

# Snapshots

by JackieJLH

DH Spoilers! Seven vignettes featuring Colin Creevey.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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**Author's Notes:** This story, and the rest of the author's notes, contain spoilers for DH. If you have not read the book yet, please back-button now. :)

This is technically seven mini-ficlets, all centered on Colin Creevey. This was written for In Memoriam, an LJ community with a challenge to write seven fics about any character who died in DH using the provided prompt table. (The community can be found here: [http://community.livejournal.com/in\\_memoriam](http://community.livejournal.com/in_memoriam) ) My seven Colin ficlets ended up all being sort of inter-connected, so I'm posting them as one long story.

Many, many thanks to Lady Whitehart for beta reading these!

### For the Future

#### (Prompt: Life)

There are a million things Colin Creevey wants to do with his life. He wants to be a photographer...maybe not for the Prophet anymore, but the Quibbler is a possibility...and he wants to travel the world. He wants to be married someday, and maybe have a son that he can teach about magic and see off to Hogwarts when he's eleven. He wants to have a pet Crup, or possibly an owl like Harry Potter's because they're far more useful, though not as friendly. He wants to go to Hogsmeade with his friends and drink butterbeer and tell scary stories about the Shrieking Shack to the third-years. He wants to go to Quidditch games with his brother and cheer for the Cannons, even though they're terrible, and he wants to kiss a girl before he leaves Hogwarts (and maybe do more, but he'll settle for a kiss).

All of these things seem to be flitting away, just out of grasp, as the days go by. Snape is ruling the school with an iron fist, other Muggle-borns disappear one by one after being questioned by the Carrows, and You-Know-Who just might actually win this war after all because no one has heard from Harry in ages or even knows if he's still alive. And then one day Colin slips his hand into his pocket and feels something hot, almost burning, and he carefully pulls out his old DA coin...he's carried it with him every day this year, just in case Harry should need help, wherever he is. The coin says that there will be a meeting in only a few hours, and Colin looks up to sees Dennis watching him from across the Gryffindor table, something clutched in his thin hand and his eyes wide.

Later that night, Neville says in a serious tone, "Before anyone agrees to anything, just remember that we'll be risking our lives. If you're not sure about this, you can leave now. No one will think badly of you or..."

"We're not going anywhere," Seamus interrupts, and everyone else nods in agreement.

Padma adds, in a soft but firm voice, "The only way any of us will ever have a chance for a real future is if we *fight* for it," and when Neville and Ginny begin telling everyone of the plans they've constructed already and asking for opinions and new ideas, Colin thinks that despite all of the things he's always wanted, all of the things he's dreamed may happen one day, there is nothing better he could be doing with his life than this.

### Three Instead of Four

#### (Prompt: Death)

'It isn't your fault,' everyone keeps telling him, but he thinks that maybe they're only saying that because they don't know the whole story.

*She wasn't supposed to die like that* he thinks, and he meets Dennis's eyes from across the room and silently begs for forgiveness. If anyone is going to blame him, he's sure it will be Dennis and his father. They know everything. They know what he can do, what he could have *done*.

A large hand grasps his shoulder, and he glances up to see his father standing over him, tears in his eyes. His heart stops, waiting for the anger, the disdain, the ~~threat~~ that he's sure he'll receive. Instead, he finds himself being lifted into his father's arms and pulled tightly against his chest, and his father is whispering things to him, things like, 'I'm so glad you're all right,' and, 'I love you,' and, 'We're going to get through this together.' And a moment later, he feels his father bending down only long enough to scoop Dennis up and hold him too, and the three of them cry together, everyone else in the house giving them a wide berth, not wanting to interrupt.

'I'm sorry,' Colin says softly, his voice cracking, and suddenly he's rambling, words mixed with sobs. 'I should have ~~saved~~ *saved her*. I wanted to, Daddy, I really did, and I didn't mean to get out of the car, it just happened by itself. I'm so sorry. I wanted to take her with me; I didn't mean to, Daddy. I'm *sorry!*' And he's telling the truth, even if he can't make himself form the words just the way he hears them in his head.

