

The Opposite

by Alexis McCoy

The Terrific Trio's 6th year at Hogwarts turns into one away from the school as they receive training to become part of an elite group of wizards and witches. New powers are also discovered as well as new and unexpected friendships.

Prologue: Another Prophecy

Chapter 1 of 24

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Prologue: Another Prophecy

"A new prophecy, Albus? How can this be?" Professor Minerva McGonagall asked in a worried tone. They were attending a meeting of the Order of the Phoenix at Grimmauld Place. Sirius still entrusted the house to them to be used. Molly and Arthur Weasley were there along with Nymphadora Tonks, Alastor "Mad-Eye" Moody, Remus Lupin, and Professor Severus Snape. They all looked very tired and worried.

"I'm afraid so, Minerva. Sibyll Trelawney again had one of her moments when she was actually using the Sight. Amazingly enough, it involved two students and Voldemort," Dumbledore said. The old man looked even more tired and old than usual. You could practically tell he was weary. His last meeting with Harry hadn't gone well at all and he was sure the boy was still mad at him. At the sound of the Dark Lord's name, a sharp intake of breath was heard from Mrs. Weasley and Tonks.

"Three guesses which students," Mad-Eye Moody said.

"If you are referring to Harry, Alastor, then yes. But, the next student came as a complete shock to me. It is the Italian minister's granddaughter, Aurora Assante. She is supposed to be attending Hogwarts this year along with her sister, Neveah. Their father is to start work at the Ministry for the Department of International Affairs, as we can use all the help we can get in defeating Voldemort," Dumbledore said. Mrs. Weasley did not look happy at all.

"Why Aurora Assante?" Tonks asked.

"Well, Nymphadora, both her and Harry share a lot of things in common. They were both born in July on the exact same day at the exact same time. They also share a rare power. One has slightly some control of it while the other really doesn't know it exists, but will find out soon enough. Which one, it was not specified," The old man said. An awkward silence followed. Lupin looked at Tonks. Dumbledore was the only one she let call her by her first name.

"What course of action is to be taken, Dumbledore?" Lupin asked the most obvious question.

"We will continue the school year as planned. This is the Terrific Trio's sixth year, am I correct? As I understand it, three of your sons went off to get Harry, right, Arthur?" Dumbledore asked. Mr. Weasley nodded.

"Will you tell him, Albus? Potter has quite a temper when he is left out," McGonagall said. She'd seen Dumbledore's office after Hurricane Harry tore through it. It was

utterly unspeakable how many things had been smashed to pieces.

"In due time, Minerva. In due time. But for now, it is to stay a secret of the Order. This meeting is adjourned.

Chapter 1: The Assante Sisters

Chapter 2 of 24

Two new foreign girls with unique abilities are introduced to the trio. One is cool, calm, and collected while the other is loud, jovial, and brash.

Chapter 1: The Assante Sisters

Harry Potter, Ron Weasley, Hermione Granger, and Ginny Weasley walked down Diagon Alley, bags in hand. They all had changed in some way over the summer. Hermione had straightened what once was a bush of brown curls on her head. She was way more developed than before and looked more like a woman. Ron was at least 6'1" now and was more muscular. Harry, on the other hand, was two inches shorter than Ron and still wore his black rimmed glasses. He also was more muscular, as he'd taken up doing more and more exercising to take his mind off the events of last year. The greatest surprise of them all was that Ginny looked almost totally different. Her hair was now at her butt and in a long braid. She looked a little bit more womanly and Ron had gotten more protective of her.

"Let's go get something to drink. Besides, I need to rest my arms. These books that the new Defense teacher ordered us to buy are heavy," Hermione said. They all agreed and headed for the Leaky Cauldron. The quartet found a table in the corner and ordered some butterbeers.

"You know, I am actually looking forward to this school year," Ron said, taking a sip of his. Harry nodded. Ginny and Hermione looked at each other.

"Harry, why do I get the feeling that you're keeping something from us?" Hermione asked, her eyes boring into his. Harry looked sternly at her. The fact was he was keeping something from them. He'd never told them about the prophecy and up until that point, he hadn't thought about it at all.

"What makes you think that?" he asked.

"Well, for one, we heard about your temper tantrum in Dumbledore's office. We knew that it could only be the aftermath of what happened that night. Plus, I've known you for a while. I think I know when you're keeping something from us. Call it a woman's intuition," Hermione answered. Ron rolled his eyes.

"What if he doesn't want to tell us, Mione?" Ron asked pointedly. Hermione cut her eyes at him then her face softened when she realized what he'd just called her. Harry and Ginny seemed to notice also, but said nothing. Harry took a deep breath and sat back in his chair.

"Well, she's right, Ron. I have been keeping something from you, but up until now, I forgot that I knew it. I don't mind telling you, though." Harry took a deep breath and told them what the prophecy had said. A long awkward silence followed.

"So that means that only you can kill Voldemort?" Hermione asked. Harry nodded. He looked at Ginny and could tell that she was focusing on the last part by the look on her face. Ron was ahead of her, though.

"That last part said that eventually one of you will die, but you don't know who. Harry, that means that you could die," Ron said worriedly. Harry nodded again. Ginny still looked sullen.

"Yes, well, that is about the gist of it. Makes my life a lot easier, don't you think? At least now I partially know what I have to do. Listen, enough sulking. Let's go and visit Fred and George's joke shop, shall we?" They trekked to 93 Diagon Alley where it was packed with students from Hogwarts. Fred saw them first and ran over to greet them.

"I see business is going quite well," Ginny said, picking up a Skiving Snackbox. Fred smiled. He looked over the group. Hermione was eyeing all the students and shook her head.

"I can't believe you are condoning the deliberate use of these things, Fred. You and your brother should be ashamed of yourselves," she screeched. Ron and Fred both rolled their eyes. George walked up with a goody box and both Harry and Ron beamed.

"Well, Hermione, we were known as the troublemakers of Hogwarts. We're the only ones who gave Peeves a direct order and he followed it. We have the power to condone whatever we want and not hear it from anyone. This is for you all. This should last a couple of months. We can always send you more," George said happily.

"Thanks, you guys," Ron said, smiling. The box was filled with basically fifteen of everything they had in the store.

"I did not just see that," Hermione said, walking out of the store. She disapproved of almost anything Ron did since he was a prefect. Harry took his box, looking a little bit happier.

"Let's go to the broom shop. I want to see what the new brooms look like," Ron said. The rest of them followed him. In the store, Ron was eyeing the Nimbus 2002. Harry noticed this and thought of what he was going to get him for his 17th birthday.

When the time came, the Weasleys and Harry said good-bye to Hermione and went their separate ways.

The next day, the quartet sat on the train when two girls walked up to the compartment door. One had honey-colored hair and blue eyes. The other had black hair and greenish-gray eyes. They were both extremely beautiful girls and looked too old to be first-years, although they were definitely new. The one with blue eyes smiled at them.

"Do you mind? Everywhere else is full?" she asked. Ginny shook her head and the two sat down. The one with dark hair looked at Harry and Harry felt something in his mind, but the girl immediately looked away from him. She found a point outside the window quite interesting.

"I'm Neve, by the way. Neve Assante. We're from Meloni, the wizarding school in Italy. I'm a fifth-year," she said, still smiling. She had almost perfect teeth and seemed a bit more forward than what appeared to be her sister.

"Meloni? I've heard of that school. I'm Hermione Granger. That's Ron Weasley, Ginny Weasley, and Harry Potter," Hermione said, also smiling. Neve nodded. Harry looked

at the dark-haired one.

"What's your name?" he asked. The girl looked up at him, but not necessarily at him. She seemed to be doing the same thing that Dumbledore had done to him the previous year: never looking directly in his eyes but always at some point over his shoulder.

"I'm Aurora Assante. I'm a sixth-year. We received letters saying we were in Gryffindor. Is that a house of some sort?" Aurora asked. She had a raspy voice that suited her exotic look well.

"Yes, it is. We're all in Gryffindor, too. All of us are sixth-years, except Ginny. She's a fifth-year. Why'd you transfer?" Ron asked. Aurora and Neve both looked at each other.

"Our father now works for your Ministry on our grandfather's orders. He's the Minister for Magic in Italy. Our grandmother is Headmistress at Meloni. Our brothers stayed with them and our mother," Neve said. The rest of them nodded.

"What department is he in?" Ron asked.

"The Department of International Affairs. He wouldn't tell us why. He seems to be leaving out a lot of things. Especially why we couldn't stay at Meloni with our brothers," Aurora said.

"Yeah, I know how it feels to be left in the dark," Harry said darkly. Everyone looked at him. He never forgave Dumbledore and really wanted nothing more to do with the old man. The train came to a stop and they all stood. Harry finally came eye-to-eye with Aurora. For a moment, he felt as though he could feel her in him as if they were one person, but then she turned away. He gazed after as she left the compartment.

"What's wrong, mate? I know she's pretty, but you don't have to stare that hard," Ron said, chuckling. Harry punched him playfully in the arm.

"That's not it, Ron. There's something weird about that girl. I just can't quite place it," Harry said, nearly whispering the last part. Ron looked at him.

"What do you mean?" he asked as they walked a safe distance from the chattering four girls.

"It was strange. I caught her eye, but only for a moment. Looking in them made me feel...vulnerable and weak," Harry answered. Ron looked at him skeptically.

"Mate, that what pretty girls tend to do. That's what Her--" Ron stopped himself. Harry looked at him with a sly look on his face. Ron seemed to be interested in straightening his prefect badge. Harry decided not to address what Ron was apparently trying to hide.

"Yeah, but somehow this was different than just looking at a beautiful girl, Ron."

At the feast, Aurora was determinedly avoiding Harry's eyes. She was talking to Ginny. Hermione interrupted his thoughts when she noticed him staring at the two girls.

"So which one is it, Harry? Ginny or Aurora?" she asked, not looking at him. Harry looked across the table at Hermione.

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you're obviously interested in one of them. So, which one is it?"

"Uh...Ginny, I suppose," he whispered so that Ron couldn't hear him. Harry'd fancied Ginny for some time now, but hadn't gotten up the nerve to tell her that. He'd felt a little saddened when she said she'd found a new boyfriend and her crush on Harry was just about gone.

"What were you two whispering about on the train?"

"You heard us?" Ron asked with a mouth full of bread. Hermione made a very disgusted face.

"Chew your food before you talk, Ronald. You two aren't very good at whispering at all. Now, what was it you were talking about?" Hermione asked again. Ron looked at Harry.

"Aurora. There's something very strange about her," Harry said. Hermione sighed.

"How thick can you two get? You've known the girl thirty minutes and already you're calling her strange. What's so weird about her? I think she's a splendid person. Both of them are very nice," Hermione said in a disapproving voice.

"Have you looked directly into her eyes?" Harry asked. Hermione gave him a strange look.

"Yes, but she's never looked directly back at me. Always at some point over my shoulder..." Hermione drifted off. She looked up at Ron and Harry, who were giving her dubious looks. Hermione sighed. "So what?"

"Then try it. See what happens," Harry said and returned to his food. That's when Dumbledore stood and McGonagall tapped her goblet. The Great Hall quieted almost instantly.

"Welcome, students. I only have one announcement this year. First, let me introduce you to your new teacher for Defense Against the Dark Arts. This is Professor Catriona Onsu. She will also be teaching Dueling to fifth through seventh years. Now without further interruption, please continue to enjoy our delightful meal," Dumbledore said. The talking resumed. Harry looked at the new teacher.

Catriona Onsu was a relatively young woman. She wore all black robes and had bone-straight black hair. It covered one eye. The eye he did see was very narrow. If Harry were a Muggle and saw this woman on the street, he'd think she was a witch anyway. Amazingly, she looked almost as mean as Snape.

"We're being forced to learn to duel?" Ginny asked.

"Considering the time we're living in, I think it's a splendid idea, Weasley," a snide and almost irritating voice said. Ginny cringed and turned to see the one person she truly despised standing over her: Draco Malfoy. He wasn't with his two cronies, Crabbe and Goyle.

"What do you want, Malfoy?" Ron asked, squeezing his fork almost to the point where it flew out of his hand. Draco cut his eyes at him.

"I've come to call a truce between Potter and me. I am definitely not trying to be your friend, Potter. I just don't want to be your enemy," Draco said, sounding weary. Harry, Ginny, Ron, Neville, and Hermione all looked at him like he'd grown wings and sprouted a halo.

"What?" Harry managed to croak. Draco sighed, obviously not wanting to elaborate on the reason why.

"My father is an idiot. I don't want to be a Death Eater for I take no pleasure in watching people being tortured. Plus, he's in Azkaban and I want nothing more to do with him or my mother. With him gone, I'm the master of the house and I have the ability to lock my mother out. Unless my father changed that..." Draco said quietly. He scanned the table and saw the most beautiful girl he'd ever seen sitting across from Ginny.

"Well, okay," Harry said, holding out his hand. Draco shook it then was off, still looking at Aurora. Aurora was still staring at him also. She blushed a little. Hermione noticed

this display of affection by the two.

"Who was that?" Aurora asked a little breathlessly. Ginny and Hermione exchanged bewildered looks. They both had to admit that Draco Malfoy in no way was ugly and possibly the best looking boy in Slytherin. But, he was also a complete and total arse.

"That blonde arsehole is none other than Draco Malfoy. Although he isn't too bad as far as looks go..." Ginny said disdainfully. Harry nearly choked on his food.

"AKA: The Scum of the Universe," Ron added.

"I think he is great," Aurora said, still looking dreamily in his direction. Harry rolled his eyes.

"Do you think you can trust Malfoy, Harry?" Neville asked.

"Yes," both Harry and Aurora said. They both looked at each other and Harry got that feeling again, but Aurora immediately looked down at her plate. Ron frowned.

"Why?" he asked. His question was directed toward Aurora more than Harry. Aurora continued to stare down at her plate.

"I just know," was all she said.

Chapter 2: Catriona Onsu

Chapter 3 of 24

The new DADA teacher shows what she's all about.

Chapter 2: Catriona Onsu

The very next day, the group walked into the large room that Professor Onsu had made her own. It had a dueling stage in the middle of it and desks in front of the stage. All the students sat, looking around. The class had been in session for nearly ten minutes, and Onsu had yet to make an appearance.

"Where the hell is she?" Neve asked, looking around. Sure enough, Onsu was still nowhere in sight.

"I haven't the foggiest," Harry said, shrugging. He wondered how this teacher was going to be. Umbridge certainly made no progress with them in the previous year. Then the clanging of a door shutting was heard. The class turned in their seats to see Professor Onsu walking up. She had white robes on today and they clashed against her black hair. It was still covering one eye. She had her lips pursed tightly. Gliding past the students, they all caught of a whiff of what smelled like peppermint. She stepped up on the dueling stage and looked out at the students. The class had been silent thus far. They all watched her with wide eyes.

"Welcome. I am Catriona Glenys Onsu. Since you are so old, I expect you to behave accordingly. Now, in addition to learning to defend yourselves against the Dark Arts, I will teach you how to duel. This is an effort to prepare you in case the time comes for you to do so. Now, I consider myself to be an overall enjoyable person, but I will not tolerate any silly incantations or hexes thrown about the room. As well as those little joke thingies from that shop at Diagon Alley. I expect nothing but the best from all of you. Who wants to be the first to give an example of dueling?" she asked. Her voice was relatively deep for a woman so small.

