through time, and it obviously worked," I explained rather awkwardly.

He seemed taken aback by my use of his title. "Headmaster, my dear?" he questioned, seeming to be gradually getting over his shock. "So formal... why?"

I gaped. So formal? "If... If you'd prefer I address you as Professor Dumbledore or sir, then I will," I replied, confused.

His expression saddened. "I suppose things really are different in other times. You obviously do not like me. The Minerva from my time never addressed me in such a formal manner – at least, not as an adult."

I felt tears come to my eyes as I frantically sought to correct the misconceptions Albus obviously held. "Sir, in my time, you had told me to always address you formally, even though you address all other members of the staff by their given names." I decided to just tell Albus how I felt about him – obviously, the Minerva of this time was much closer to this Albus than I ever was to the Albus of my own time. And, as I was not in my own time, I had nothing to lose by confessing my feelings. "I do like you... In fact, I've been in love with you for as long as I can remember. However, friendly feelings have never been returned by you – after you helped me to become an Animagus, you didn't talk to me until I began teaching at Hogwarts," I explained sadly.

Looking up into his eyes, I saw them light up at my confession of love to him. However, they immediately saddened when he looked down at me, when I explained my use of his formal title.

"Please, my dear, call me Albus," he requested.

"All right... Albus." I loved the way his name sounded.

"Daddy? Who's there?" I heard a tiny voice ask. A young girl, around the age of six or seven, perhaps, was standing in the doorway which led, I presumed, to Albus's private quarters. As the girl moved closer into his study, I was able to see her clearly for the first time. She had pale skin, dark hair, and large, twinkling blue eyes, which widened in amazement as they rested upon me.

"Mummy?" she whispered and flung herself onto my lap, burying her head in my hair.

I looked up at Albus with an expression of utter disbelief written across my face. He nodded, and I closed my eyes, relishing an experience I never thought I would have – holding Albus's and my child.

Learning About A Life

Chapter 3 of 8

Our Minerva learns some very surprising and upsetting facts about the lives of the Albus and Minerva of this time.

"Penelope," I heard Albus say. "It's late, dear heart, and time to go to bed." The little girl I held in my lap began to squirm in protest.

"Can I tuck her in Albus?" I asked tentatively before the girl could put up any protest at being sent to bed.

He looked at me with eyes so full of emotion—it quite unnerved me, as I was used to those eyes resembling blue ice, not the warm summer sky. He nodded, almost imperceptibly, while I gently gathered the girl into my arms and followed him as he led the way to her bedroom.

As he opened the door leading to his private quarters, I was rendered speechless. In the place of honour above the fireplace was a large family portrait with Albus standing beside a very pregnant version of myself. I looked toward him questioningly, but he mouthed, "Later," and continued leading the way to Penelope's bedroom.

As we finally reached the room, very girly, yet with a Gryffindor sense of pride in the deep pinks and golds, Albus turned down the covers of the bed. I placed the now-sleeping girl between the sheets and kissed her on the forehead. He followed suit, and after I took one last look at the girl, he led me back to his sitting room after dousing the lights in her room.

"Albus..." I began, only to be halted by his raised hand.

"Don't ask any questions yet, my dear, because I don't think I can get through this story after being interrupted."

I nodded my acquiescence and positioned myself more comfortably on the chintz loveseat which faced the portrait of Albus and myself.

"I began teaching at Hogwarts as the Transfiguration professor after defeating Grindelwald, my one-time friend. Several years passed, and a most talented student named Minerva McGonagall arrived at Hogwarts. She was a very talented witch. By the time she had begun her sixth year, she was already an Animagi. I fell in love with her when she came back to Hogwarts as Head Girl in her seventh year. I began courting her after her graduation, and a year later, we were wed. She began teaching at Hogwarts as the Transfiguration professor after Armando Dippet died and I became Headmaster. Before she could officially start her duties, however, she became pregnant. I refused to let her start teaching, so I covered her classes until she gave birth. On March 15th, our daughter, Penelope McGonagall Dumbledore, was born. Minerva died in childbirth. Obviously, Penelope has never met her mother. I never remarried—how could I replace the love of my life? When you showed up here tonight, I thought I was dreaming. But when Penelope came into the room, I realised that it was real. You were really here. I've missed you ever so much."

Albus quickly crossed the room from where he was pacing in front of the fireplace and grabbed me in a passionate kiss. As I let myself return the kiss, all I could think about was how I felt that this was a dream. I prayed it wasn't. As we broke apart, I rested my head on Albus's chest and took a deep breath.

