

Secrets of Shell Cottage

by x_dobby

We all saw what happened to Harry, Ron, and Hermione when they were at Shell Cottage, but Luna and Dean were there too. This is what I think they were doing.

Luna

Chapter 1 of 3

We all saw what happened to Harry, Ron, and Hermione when they were at Shell Cottage, but Luna and Dean were there too. This is what I think they were doing.

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One

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Luna

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I liked Hogwarts. Hogwarts was where I found friends. That may sound like a dreadfully unoriginal line, but it is the truth. And it always will be.

That day on the train, I was sitting talking to Neville about Daddy's latest investment in the Crumple-Horned Snorkack sighting in the Forest of Dean. "Really quite exciting," I said. "Daddy's printing a whole new article about it in the most recent *Quibbler*. Really great stuff... This is the breakthrough proof that really shows the world that Crumple-Horned Snorkacks are real!"

Neville nodded, looking down at a textbook in his lap. I wondered why: we had exceptionally little homework over Christmas break; why did he need to study now?

At last, the train pulled into King's Cross Station. I quickly gathered my things and was just stepping off the train when suddenly a rough hand covered my mouth and turned me on the spot. I tried to scream—I bit his hand, I really did—but it was as useless as trying to wave off a really determined Wrackspurt. He had me caught like a nargle in mistletoe. We Apparated into a dark, dank dungeon, and then he Disapparated before I could get a good look at him.

One thing I *did* notice, though, was the tattoo on his left arm: the one that had grabbed me. It was a rather odd thing to have tattooed on you, but to each his own. It was a skull that seemed to be vomiting up a snake—definitely not the sort of thing I would want put into my skin forever. His choice, though, I suppose.

Mr. Ollivander was in the prison with me, and soon we became friends. He's a rather nice man, you know, a little eccentric, and ~~very~~ kind. I liked talking to him, and when Dean Thomas joined us just a few months later, we had some stimulating discussions. Finally! Mr. Ollivander actually agrees with my on the topic of Crumple-Horned Snorkacks.

One day I will never, ever forget, though, was the day Harry Potter and his friends saved us. It was truly remarkable. I enjoyed every minute of the adrenaline high coursing

through my veins. But then that elf—oh, ye gods, that poor little elf, it was Dobbin or something, wasn't it? I just cried when I heard about his death. I sat in my bedroom at Shell Cottage and sobbed.

Anyway, that's where I am now—Shell Cottage. I'm sitting on my bed, staring out at the gloriously magnificent sunset. Oh, it is so breathtaking. It is streaked with deep red and gold colors, Gryffindor colors. I wonder if that's sign—that Harry will prevail over Voldemort. Oh, I do hope so. I do.

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Dinner tonight is spaghetti and Fleur's delicious, spicy meatballs. I can smell it. The sky is growing dark as the scent wafts upstairs. Through the thin wall, I hear Harry saying something to Griphook, that ill-tempered goblin—about a "sword". Sword? Who uses swords anymore? The only reason I can think of as to why Harry, Ron and Hermione would need a sword is to kill a Blibbering Humdinger—their bodily fluids are extremely beneficial to wizards—and why would they do that? Blibbering Humdingers are native only to Africa.

I get up and pace around my room. Shell Cottage really is lovely, I wonder how long we get to stay here. I hope it's a while. That would be marvelous. And I'd like to pay my respects to that poor little elf—the one who died saving us.

I finally walk downstairs for dinner. Mr. Ollivander is already seated at the table; Dean is just walking in as I am. Bill is by Fleur in the kitchen, and they're talking in low, hushed voices. I avert my gaze; I don't want them to think I'm eavesdropping.

I sit, stomach gurgling. I didn't eat a lot at lunch today; I just can't wait for Fleur's fantastic dinner. She really has a gift for cooking.

Dean suddenly sits next to me, and for some reason there's a tiny lurch in my chest. Acid reflux? No. What is it? He smiles at me with teeth as white as the moon, and I feel it again. I smile back, hoping there's nothing caught in my teeth.

Fleur sets out plates of the steaming spaghetti, and everyone digs in heartily. Ye gods, I was right: This is great. Better than great. Bill calls up the stairs for Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Griphook the goblin, then sits by Fleur and begins eating.

I'm suddenly acutely aware of Dean's presence next to me. My stomach roars for food, but I find myself being careful about my eating habits. I hope I don't slop spaghetti sauce down my chin or drop meatballs on the floor. Gods, would that be embarrassing. I twirl the spaghetti strings daintily, as I have seen other, more prim girls at Hogwarts do. But Dean isn't looking at me. He's focused down at his food, shoveling it in in that typical boy way.

Snap out of it, Luna, I tell myself. *What's wrong with you?* I finally begin to eat normally, and my stomach feels slightly better at this transition.

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During dessert, which is lovely peach ice cream topped with fresh strawberries, picked from the bushes out back, I catch Dean staring at me. My chest does that funny lurching thing again, and I'm startled. He's not staring at me in a *bad* way, just... looking. Curiously. Adoringly? No. Quiet, Luna. Damn those thoughts of yours.