"I would," a raspy voice said. The class turned to see Aurora with her hand up. Onsu nodded and Aurora stood up.

"What's your name, young lady?"

"Aurora Assante."

"Well, Miss Assante, choose another," Onsu said, waving her hand. Aurora looked around the room and chose Millicent Bulstrode. The large girl stood and smiled. They both walked up to the stage and looked at one another.

"Well, have at it when I clap," Onsu said. The girls nodded. Onsu's clap came unexpectedly.

"*Tarantallegra!*" Millicent yelled. Aurora dodged to the side and Millicent frowned.

"*Expelliarmus!*" Aurora yelled. The spell hit an unexpectant Millicent and she went flying backwards. The class made an awed sound. Onsu clapped again.

"A great demonstration, girls. Please take your seats. You all know of the Unforgivable Curses, right?" Onsu asked as Aurora and Millicent went back to their seats. It appeared that Millicent had marked Aurora as her enemy by the way she was staring. Aurora was smiling smugly as she sat down next to her sister. Neve clapped her on the back.

"Excellent, but I think you've made a new enemy," she said. Aurora looked over at Millicent, who was fuming in her direction. Aurora caught her eye and Millicent looked shocked and looked away. Aurora smiled again, then turned her attention back to Onsu. Hermione had raised her hand.

"Yes, Miss..."

"Granger, Hermione Granger. The Unforgivable Curses are the Cruciatius Curse, the Imperius Curse, and the Killing Curse, Avada Kedavra," she said.

"That is correct, Miss Granger. Twenty points to Gryffindor. Now, there is a way to block two of these curses. The Imperius Curse is the easiest, yet it is still difficult to do so. One must have an impeccably strong will and mind to do so. Normally, when you are a subject to this curse, a voice in your head is telling you to do whatever it is that the person giving the curse wants you to do. The problem is that you do have a choice. It is a relatively painful thing and very tiring, but it is worth it. The Cruciatius Curse is a little bit more complicated. Normally, I would just say dive to the side or something. Most people do just that in order to avoid being hit with it. But, if you are strong enough, you can reverse the path of this curse. To do so, you must be Soliopath. Does anyone know what a Soliopath is?" Onsu asked. This time, Draco's hand went up.

"Malfoy, Draco Malfoy. A Soliopath is someone who can practice Soliopathy. Soliopathy is the ability to do magic without a wand," Draco said. Onsu nodded.

"Correct. Twenty points to Slytherin. A partial Soliopath can't do it. But, if you are a full Soliopath and trained, you can do it with any spell, except the Imperius Curse and Avada Kedavra. This curse is probably the only curse that no one has successfully blocked. It's not like you can just throw it at someone and see if they block it. I guess

that's one of the reasons that it is impossible for you to block. But, there is a way to do so. Everything has an opposite. No one has found it yet. Well, does anyone else want to duel?" Onsu said. Ron and Neville's hands went up. "You two. Let's go," Onsu said.

At lunch, Ginny was playing Harry in chess. Hermione sat down next to them and opened a very large book.

"What's that?" Ron asked. Hermione looked up and saw he was stuffing his face with two sandwiches and rolled her eyes.

"This book is on the Dark Arts. I want to see if I can find a way to block the Killing Curse."

"But how would anyone know how to block it if no one's ever survived it while trying?" Harry asked. Hermione shrugged.

"I don't know. It says here that the curse can only work if the person throwing it really wants that person's life to end. Meaning that if you were to throw it at Ron, it would merely disintegrate into nothing," Hermione said. Ron and Harry looked at each other.

"I would hope that would happen. Not that I'd ever throw it at you, mate," Harry said jovially.

"I would bloody well hope not," Ron said. Ginny giggled.

"Why do you think we can trust Malfoy, Harry?" Ginny asked. Everyone looked at Harry as she asked this question. Harry looked up from the chessboard.

"Well, I just felt something in him. When I saw his eyes, I knew he was telling the truth. I can't really explain it," Harry said. Ginny squinted at him. Her knight was currently involved in a very violent tussle with Harry's pawn. It seemed that the pawn was winning, although it was Ginny's move.

"Apparently, so did Aurora. Aw, come on! It's just a bloody pawn!" Ginny yelled. Harry stiffened at the sound of Aurora's name. Ginny noticed this. Little did Harry know, but Ginny felt the same way about him. Her face darkened a little as he did this. She looked back down at the chessboard. Finally, the pawn was thrown off the board and the knight dusted himself off and mounted his horse again. Hermione rolled her eyes as Neve walked up with Neville.

"You're never going to believe this," she said.

"What?" Harry asked absent-mindedly.

"I think that Malfoy boy is a bit taken with my sister."

"Malfoy? Fancying your sister? This I gotta see to believe," Ron said. Neve smiled and pointed over her shoulder. The rest of them looked over by the wall. Sure enough, Draco was apparently sweet-talking Aurora because her tanned skin was flushed so that she looked almost as red as Ginny's hair. Then it dawned on Hermione.

"Neve, you're hair is black," she stated. Neve turned back around to face her.

"Well, yeah. I'm a Metamorphmagus. Runs in the family. I got tired of it being honey, so I changed it to black. Aurora is jealous of me about it." She smiled, running a hand through her hair.

Around Halloween, a very strange thing happened in Potions. Snape was being even harder on Harry and apparently hadn't forgiven him for what he'd seen in the Pensieve. In Potions, Aurora was Harry's partner. She still fancied Draco and they were always whispering to each other and making eyes. Aurora added too much spider blood in the cauldron. It exploded just as Snape was passing by and red liquid was all over him. Harry had to immediately look down to keep from laughing. Aurora, on the other hand, looked absolutely mortified. Snape had grown a particular distaste for her also, since she was blowing things up on a regular basis.

"Bugger," she said quietly.

"Idiot girl! Stop being so bloody careless!" he yelled. Aurora sank back in her seat a little. She seemed to be on the verge of crying.

"I am very sorry, Professor Snape," she practically whispered. Harry frowned. Aurora wasn't one to express her feelings very often.

"Sorry isn't good enough. Twenty points from Gryffindor," he said. Harry made a noise, then stood up.

"For what? Making a mistake in class? That's not fair! I don't see you taking points from Slytherin when those imbeciles Crabbe and Goyle foul up their potion!" Harry said, standing abruptly. Snape turned his head to look at him.

"Watch it, Potter. I am definitely not in the mood to deal with you," Snape said. Harry still stared at him. "Take your seat, Potter," Snape said. Harry continued to stand. He felt a burning sensation somewhere behind his eyes. The next thing that happened came as a shock to both Snape and Harry. Snape's robes caught on fire without warning.

"Professor, you're on fire!" Seamus yelled. Snape looked down and saw that his black robes were indeed on fire. Harry continued to stare at him, not bothering to help. The flames only grew worse, even with Seamus and Snape's attempts to put it out. Aurora closed her eyes and the flames immediately extinguished leaving a very confused Seamus and Snape. The bell rang as Harry blinked and Aurora immediately pulled him off. In the hall, Ron and Hermione caught up with them.

"What the bloody hell happened in there? Harry did you use magic on Snape?" Ron asked, a little winded. He had a gleam of hope in his eyes. Hermione rolled her eyes.

"He couldn't have possibly done it, Ron. Harry didn't have his wand out. Right?" Hermione looked at Harry expectantly. Harry looked at Aurora, who was finding a spot on her robes very interesting. She looked up into his eyes.

'Not yet,' a voice that sounded just like Aurora's said in Harry's mind. Harry blinked and looked back at Hermione.

"Hermione's right. My wand was in my robes," Harry said. Hermione smiled and put her nose in the air.

"See, Ronnie. I told you he didn't do it," she said, then stalked off with Aurora. Harry faced Ron, who was turning a bit red.

"Ronnie? Since when do you two have pet names for each other?" Harry asked. Ron looked at him with his mouth hanging open.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Ronnie and Mione. That's what I'm talking about, you arse," Harry said laughing. Ron hit him on the side of his head.

"Shut up. Let's go. Onsu will eat us alive if we're late," Ron said and Harry followed him, leaving the subject alone, for now.

In class, Onsu finished giving the class notes. She turned around to face them.

"Let's see. I want Potter and Malfoy up here now," she said. Harry exchanged looks with Ron. Ron shrugged and Harry made his way to the dueling stage.

"This oughta be a sight for sore eyes," Ron said. Hermione looked at him.

"He said that he didn't want to be our enemy," she argued. Ron looked at her like she'd grown horns and a tail.

"Are you fucking daft Mione? That did NOT under ANY circumstances mean that he is our best friend, either," Ron said. Hermione rolled her eyes, but touched Ron's hand as he turned his attention back to the stage. He smiled a little. Aurora and Ginny watched the two boys stare intently at each other. Even though they were not enemies anymore, they still didn't like each other in any way. Onsu clapped.

All sorts of hexes and curses went flying across the room. Harry had to admit, Draco was pretty good. He was nowhere near what Harry could do, but good nonetheless.

"*Expelliarmus!*" Draco yelled. Harry flew backwards and dropped his wand. Draco, not really caring what Onsu said, sent another hex at Harry as he stood, looking obviously peeved.

Harry felt that burning behind his eyes again as the hex got closer. It was a rather powerful hex. It stopped in midair and hovered for a moment. It then reversed its path and headed straight for Draco, who just stood there, a bit shocked. The next thing that happened was a complete and total shock to everyone in the room. Aurora jumped in front of Draco and put her hand out. The hex seemed to hit a wall that rippled. It was a very strange thing. Onsu watched this with interest and the rest of the class looked shocked.

Harry blinked and the fire behind his eyes disappeared. He stood staring at Aurora, wondering how he'd done what he'd done and how she'd done what she'd done. The class was in silence until Onsu broke it, causing everyone to visibly jump.

"Potter, Assante, follow me," she said. Aurora and Harry looked at each other then followed swiftly, eager to get away from the stares of the class.

Chapter 3: The Magi

Chapter 4 of 24

An elite group of witches and wizards are introduced to the group and a proposition is made for special training.

Chapter 3: The Magi

Ron and Hermione looked back at Draco, who was mumbling a selection of very colorful phrases. Ginny and Neville looked utterly shocked. The only one who looked remotely calm and collected was Neve. She was filing her nails.

"What the hell was that about?" Ron asked.

"What I want to know is how they both managed to do that," Hermione said. Neve sighed, making her presence known.

"I thought it would be obvious. Especially from what Aurora told me about your Potions class today," she said. Everyone looked at her. Draco had made his way over to the table. He put his hand down in front of Neve, who stopped filing her nails. She looked up at Draco.

"How did your sister do that?" he demanded, looking infuriated. Neve frowned at him. She'd grown a particular distaste for three things at Hogwarts: Peeves the poltergeist, Arithmancy, and Draco Malfoy. She didn't care if he was her sister's boyfriend.

"My sister is a Soliopath and a telepath. Apparently, so is Harry. The difference between the two is that Aurora is a little more in control of hers. Harry, I guess, is probably just realizing he has this ability. Soliopathy runs in my family along with numerous other things. I guess you can say we are just a gifted bunch. Telepathy isn't as prominent in my family, but my grandmother was once a Seer before she became headmistress of Meloni."

"Where do you think Onsu's taking them?" Ginny asked. Ron and Hermione shrugged.

"Probably to Dumbledore's office," Draco snorted distastefully. Hermione rolled her eyes. She'd become exceptionally good at that.

"I hope they're not in trouble," Ginny said. Ron stood up. He began moving towards the door. Hermione, Neville, Neve, Ginny, and Draco followed him with their eyes.

"And where do you think you're going?" Hermione asked.

"To follow them." And with that Ron was gone. Hermione sighed and ran after him along with Draco, Neve, Ginny, and Neville.

"And you call yourself a prefect," Hermione growled. Ron sighed.

Onsu stopped in front of the entrance to Dumbledore's office. Harry and Aurora still had blank looks on their faces.

"Ferret feces," Onsu said. Aurora made a face at the new password for his office. The gargoyle hopped aside, revealing the stone staircase. Onsu began walking up it and the two students followed. Onsu knocked on the door.

"Come in," a merry voice said. Onsu entered with the two students.

"Good afternoon, Headmaster," Onsu said. Harry still had an aversion towards Dumbledore and believed he would for the rest of his life if he could help it.

"Good afternoon, Catriona. What brings you to my office?" Dumbledore asked jovially. He sounded so unusually happy. Onsu stepped aside, revealing Aurora and Harry. Dumbledore looked directly at Harry, which shocked the latter. "Ah, Harry and Aurora. What is the trouble?"

"These two seem to have the ability to do wandless magic, Headmaster," Onsu said disdainfully. Dumbledore surveyed the two students intently. Harry wondered what was so bad about being able to stop a curse without using your wand.

"Ah, I see. Catriona, leave me with them," Dumbledore said. Onsu nodded and left the room, heading back to her class.

Down in the hallway, Ron noticed Onsu coming down the stairs. He told the other five to hide behind the wall. Onsu passed them. They then found themselves staring up at

the gargoyle.

"Bugger!" Ron said. Hermione eyed him.

"What's wrong?" she asked.

"I don't know the bloody password," he said. Draco sighed.

"Chocolate Frogs! Skiving Snackboxes! Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans! Sherbet Lemon! Cockroach Cluster..." Ginny yelled everything she could think of. The gargoyle remained unmoved. It appeared to be mocking them.

"Nice try," Neve said, snickering. Ginny rolled her eyes and crossed her arms.

"Knowing Dumbledore, it'd probably be something like ferret feces," Draco said, crossing his arms. The gargoyle sprang to life and the other five looked at him.

"Ferret feces? You've got to be kidding me," Neville said.

"I was only kidding," Draco said, looking very confused. Ron led the other five up the stairs. The stopped at the door to listen.

"You might as well come in, Mr. Weasley," Dumbledore said. Ron's ears turned red as he opened the door. The six of them filed in. Harry and Aurora smiled. Draco immediately went over to where she was. Neve made a disgusted face and rolled her eyes at their display of affection.

"Sorry, Professor Dumbledore. We didn't mean to pry," Ron said.

"No, Mr. Weasley. You didn't mean to get caught prying. It's quite alright, though. I expect that whatever I was going to tell Harry and Aurora was eventually going to get to you all anyway. Now, back to business. There is no need to think you are in trouble. Please, have a seat all of you." Dumbledore conjured up some chairs and they all sat. "Now, what happened? Aurora, tell me first."

"Well, Professor, Harry was battling--" She began but Dumbledore cut her off.

"No. From the beginning, Miss Assante," he said. By Aurora's intake of breath, Harry knew she'd known what exactly had happened.

"Well, first, Harry sort of set Professor Snape on fire while trying to take up for me in Potions," she blurted out. Dumbledore nodded then turned his attention to Harry. Harry stared right back at him.

"And, Harry, how did you accomplish this feat?"

"I...don't know." That was the honest truth. Harry didn't know how he'd managed to do what Aurora said he did.

"Did you feel anything, think anything?" Dumbledore asked, intertwining his long fingers. Harry looked down.

"I felt a kind of heat behind my eyes. I was thinking that I would not like to see anything more than Snape burning in hell."

"**Professor** Snape, Harry. Then what happened?" Dumbledore asked in a placid voice. Harry sighed and made a face. Dumbledore figured he would do that. He could tell Harry was still highly pissed at him.