"Are you all right, dearest? Is this moving too fast for you?" Albus inquired, obviously concerned at my silence.

I didn't respond for a moment as I tried to memorise every detail of this moment—the way he smelled, the feeling of his hands removing my hairpins, the sound of the fire crackling in the grate. But eventually, I looked up into his eyes, noting again the difference between his and the Albus's of my time.

"We're not going too fast, darling," I replied. "I just wanted to memorise this moment, as I've dreamed of it for so long."

With the last syllable of my answer still lingering on my lips, I felt the world beneath me move as Albus swept me up into my arms and carried me into his bedroom, placing one-way silencing and locking charms on the door before claiming my lips in a fervent kiss.

The Odyssey

Chapter 4 of 8

Minerva learns about her life in another time.

I woke up the next morning wrapped up in Albus's arms. Even before I opened my eyes, I knew he was awake and watching me. As he noticed me stir, he leaned down and kissed me. I began to deepen the kiss, but ended it quickly as my cat-like hearing picked up the faint sound of a child running towards our room. As a grief-stricken Penelope flung the door open, the sadness on her face turned into joy as she leapt onto the bed and immediately snuggled between myself and Albus.

"Sweetheart, why were you crying?" Albus asked her as I stroked the hair that was so similar to my own.

"I thought Mummy coming back was a dream, so I was sad," Penelope said, her reply a bit muffled as she was pressing her face into my shoulder, as if she was trying to reassure herself that I was still here.

"I thought it was a dream too, sweetheart," Albus responded as he draped his free arm around my shoulders, tightening his grip as I wiggled closer to him.

As Penelope fell back asleep (it was only six in the morning, and she had been up late last night), Albus and I watched our daughter sleep.

"Albus?" I asked tentatively, reluctant to break the silence that had fallen over us as we watched each other and our daughter.

"Yes, dearest?" Albus responded.

"Why did you name our daughter Penelope? Did you pick it out by yourself, or..." I couldn't bring myself to ask him if his Minerva had picked out the name or if they had picked it out together. Luckily, he understood my unasked question.

"I thought of the name. I always called Minerva my goddess, and when she conceived, we were thinking up names, and I suggested Odysseus if we had a boy and Penelope if we had a girl. When Minerva asked me why I chose those names, I told her that they were our 'demi-gods', because she was a goddess and I was only a mortal. I personally thought that in the Iliad and the Odyssey, the goddess Minerva was a little too fond of Odysseus, so I suggested that we name our children after the hero and his wife."

By the time he had finished recounting the story behind Penelope's naming, we were both in tears, and Penelope had started to wake up. Albus snapped his fingers, and a house-elf appeared. He ordered breakfast for the three of us, and we had breakfast in bed.

For the first time, we were a family.

Sick At Heart - And In Body

Chapter 5 of 8

Minerva becomes sick, and there is only one way for her to get better...

After finishing breakfast, I had to run to the bathroom in order to avoid getting sick all over Penelope and Albus. It wasn't the breakfast that had made me ill – if I was honest with myself, I had been feeling nauseous ever since arriving in this time. It was the oddest thing, as I should have been feeling better than I ever had. I had finally been able to sleep through the night, I was not sad, and I was eating well, too. Mentally, I had never felt better. Physically, however, was another story.

Albus had followed me into the bathroom and held my hair as I vomited up my breakfast. After I had finished, he lifted me up gently and carried me into the living room.

"What's wrong, dear heart?" Albus asked, a concerned look in his eyes.

He noticed my reluctance to respond and followed my gaze to Penelope, who was standing in the doorway looking at us.

"Penelope, dearest, can you run to the Hospital Wing and fetch Madam Pomfrey, please? Tell her to come back to our rooms," Albus said, prompting a nod from Penelope before she ran out the door and down the hall.

"Oh, Albus," I groaned, resting my head on his chest. "I've been feeling sick ever since I arrived in this time – I don't know what's wrong with me! I've never been so happy in my life, so why don't I feel well?" I asked piteously.

Before Albus could respond, the fire in the grate crackled and turned emerald. Madam Pomfrey and Penelope stepped out onto the carpet.

Madam Pomfrey gasped, and turning to Albus, she asked, "Albus – is that really Minerva?"