But every time I look back, a flush spreads over his cheeks, and he looks down at his ice cream. A pang—is that disappointment?—stabs at me cruelly, but it's gone as quickly as it appears.

I never really noticed Dean at school. I mean, I knew he was there, and that he was in Gryffindor, and I saw him with Harry sometimes, and then in sixth year when he started dating Ginny Weasley (my... friend. Oh, I do love that). Maybe, in the back of my mind, I always thought he was a little cute... but I'm not one for dating. Boys usually think I'm dotty and barmy. Just for believing in Wrackspurts and Crumple-Horned Snorkacks—as if that's a good reason at all. I have my beliefs, and they have theirs. That's my take on the situation.

But anyway, I did harbor one crush over the years, but that was for Ron Weasley in fifth year. It only lasted a few months, though, and I'm quite glad, because it seems that he and Hermione Granger are going together now. I'd just get hurt if I still liked him—which I don't. I am unattached, floating in the breeze like a loose paper. Which is how I've always been, actually.

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Dean

Chapter 2 of 3

Dean thinks and comes up with a plan.

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Two

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Dean

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I was in hiding for a while. After they said Muggle-borns had to register, and me having no solid evidence of being a half-blood, I just ran for it. In the dead of night, I stole away with just a rucksack and the clothes I was wearing. I tried to do an Undetectable Extension Charm, but to no avail. I was never a genius wizard.

I hid out in the woods, as I'd heard of Harry Potter doing. I guess I'm not that great a camper, though, 'cause just a few days after I got there I was awoken to a man's footsteps outside my makeshift tent of three cloaks, a blanket, and a few sticks.

Scared witless, I lay on my bedding of blankets and pine branches in the pitch dark, just listening. "I think we've got a runaway, Ted," one man whispered in a raspy voice. "That it is, Dirk," another one replied.

Dirk? Ted? Somehow those names were familiar to me. But I just couldn't place them. I lay still, heart pounding, listening to them rustle round my campsite.

"They've got food," the one named Dirk said. "Whoever they are, they've got some food. Let's take it. I think this place is deserted anyway."

My heart surged. Not my food! I barely had any as it was, and I'm terribly useless at fishing and hunting. This was the final straw. I jumped out of the tent, brandishing my wand and shouting, "*Stupefy!*" The red jet of spell light missed the two tall, unshaven men, but the shock on their faces was enough. I pointed my wand at the taller of the two. "Who are you?"

"Ted Tonks, son. Don't be scared; we're just as wanted as you are."

I dropped my arm. Ted Tonks! That was it. I'd heard of him somewhere. And Dirk... Dirk must be....

"Dirk Cresswell?" I asked, turning to the second half of the pair.

He nodded. "Ted's a Muggle and I'm wanted for questioning about my family tree. You?"

I told them my story, and soon we were packing up my small amount of possessions so I could join them. They had a goblin in their party, too: his name was Griphook. But then we were captured and Ted and Dirk were tragically killed trying to save our lives. In Malfoy Manor, I spent a lot of time hiding my tears from Luna, Griphook, and Mr. Ollivander, who were there as well.

But then, Harry, Ron, and Hermione saved our lives. I don't think I'll ever forget that. It was amazing, bloody brilliant actually. They took us to Ron's brother's house: Shell Cottage. Which is where I am now, sitting at the dinner table reminiscing.

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I never paid much attention to Luna Lovegood. At first, it was understandable: Me being in Gryffindor, her in Ravenclaw, and me one year older as well. But as time wore on, I heard other students discussing a "Loony" Lovegood, and I knew they were talking about her. I really didn't want kids thinking I was a loony too. So I kept my distance.

In sixth year, I fell for Ginny Weasley. But that all ended with Harry Potter. I got over her, though, slowly. And now, when I should be in my seventh year, I'm instead helping Bill Weasley's wife, Fleur, clear dirty dishes from the table. I look over at Luna: she's standing at the window, staring out with her typical dreamy expression on her face. I wonder what she's thinking. Probably about Stampede-Horned Crumpnacks or whatever the hell it is she goes on about all day.

And yet... As a breeze from the open window wafts across her face, she looks almost radiant in the orange glow of the almost setting sun. A blond piece of hair is blown onto her forehead. I can't help but stare. Thank God she doesn't look up. She'd catch me gawking.

Snap out of it, Dean! I look away and begin drying the things Fleur has already washed. Fleur is okay, in my opinion: she's nice, a good cook, decent-looking too. But gun to my head, I'd pick Luna over Fleur. And not just because of the age difference and marital status, too.

Dean! Wait! What are you thinking, idiot? That's just Luna! Loony Lovegood! Shut up and STOP THINKING.

I do, but I know it's just a matter of time before those thoughts return.

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It's evening: late. The skies are crossed with black and blue beams of color. I'm lying in my bed in my room, hands folded under my head like a pillow, elbows sticking out. I just can't stop thinking about her. I don't know what this means, or why I'm thinking these thoughts.

I close my eyes, and the mental images cascade over me: Luna, sitting at the Ravenclaw table; Luna, reading *The Quibbler* on the school train; Luna, sitting at the dinner table at Shell Cottage, daintily eating peach ice cream; Luna, standing at the window, watching the sunset with a serenity nothing I've ever seen can match.