"Professor Snape's robes set on fire. I felt a kind of coldness behind my eyes and I shut them. Then the flames extinguished and the bell rang. In Professor Onsu's class, Harry and Draco were dueling," Aurora said. Dumbledore nodded, then looked at Draco.

"Did you say anything to provoke Harry, Draco?" he asked in a voice telling Draco that he was not accusing him of anything.

"No. I did manage to disarm him, though. I attacked him while he was down and he reversed the hex I threw at him. That's when Aurora jumped in front of me and blocked it with a sort of wall she put up with her arm. Then Potter blinked. It seemed like he was in a trance when he did what he did. It was almost like when he talked to that snake a couple of years ago," Draco said, crossing his arms. Dumbledore nodded again. He sat back in his chair and thought for a moment while everyone else was silent.

"Harry, Aurora, you both are Soliopaths. It is very rare and most common among women. I'm sure that Catriona told you what they are. Aurora, it seems that you have learned to control yours somewhat while Harry, you are just realizing that you have it. There is also something else that I must share with you. But first..." Dumbledore scribbled something on a piece of parchment and gave it to Fawkes, his phoenix. "Take this to Professor Onsu for me, please." The eight students looked utterly confused.

"What is it, Professor?" Aurora asked when Fawkes was gone.

"Well, another prophecy was made over the summer," Dumbledore said, removing his half moon spectacles and rubbing his eyes. Harry looked at Dumbledore at the mention of another prophecy.

"Let me guess; I'm involved," he said, sounding somewhat annoyed. Dumbledore nodded.

"The stranger thing is that so is Miss Assante here. It's on you, Aurora, and Voldemort." Dumbledore put his spectacles back on.

"Me? How, Professor?" Aurora said, slightly alarmed. Draco frowned, not liking the idea of her being in harm's way.

"The prophecy states that you, Harry, will need Aurora's help in order to defeat Voldemort. How, it does not specify," Dumbledore said.

"How can I possibly help Harry? He seems to be more capable to do it himself from the stories I have heard," Aurora said. Dumbledore nodded.

"Everything has an opposite, as I'm sure you already know. Just like everything that has a beginning has an end. The same applies to people. Every witch or wizard has a virtual opposite. Most people never meet theirs. I personally have never met mine. You two are opposites, Harry and Aurora. Because of this, the two of you together pose a greater threat to Voldemort than you can possibly imagine. You are like fire and water, so to speak. In order to be truly rid of you, Harry, Voldemort has to kill Aurora as well," Dumbledore said rather slowly. Neve gasped and clasped her hands over her mouth. She didn't like the thought of her sister dying.

"So now Aurora's on the 'hunted' list? Bloody hell! When does this end!" Harry yelled, throwing his hands up. Hermione and Ginny flinched at his outburst. Dumbledore made no move to reprimand Harry about his language, as he was sure that if he was in Harry's position that he'd act the exact same way. He instead sighed very deeply.

"You two especially are going to need special training. There is a group of witches and wizards that are ranked higher than Aurors and are highly secretive about their existence. They are called upon only in the most desperate of times. They are called the Magi. You could say that they are the cream of the crop, the crème de la crème of the wizarding world. They use magic, weapons, and hand-to-hand combat to achieve the goal. They even use Muggle weapons. I was hoping that we could've at least made it to Christmas without having to send you on your way, but under the circumstances..." Dumbledore said.

"So you want us to become a..." Harry began.

"A Magus for you, Harry. Aurora would be a Magas. Professor Onsu is a Magas and a very good one indeed. That is one of the reasons I appointed her. Mainly to watch over you and Aurora, though, Harry."

"Professor, you are going to send Harry and Aurora away?" Hermione asked.

"Yes. But, the reason you all are here is because I was hoping that I would not have to send these two alone. I think they both work better in groups anyway. I'm sure that Harry and Aurora wouldn't mind if you six joined them. But, it is purely and solely your choice," Dumbledore said, a twinkle in his eye.

"I'm all for it," Ron said without hesitation. There was absolutely no thought process. Ginny and Hermione nodded also. Neve and Neville nodded and so did Draco. Dumbledore smiled.

"Well, Harry and Aurora, you are certainly loved." That was when Onsu walked in with four others: two males and two females. The students turned to look at them. "Ah, Professor Onsu, welcome back. Catriona, if you would be so kind as to take this note to the head house-elf Dobby. He'll know what to do." Dumbledore handed Onsu a note and she left. The other four stayed.

"Students, these are four of the Magi: Aislin Douglas, Fionnula Onsu, Sloan Bowen and Drake Onsu. Fionnula and Drake are the siblings of Professor Onsu. Aislin and Sloan are great Magi in their own rights. They will be your trainers," Dumbledore said. Harry examined the other adults.

Aislin Douglas was a slender woman with platinum blonde hair much like Draco's and blue eyes. Her robes were all red. She looked like a very pleasant person, given what her job was. Fionnula Onsu was Catriona Onsu's twin sister. They looked exactly alike except that Fionnula's hair was much shorter and it covered her left eye. She also wore red robes. Sloan Bowen was very tall and muscular. He towered over everyone. He wore black robes. Drake Onsu was obviously older than the twins, but no less scary-looking. He had narrow eyes just like them and dark hair. He glared down his robes at the teenagers.

"It is done, Headmaster," Catriona Onsu said as she walked back in the office. Dumbledore nodded and rose from his seat. He picked up a trophy of some sort and whispered something. Harry assumed he'd just made it into a Portkey.

"Uh, Professor, what about our things and our parents?" Ginny asked.

"Owls have been sent concerning this, young Miss Weasley. They all gave their permission. See, I have been planning this since the summer. Your possessions have already been sent, thanks to Dobby. This Portkey is to an undisclosed location far from the school. No one but these four and I will know where you are. All of you grab hold. Good luck," Dumbledore said. The students crowded around the trophy and all grabbed hold.

Chapter 4: Training Day

Chapter 5 of 24

The students begin their training away from Hogwarts.

Chapter 4: Training Day

Harry looked around the new room he was standing in. It was virtually empty. Looking around, they saw the four adults appear moments later. The two men and Fionnula left. Aislin looked towards them and smiled. She was definitely the friendliest.

"Welcome, students. As you've already been informed, you are here to learn to become Magi. I am Aislin and you can call me that. I am a Magas and a damn good one if I do say so myself. I am a Soliopath like Mr. Potter and Miss Assante. Catriona informed me. I specialize in Soliopathy and the use of medical charms. Fionnula specializes in telepathy and Muggle weaponry. Sloan specializes in magical weaponry and various defensive techniques. Drake is excellent at combat the old-fashioned way. Now, there is food in the kitchen. After you eat, you may do as you please. Make sure you get some sleep. You have a VERY long day ahead of you." And with that, Aislin was gone.

Ron immediately began walking towards the kitchen. The other three boys followed. Hermione sighed.

"Leave it to the boys to go for the food first. I want to explore first. Who's with me?" Hermione asked. The rest of the girls nodded and were off. They were apparently in a large castle somewhere in the countryside. The castle looked very old and smelled that way also.

"I don't know about you all, but this place gives me the creeps," Neve said. Ginny nodded in agreement.

"It is so depressing. There is almost no color except gray," Aurora said.

In the kitchen, the guys were eating ferociously fast. No words were passed between them. Then Ron sat back.

"So, Malfoy. I see you fancy Aurora. I honestly don't know what she sees in a prick like you," Ron said, eating a dinner roll. Harry and Neville looked at Draco, waiting to see his reaction.

"It's no different from what Granger apparently sees in you," he said slyly. Harry and Neville turned their heads to Ron, who looked dumbfounded.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Oh, come off it! It's so bloody obvious, Weasley. You and Granger practically melt into each other when you're not rowing," Draco said. Harry straightened up in his chair.

"It's really not that hard to notice, Ron. I mean, she calls you Ronnie and you call her Mione. You two slip up every time. Just tell me one thing," Harry said, biting into a chicken leg. Ron looked at him.

"What?"

"What took you so damn long?" Harry asked. Neville laughed and Draco smirked. Ron threw a dinner roll at Harry as the girls walked in. They then were hushed. The girls exchanged weird glances as they grabbed plates and sat down next to the boys.

"Malfoy, pass me the damn gravy," Ron said, obviously a bit steamed. Ginny sighed as she sat down next to Harry.

"By all means, don't stop being civil to each other just because we walked in." Ginny said.

"Piss off, Ginevra," Ron said snidely. Ginny scoffed.

"Same to you, Ronald," Ginny said. Harry looked at Ginny.

"Ginevra? Your real name is Ginevra?" he asked, looking shocked.

"Ginevra Weasley. You mean to tell me you thought my real name was Ginny?" Ginny asked Harry. Harry blushed a little.

"To tell you the truth...yeah, I kinda did," he said. Ginny and Ron laughed.

"How thick could you get?"

The next morning, Harry jumped awake as someone very large opened their door. He turned over and noticed that it was still dark outside.

"Get up," the figure simply said. Harry sat up and looked over at the chair across from his bed. A black outfit sat there with a belt and heavy looking boots. He sighed and got dressed.

Downstairs, eight very hacked off and tired looking teenagers stood. The girls wore red and the guys wore black. The four Magi stood there, looking as if this was a sane hour to be awake at.

"Good morning, my little rays of sunshine!" Aislin said loudly and giddily. The eight of them all glared at her.

"What's so good about it? What time is it anyway?" Neve asked. Fionnula glared at her. She could already tell she was going to hate this child.

"It's just past four in the morning. I believe Aislin informed you that this was going to be a very long day. You have a lot to learn in a short amount of time. Maybe tonight you'll realize the importance of sleep," Fionnula said. She sounded just like her sister. Neve made a face at the woman. You could practically see the lightning crackling between the two.

"Why are we up so bloody early?" Draco asked.

"Training begins today. Also, we have a couple of minor things to take care of." Up until now, Aislin and Drake had been hiding their hands behind their backs. They pulled them out, revealing scissors and razors. The girls all looked mortified. Especially Ginny, who grabbed her long, pretty braid.

"Hair can be a major problem when in battle. Guys are going for the American Marine look while girls are getting it cut to the nape of their necks. Don't look so horrified, Ginny. It's hair. It'll grow back, I promise," Drake said. After the murderous glares of two very pissed off redheads, everyone was left rubbing their heads in disgust.

"Harry and Aurora, follow me," Aislin said. She led them into a very large room that was completely empty. She turned to face the two. "For three hours everyday, you two belong to me. Meaning, your arse is mine." She waved her hands and the door closed behind the two. Harry and Aurora jumped at the sound, looked at each other, then looked back at Aislin. "I will not lie to you. I'm not that much older than you, but I was exceptionally good at magic and I finished years before I was supposed to. I'm one of the few Soliopathes on Britain, and there aren't many. What I'm going to teach you is how to throw shields, curses, hexes, and charms without using your wand. First, I want Harry to throw a curse at me," Aislin said. Harry looked down at his wand, then back up at Aislin.

"Are you sure?" he asked. Aislin nodded. "*Stupefy!*" He yelled. The jet of light flew towards Aislin, who just stood there. She put up her hand and the spell hit a wall similar to Aurora's. She lowered her hands and smiled.

"Pretty soon, you'll be able to do that."

Meanwhile, Ron, Draco, and Neville were doing push-ups. Drake clapped his hands and the boys stood. Ron glared at Draco.

"You just had to shoot that fat arse mouth of yours off, didn't you, Malfoy?" he groaned. Malfoy shot him a dirty look.

"Piss off, Weasley."

"Well, I'm here to teach you combat the old-fashioned way," Drake said.

"What's that?" Neville asked. Drake smiled wryly.

"I'm glad you asked. **SLOAN!**" he yelled. The taller man came running.

"What is it?" he asked. He'd barely got the words out before Drake slugged him in the jaw. Sloan stumbled backwards, then looked over at Drake, who was smiling smugly. "You bloody fuck! That shit hurt!" he yelled before stomped off.

"That is the old-fashioned way. I'm sure you get the gist of it. To me, there's nothing I'd like to do more to a Death Eater than knock him out with my bare hands," Drake said. Ron smiled. He was going to like Drake.

Hermione, Ginny, and Neve watched as Fionnula pulled a black metal object out of her holster on her leg.

"Who can tell me what this is?" she asked.

"It's a gun," Hermione said.

"Correct. A gun does what the Avada Kedavra curse does, only it's a lot more painful and messier. They propel tiny bullets through the air at a high speed. This doesn't necessarily kill you, but it can maim you. Not a fun way to die. Ladies, grab two holsters and put them on each of your legs. I am now going to teach you how to shoot." Fionnula took out her wand and transfigured five rocks into dummies. "First you aim. Make sure you keep both eyes open. You will see twice as good. Then you squeeze the trigger and..." A gunshot was heard around the castle. Even Harry and Aurora heard it and jumped.

"What was that?" She asked.

"It sounded like a gunshot," Harry said. Aurora looked at him with a confused expression on her face.

"You'll eventually get to that, you two. The first thing I'm going to teach you is how to summon things. Watch." Aislin turned towards a table that was behind him. Harry didn't remember seeing the table there before, but dismissed it. There were three goblets on the table. Aislin held her hand out and one of them came flying towards her. She grabbed hold of it.

"And how do you expect us to do that?" Aurora asked. Aislin smiled.

"First, you must think that you want the goblet. Basically, will it to come to you. In your mind think of the Summoning Charm. Say it in your mind," Aislin said. Harry held his hand out. The goblet in front of him merely shook, but did not come. Aurora tried hers and it did pretty much the same thing, only it fell over.

After about fifty attempts within the three hours, Harry got agitated and forcefully held his hand out.

'*Accio goblet*,' he sort of yelled with his mind. The goblet came flying towards him at amazing speed and hit him square in the face. Aislin and Aurora looked at him, stunned. Then they both smiled as Harry rubbed the knot forming on his head. Aislin clasped her hands together.

"Good job, Harry. Now all you have to do is work on making it come directly towards you. Aurora, try one more time, then you may go. I'm sure breakfast is ready now," she said. Aurora nodded and looked at her goblet. She held her hand out and the goblet shook, then flew towards her. She caught it and looked at Harry. Harry sneered back at her.

"I did it!" she exclaimed. Aislin nodded.

"Go on, you two. After breakfast, you will regret having eaten, but you also need your strength to continue on with the day," Aislin said. Harry and Aurora ran out of the room.

In the kitchen, Harry saw that Ron and Draco both had black eyes. He looked at Neville, whose lip was a little swollen. Then he glanced at Hermione who just shook her head.

"What happened to you all?" Harry asked. Draco grumbled a colorful phrase and Aurora hit him. He winced a little, then glared daggers at her. Aurora smiled and Draco's face softened. Yes, he was whipped and everyone could see it.

"That Drake fellow is the hand-to-hand combat trainer. So, well, Malfoy and I got a little carried away. Drake said that he'll get Aislin to heal us," Ron said reluctantly.

"It's hard to tell who won that fight," Neve said, biting into an apple. Neville smirked at her. He'd been the subject of a stray fist from trying to pry Ron off of Draco, but wasn't going to say that. Instead, he just looked at Draco with a devilish look on his face. Draco glared at him in turn. That was when Sloan entered the room. He looked at the eight kids.