I looked at Poppy, who had been one of the few people who liked me when we were at Hogwarts together. She was the Matron here? That wasn't how it was in my own time.

"Later, Poppy. Right now, we need to find out what's wrong with Minerva. She travelled sideways through time using a time-traveller of her own creation. Ever since she got here yesterday, she says she's been feeling nauseous. This morning she began vomiting, so I sent Penelope to fetch you," Albus explained in a worried tone.

"You travelled sideways through time?" Poppy asked, wonder clearly evident on her familiar features.

I nodded weakly, trying to stave off the nausea I still felt.

"Can I see it, please?" Poppy requested. I unfastened the chain from around my neck and handed the time-traveller over to her. After watching her examine it for several minutes, I had to dash to the bathroom again before I became sick.

As I returned, shaking slightly from the exertion, Poppy and Albus had solemn expressions on their countenances.

"Minerva," Poppy began timidly, "I know why you're sick. You can't stay in this time – it's not meant to be. You have to return to your own time immediately or else you'll die."

I collapsed, sobbing, when I heard her grave pronouncement. How could I return to my own time? I had been here for only a day and a half, yet I felt more at home in this time than I ever had in my own.

More importantly, how could I leave Albus and Penelope? I did not think that I could face the Albus of my own time, with his cold, indifferent attitude towards me when my Albus loved me. And my daughter! How could I leave my daughter? The Minerva of this time had given birth to her, but that Minerva was still me – just in a different time. How could I leave this place?

Albus had been stroking my back as his own tears dripped onto my hair. Penelope had wrapped herself around Poppy's legs, burying her face in the nurse's apron.

Finally controlling my sobs long enough to speak, I asked Poppy, "When do I have to leave?"

She replied, "As soon as possible. The longer you remain in this time period, the sicker you will get."

It Is Better To Have Loved and Lost...

Chapter 6 of 8

Minerva, Albus, and Penelope deal with the consequences of travelling through time.

"There must be another way!" Albus yelled frantically, startling all of us. "What about the Sorcerer's Stone?"

I looked up at Poppy, hoping that the Stone would enable me to stay here.

She shook her head sadly.

"Why won't it work, Poppy?" I demanded. "The Stone is supposed to make you immortal, as long as you drink the Elixir of Life!"

"That is true," she began, "but in this case, you would slip into a coma. You would still technically be alive, but your mind wouldn't be here."

What was left but for me to return to my own time? The only other way to stave off death was to drink the blood of a unicorn – and I would never kill something so pure and innocent. Even if I did, the blood would probably have the same effect as the Elixir of Life. If the Sorcerer's Stone could not keep me here, I doubted anything could.

I buried my head in Albus's chest again, once more letting my sobs overtake me. Penelope had let go of Poppy's leg and flung herself onto my lap where she was crying as well. How could this happen to us? I finally had loved and been loved – for the first time in my life. I could not return to my own time, where Albus was so cold and impersonal towards me. I could not bear seeing Janet with him, and their child, when in this time, Albus and I had our own beautiful daughter!

Oh, Albus! He had lived without me for seven years after my death in this world. Then I returned. How could he go on living when he was given everything back, just to have it taken away from him again? And Penelope, my darling daughter, my only child. She had never met her mother until yesterday – she was given only one day to spend with her mother! How was that fair? My only child must grow up without a mother – one that she had for a day and then was gone.

How could I leave this world behind? It is said that it was better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all, but right now, I could not see how that was possible. I do not think I could bear to return to my own time, knowing what I could have and should have had.

I fought down yet another wave of nausea as Poppy cleared her throat before beginning to speak. "Minerva, you need to go back to your own time. I'm afraid you are only getting sicker by the minute."

I knew she was right. It would be so painful for all parties for me to leave, but Albus and Penelope would be in even more pain if I died in this time again. How could Albus survive his wife dying again? How could Penelope live her life knowing that her mother died at her birth and then again seven years later after one day of knowing her daughter? They could not survive. I knew then that both Albus and Penelope would be in so much more pain if I did not leave now.

"Oh, Albus, darling, I love you more than anything!" I sobbed, kissing him one last time, trying to fix every detail of him in my memory.

"Darling, I will love you forever and ever," Albus responded as tears ran down his own face. He took off a chain from around his neck and unfastened the clasp. Slipping both the diamond engagement ring and the plain gold band onto my left ring finger, he said, "Keep your rings, dearest, and never forget!" He burst into the sobs that he had tried so hard to keep from releasing.