He and Dennis have always been different. '*Special*,' his mother had said once, and she'd barely blinked when Colin had walked into the kitchen with his favorite toy only seconds after she'd taken it away and put it in a cupboard she knew he couldn't reach, or when Dennis had tried to climb a tree but had fallen and literally floated back to the ground. She'd cautioned them to be careful, of course, to be cautious and not to tell anyone...she worried that if anyone knew, they'd want to take her boys away to study them or something equally horrible, and they weren't *things* to be studied, they were her sons, and she loved them.

But even though he could make things fall out of cabinets all on their own, and even though he could fix the things he occasionally broke before his parents ever found out they'd been broken to begin with (the vase in the hall has been broken six times now, or maybe it's seven), Colin couldn't save his mother. He'd seen the other car coming towards them much too fast, known that they were going to be hit, and instead of trying to get away, he'd just closed his eyes and thrown his hands up in front of his face. He can remember the way his mum had reached one arm out and pressed her hand against his chest, pushing him back against his seat, trying to protect him in that final second in any way she could. He can still hear her gasp of terror...not even a scream because there wasn't time for that. And then he was outside, lying on the grass, knees still bent as if he were sitting and hands still out in front of him, but the pressure from his mother's hand was gone, and before he had a chance to open his eyes and wonder what had happened, he heard metal colliding with metal, a crashing, twisting, haunting noise that seemed to end his whole world.

He'd never meant to leave the car because he'd been so panicked that he hadn't even thought of his special powers in that instant, and he'd certainly never meant to leave his mother behind. He doesn't remember how he did it, but he did it nonetheless, and she'd died while he'd survived with only a bruise on his back where he'd fallen onto the ground.

But his father simply holds him tighter, shushes him when he tries to explain that it's all his fault, that he should have been able to save her but couldn't, and Dennis hugs him tighter, and even though his brother is only four and probably doesn't understand everything that's going on, Colin finds comfort in the tiny arms wrapped around his neck and pulling him close. And their father says again, 'We're going to get through this *together*,' a phrase that will become something of a mantra in the days that follow as they learn to live as three instead of four, and will eventually become the words that Colin repeats to his brother over the years, whenever something bad happens and they feel completely alone in the world their father can't follow them into.

But in that moment, it's not a often-used phrase or a family motto of sorts; it's only words, the most wonderful words Colin thinks he's ever heard, and he whispers them softly back to his father and feels as if they're the only three people in the world.

#### Two of a Kind

##### (Prompt: Baby)

Shaun and Diana Creevey had always wanted children, but as the years passed them by they'd begun to think that maybe it wasn't meant to be. Now, watching a stuffed elephant float across the room all on its own, Diana thinks that she never would have been able to handle this sort of thing when she was younger.

"Baby," Colin says, one hand pointing at her stomach and one now wrapped around his toy, and Diana smiles but shakes her head. After all, Colin is just barely a year old, and after learning of his ability to make things just *happen*, she and Shaun had decided that one child was enough for now.

"Baby!" Colin insists again, and suddenly his elephant is hovering in midair beside her stomach, and her son looks pleased with himself. "Baby," he says once more, grinning, and turns back to his other toys.

Eight and a half months later, watching that same elephant drift lazily across the room and land next to her newborn son even though Colin has gone out for ice cream with his father, Diana doesn't even pretend to be surprised.

#### Going to Hogsmeade

##### (Prompt: Child)

"Young children cannot go to Hogsmeade," Professor Umbridge says simply, her usual sickeningly sweet smile on her face, and Filch stands behind her, not letting anyone without a permission slip go through the gates.

"He's not a child," Colin retorts, and Umbridge's smile grows a bit wider, a bit more frightening.