"Breakfast is over. Let's go," he said. The teenagers stood abruptly and followed him outside to a large field. He turned towards them as they looked around. The sky was just becoming lighter and Harry could tell that they were definitely out in the middle of nowhere. "The Magi are basically a tactical unit of wizards and witches. It means we use crafty and subtle ways at achieving the goal. As one of the Magi, you will need both of these. Your job is not to be seen, but to blend in. That's what makes us different from the Aurors. Plus, we tend to be slightly more powerful." Sloan said. He conjured up a type of ball launcher. "Now, my philosophy is this: If you can dodge a ball, you can dodge a curse. So, Draco, if you would be so kind as to run out in the field, I will launch these balls at you and you try to dodge them." Draco obeyed without a word and turned to face Sloan. As soon as he turned, he was hit with a ball.

"Is there a little something you forgot to mention? Hmmm?" Draco said, rubbing his arm. Sloan slapped his forehead and let out a light chuckle.

"As a matter-of-fact, Draco, there is. These balls will be projected at a fairly high speed, as curses don't tend to move slowly. I figure if I set it higher, you have enough time to dodge and throw your own curse. Let's try this again." He shot another ball at Draco, who was a little slow in reacting. The ball whizzed by his head and he felt the wind off it. "Better, Draco, but you need to be quicker in order to retaliate faster. You may come back. Hermione, step up."

Harry sighed. This was definitely going to be a long day.

Chapter 5: Italian Cursing

Chapter 6 of 24

Neve grows a language problem and Harry and Ginny are left alone for once.

Chapter 5: Italian Cursing

"*Merda!*" Neve cursed in Italian as a ball hit her. It was two weeks into their training and Neve wasn't really catching on with the dodging curses practice. She had bruises on her arms and legs. She'd grown a real bad language problem because of it.

"Come, Neve! You can do it!" Sloan yelled. Harry was levitating one of the balls and laughing at her at the same time. He'd grown rather good at Soliopathy. Ron was a master in Muggle weaponry like knives and guns. Hermione could kick Ron's butt in hand-to-hand combat and was a better knife thrower. Draco was very talented at magical weaponry like enchanted arrows and such. Aurora was rather powerful with her telepathy now thanks to Fionnula and her relationship with Draco was blossoming. Ginny seemed to be hiding something, as she'd begun to act rather weird in her training. She'd begun to keep to herself and was known for disappearing for hours at a time.

Another ball was launched at Neve, and this time she dodged it then through a spell.

"*Finite Incantatem!*" she yelled. The ball blew up, sending pieces everywhere. Sloan smiled at her.

"Finally, you do something right. Take a break; then head to Drake. Harry, you're up and stop playing with the balls. I want you to use your Soliopathy this time to destroy the balls," Sloan said. Harry stood up and Neve passed him.

"*Parte di merda*," she mumbled idly. Harry thought that Italian was a great language to curse in. It sounded so beautiful. He walked out to the field, and Sloan immediately sent a ball at him. Harry didn't bother to dodge. Instead, he held his hand out. The ball stopped in mid-air and hovered for a second. Suddenly it flew back towards Sloan at an amazing speed. Sloan dodged it and threw his own spell to destroy it.

"Very good, Potter. But, I said destroy the balls. Don't attack me with them," Sloan said. Harry frowned and then nodded, his face softening. Ron and Draco watched silently. Sloan sent another ball in Harry's direction. Harry dodged swiftly and held his hand out. A jet of light shot out of it and the ball blew up into pieces. Sloan nodded

and Harry went inside. That was when Professor Dumbledore appeared right in front of Harry, making him jump back and pull his wand out. Their reaction times had increased also.

"Relax, Harry. It's just me." Dumbledore put the goblet he was holding down.

"I thought this area was zoned as a Non-Apparition Zone," Harry said.

"That was a Portkey, Harry. Where are your trainers?" he asked. Harry looked sternly at the old man. His face was still very hardened.

"Sloan is outside, Fionnula is working with Hermione and Neville, Aislin is working with Aurora, and Drake is with Neve and Ginny," Harry said, starting to walk past the old man. Dumbledore looked as if he was going to say something more, but apparently decided against it as Sloan walked inside with Draco and Ron in tow.

"Ah, Dumbledore. What a pleasant surprise. Shall I call the others?" he asked jovially.

"Hello, Sloan. Yes, please meet me in the kitchen away from the students." Dumbledore glided off.

Meanwhile, Harry went to the room with the other students. They were all resting and looked very tired and worn out. The girls looked noticeably more muscular, as did Neville. His face was not nearly as chubby anymore, and he was also well toned like the other boys. Aurora walked in behind Harry. She immediately sat down next to Ginny. Ginny glanced up at Harry.

"Hi, Harry," she said quietly.

"Hi, Ginny. Learn anything new?" He asked. He'd begun to get quite suspicious about whatever it was she was hiding. She shifted nervously in the armchair she was in. Aurora stared at Ginny, and then looked away from her. She looked at Harry and discreetly shook her head. Harry got the picture and went over next to Neville and Neve.

"I hate Sloan and Fionnula. They both are so damn hard on me. Bloody vultures," Neve grumbled. Aurora glared at her sister.

"Why is everything out of your mouth a swear word, Neveah?" she asked. Neve looked at her sister. Today, her hair was sky blue and her eyes matched. Normally, her hair tended to change whenever she was angry. No one ever called Neve by her real name except Aurora occasionally and Fionnula. Ron slipped up and received quite a beating from her, magical and non-magical.

"*Vaffanculo*," Neve said. Aurora's eyes widened. Hermione sighed. Neve had just started another fight in Italian.

"*Coglione*," Aurora retaliated.

"*Baci il mio asino*"

"*Sia calmo prima che batti la merda da voi!*" Aurora said and turned her attention to Draco. She leaned down to his ear. *Ti amo*," she said audibly. Draco blushed and Neve rolled her eyes. Hermione realized that Neve had understood what Aurora had said and obviously wasn't too happy about it.

"What did she say?" Hermione whispered enthusiastically. Neve looked over at her.

"I'm not sure Aurora wants me to spread the joyous news just yet. I think I'll let her tell you. Draco understands most of the Italian language. He's almost fluent in it. Personally, I love cursing in Italian," Neve said. Harry chuckled along with Ron.

"Yeah. It's like wiping your arse with silk," Ron said. Neve hit him on the back of his head, and Harry, Ginny, and Hermione continued to laugh.

In the kitchen, Dumbledore was sipping on very strong coffee. The four Magi watched him closely.

"What is it, Dumbledore? What has happened?" Aislin asked with urgency in her voice. Dumbledore looked wearily up at her.

"I fear that the times are growing colder and more dangerous. I hate to put more pressure on the students, but it is necessary. Aislin, how are Harry and Aurora coming in Soliopathy?"

"Harry seems to have a better grasp of it while Aurora seems to only get things done when under pressure. Harry has been practicing with the balls that Sloan uses to help the students' reaction times better. Aurora's time with me has gone from three to five hours in the morning. She has to get up earlier than everyone else," Aislin said, crossing her arms as she sat back in the chair.

"Has anyone else exceeded in a particular area?" Dumbledore asked.

"Draco has certainly become a master at magical weapons. He is exceptionally good at enchanted archery. He may even be better than you, Fionnula," Sloan said.

"I highly doubt that. Aurora is better at telepathy than Soliopathy. Ginny is excellent with sniping with Muggle weaponry. Ronald and Hermione also seem to have a knack with knives and guns. Hermione also excels at hand-to-hand combat with Ronald," Fionnula said. She basically called everyone by their real names, much to Neve's dismay.

"What about Mr. Longbottom and the other Miss Assante?" Dumbledore asked.

"Neville is rather gifted with defense curses, hexes, and charms. He'd also make a wonderful mediwizard one day. Neve's excellent with hand-to-hand combat. She can be very deadly with stealth, as she is very flexible and quiet. She isn't too great at dodging, though. Her reaction time isn't that great. She'd be a great spy, as she is a Metamorphmagus also," Drake said. Fionnula shifted in her seat and Dumbledore looked her way.

"I feel that something is troubling you, Fionnula. What is it?" Dumbledore asked.

"Ginny Weasley, Headmaster. The bloody child confuses the hell out of me. It seems she is partially a telepath, but there is also something else that I can't quite place on her. If I was to find out what it was, I'm sure I could train her. As it stands, I am stumped. I don't know what to do, and I'm used to thinking this," Fionnula said, obviously frustrated. Dumbledore nodded.

"Hmm. I will ask her parents if Ginny has shown any special abilities in the past. For now, I want each student to concentrate on their greatest abilities the hardest. This is where I bid you adieu and goodbye. I will visit again soon. Sometime around Christmas, I think." Dumbledore stood, and the four Magi stood with him.

The teenagers all looked at the headmaster as he exited the kitchen. Dumbledore picked up the goblet and disappeared. The four Magi looked at the students.

"Well, you might as well get to lunch. After that, the rest of the day is yours," Aislin said. The four walked off.

As the eight of them ate, Ginny kept glancing at Harry. Harry never seemed to catch her, as they basically kept missing each other. Hermione watched the two do that. After lunch, Hermione pulled Ron aside.

"Listen, Ron. Your sister apparently fancies Harry and vice versa. We need to get those two alone so they can talk. At this rate, they won't get together until they're fifty years old," Hermione said. Ron looked over her head at Harry and Ginny, who were silently clearing the table with Aurora's help.

"Why? I don't fancy the idea of Harry snogging my baby sister," he said. Hermione sighed.

"Oh come off it, Ronald! Ginny is fifteen and old enough to make her own choices about whom she snogs. Stop being such a big baby. You apparently had no problem when she was with that Michael fellow," Hermione said, crossing her arms. Ron looked down on her with a warning look. It didn't have any affect on her at all.

"No. I'm not going to help Harry succeed in tainting my sister." Ron started to walk off, but Hermione pulled him into a kiss. Harry, Ginny, and Aurora's mouths hung open. Draco was still in mid-bite. They'd never seen this kind of affection from the two. In front of everyone, they acted as if they hated each other. When the kiss was over, Hermione looked into Ron's dazed eyes.

"Harry's your best friend. You think he'll taint your sister?" Hermione asked, shooting her cutest face at him. Ron sighed. He hated it when she did this. She always managed to entice him into doing anything either by kissing him or looking at him with that sad puppy dog look. This time, she'd pulled both.

"Fine. You win. But, you owe me **BIG TIME!**" he said. Hermione smiled and kissed his cheek. Then she hopped off happily. Ron went back in the kitchen where Harry was smiling smugly. "Not one word, asshole," Ron growled. Harry nodded and continued his task.

Later that day, Neville and Ron were playing Exploding Snap while Draco was trying his hand at beating Harry in chess. Hermione sat in the corner whispering to Neve and Aurora while Ginny was watching Harry and Draco. Harry looked suspiciously over in Hermione's direction. She smiled at him and kept talking.

"Now, Aurora, I need you to keep Draco busy for about an hour. Do you think you can do that?" Hermione asked. Aurora nodded. Hermione turned to Neve. "What about Neville?"

"I could ask him to help with my Medi-Charms. I suck at them anyway," Neve said. Hermione smiled mischievously.

"And I will take care of Ron. Then Ginny and Harry will be alone for quite some time. Let's go. Our plan goes into action now," Hermione stood.

"Checkmate," Harry declared while leaning back and stretching. Draco stared at the board.

"That's not checkmate," he mumbled. Harry stopped stretching and sighed.

"How so? It appears that my bishop is getting ready to wrestle your king into submission," he said jovially. Draco looked around, desperately trying to find a place for his king to move. Harry smirked and looked at Ginny, who giggled.

"Chess is a dumb game anyway," Draco said as Aurora walked over to him. She whispered something in his ear, and Draco followed her out of the room.

"I wonder where they're going," Ginny said, looking in their direction. She knew after she'd asked the question that it was a pretty stupid one. Harry made a snorting noise.

"Are you daft? I guarantee you that you don't want to think about it," Harry said. Then he noticed the room had gotten very, very quiet. He glanced around and saw that Ginny and he were the only ones left. Ginny seemed to notice also.

"Harry, do want to know a secret?" Ginny asked, stammering a bit. Harry looked over to her. She was staring at her fingers.

"What is it, Gin?" he asked. Ginny looked up at him.

"Well, I don't really know what it is. Do you know why I've been disappearing every now and then recently?" she asked him. Harry shook his head. He had a feeling this was going to be an interesting conversation.

"Why? I've been meaning to ask you about that myself. You're not secretly seeing some strange bloke, are you?" Harry asked. Ginny really couldn't tell if he was joking or being serious.

"No, Harry. I only li..." Ginny stopped herself as Harry looked over at her from his stretched out position. Ginny immediately avoided his gaze. Harry stared at her hard, so hard that he was starting to get a little light-headed. Ginny looked up at him. She was staring intently at him also. "Harry..." she whispered. Her eyes seemed to glaze over, and Harry felt himself enter Ginny's mind in his attempt to try and figure her out. The next thing they knew, they both were sprawled out across the floor, their eyes staring at seemingly nothing.

Merda = Shit

Parte di merda = Piece of shit

Vaffanculo = Fuck you

Coglione = Asshole

Baci il mio asino = Kiss my ass

Sia calmo prima che batti la merda da voi = Be quiet before I beat the shit out of you

Ti amo = I love you

Chapter 6: The Missing Hour

Chapter 7 of 24

What was everyone else doing while Harry and Ginny were talking?

Chapter 6: The Missing Hour

While Harry and Ginny were having their minds tinkled with, the rest of the group had parted their ways around the castle. Right when Harry and Ginny passed out, Aurora looked up. Draco was sitting next to her. They were in the greenhouse of the castle, surrounded by a special type of flower that resembled roses but bloomed in the winter.

"Did you feel that, Draco?" she asked, being the only other telepath in the house. Draco looked up at her and shrugged.

"What are you on about now, woman? Ever since you've been practicing that telepathy rubbish, you've always gotten these feelings. No, I didn't feel anything, and I would appreciate it greatly if you'd stop asking me that," Draco fussed. Aurora hit him on the shoulder.

"You are so mean to me," she mumbled. Draco lifted her chin so that she was looking at her. Aurora looked into his eyes. Draco was the only person who she couldn't use telepathy on. It was like he had mental walls up. Their faces got gradually closer.

About an hour before that conversation, Ron and Hermione stumbled upon a hidden door. Hermione bumped into it, and the door seemed to be protected by some kind of shield. Ron looked as the shield rippled.

"Cool. Let's open it." Ron pulled out his wand, but Hermione pushed it down. She looked at the wall where the door had once been and tapped it with her wand. The ripples were made again, and the door appeared.

"Odd. I've never seen this kind of shield. Well, once. I saw it when Aurora did it in class that day. But, why is it here?" Hermione thought aloud. She ran her hand over the shield, feeling its warm presence. Ron, being the impatient person he is, sighed.

"Apparently it's guarding something. Now, break the shield, Mione," Ron said. Hermione looked at him in a way that made her remind him of his mother.

"Ron, since it's here, it must mean that we're not supposed to go inside. Are you that thick not to understand that?" Hermione said. She glanced at the door again. This time, a wave of suspicion fell over her. "Although, it is quite odd as to why this door is here. Every other door in the castle is unlocked. Why is this one? See, Ronnie! Now, I'm curious, and I must have a look inside."