Next, I said goodbye to Poppy, urging her to take care of Albus and Penelope.

Finally, there was only Penelope left to say goodbye to.

"Oh, Mummy, I don't want you to leave us!" Penelope bawled, squeezing my waist so tightly I almost could not breathe.

"Oh, sweetie, I don't want to leave you either," I said, choking on the tears I tried to suppress, "but I have to go. I love you so very much, my dearest. Take care of your father, honey, and always remember that I love you!" With that last pronouncement, I removed the bracelet given to me by my grandmother before her death when I was seven. Slipping it onto Penelope's wrist, I whispered in her ear, "This was given to me by my Grandmother McGonagall, sweetie, and I want you to have it. I'll always love you, no matter where I am."

With one last sob, I unfastened the brooch that was pinned to my dress. Handing it to Albus, I gave him and Penelope each one last kiss. Closing my eyes, I turned the time-traveller and felt the dizzying sensation of being sucked through time.

Like I Never Loved At All

Chapter 7 of 8

Minerva returns to her own time and finds out that things have changed...

Suddenly, the world stopped spinning as I landed hard on the plush carpet of Albus Dumbledore's living room. I saw just enough to realise that I was no longer with my Albus before I fainted.

I woke up on a large purple couch with Albus, Isabel Worthdall (the school nurse), and Janet Dumbledore peering down at me. I sat bolt upright, as I was shocked, and tried to remember what had happened. Looking into Albus's cold, impersonal eyes, I remembered the happiness I had experienced the past two days.

"Well, Professor McGonagall, nice of you to join us," Albus remarked sarcastically, "where did your time-traveller send you? I hope it was a pleasant vacation. Now, I have to ask you to leave, as you have been fired for disobeying the Headmaster. You are very lucky that I have decided not to turn you over to the Ministry of Magic, as you most certainly would have been sent to Azkaban. However, I must insist that you give me your time-traveller this instant."

If I had had any doubts that I was back in my own time, they had vanished with Albus's speech. Silently lifting the time-traveller on its chain over my head, I placed it in Albus's outstretched hand.

"Now then, Miss McGonagall, you have no further business at Hogwarts. Your personal effects have already been removed to your family estate, and your final paycheque has been deposited in Gringotts," Albus said, turning his back on me as he focused on his wife.

"Isabel, could we continue the baby's check-up?" Janet asked. I noticed for the first time that her robes were unfastened enough to allow Isabel access to her protruding belly. The family portrait my Albus had hanging above the fireplace swam in my mind. I was jealous – of his Minerva and of Janet. While I was Penelope's mother, I had never known the experience of carrying his child.

Janet had not been pregnant when I had left yesterday – or was it yesterday? It had obviously been several months since I had been here. 'That was not fair!' I thought to myself. I had only a day and a half with Penelope, and when I come back, it has been months since I have been here!

I was jolted out of my thoughts by Janet asking me, "Do you mind? My husband has already informed you that you have no more business at Hogwarts – so please leave now."

With that, I burst into tears and ran from the castle. Reaching the gates, they opened for me and then closed with an audible clang. I closed my eyes and focused on McGonagall Manor – my childhood home that I had not seen in over a decade.

I Apparated into the front hall of the Manor. Luckily, the house-elves had not let the Manor fall into a state of disrepair or disuse. Everything seemed to be just as I remembered. Twindy, the house-elf who had raised me, appeared next to me with a crack.

"Mistress Minerva, we was not expecting you!" Twindy squeaked. I could tell he was a bit nervous about my sudden appearance.

"Oh, Twindy," I managed to choke out before bursting into sobs again, "I have been fired! I've lost my job at Hogwarts!"

Twindy looked surprised at this sudden revelation. "Mistress Minerva, why is you being fired?" he asked.

I cried harder. "I was working on a project for Professor Dumbledore, and I created a time-traveller that allowed me to move sideways in time. I went to a time where Albus and I were married and had a daughter. The Minerva of that time had died in childbirth. Anyway, I got very sick in the day that I spent in that time, and I had to return here. I left four months ago and only got to spend one and a half days with my daughter, and I realise that I missed four months of time here! Professor Dumbledore fired me for disobeying him, and I'll never get another job with this on my record!" I had buried my face in my lap.