Not wanting to end up in detention...he's heard rumors of a very dangerous quill, and has no desire to see it for himself...Dennis shakes his head and grabs his brother's arm as if to lead him back towards the school. As soon as they are out of earshot, Dennis whispers, "You go. Tell me everything, and make sure they know I want to help."

"There has to be some way to get you past Umbridge," Colin insists, looking around as though a secret passage will suddenly appear before them. "You have to be there; Ginny said it was important." Glancing back over his shoulder, he sees Umbridge watching them curiously, so he nudges Dennis with his elbow and together they begin walking again.

"Mr Creevey, aren't you supposed to be in Hogsmeade?" they hear, and they look up to see Professor McGonagall standing in their path.

"I didn't want to go to the mee- I didn't want to go without Dennis," Colin answers, blushing profusely, and Dennis gives their head of house an innocent look and tries to pretend that he hasn't just stomped on his brother's foot.

McGonagall narrows her eyes and seems to be considering something, and then says sternly, "Be at the gates in two minutes, and try to stay out of sight." And without another word, she points her wand towards the school, casts a silent incantation, and then turns and heads down the path towards Hogsmeade.

The Creevey brothers dart into the trees, hurrying after their professor, and watch with wide eyes as Umbridge and Filch pass them on their way toward the castle, ranting about Dungbombs in the Great Hall and how whoever has done it will be punished most painfully. Rushing down the path as fast as they can manage without being seen, the boys finally reach the gate and find McGonagall standing there, tapping her foot impatiently.

"I suggest you run until you're out of sight, just in case she realises something is going on and comes back," Professor McGonagall says, giving them an expectant look

when neither of them move. "Or perhaps you've changed your minds?"

Grinning, the brothers rush through the gates, not bothering to stop to thank her...there will be time for that later, and they have a meeting to attend...and they don't stop running until they've reached the town. Sticking as close to the shadows and crowds as they can and trying to avoid notice, they slip into a shop just across the street from the Hog's Head with nearly an hour to spare and watch anxiously for signs that the others have started to arrive.

## The Mudblood Compartment

### (Prompt: Teenager)

Many of their friends have decided not to return to Hogwarts this year. With rumors of what's going on at the Ministry, most of their parents insisted on keeping them home or leaving the country altogether. The Muggle-borns, especially, were anxious to avoid going back to school.

Colin knows that he should feel the same way, that he and his brother should probably be leaving as well, but the wizarding world is *their* world too, and how can they just abandon it at a time like this? They've always known that they belonged in the wizarding world, even since before they knew what to call it, and they refuse to let anyone tell them that they don't. So they make sure not to mention anything even remotely suspicious to their father, and they ask to be dropped off outside the station instead of walking to the train.

But things have changed, they find, and Colin thinks, *Maybe we've underestimated how bad things could get so quickly*, as he steps onto the train and comes face to face with a woman he's never met. She asks him, at wandpoint, about his parents, and upon hearing that they were both Muggles, she jerks his camera out of his hands and directs him into the compartment to her right. Ginny Weasley watches him with worried eyes as she's pointed towards the back of the train.

Dennis is nearly shoved into him as they're pushed through the doorway, and they find themselves crammed into a crowded compartment with nine or ten others...mostly first-years, from the looks of them, and they all look confused and scared. Colin thinks back to his first ride on the Hogwarts Express, remembers how excited he'd been and how welcome Hogwarts had made him feel, and his heart drops a bit. Others join them, and before long it seems that half the Muggle-borns on the train are pressed into their compartment, luggage piled precariously on the racks above their heads and nearly everyone standing because there isn't enough space for anyone to sit on the floor.

An hour into the trip, someone finally gets the courage to try the door in the hopes of letting in some air. So many people in such a tiny room has made it uncomfortably warm, and some of them are starting to sweat and look a bit glassy-eyed. After fighting with the handle for a few moments, the girl who had tried to open the door announces that she thinks they're locked in. An older boy tries a spell, but it doesn't work, and then nearly all of them are crying. Colin meets his brother's worried eyes and feels helpless.