"I knew you'd see it my way. Step aside." Ron practically pushed Hermione out of the way. *Alohomora!* he yelled the incantation. The shield merely deflected it. The two had to dive out of the way. If their reflexes hadn't been up to par, they would have been hit with it. Hermione stood up and pointed her wand.

"Honestly, Ron. It's a barrier we're trying to break, not unlock the door. *Bombarda!*" Hermione yelled. The barrier broke, and the door opened. Hermione smiled smugly at Ron and walked inside. He followed her, frowning with all his might.

Inside the room, they came to a staircase.

"*Lumos maxima!*" Hermione whispered, and the end of her wand brightened significantly. She looked at Ron who shrugged. He pushed past her and walked down the stairs. "Ronald, wait! Anything could be down there!" she yelled after him. Then Hermione heard the door shut behind her. She whirled around, shining the light from her wand behind her. No one was there.

"Hermione! Hermione!" she heard Ron yelling. Worried, she tripped and fell down the stairs because of the speed she was trying to get down them at. She landed roughly on the floor and coughed as the dust got into her nostrils. She looked up and saw two gigantic feet in front of her. Ron smiled down on her. "You really thought I was in trouble? Aww, Mione, I'm touched," Ron said. He helped her up, and she punched him the stomach. Then she looked around.

They were obviously in the cellar of the castle. Or, at least one of them. Hermione already saw the dungeons. This place was new to her. There were bottles upon bottles of wine and brandy. A whole wall was devoted to firewhisky. Hermione sighed. She knew how Ron was about drinking. He'd practically done it all summer long.

"Wow! This is great. No, this is heaven!" he said and started to walk towards the firewhisky. "I've got to tell Harry about this place!" he said gleefully. Hermione sighed deeply and rolled her eyes.

"Ronald Bilius Weasley! I am honestly surprised at you! You are a prefect. Why are you behaving like this?" Hermione said. Ron glared at her. It was uncanny how much she sounded like his mother.

"Well, I'm not at school nor am I at home. So why should I obey the rules?" Ron said and popped a bottle of the firewhisky open. "I'm tired of training and right now, I want nothing more than to get bloody pissed." That's when they heard footsteps. Hermione and Ron turned towards the stairs and held their breath. The breathed when they saw it was just Neville and Neve walking down the stairs.

"Oh, it's just you. We thought it was somebody important," Hermione said. Neve looked at her in a slightly offended way.

"I see," she said in foreboding tone. Hermione mentally kicked herself, knowing that she'd just put her foot in her mouth.

"Sorry, Neve. I didn't mean it that way," Hermione said. Neve nodded then looked at the bottle that Ron was holding. Then she looked around the room. Her eyes lit up just as Ron's had as she stared around the room. She grabbed a bottle.

"Stupendo. Una cantina per vini!" she said gaily. The other three stared at her in wonder. "It's a wine cellar. This is great!"

Upstairs in the greenhouse, Draco was playing with Aurora's hair as they walked around. Aurora would stop and smell the flowers every now and then. She came to a particular flower and looked at it.

"I know what this is. It's a 'margherita di nero.' Such a rare flower this is in Italia. Very rare indeed," she said, awed by the flower's beauty. It seemed to respond to her touch, as it turned toward her fingers and opened even further. Draco rolled his eyes. He hated when she got sentimental about things.

"Does Italy have a wizard's prison?" he asked, sitting on a stone step. Aurora looked over at him. She sat next to him, rubbing her neck. She still hadn't gotten used to her hair being so short.

"Yes. It is a dreadful place. Trials are held there for Dark wizards and the like. A very dangerous place it is, too. It is said that the worst sentence is the life sentence because of the level of that place's misery. I have only seen the outside of it when my father was picking up my grandfather in a Qualunque car. It's a Mugle car."

"It's pronounced Muggle. With two g's. What's this dreadful place called?" Draco corrected her, and Aurora cut her eyes at him. She hated being corrected with a passion. She also didn't like being second-best at anything. Right now, Neve was better at English than she was.

"The name is in Italian. I will see if I can translate it. I will say it first in Italian, though. It's called: Prigionie di Massima si Curezza per Stregones di Cirocco. That means, um, Cirocco Maxeemum-Security Wizards' Prison."

"It's maximum. Ours is much simpler than that: Azkaban. Horrible place also. Never been there, though. Our trials are held at the Ministry of Magic in London. You do have a hospital, right? Ours is St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries."

"Such a long-winded name. We have two. Their names are also in Italian. One is Ospedale di Santa Ana. It is just a regular hospital. The other is Manicomio di Santa Italia. It's a..."

"Mental hospital. I gathered as much. What guards the prison? We had dementors. Emphasis on had. But, they've all sided with the Dark Lord," Draco said disdainfully. Aurora looked at him with a quizzical expression on her face.

"Dementees? I have never heard of those. What are they?"

"De-men-tors. They're these ugly skeleton-like things that wear black cloaks. Whenever they're around, everything gets very cold. They give you this feeling like..."

"...you will never be happy again," Aurora whispered darkly. Draco looked at her with a surprised expression. Aurora was now staring at a red flower that rubbed against her hand as she touched it.

"Aurora, how did you know that?"

"Well, Neve and I have not told anyone this. Neve and I figured it was a normal occurrence for people who walk down that particular alley. I do not think she even remembers it that well, to tell you the truth. Well, we were at Diagon Alley, is it? Yes? We were shopping for supplies and came upon a dark and dumpy looking place. It soon occurred to us that we made a very wrong turn. Suddenly, everything got really dark and really cold. We could see our breath in front of us. I remembered my most horrible memory..." Her voice trailed off for a moment. She faced Draco with a frightened expression. "Oh, Draco! It was horrible. It wore a dark, raggedy cloak, like you said. Neve completely passed out as the dark dementee-thingy closed in upon us. It bent down over Neve, and a strange light was coming out of her mouth. The dementee seemed to be sucking the life right out of her. I did not know what to do. Suddenly, something clicked in my mind, and I pulled out my wand. I made a Patronus, and the ugly creature went away. That was when Neve woke up, and our father came down the street," Aurora said. Draco sat, utterly speechless. He realized his mouth was hanging open and blinked.

"A corporeal Patronus?"

"Corpo-che?"

"Did it have a definite shape? Form?"

"Shape?"

"Uh, una forma?"

"Oh. Yes. It was una unicorna. I think it is unicorn, in your language. Very beautiful, I might add."

"I've only seen Potter make one. It looks like a stag. My father, damn him to hell, taught me how to make one. It's a very large eagle. Scary looking, but beautiful at the same time. The thing about our dementors is that you can't let them Kiss you. That's what it was probably doing to Neve."

"Kiss?"

"It's not really a kiss, per se. All they do is suck out your soul. It's said to be worse than actually dying. Sounds awful if you ask me. You never told me what guards your prison, though. What is it?"

"Well, they're similar to the dementees..."

"De-men-tors. It really isn't that hard." Draco laughed. Aurora glared daggers at him.

"Shut up, Draco. We call them Spiriti Cattivi. It means..."

"...Nasty Spirits. I'm not that dense in Italian, Aurora. What do they do?"

"Well, they are very similar to the dementee-thingies. Not one word, Draco. They perform a dreadful thing. It is called 'Bacio di Morte.' Otherwise known as the Kiss of Death in English. Instead of sucking your soul out, they suck your life energy out. Evil creatures, they are. If they ever joined with the Dark Lord, as you say, it would be utterly terrible. From what Nonno tells me, it is a gruesome sight watching them perform this feat. I do not know how to beat them. I guess I could try a Patronus if I ever come face to face with one," Aurora again said darkly. Her tone seemed to have gotten lower as the conversation progressed. Draco leaned back onto the bush behind him.

"Nonno?"

"My... uh... grandfather. He is Ricardo Assante. He is what you call the Minister for Magic in Italy. Great man, that one. A bit mental, but very brilliant. He says he will retire after the war is over."

"What do you call the Dark Lord?"

"Who? Voldemort? Oh, he is known as 'il Malvagio' in our land. It means the Wicked One. Many wizards have joined his side."

"Cool name for such an evil person. Weasley was right. Speaking in Italian is like wiping your arse with silk," Draco sighed and got a sort of dreamy look in his eyes. Aurora smiled and looked back at his resting form.

"What are you thinking, Draco?"

"That I'd like nothing more than to beat the bloody hell out of him." Those words got him punched in the chest rather hard. Draco looked over at his girl with wide eyes. "That actually inflicted some pain." He said, rubbing his chest and smiling evilly.

"Quiet, Draco. You are always threatening someone." Aurora said in a heated tone.

"I'll do it. Just to spite you, love," Draco said, grabbing her around the waist. Aurora struggled in his grip.

"Sopre...il...mio...cadavere!" Aurora yelled and laughed at the same time. Draco swung her around so that he was on top of her. Aurora's face flushed at this occurrence.

"Over your dead body, huh? So be it!" he yelled and began tickling her like mad. Aurora squirmed underneath him.

"Draco! Fermarlo! Stop! Stop!" She tried to sound serious, but was failing miserably. Draco took absolute pleasure in what he was doing. He pinned her arms above her head. They were both breathing rather hard.

"Not a chance." Draco continued tickling her.

Back in the wine cellar, Neve and Ron were positively drunk. Neville was well on his way there, but Hermione just watched them with hateful eyes. She was clearly not happy about this.

"Ronald, Neveah, and Neville! This is absurd. Don't come crying to me when you wake up tomorrow with a hangover! You'll just have to live with it." Suddenly, a wave of energy passed over them. Everyone paused for a moment, then Ron smiled.

"That felt funny. I felt all warm and tingly inside." He giggled girlishly. Neve looked lazily in his direction. Her hair was now a color similar to Ron's.

"Quello è perché essete bevuti, voi idiot." She laughed as well. The three of them were cackling while Hermione got a bad premonition.

"I'll be right back. I have an awful feeling about this." Hermione ran up the stairs. She ran to the room where Ginny and Harry were. Opening the door, she gasped. "Oh no," she breathed. She ran to them and checked their pulses. She sighed with relief to find their pulses were both strong, but they were both very unconscious. Fionnula walked in behind her.

"Hermione, what happened? Did you do this?" she asked, crossing her arms. Hermione shook her head very quickly.

"No, Fionnula. I felt a wave of energy and came to see if they were all right. I found them like this."

"I felt that wave also. Go and find Sloan and tell him to owl the headmaster. I'll take care of these two."

"Yes, Fionnula." And with that, Hermione was gone.

Stupendo. Una cantina per vini = Marvelous. A cellar for wines

Corpo-che = Corpo-what

Quello è perché essete bevuti, voi idiot= That's because you're drunk, you idiot

Chapter 7: A Dangerous Weapon

Chapter 8 of 24

Harry wakes up alone.

Chapter 7: A Dangerous Weapon

Aurora and Draco made their way to the room where Ron and the others were. Ron, Neve, and Neville were stumbling up the stairs, positively drunk. Ron smiled up at Draco. He was holding an empty bottle of firewhisky. Neve's hair had changed again into a slimy green color. She looked up at her sister and waved.

"Arrivederci, Aurora!" she slurred loudly. Neville waved at the two also. Neve and Neville were supporting Ron, who was the drunkest.

"I do not believe this! They're all bloody pissed! This is too much!" Draco said. Neve tripped forward as she came up the stairs. That's when Hermione ran inside the room. She pushed Draco aside and saw the trio coming up the stairs. Ron stood up in front of her.

"Mione, you're really pretty..." Ron promptly passed out. Hermione sighed as she tried to support his weight.

"A little help here, Draco." Draco sighed and reluctantly helped her. "Aurora, we'll take care of this arsehole. You go and help the other two to their bedrooms. I'm sure they are capable of walking on their own," Hermione said while holding Ron up by his arms. Draco held his feet and they trudged out of the room with Ron in tow. Aurora nodded and looked at Neville and Neve.

"Neveah, I am surprised at you! Wait until Papà hears about this." She grabbed their hands and pulled them along. Neve just smiled and began singing a song in Italian. Neville laughed the entire way upstairs.

About two hours later, Harry woke up in his bedroom. Everything was blurry, and he realized he didn't have his glasses on. He sat up quickly and looked around for Ginny. He soon realized that he was in his bedroom. Looking over to his left, he saw Professor Dumbledore looking at him. Harry frowned visibly.

"What happened?" he asked. Dumbledore tore his gaze away from Harry.

"It has recently come to our attention, Harry, that you possess another rare talent. You, Ginny, and Aurora all seem to have it," Dumbledore said, clearly avoiding Harry's question. Harry squinted at the old man and picked up his glasses. He put them on and continued to glare at Dumbledore.

"You didn't answer my question. What happened? Where's Ginny?" he demanded to know. Dumbledore intertwined his long fingers and looked at Harry over his half-moon

spectacles. He seemed to be examining Harry.

"I don't know why I didn't see this coming. I know the gene usually only goes to women. I've met only three males in my time here on earth. This is quite unusual, yes," Dumbledore said, still skating around Harry's questions. Harry looked at the man like he'd gone mad.

"Are you deaf or just daft? Why aren't you answering my bloody question?" Harry yelled at the man. Dumbledore did not visibly jump, but you could tell that he was a little startled at Harry's outburst. It was then that Harry realized he had a very painful headache, but this time, it was not centered on his scar.

"Quiet down, Harry. In addition to being a Soliopath, you are also a telepath," Dumbledore said quietly. Harry ignored his headache. He was ready to reach over to Dumbledore and choke the old wizard to death.

"Damn it to hell! I don't care! What happened to Ginny! Did I hurt her?" Harry yelled again. This time, Dumbledore's face grew very serious. Harry knew he'd crossed the line a little. He'd been getting away with saying a lot of things in front of the headmaster. Dumbledore looked down, and Harry sat back on his pillow.

"No, not intentionally," Dumbledore said simply and serenely. Harry looked at the man with a weird expression. It was amazing how quickly he could change temperaments.

"What do you mean, 'not intentionally'? What'd I do to her?" he asked, still looking very puzzled.

"See, Harry, the thing about being a telepath is that you must learn to control it. You inadvertently concentrated on Ginny's mind too hard. What you did was apparently too strong for the both of you. Miss Weasley has not yet awakened. She is with Aislin and Fionnula right now. Fionnula is probing her mind. Don't worry. She's in very good shape, and Fionnula is a very well-trained telepath. She knows what she is doing," Dumbledore stated. Harry let out a sigh of relief and looked back over at the man.

"What'd I do?"

"Ginny is a partial telepath or something of that nature. I can't tell you what it is because, honestly, we don't know yet. You accidentally performed an Analisi Psichica. This allows you to search and read a person's mind, so to speak. If an untrained telepath, such as you, does it, the end result could be fatal."

"To whom? Me or the person subject to it?" Harry asked.

"Well, it depends. Normally, it would be the person subject to it. You are both very lucky, Harry. There are other mishaps that could happen. In one instance, you could bring that person to insanity. The other instance is being permanently in a coma," Dumbledore said rather slowly. Harry looked down and squeezed his eyes shut. The headache he had was really starting to get to him.

"Is Ginny..."

"Oh, heaven's no, Harry. But, that is the reason Fionnula is probing her mind. Being a partial telepath, if that's what she is, helped Ginevra out a lot. She accidentally reversed it back to you. That's what caused both of you to lose consciousness. When Ginny wakes up, the only side effect will be a terrible headache, as I am sure you are experiencing right now. I also imagine that she will not be the happy person, either. Especially with you, Harry."