Feeling Twindy's arms embrace me, I allowed myself to be comforted a bit. In a few minutes, I managed to stand. Twindy walked me up to my old room and tucked me into bed. Quickly popping downstairs to the kitchen, he returned with a tray of tea and a tin of Ginger Newts. I managed to get a little bit down before falling asleep, still crying for Albus and Penelope.

Is This Possible?

Chapter 8 of 8

Minerva finds out that three months have passed in her own time, and she is experiencing some strange side-effects...

As I awoke the next morning, I had no time to register my surroundings before dashing into the bathroom and vomiting. As I sank to the cold tile floor, I realised that I was back at McGonagall Manor – and no longer with Albus and Penelope. As I looked out the window in the bathroom, I noticed that there was snow on the ground. When I had left, it was late August – returning to my own time must have taken much longer than changing times to begin with.

"Twindy!" I called, and he appeared with a sharp crack.

"Yes, Mistress Minerva?" he asked.

"What is the date?"

"It is the 29th of November, Mistress McGonagall. Would the Mistress be wanting any breakfast?" Twindy asked.

I sat down on the bed, dizzy at the implication that I had lost three months of my life travelling back through time. "Yes, please, Twindy. Some Belgian waffles with lemon, scrambled eggs, sausage, and bacon. And hot chocolate to drink."

As he disappeared again, I thought over what I had just ordered. I never was fond of Belgian waffles, least of all with lemon! But the words just seemed to fall out of my mouth. I knew it was one of Albus's favourite breakfasts – maybe I was just lonely for him.

I stood up from my bed, wincing as I put my weight on my swollen feet. Swollen feet? I thought to myself. As I stood in front of my wardrobe, attempting to change into a Muggle dress for the day, I happened to look down at my stomach. It seemed larger, but I couldn't really tell from this angle. Once again feeling the need to vomit, I barely made it to the bathroom in time. By the time I emerged, my breakfast had arrived and was sitting on my window seat. I wrapped a bathrobe around myself and sat down to enjoy my breakfast – which, surprisingly, I did. It was odd, really, for I had never liked hot chocolate in the mornings either – I had always found it too sweet.

Resuming my dressing for the day, I attempted to slip into my favourite light-blue dress. However, I could not for the life of me get the buttons done up in the back. Suddenly piecing together the bits of everyday life which had changed. Cravings for certain foods, vomiting, swollen feet, weight gain...

I rushed over to the Floo, knelt down, and called into the fire, "Poppy Pomfrey!" As her kitchen appeared, I sighed in relief as she came into view.

"Minerva?" she asked. "What's wrong?"

"Poppy, can you come over to McGonagall Manor right away, please? I need you to do a diagnostic test on me," I pleaded.

"I'll be over in five minutes – let me gather my things," she said. "Why are you at McGonagall Manor?"

"I'll explain it all when you get here."

"All right."

As I removed my head from the fire, I had to put my hand along the wall to steady myself. I knew I couldn't explain what had happened again – I'd have to use my parents' Pensieve to show Poppy the memories. Walking downstairs, I entered my parents' study. A few minutes of searching finally yielded their Pensieve, just as the bell was rung outside. Banishing the Pensieve to my bedroom, I made my way towards the front door to get Poppy.

"Hello, Minerva," Poppy greeted me.

"Hello, Poppy, let's go up to my room," I said, taking her arm and leading her up the grand staircase.

"Are you going to tell me what this is about?" she questioned.

"I can't tell you, Poppy – I know you'll never believe me. I've found my parents' Pensieve, and I'll show you what's happened to me. Then I need you to tell me if I'm pregnant or not."

Poppy stopped short at my last sentence. "Pregnant?" she squawked.

"Yes, Poppy, pregnant. Do you want to know what happened or not?" I demanded, impatient at how immature she was acting.

Poppy nodded and quickened her pace. As we reached my bedroom, I motioned for her to be seated as I began extracting the relevant memories.

"Okay, Poppy," I said with far more confidence than I felt.

She stepped over and peered curiously into the swirling liquid. As we simultaneously emerged our faces in my memories, I began to cry. Albus, I thought. How I miss you. How I miss our daughter.

As the memories completed, we were returned to our bodies. Poppy stared at me, open-mouthed, and began to speak.

"Poppy, can you just find out if I'm pregnant or not? I'll answer any questions you have after that," I begged.

She nodded and murmured an incantation under her breath. I closed my eyes – I didn't want to see the result yet.

"Oh, Minerva," she sighed.

I couldn't tell from her tone whether it was good news or bad news, so I slowly opened my eyes...