By hour three the children have long since become too tired to cry any longer and their legs are aching. Colin begins trying to find places for them to sit down, letting the most tired sit on the benches for a few minutes before trading places with another student, so that everyone gets to rest for at least fifteen minutes out of every hour. He doesn't take a turn, and, following his lead, neither do most of the other older students. They know what's going on, even if the first-years don't, and they exchange nervous but determined looks. The Death Eaters won't break us, they seem to say. This may be the most harmless thing they will suffer this year, but they will start resisting now because they have to start somewhere, and perhaps it's best to start at the very beginning.

With the fifth hour comes the first real conversation. A girl says that she's hungry, and others agree, and before long they're carefully, one by one, distributing the snacks that a few students had in their bags and have offered to share with the group. It's not nearly enough to make anyone feel full or even remotely satisfy their hunger, but it's something, and they all share secret smiles. Colin counts seventeen first-years and six older students, and wonders if there are others in another compartment somewhere and if they have anything to eat in there or not.

They're telling stories by hour six. Mostly tales of how they used accidental magic once or twice, but others tell of how they learned to use their powers purposely...that's something Colin can relate to, and he focuses on the tiny voices and pretends his legs aren't throbbing. Before long there is a bit of laughter, and eventually they're all talking and laughing at once, and this continues until a bang on the door and threats of hexes demand silence. But there is an air of defiance among them, and they still grin at one another even as they cringe at the harsh voices coming through the door.

It begins to grow dark outside, and Colin is able to see enough through the windows to know that they will be at Hogwarts shortly. A tiny boy beside him sways and nearly falls over, and Colin reaches out to steady him and then nudges another tired looking student out of their seat so the boy can rest before he collapses. It's too hot, and there doesn't seem to be enough air, and everyone looks unsteady on their feet, but one of the first-year girls starts murmuring the words to a lullaby as if to soothe herself and soon they're all singing along in whispers. It's a Muggle song, one they all recognise and have in common, and that seems fitting.

One of the third-years leans over and says, voice covered by the murmuring of the others, "We never should have come back," and Colin frowns and thinks that if none of the older Muggle-borns had returned, the first-years would be in here alone. Even thinking of that makes him so angry that he wants to scream.

"We had to come back. Someone has to stop this," Dennis insists, as if reading his brother's mind.

"What are a bunch of teenagers going to do to stop You-Know-Who?" the other boy asks, rolling his eyes.

Looking down at the children huddled around them, all of them still humming and whispering and leaning into each other for support, Colin says simply, "We'll do whatever we can. We're going to get through this together." And from somewhere beside him, Dennis grabs his hand.

## Stand and Fight

### (Prompt: Adult)

"Absolutely not, Creevey, go! *And* you, Peakes!" McGonagall orders, prodding Colin out of his seat.

"I'll be seventeen next week, Professor!" Colin protests. "I'm practically an adult now; I'm not leaving!" But she stands firm, nearly pushing him into the ever-moving stream of students hurrying towards the Room of Requirement. Looking around wildly, he spots his brother a bit ahead of him in the line and grabs his hand, dragging him into an empty classroom.

"I'm not going," he says firmly, but when Dennis begins to say that he's staying as well, Colin shakes his head.

"Someone has to tell Dad what's going on and take him somewhere safe," he points out, and he's surprised to find that he sounds calmer than he feels.

"No!" Dennis shouts, and then winces and lowers his voice. "I won't leave you! I can help!"

"What if You-Know-Who wins, Den? I can get away; I can hide in the woods until my birthday when the Trace lifts. That's only a week. I'll be fine. You'd never be able to hide until your Trace lifts, and there's no way we'd be able to get away together without magic. You have to go, now!" Colin insists. "Please! Someone has to protect Dad."

"We're supposed to get through this *together*, remember?" Dennis chokes out, his eyes filling with tears. "What if something happens to you?"