"Yes, I experienced that also. Professor?"

"Hmm?"

"You said something about my ability being passed down, I think. Was my mother a telepath?" Harry asked. Then he realized what he'd asked. He didn't remember Dumbledore actually *saying* something about it being passed down, and he saw that Dumbledore realized this because of the twinkle in his eye. "Oops..." Harry said.

"It's quite all right, Harry. To your question, yes. Lily was a rather talented one, too. If you'd had a sister, I imagine that she would also have this gift, as it is most common in women. Lily had a real grasp on her talent, too. I've always wondered why she chose to be an Auror instead of a Magas of the Magi. I think the reason might have been because of you. But, I guess I will never know. She could do amazing things with her mind, Harry. She was a very rare talent, indeed, Harry. By now, I'm sure you've realized the power of such a talent."

"Professor, telepathy sounds an awful lot like Legilimency. Is it the same thing, or is it different?"

"Legilimency is the ability to extract feelings and memories from a person. Meaning that you can tell if that person is lying and what they are feeling at that particular moment and what caused this feeling. Telepathy is more like a mind-control thing. In the Muggle world, I believe they call it 'mind-reading.' Well, it is much more complex than that."

"How so?" This was starting to interest Harry. Dumbledore smiled a little at him.

"Well, for one, a telepath, if trained correctly, can do things without the eye contact that is required with Legilimency. Also, a telepath can kill a person if they are powerful enough. They can also make people believe things and act a certain way."

"How does one kill another with telepathy?"

"The mind is extremely fragile, Harry. So, a telepath can tell one to commit suicide with the mind-control factor. Another way is to play on the subject's mind. Only unreasonably powerful telepaths can do this. They merely concentrate hard enough, all the while thinking that they want that particular person to be brain dead. Since the body cannot live without the mind, the subject dies instantly. That's what makes telepaths very dangerous because you can never really tell if that person is that powerful just by looking at them. Most telepaths fight on the good side, Harry. So, you needn't worry."

"Professor, does Voldemort possess any of my talents?" Harry asked, a bit afraid of the answer. He really hoped he might have the upper hand on Voldemort. Dumbledore looked directly into his eyes.

"Aside from being a Parselmouth, yes, he does. He is a very skilled Soliopath. But, unfortunately for him and fortunately for you, Voldemort is not a natural Soliopath like you and Aurora. Soliopathy can be taught, but most just stick to the old-fashioned way: magic with a wand."

"Can telepathy be taught?"

"Only to those who possess the talent. Then it is rather being taught *to control*. Telepaths are like Metamorphmagi. They are born and not made, Harry. Telepathy does not run in the Slytherin family tree. Witches and wizards who are not telepaths, mostly Dark wizards, take up Legilimency instead. Voldemort, thankfully, is not a telepath. If he were, I'm sure you would've been dead two years ago. But, as Professor Snape probably informed you last year, he is a very talented Legilimens. That's why you really need to practice your Occlumency. I've heard you've become rather good at it." Dumbledore said. Harry nodded. His head was killing him.

"Professor, is there something I could take for the pain?" he asked. Dumbledore smiled, and Harry found himself grinning at the old man, too.

"No. You'll just have to wait until it subsides, I'm afraid. Nothing works on those types of headaches. Now, I think Miss Granger would like to see you." Dumbledore glided to the door and opened it. Hermione was leaning against the wall across from the door. She looked up as Dumbledore opened the door. "You may enter, Miss Granger." Dumbledore moved smoothly off two doors down to Ginny's room. Hermione practically knocked Harry out of the bed.

"Whoa, Hermione! I'm okay, really!" Harry said, laughing jovially. Hermione leaned off of him and slapped him in the face. Harry's head flew to the side. He turned back towards her and saw she had tears in her eyes. "What was that for?" he demanded. Hermione sat in the chair that Dumbledore had once occupied.

"You scared me, Harry. I thought you were going to die!" Hermione cried. Harry smiled a little and put a hand on her back as she sniffled. "You big jerk!" she cried again. Harry couldn't help it. He laughed at her.

"Aw, Hermione, I didn't know you cared. Where's Ron?" Harry asked, a little surprised that he wasn't with Hermione, as they were rarely seen without the other. Hermione turned toward him.

"He's drunk as they come! We discovered a wine cellar on the other side of the castle. It was guarded by a barrier, but I broke through it..." Hermione began.

"You mean to tell me that the great Hermione Granger, Supreme Goddess of Obeying the Rules and All That Is Right in the World, broke a barrier that was obviously there for a reason? I really needed to see this to believe it. There's a wine cellar in the castle? Awesome! I'm going down there tomorrow after practice." Hermione rolled her eyes and sighed, signaling Harry of her displeasure at the thought.

"Neve and Neville got positively drunk, also. I didn't have one drink. Malfoy and Aurora were off somewhere and probably snogging each other to death." Hermione shuddered at this sentence. "What a gruesome picture. I honestly don't know what she sees in him. She's too nice of a person to go out with someone as horrible as him. But while we were downstairs in the cellar, we felt a sort of wave of energy. I thought it might've come from Ginny, so I went to check on you guys..."

"Whoa! Pause it right there! You mean to tell me that you knew about Ginny's little talent all along?" Harry asked, putting a hand out. Hermione smiled.

"Well, we don't spend our nights talking about you, idiot. Gosh, how can you be so conceited? Anyway, that's when I left the three drunks and went upstairs. I found you both passed out. You were sprawled across the floor while the chess pieces were bloody murdering each other. Then Fionnula walked in and asked me if I'd done this. She'd felt the energy also. I said no and she took a look at the both of you. She told me to go tell Sloan to bring Dumbledore to the castle. I did and then I went and found Ron, Neve, and Neville. Draco and Aurora were watching them come up the stairs to the wine cellar. Ron passed out and Aurora tells me that Neville threw up down the hall. Draco helped me carry Ron's heavy arse upstairs." Hermione rolled her eyes. "I suspect they're all asleep now." Then Draco and Aurora entered the room.

"Harry, what happened? What did Dumbledore tell you?" Aurora said, sitting on the end of his bed. Draco leaned against the wall with his arms crossed over his chest. Harry looked at Aurora.

"Well..." And he told them everything that Dumbledore had told him.

"Is Ginny going to wake up?" Hermione asked, worry in her eyes. Harry shrugged.

"Yes, and there's no telling when she will. Dumbledore assured me that she wasn't going to be insane because she reversed it on me. That's why we both passed out, remember?"

"Telepathy sounds relatively strong. Maybe you could kill the Dark Lord that way, Potter," Draco said, sounding hopeful.

"I don't know if I'm that powerful yet, Malfoy."

"Fionnula should start training you soon in telepathy. Maybe that's what the prophecy meant in saying that you would need Aurora's help. You both are Soliopaths and telepaths. There's no possible way Voldemort could stop you," Hermione said gleefully.

"Unless he kills one of us first," both Harry and Aurora said gloomily. They looked up at each other. All was quiet as thunder rolled outside.

Chapter 8: Un Presagio

Chapter 9 of 24

Aurora relays her story to the others. Ginny lives it instead.

Chapter 8: Un Presagio

Harry stood sat in Ginny's room with Ron and Hermione. It'd been a month and eight days since Ginny'd fell into the coma. They were watching her. She seemed so peaceful. Harry didn't want to chance delving into her mind again at a risk of making her go insane. Ron sighed deeply and turned to look at Harry.

"It seems almost too quiet with her being asleep like that. I wonder what's going on inside her mind," Ron thought out loud the last sentence. Harry nodded without realizing he was. Then Fionnula walked in the room, startling all three of them. Today, she wore a white cat suit with white boots. Her cloak had a hood on it. She had it over her head. She looked positively frightening, even if she was wearing white.

"Harry, come with me," she said. Harry stood up and followed her. Hermione mouthed the words "Good luck" to him and he nodded. Harry followed Fionnula to a small room. Aurora stood there, watching them enter. Aislin was also in the room, sitting at a table. Aislin had on the same outfit as Fionnula. Two unfamiliar faces were also with Aislin. Fionnula stood in between Harry and Aurora. Aislin stood up.

"Hello, Harry, Aurora. I bet you want to know why you are here. Well, for a month now, you've been training in your Soliopathy. At the end of every month, we are going to test you. This is basically to evaluate how far you've come. Don't worry, your clothes are enchanted. Whenever you receive a direct hit, a red mark will appear where you were hit, but no harm will be done to you. This woman to my right is Madame Cosette Constantine. Madame Constantine is a very talented Soliopath and founder of the Constantine School of Soliopathy. The man to my left is Cyril Jones. He is the highest ranking Magi, the Capo Superiore. These two will be evaluating you. They are going to point out your weaknesses and your strengths. Fionnula take it away," Aislin said. Fionnula nodded.

"Now, you may not use your wands. This exercise is strictly for Soliopathy. On my whistle you will begin and on my whistle, you will stop. Ready?" Fionnula raised her arm and stepped back. Harry and Aurora nodded. Then Fionnula blew the whistle. Harry held out his hand a jet of green light flew from it.

Aurora smirked as the light hit an invisible wall. Harry followed it up with a few hexes in succession. Aurora could not block all of them at once. She dove to the side and sent a cold stream of light at Harry. Harry ducked. Aurora's hand was still out. Harry was about to send another curse at her when Aurora's previous curse hit him in the back. She'd managed to reverse it. Harry went flying forward. A red mark was on his back. Although the curse had no affect on him, it still stung painfully. Aurora stood up and sent a Stinging Hex at him. Harry hopped up and held his hand out. The curse hung in mid-air, and Aurora's eyes widened. Harry doubled the curse's size, and it went flying towards Aurora at amazing speed. Aurora just stood there, as if mesmerized by this feat. She realized a second too late that it was going to hit her. She was blasted backwards. Aurora hit the wall and then fell to her knees.

Harry stood up straight and watched as Aurora struggled to stand. She looked up at Harry. Hitting the wall had taken a lot out of her, and Harry could tell. Aurora finally

made it to the upright position. She stared directly at Harry. Harry stared back. Aislin wondered why neither was making a move. She looked back and forth between the two.

Harry felt heat behind his eyes. They turned red. Aurora felt the exact opposite of Harry, coldness. It felt as if her eyes were freezing. They turned an icy shade of blue. Suddenly, both held out their hands. A blast of red light was emitted from Harry while Aurora emitted a blue light. The four spectators watched in wonder. The two powers met in the center of the room, and a white light was formed between them. Suddenly, the light took over, and both Harry and Aurora were blasted backwards. They both hit the walls on either side of the room. Then Fionnula stood up and blew the whistle.

"That is enough. The two of you go with Aislin. I'm sure you are both very sore," Fionnula said as the two tried to stand. Aislin helped Aurora up as Harry stumbled over to them.

"Follow me," Aislin said. They both followed her into an all-white room. A table was in the center of it with various cabinets surrounding. "Sit, both of you," she said. Harry and Aurora sat on the table. Aislin looked in the cabinet and picked up two vials. She walked back over to Harry and Aurora. They took the vials and drank the potions. "They should help with the bruises and such. You two really surprised me. I didn't think you were both that powerful yet. You truly are opposites, though. Exactly like Dumbledore said. Fire and water. Dinner should be ready. Go and eat. I'm going to see what your scores look like." Aislin walked off.

Harry was currently looking very sick from whatever was in the vial. He looked at Aurora, whose face wasn't too different from his. She swallowed reluctantly and breathed heavily.

"That had to be the nastiest thing I have ever tasted," she said.

"I've tasted worse. You didn't do badly at all. You've been practicing a lot. You gave me a run for my money," Harry said jovially. Aurora smiled and hopped down from the table. Harry followed suit.

"Yes, I have. Aislin has been on me about controlling my anger. I guess we both kind of lost it while fighting, eh? How did you do that?" Aurora asked, looking at Harry. Harry looked back as they walked to the kitchen.

"Do what?"

"You reversed my Stinging Hex and put more power into it. How did you do that? I know for a fact that it was not too powerful. I really had no desire for it to hit you, just distract you so I could get another clean hit in. Nevertheless, you reversed it. It was very brilliant," Aurora said, smiling. Harry blushed a little. Aurora was a very pretty girl and had a weird power over all the boys in the castle, much to Draco's consternation.

"Well, I don't rightly know, Aurora. I guess it just sort of happened. Sorry about blasting you into the wall like that. I thought you were going to move. Why didn't you, by the way?"

"I got caught up in watching you accomplish something I could not. I realized what was happening a little too late and forgot to dodge. It is quite all right. Aislin was right. I do not feel sore anymore. That stone wall did hurt, though." They stopped in front of the kitchen and heard Draco and Neve going at it.

"You big git! You *heard* me say I wanted that last roll and you just took it!" Neve was yelling. Aurora sighed and walked in. Ron, Neville, and Hermione were just watching.

"You can't *claim* food in this place, you stupid wench! And don't call me a git, *Neveahl!*" That was the straw that broke the camel's back. Neve's eyes narrowed as Ron, Hermione, and Neville leaned away from the table. Neve's hair turned fiery red almost instantly, and she launched herself across the table. She grabbed Draco's neck, and his chair fell backwards under their combined weight. Aurora sighed and walked over to the two. She held her hand out.

Petrificus Totalus, she thought. Both Draco and Neve's bodies went rigid. Neve rolled off of Draco. Ron looked at them on the floor.

"What'd you do that for? I wanted to see who would win that fight!" he said, sounding somewhat disappointed. Hermione and Aurora both rolled their eyes. Hermione slapped Ron on the back of his head. Ron rubbed it and glared at Hermione, who just smiled her sweetest smile. Ron mumbled something illegible and continued to eat. Harry and Aurora took seats next to Neville.

"Those two will be the death of me. I do not understand why they go at each other's necks," Aurora said, grabbing a piece of chicken. Hermione smirked.

"Maybe she doesn't like the notion of Malfoy snogging her sister. That might be it, Aurora. So, what did Fionnula want with you two, anyway?" she said, drinking pumpkin juice.

"Well, she wanted to test our skills so far. We were being evaluated by a witch and a wizard. One was a Soliopath, and the other was a high-ranking Magi. So, they made Harry and I fight. It was rather tiring. After dinner, I am definitely going to bed," Aurora said, fighting a yawn. Hermione giggled at her friend's display of sleepiness. "Harry, Draco told me you have fought a dementee," Aurora said. Harry looked at her, nearly dropping the gravy.

"A dementee? You mean a dementor?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, I think that's what he called it. They guard the wizard prison here, no?" Aurora asked. They were all looking at her as if she was speaking Latin. Hermione looked over at Harry and Ron did the same. "Did I say something wrong?" Aurora asked.

"Oh, no, you didn't. Yes, I have fought a lot of them, actually," Harry said. Then he looked more carefully at Aurora. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, before school began, Neve and I encountered one," she said quietly. Hermione gasped, and Neville dropped his fork. Ron just stared blankly at her. Harry turned to fully face her.

"What do you mean? Did you drive it away?" he asked urgently. Aurora nodded.

"Yes. It was awful. I felt as though I would never be happy again. Like all the joy had been sucked out of my life. It attacked us on a dark alley just past Diagon Alley. The odd thing was that Neve and I were originally going to split up. But, something told me not to go off alone. A type of...I do not know the English word...un presagio. Forewarning?" Aurora asked.