You've fallen, Dean. You've got it bad.

I nearly groan aloud. Who would have thought the day would come when I—Dean Thomas—would fall for Luna "Loony" Lovegood?

I roll over in bed, still thinking long and hard. What do I do? I've never been in love with someone so... different before. I want to spend more time with her, I do. I should, tomorrow. But what would the others say? Harry, Ron, Hermione?

But what about *Luna*? What if she doesn't like me back? What if I walk up to her and say, "Luna, I like you," and she just laughs and says, "HA, and they call ME loony," and walks away!?

God. I can't do this.

Yes. Yes I can. Buck up, Dean. Be a man.

Suddenly, I have an idea. A plan. Shell Cottage has a lot of beautiful scenery and Fleur loves gardening ('Fleur' in French is 'flower', after all). Tomorrow, I'll ass Luna if she wants to take a walk with me. And what happens, happens—that's it.

Finally satisfied, I roll back over and fall asleep.

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Luna & Dean

Chapter 3 of 3

The final chapter, where Luna and Dean take a walk. Kinda short, sorry. :[

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Three

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Luna

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Early morning is my favorite time of day. All's calm, all's quiet, all's peaceful. At Hogwarts, I used to get out of bed around five a.m. just to watch the sun rise. I'd pretend to wake with the others, of course, but those dewy mornings spent watching the sun rise—oh, they were my sanctuary.

Now, I'm standing at my bedroom window, the only light coming from the glowing bedside clock that reads 4:52 a.m.. Quiet snores echo throughout Shell Cottage.

I wonder what to do today. Nothing exciting seems to be happening here at Shell Cottage. If only something were. If only I could...

Do something with Dean.

The words appear before I can stop them.

I have to finally accept it. I'm in love with Dean Thomas. Why didn't I realize this before, at Hogwarts, anywhere...? Well, nothing I can do about it now. I wonder if he'll talk to me later. Gods, I hope so.

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Dean

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When is Luna coming down? Breakfast is almost ready! I can't lose my nerve. I can't, I can't, I just can't.

Fleur motions for me to sit down and dumps a bunch of toast and kippers on my plate. I know I'm not going to eat them, but she'd probably be insulted if I said so. It's nothing personal to her, I'm just not hungry.

Where's Luna?!

She was supposed to be down ten minutes ago. I hope she's okay. What if—

Oh, God, here she is.

She's walking down the stairs wearing jeans, a T-shirt and trainers, the perfect outfit for a walk in the garden. I'll ask her right after breakfast. Right after breakfast. Okay. I have a plan. Okay.

I begin eating breakfast.

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Luna

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I hope he notices me. No, I hope he doesn't. I don't want to do something stupid, but gods do I want him to look at me. He seems mesmerized by his kippers, though. Maybe he just really likes them.

Breakfast seems to finish in three seconds flat. I clear my plate, and Dean follows. Just as I'm about to walk back upstairs, he grabs my arm, and I feel a spark running up it—Electricity? Surprise? Adoration?

"L-Luna," he says in a quiet, shaky voice, "d-d-d'you want to go on a... a walk with me?"

Yes! Yes! I do! I do!

"Sure, Dean," I reply softly.

He nods, and his face splits into a wide grin. "Cool," he says, "let's go."

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Dean

+ ~ +

I walk down Fleur's garden path with Luna by my side. I have tingles everywhere, right down to my toes. What do I say next? Should I even talk at all? Should I hold her hand? Kiss her? Touch her?

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Luna

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I can't believe I'm actually walking with Dean. This is the definition of bliss. Will he hold my hand? Kiss me? Gods, I hope so.

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Dean

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I can't believe I'm actually about to do this, but I am. I stop walking, and so does Luna, looking confused at my sudden halt. I am, too, actually. What am I doing? I don't know anything about girls. Even with Ginny I didn't have such strong feelings for her as I do Luna right now.

"Hi," she says suddenly, and the spell is broken. I chuckle softly, being unsure of what to say back. But it's now or never.

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Luna

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What's Dean doing? He's leaning forwards. Wait. Oh, gods. Oh, gods! I—I can't believe this is happening! I lean forwards, too, and oh... gods... we're... almost... touching...

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Dean

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One more second...

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Luna

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This feels like an eternity...

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Dean

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Oh my God, our lips are touching, and we're actually *kissing*.

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Luna

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Oh *gods*, my first kiss and I'm SO glad it's with Dean. He's really a great kisser.

Finally, after two minutes or so, he pulls away and smiles at me. I smile back. I was wrong when I said walking with him was bliss ~~kissing~~ him was so much better.

"I really like you, Luna."

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Dean

+ ~ +

Did I just say that? The words slipped out without me thinking. I hope she says something of that sort back... I'm such a moron.

"I really like *you*, Dean," she replies, grinning wider.

God, I can't believe this. Do things this good really happen *to me*?

I lean in for round two, and she eagerly accepts. For a moment, I forget about the war, forget You-Know-Who, forget everything, and in a space of a moment, it's just me and Luna and no one else.

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