Pulling his brother into a tight hug, Colin says, "I'll be all right, I promise, and I'll meet you at our house as soon as I can. Just go, before it's too late."

Looking as though his heart is breaking, Dennis gives him a sad smile and a stiff nod before disappearing into the noisy hallway.

Colin leans against the wall and cries, trembling from head to toe and hoping that his brother will be able to make it back to their father and get him away in time. He knows

that the Death Eaters outnumber the professors and the DA put together, and though there are other adults in the school that Colin has never seen before, he still can't see how they can possibly win. *But we have Harry*, he thinks, and tries to tell himself that will be enough to tip the scales in their favor.

## Ancient

### (Prompt: Elderly)

The other boys in his dormitory don't seem to like Dennis being in their room, but Colin doesn't care. His brother is his best friend, and with Cedric Diggory dead and the news that You-Know-Who has returned, he feels safer if Dennis is always within his sight.

"I heard Katie Bell saying that Dumbledore defeated Grindelwald.... Do you think he can keep You-Know-Who away from the school?" Dennis whispers one night, his voice soft so as not to wake the other boys in the room, and Colin shrugs.

"I don't know. I hope so. They say that Dumbledore's the only person You-Know-Who was ever afraid of." Colin wrinkles his nose, thinking for a moment, and then asks, "Wasn't Grindelwald defeated back in the forties? Just how old *is* Dumbledore, anyway?"

"He must be *ancient*," Dennis says with a grin, and Colin laughs. They fall silent after a moment, both of them tired, but just as Colin is about to drift off to sleep, he hears Dennis's quiet voice in the darkness again. "Do you think we'll ever get to be as old as Dumbledore? I mean, You-Know-Who wants to kill all of the Muggle-borns... What if he..."

"He won't," Colin interrupts. "Harry and Professor Dumbledore will get rid of him long before it gets that far," he continues, putting a reassuring arm around his brother. "We'll both live to be just as ancient as Dumbledore, just you wait and see."

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"I'm officially ancient now," Dennis mutters, and he groans wearily as he settles himself on the ground beside the tombstone that bears his brother's name. He's 100 years old, but he won't let his age keep him from his yearly ritual. "You should be glad you never got this old. Dumbledore made it look much easier than it really is."

There are others scattered around the small graveyard, but not nearly as many as there had been in years past. The Ministry decided that those who had died defending Hogwarts in the castle's most epic battle in centuries deserved to be buried there, and so they created a graveyard on the grounds, surrounded it with flowers and tall hedges and stone benches, and made it a sort of tribute to the fallen. The first few years they had a ceremony beside the graveyard, and everyone would gather to mourn and to remember. When the ceremonies stopped, the people still came, and even 86 years later there are a few people scattered here and there, paying their respects to friends and siblings, sons and daughters, parents and grandparents and great-grandparents. Dennis has never missed a year.

"Harry's dead," he says simply, and he can't bring himself to feel sad over that because Harry had lived a long life...shorter than most, maybe, since he was a wizard, but perhaps it had been long enough for Harry, considering how hectic his life had been...and he had died a peaceful death. Besides, these days it seems like Dennis's friends are always dying. "It happened in February... I'm sorry I haven't been to visit since then." He falls silent, old memories playing through his mind.

"Do you remember Luna?" he asks suddenly, and pauses as though he expects an answer. "Her grandson just got married to Harry's granddaughter last week. The wedding was... odd. Very *Luna*, actually."

"Rosie's doing all right. She wanted to come with me, but she had a headache, so she stayed home. And the kids are okay. Bryan, Phillip's son, is starting Hogwarts this year... Maybe he'll stop by here to see you."

It looks as though it's going to rain, and Dennis can't think of anything else to say, so he struggles to his feet and faces the cold stone before him. The memory of a brave sixteen-year-old boy, of his older brother's warm smile, flits across his mind, and he thinks, *I still miss you, you know*, before turning away and hobbling down the familiar path to the Apparition point.