"A premonition?" Harry asked. Aurora nodded happily.

"I think we made a wrong turn, and then everything got cold. It was going to take Neve's soul. Draco told me that the dementee-thingies have sided with Voldemort. Why would they be after Neve?" Aurora asked. Everyone shrugged, obviously stumped.

"How did you defeat this dementor?" Hermione asked. Aurora blushed a little bit.

"Well, I know it sounds silly, but I had no idea how. Then something told me to think of the happiest memory I have. A strong memory. Then say the words *Expecto Patronum* very loud and very clear. I thought of the day that my baby brother was born. He was so beautiful. It was like he was my own child, you know? Anyway, the funny thing is, I had no idea what a Patronus was until I asked my father. So, how would I know how to make one?"

"That's a good question," Ron said, looking at Harry.

"You are my opposite. Maybe at that exact moment, you saw me do it or felt that I knew how. Did you tell anyone else besides Draco this? Your father, perhaps?" Harry

said. Aurora shook her head.

"No one else. Just us and Draco. Neve really does not really remember what happened. At our prison in Italy, we have something similar to the dementees. We call them...how did Draco put it...evil ghosts or something like that. At least that is what it is translated, I think." Aurora felt someone pondering very hard in the room. She looked over at Hermione. She was staring at her plate in deep thought. "What are you thinking, Hermione?" she asked. Hermione looked up at her.

"Oh, sorry. I don't think that the dementor was after Neve. I think it got confused. I don't think whoever sent it was counting on you being *with* your sister. Did you feel anything when you turned down that alley?"

"I looked down it for a moment. Neve said she wanted to go to the sweetshop or something like that, but instead, I had a funny premonition-thingy. So, I ended up dragging her along with me. Reluctant as she was, she came anyway. I think I may have altered the future or something."

"That may be why the dementor that was most likely meant for you attacked Neve. It couldn't distinguish between the two of you. It wasn't told that there would be two of you. So, it took a wild guess and chose Neve. The real question is *why*," Hermione said. Ron sighed.

"This is getting way too confusing for me. How would Voldemort know about Aurora and her powers? He doesn't even know about Harry's," Ron said. Hermione shook her head.

"How could he know about the second prophecy? Only Dumbledore heard it," Neville said. Hermione shook her head again.

"The dementor was sent for a reason. That reason may have been to kill Aurora. If Voldemort killed off Aurora, then Harry won't stand a chance against him. Remember the prophecy, Ron? It said that Harry would need Aurora's help in order to defeat Voldemort. She can't help if she doesn't have a soul," Hermione said.

"Thanks for that extremely cheerful input, Hermione. We need to tell Dumbledore this," Harry said, standing abruptly. The other four stood up.

Ginny opened her eyes. She was sprawled out on the ground. Sitting up, she realized that she was not where she last remembered being. The air was cold and it was dark. She couldn't see anything except a faint light in the distance. She squinted, trying to see more as her eyes adjusted to the darkness.

"Where am I?" she asked herself. Ginny stood and began walking towards the light. It seemed to be growing brighter and brighter. Then she saw them. There were six people standing around a light in black robes. "Death Eaters," Ginny whispered. She wondered if they could hear her. Then Ginny saw the reason why it was so cold. There were three dementors hovering above the group. Ginny touched a tree and fell right through it. "I'm not really here." That led her to the conclusion that she couldn't be seen.

"Is it done?" a cold voice asked. Ginny realized that it could only belong to one person: Voldemort. She stepped ahead of the Death Eaters and looked into their hoods. She recognized one as Bellatrix Lestrange. She stepped forward and bowed to Voldemort.

"Lord Voldemort, the girl somehow knew the incantation to produce a Patronus. I also believe that the dementor picked the wrong girl. She was not alone," Bellatrix said her voice shaky.

"Well, well. It doesn't make sense. The Seer said that she would be alone. Seers are never wrong. No matter. We'll get her at school. I cannot have her near Potter. I still do not understand. At Meloni, they do not learn how to conjure Patronuses until their seventh year. Assante is only in her sixth," Voldemort said. Ginny gasped.

"Assante? He's talking about Aurora. This must've happened before term started."

"Where did the dementor meet her?"

"Knockturn Alley, Master."

"I still do not understand. Could the child possibly have some sort of link to Potter?" The rest of the conversation was unbeknownst to Ginny. She felt something tugging at her, and a flash of light was seen.

Looking around, Ginny saw that she was at Diagon Alley. Smiling, she felt much safer. She turned and saw Neve and Aurora. She started to call out their names, but stopped herself. She remembered that they couldn't see or hear her. She followed them and listened to their conversation.

"Aurora, come sono ho supposto per sapere?" Neve said in Italian. Ginny closed her eyes. She tried to remember what Neve had said to her. What Neve had said to Aurora meant "How am I supposed to know?" Ginny looked back at the duo.

"Speak in English, Neve. I am trying to get better at it."

"Fine. I want to go to the sweetshop. We'll meet right here." Neve started to walk away. Ginny remembered the conversation between Bellatrix and Voldemort. They were supposed to be together. If Aurora went off alone, then she would die. Ginny closed her eyes. Maybe her telepathy would work since they couldn't hear or see her.

No! Neve must stay with you! Trouble is coming! Do not go off alone! Stay with Neve! Tell Neve to follow you! Ginny thought towards Aurora with all her might. Aurora's eyebrows furrowed and she looked around. Then she looked at Neve.

"Neve! Come back! Come with me. I do not want to be alone," Aurora said. Neve rolled her eyes and reluctantly turned around.

"You are such a baby. After we go wherever you want to go, we are going to the sweetshop. Where are you going, anyway?" Neve said. Aurora grabbed her sister's arm and pulled her along.

"I want to go to the joke shop. I do not remember where it is, though." Aurora looked down Knockturn Alley. "Come. Let us go this way." Aurora pulled Neve. Neve shook off her grip. Ginny followed them down the alley. It was virtually empty and devoid of people. Suddenly, it got very cold and dark. Neve and Aurora looked around. Ginny looked up and saw the dementor closing in on them.

"Aurora, what the hell is that?" Neve said, her voice shaking with fear. Aurora said nothing as the dementor seemed to sucking the very life out of Neve. Her sister fell to the ground, unconscious. Aurora kneeled.

"Neveah! *Svegli prego!* Neveah!" Aurora looked back up at the dementor. It got really close to Neve's lips. A light started to rise from her mouth. Ginny closed her eyes.

Think of the happiest memory that you have. A very, very happy and strong memory. Then, say, Expecto Patronum" very loudly and very clearly with your wand at the ready, Ginny thought tremendously hard. Aurora looked behind her with a confused look on her face, and then stood up straight. She took out her wand and pointed it at the dementor.

"**Expecto Patronum!**" She screamed at the top of her lungs. A bright light was emitted, and a unicorn ran forward. The dementor was driven off by it. Everything around them returned to normal. The tiny light floated back to Neve. She gasped as her eyes opened. Aurora sighed with relief. "**NEVE!**" She hugged her sister tightly. Neve was shaking. "Neve, are you okay?" Aurora asked.

"Yes. Now I am. Look, there's Papà." Neve ran forward to Alfonso Assante and threw her arms around him. Aurora did the same. Alfonso looked utterly shocked at the

display of affection from his only daughters.

"Come on you two. We have to pack your trunks for Hogwarts." He dragged them off. After that, Ginny felt that tugging again. This time, she didn't open her eyes and see something different. She saw something very familiar.

A pair of green eyes...

Svegli prego = Please wake up

Chapter 9: Past, Present, and Future

Chapter 10 of 24

Dumbledore hears the story.

Chapter 9: Past, Present, and Future

"We need to speak to Professor Dumbledore," Harry said, barging into Sloan's room. Drake was there and they were drinking firewhisky and playing cards. Sloan turned and looked at the five of them. Hermione stepped up beside Harry.

"Why?" Sloan asked. He faced the teenagers and stretched. Harry looked from Hermione to Ron. Then he turned his gaze back to Sloan and Drake.

"It's really, really important, Sloan. It's about Voldemort," Harry said quickly. Sloan stared long and hard at him. Then he looked across the table to Drake. Drake was tapping the cards against the table, making a very annoying sound. Neville cringed at it. Sloan finally stood up and walked towards the group.

"Professor Dumbledore might be busy. I will call for him, though. He might not be able to come until tomorrow or the day after. What is it you must tell him?" Sloan asked. Harry looked at Aurora, who stepped closer to Harry. She looked up at Sloan with her head almost looking straight up.

"Before term started, I was attacked by a dementee-thingy," Aurora said quietly. Sloan raised an eyebrow. Then he looked back at Drake, who shrugged.

"A what?"

"A dementor. She can't say it correctly. Someone sent a dementor for Aurora, and it attacked both her and Neve," Hermione said. Sloan looked at Aurora, the look on his face asking if it was true. Aurora nodded. Sloan looked very thoughtful for a moment, and then pushed passed the quintet.

"I'll alert Dumbledore immediately. He's going to want to hear this story. Get to bed, all of you," Sloan said. Drake stood up, cracking his knuckles very loudly. The girls jumped and looked back at him. Drake was definitely not the friendliest person and took joy in scaring everyone. They immediately filed out of the room.

Aurora went to the kitchen and looked down on Draco and Neve. They were still in the body bind. She shook her head and waved her hand. They sat up immediately, breathing hard. Glaring at each other, and then glaring at Aurora who waved sheepishly at them.

"Hello. Sloan said get to bed." And with that, Aurora was off. She heard Neve growl something illegible and then heard footsteps. Smiling to herself, Aurora thought how great it is to be a Soliopath.

Later, Harry sat in Ginny's room, looking at her. Ron and Hermione had just left to do God-knows-what. Ginny's hair had grown, given the two months she'd been asleep. There had been no word from Dumbledore yet. Harry wasn't sure when the headmaster would come. Sloan hadn't given them any news. Suddenly, Harry was almost knocked out his chair.

Ginny sat up gasping and screaming. Her arms flailed about, and she tried to hit Harry. Harry stood up and backed away from her. He knew he should go get Aislin, but he just stood there. Ginny seemed not to recognize him. Harry stepped forward and put his hands on her shoulders, forcing her back on her pillow. She kicked her legs and continued screaming. Her eyes were not focusing on anything. Her eyes were wide. She had almost no irises.

"GINNY! GINNY! FOCUS ON ME, GINNY! FOCUS" Harry screamed. Suddenly, the screaming died down, and Ginny blinked once, twice, three times. Her pupils became smaller and her eyes drooped. She looked at Harry. He stared back, wondering if she was back to normal. "Ginny, are you ok?" he asked quietly. "Are you back?"

"Harry? What happened?" Ginny tried to sit up, but immediately decided against it. Harry released her and sat back in his chair. He was amazed that no one had come running. "Oi, my head hurts," Ginny moaned. Harry sighed with relief that that was the only thing that was bothering her. Dumbledore had said it was a common side effect.

"Oh, Ginny! Do you have any idea how much you've worried us? Do you have any idea how long you've been unconscious? You gave us all quite a scare," Harry said loudly. Ginny flinched a little.

"Ah, Harry...Please don't yell." Ginny looked over at him, bewildered. "Unconscious? How long?" she asked, looking extremely puzzled. Harry smiled back at her.

"For two months now. I was only out for about an hour," Harry said, staring off into space. Ginny's eyes widened once again, and then she rubbed her head. She propped up her pillow and leaned back against it, sighing in pain.

"Two bloody months! Are you serious?" she yelled, clearly not happy about it. Harry nodded meekly. "Ow. Yelling hurts. I must be so far behind. Wait a minute...how did we pass out?" she asked, looking pointedly at Harry. Harry flushed a little and looked down at his fingers.

"Well, to make a long story short...It turns out that we're both telepaths like Aurora. At least, that's what they assume that you are. We performed the same action, and I guess we cancelled each other out. Dumbledore said you might only be a partial telepath, though. That's why you were out so long. We also learned something very interesting and mind-boggling yesterday from Aurora. She and Neve..." Harry began.

"...were encountered by a single dementor on Knockturn Alley while looking for Fred and George's joke shop. Harry, while I was out, I saw Death Eaters. A sort of meeting," Ginny said, finishing Harry's statement. Harry stared at her for a moment, unblinking. Ginny stared back, and then Harry blinked. "Did you hear me?"

"Yes. Death Eaters, you say? Was Voldemort there?"

"Yes. So was Bellatrix Lestrange. I couldn't see any others. Aislin's coming," Ginny said the last sentence inattentively. Harry cringed at the sound of Bellatrix's name and then turned to look at the door. It did not open, and the blonde did not come through. He turned to look at Ginny.

"Oh..." Then something dawned on Harry. His eyes widened as if he was facing new presents. "Wait a minute! Did Aurora or Neve tell you about their encounter?" he asked. It was Ginny's turn to blush.

"Harry, slow down! Tell me what you know of their encounter."

"Well, they were on Diagon Alley. Neve said she wanted to go to the sweet shop..."

"...and something told Aurora to stay with Neve," Ginny finished. Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Yes. So, they went looking for Fred and George's joke shop instead. Then..."

"...they made a wrong turn down Knockturn Alley. That's when the dementor appeared," Ginny finished off his sentence again. Harry continued to stare at Ginny like she'd grown antlers and a red nose.

"She didn't say it was Knockturn Alley."

"Trust me, Harry. It was Knockturn Alley."

"Okay. Well, then the dementor went for Neve. She fell unconscious, and the dementor prepared to Kiss her. Aurora didn't know what to do until..."

"...she heard someone tell her how to make a Patronus," Ginny finished. Harry still looked shocked at her knowledge of the event; her terrifyingly accurate knowledge of the event she was not told about.

"Ginny, how do you know all of this if no one told you?" he asked, sitting up closer to her. Ginny suddenly became very interested in her fingers. She felt very nervous when Harry got this close to her. "Gin?"

"That brings me back to the Death Eater meeting. It seemed that I'd gone back in time before term started, but after the dementor event. I was invisible to them. I figured that out by the way I fell straight through a tree. It was very cold, and I saw three dementors floating overhead. I don't know why they weren't affecting the rest of the Death Eaters. The certainly weren't affecting Voldemort. Voldemort asked whether it was done. Bellatrix told Voldemort what'd happened with Aurora, Neve, and the dementor. I didn't see her on Knockturn Alley, but she could've been on the roof of one of the buildings. Anyway, Voldemort said that the Seer that was working for him told him that Aurora would be alone. I deduced that Voldemort wanted Aurora dead. Seers are *NEVER* wrong, Harry. *NEVER*," Ginny said, emphasizing her words. Harry nodded and she continued. "Bellatrix said the dementor didn't distinguish between Neve and Aurora and went for Neve instead. Then she said that Aurora produced a Patronus. Voldemort was definitely not happy about this. He knew that she didn't know how for a fact because Meloni didn't teach it until seventh year, and Aurora was just beginning sixth year. He suggested that you and Aurora may have another connection other than being opposites," Ginny paused. Harry took a moment to finally breathe. He was astounded at the fact that she knew all of this.

"Then what happened, Gin?"

"Then I felt a sort of tugging. Almost like the feeling you get when you use a Portkey. I found myself on Diagon Alley a few feet away from Neve and Aurora. They were about to split up, so I figured that I was transported even further back in time."

"That's not possible. If they split..."

"...then Aurora would die. I gathered as much from Bellatrix and Voldemort. Remember that dementors do not distinguish the one they're after and the one who gets in their way. I knew they couldn't split, and I knew that they couldn't hear or see me. Then I realized that Bellatrix had said that Aurora wasn't alone. I figured out my power of telepathy a while ago. Like, when we first started training here when I read Ron's mind by accident. I didn't tell anyone. I wondered if Aurora could hear me think. So, I tried. What harm could it do, right?"

"So, it was you, then?"

"Yes, it was. I told Aurora to stay with Neve. To make Neve follow her. Neve begrudgingly agreed and followed Aurora down Knockturn Alley. That's when the dementor attacked them, and I knew that Aurora had absolutely no idea how to do a Patronus Charm. So, I told her mentally. She did it, and then the dementor was driven away. It was pretty amazing that she produced a corporeal one on the first try. It was unicorn and very beautiful. Anyway, that's when Neve woke up." Ginny took a deep breath. Harry sat, stunned and appalled at what he'd just heard.

"Ginny, something is not right. Technically..."

"...Aurora shouldn't be here. Neither should Neve. But, I remembered the prophecy Dumbledore told us about. I also realize that a Seer's words are written in stone. I need to see Fionnula or Dumbledore or someone about this," she said, looking worried.

"Dumbledore is supposed to be coming. We called for him after Aurora told us what happened. Hermione was right. Voldemort does know about the prophecy," Harry said. That's when Aislin walked in. Harry turned to look at her. She looked amazed at Ginny.

"Oh, Ginny! You're awake! Good. Harry, Drake is calling for you. Your friends are waiting for you. Professor Dumbledore is here. Ginny, you can go, too, but only if you're up to it," Aislin said, waving her finger. Ginny nodded and swung her legs over her bed. She stood as Aislin walked out. Harry looked at Ginny again.

"How did you know she was coming?"

"What do you mean?"

"You said that she was coming a good ten minutes ago. Then she just appeared. How did you know?" Harry inquired. Ginny shrugged.

"Lucky guess, maybe? Let's go," Ginny said. Harry nodded, still looking bewildered.

Dumbledore was sitting in a large armchair with the students surrounding him when Harry and Ginny made their presence known. They all turned and looked at them. Ron looked ecstatic to see Ginny standing there. Ginny smiled and waved.

"Ah, Miss Weasley. It is nice to see you awake again," Dumbledore said, his eyes twinkling. "Now, what's this I hear about a dementor attacking Neve and Aurora?" he asked in a more serious tone as Harry and Ginny took their seats on a loveseat next to Aurora. Aurora raised her hand. Dumbledore acknowledged her.

"Well, it happened the day before we left for Hogwarts..." She began her story. After she was done, Dumbledore pondered long and hard. The teenagers exchanged looks

until Dumbledore dropped his intertwined fingers.

"You say you heard a voice telling you what to do, right, Aurora?" he asked. Aurora nodded. Then Ginny raised her hand. Dumbledore looked sternly at her. "Something to say, Miss Weasley?"

"Yes, sir, actually there is something else. While I was out, I saw..." Ginny told them about her experience and why Aurora was compelled to do what she did. Even Dumbledore himself looked utterly shocked and amazed. Everyone stared at Ginny, and she shifted in her seat uncomfortably.

"This is awfully strange. You altered time, Ginny. Aurora and Neve should not be here. Well, Neve might be here. Aurora would be dead. But, you say a Seer told Voldemort about where Aurora would be. Seers are never wrong," Hermione said. Ginny looked in her direction. Dumbledore nodded.

"I'm afraid that Miss Granger is right, Ginny. That means, in another time frame, you, Aurora, did die. In another time frame, none of this would've happened. We would not even be here."

"How do you know, sir?" Draco asked. He looked positively confused at all of this.

"Well, for one, Draco, the scene between Harry and Aurora revealing their powers in class would not have happened, therefore, I would have no reason to send you off to training with the Magi. Thus, Ginny here would not have discovered her power, because she was not here. Consequently, Aurora, you would have been alone and would not have known what to do in your time of need." Dumbledore said. It was silent for a moment. Neville and Neve looked utterly confused. Neville blinked.

"Run that pass me one more time," Neville said.

"What he means is something happened along the way before Aurora came here to alter her destiny. It was Aurora's destiny to die. Something happened to alter time. Something that happened way before we met. Way before her father came. But what was it?" Hermione asked, looking over at Neville. Neve seemed to be in very deep thought.

"Someone knew what was going to happen beforehand and decided to change it. But who? Who would've known how to do something like that? A Seer, maybe?" she asked, looking at Dumbledore.

"No. You would need to go way back in time to do something like that," Dumbledore said. Something in Ron clicked. He looked over at his sister.

"Ginny was born. That's what changed," he said quietly.

Chapter 10: Spy

Chapter 11 of 24

Ron explains his comment.

Chapter 10: Spy

Everyone stared at Ron in disbelief. Hermione looked appalled that he would say something like that. Ginny looked sad that her birth could've possibly been a mistake. None of this seemed to make sense to her. Harry looked around at everyone's faces. Even Dumbledore appeared to be stumped on this one.

"**RONALD WEASLEY!** How could you say something like that about your sister?" Hermione exclaimed. She hit him with a pillow from the sofa. Ron tried to block her onslaught. Dumbledore raised a hand and Hermione stopped. They all turned to look at the old man. Ginny was still gaping.

"I wasn't supposed to be born? How is that possible?" Ginny asked, looking at Ron for some sort of answer. Ron was rubbing his head.

"Well, isn't it obvious? Mum always used to say that Ginny was a miracle child when we were younger because she was such an angel. I never thought much of it until now. Mum couldn't have anymore children after me. At least that's what Bill told me he heard her tell Dad one day when they were younger. Mum swore an angel gave her to them, because a year later, Ginny was born even though it was physically impossible," Ron said. Everyone still had the shocked looks on their faces.

"So, I was a mistake?" Ginny whispered. Ron shook his head.

"Never a mistake, Ginny. It was just a miracle you were born. If you ask me, I'm glad you were. I don't know how I would've taken it being the youngest. I already get picked on enough," Ron said in his usual jovial manner. Ginny smiled a little at his words. He definitely knew how to make her feel better.

"Professor, could this be true? I mean, that Ginny wasn't supposed to be born?" Neve asked. Dumbledore nodded.

"Someone knew way before the new prophecy was even made that Aurora was going to die. But, it's who would've known that is the question. Plus, who went back and changed what happened to bring Ginny into existence. They knew that Ginny would be the only one to save her. They knew Ginny would be Aurora's only hope in surviving, but she couldn't do that if she never existed," Dumbledore said. Everyone nodded.

"But who has that type of power to give a child to a woman, even though it is physically impossible for them to give birth?" Harry asked, curious as to how this happened. Hermione looked up out of her stupor.

"A Graviostetria," she said. Everyone looked at her in awe. The girl had an answer to almost everything.

"A what?" Harry asked.

"A Graviostetria. It's special type of healer that specializes in childbirth and whatnot. I read about them a couple of years ago in fourth year," Hermione replied. Dumbledore chuckled a little at everyone's amazement.

"But, how would a Gravostetica get into the past to help Mrs. Weasley?" Aurora asked, mispronouncing the word. Draco giggled a little. Aurora shot him a dangerous look and he straightened up immediately.

"It's Graviostetria, Aurora. I have no idea how that is possible. I need to go to the Department of Mysteries. Maybe I can find some answers there." Dumbledore stood and walked over to a candle. "*Portus*," Dumbledore said, taping his wand on the candle. He touched it, then disappeared.

Everyone sat in awe of the conversation they just had. Ginny was staring at her hands.

"So, someone altered time a long time ago and that's why I exist. That's why the Seer saw Aurora die. I can think of no one who would do that. How did they get that far back? Don't horrible things happen to witches and wizards who meddle with time?" Ginny said, looking up. Hermione and Harry nodded, remembering their use of the Time Turner in their third year. Ron looked a little saddened. Ginny looked over at him.

"What's wrong, Ron?" Ginny asked. Ron looked up at her.

"To think that my younger sister only exists to save someone's life...That's not a very cheerful thought..." Ron's words were cut off by a deafening scream on the other side of the room. Neve put her legs up on the sofa she was sharing with Neville. Neville looked on the floor around them to see what she saw.

"What is it, Neve?" Aurora asked, searching the floor as well.

"*Un ratto! Un ratto!*" she screamed, trying hard to get as far away from the floor as she could. Harry and Ron looked at each other, fighting laughter. Then, a rat appeared. He was missing a whole foot and was scampering around with a silver substitute for the missing foot, it seemed.

"Wormtail..." They immediately got up. They saw the rat moving around the door. It touched a rather large piece of wood and was gone in an instant. Harry and Ron stomped on the floor.

"**FUCK!** This is **NOT** good!" Harry yelled. If Wormtail knew their whereabouts, he could tell Voldemort and then they'd all be dead.

"Wormtail? Who's Wormtail?" Neve asked, calming down. Harry turned to face her. His face was one of pure hatred and anger.

"Wormtail is also known as Peter Pettigrew. He's Voldemort's right hand man and he's the reason both of my parents are dead. He sold their whereabouts to Voldemort and he came looking for me. I have a hunch he'll do the same thing to us," Harry said, plopping down next to Ginny as Ron sat back next to Hermione. Harry put his head in his hands and sighed very long and very deep. Ginny rubbed his back.

"How did he find us?" Draco asked. He looked around wondering if anyone would answer him. Neville's eyes lit up.

"Maybe he somehow got onto Dumbledore's robes without his knowledge and came here with Dumbledore," Neville said, guessing. Hermione nodded.

"That just might be it, Neville."

"You're forgetting one thing," Ginny said. Everyone looked in her direction.

"What?" Ron asked.

"He had his own portkey. It was obviously one-way. How would a rat carry a piece of wood that big?" Ginny asked. They all exchanged weird looks. "Someone had to plant it there. Someone large enough to carry a big wooden beam. Obviously, none of us could've done it because none of us know how to make a portkey. Also, how would Wormtail get here? It doesn't seem plausible that Dumbledore wouldn't notice a rat clinging to his robes. Plus, Wormtail would've had to have been at Hogwarts. It doesn't make any sense," Ginny said. Aurora looked pretty shocked.

"Why would someone here want to sell us out?" she asked, looking around.

"You'd honestly be surprised," Harry mumbled under his breath.

"Not why, Aurora. I don't give a bloody fuck why. Who?" Draco asked. Everyone shrugged. Someone in the castle had brought Wormtail there. Someone who knew how to get passed the barriers.

"Let's not think about that tonight. Let's think about it tomorrow," Ron said, standing and stretching. Hermione pulled him back down. That's when Aislin walked in. Everyone immediately turned around. If Aislin found this suspicious, she didn't let on, until she spoke.

"You guys shouldn't do that. You look *very* conspicuous. I just came here to tell you that dinner is ready." And with that, Aislin was gone, her blonde ponytail swinging as she turned. All eight of them exhaled loudly.

"That was a bit conspicuous, you guys. We're gonna have to work on being a little bit more secretive. Ron, you just can't forget about it. Voldemort could attack us tonight!"

"He's not going to," Ginny said quietly. Hermione and Harry looked at her. Ginny looked up at them.

"How do you know?" Harry asked. Ginny shrugged.

"I just know," she said with certain finality in her voice. She stood and walked out towards the kitchen. The other seven sat in wonder, then followed her out.

In the kitchen, they ate in silence. Draco kept glancing around the table, seeing everyone concentrating on their plates. He grew tired of the silence and slammed his fist on the table. Everyone jumped and pulled out their wands.

"Wow. At least your reaction time is up to par," he said, smirking. Harry frowned and put his wand back up.

"What is it, Malfoy?"

"It's too bloody quiet! I've grown used to your mindless chatter and the silence is really starting to get to me. What do we do when we do find out who is helping Voldemort?" Draco asked, picking up his fork again. Hermione sighed, putting her wand away also. She would've liked nothing more than to hex him, but restrained herself.

"I haven't thought that far into the future, Malfoy. We're still trying to figure out who knew about Aurora..."

Elsewhere, Wormtail morphed out of his animal form to face Voldemort. The sinister man wore his hood and all you saw were vicious red eyes. Wormtail cowered before him and kneeled.

"What did you find for me, Wormtail?" Voldemort asked in his cold voice. Wormtail looked up slowly from the ground. "Rise, you idiot," Voldemort said. Wormtail stood quickly and glanced at his master.

"I've found out their whereabouts, my lord. I also heard their conversation with Dumbledore. Apparently, the reason you did not succeed in killing Aurora Assante was because of Ginevra Weasley," Wormtail stammered out. Bellatrix Lestrange walked up behind Voldemort's chair and looked out on the man. Her eyes narrowed.

"You mean to tell me that Arthur Weasley's daughter is the reason why Aurora is still alive? How is that possible, Peter?" she asked, her voice stern. Voldemort intertwined his fingers in a very Dumbledore-like manner. Wormtail looked from her to Voldemort.

"Well, Ginevra Weasley somehow was transported to the past in her mind and first heard the conversation about the failed attempt at the meeting after Aurora Assante was supposed to be killed. She heard about the Seer and everything that was supposed to happen. Then somehow, she was transported even further back in time to Diagon Alley where the Assante sisters were. The child is telepathic and used her power to tell Aurora what to do in order to save her life. That's how we failed and that's how the girl was saved," Wormtail said quickly. Bellatrix frowned.

"That's not possible. How could she have done this if we didn't see or hear her? I specifically don't remember seeing anyone but the Assante sisters in Knockturn Alley," Bellatrix said angrily. She didn't like being proven wrong. Wormtail cowered before her also.

"Bella, hush," Voldemort said quietly. Bellatrix nodded and quieted down. She glared back at Wormtail, her eyes narrowed to the point where it looked like she was squinting. All that was heard was Wormtail's unsteady breathing. "What else was said, Wormtail?" Voldemort asked. Wormtail turned his attention back to Voldemort.

"Well, they were all trying to figure out how Ginevra could have done it. She, herself, didn't know how. The Mudblood girl said that Ginevra had altered time and that Seers were never wrong..."

"What? I was proven wrong? How is that possible?" a new voice said. Another woman with short brown hair walked up next to Bellatrix. She looked awfully angry. Wormtail could tell she was the aforementioned Seer. Wormtail nodded.

"I'm getting there. We all know that a Seer's words are written in stone. There is no changing them. Apparently, someone else, someone we don't know about, saw Aurora die. The Weasley boy said that what changed in the past was the birth of the Weasley girl. She wasn't supposed to exist. If she didn't exist, none of this would've happened. Harry Potter needs Aurora Assante to succeed and if she died, there was no way he could have done so," Wormtail said. Voldemort nodded slightly. "The Mudblood girl said that only a Graviostetria could have the power to make Molly Weasley have the Weasley girl," Wormtail concluded. Voldemort nodded again.

"Yes, I see. Where are they, Wormtail?"

"They are in an old abandoned castle, outside of Dublin. There are many spells and enchantments surrounding it. Our informant said that they could easily take some down to make it easier to attack," Wormtail said, looking hopefully at his master.

"Yes. Bellatrix, on the first of April, I want you to take eight Death Eaters and attack the castle. I will come and corner Potter and the Assante girl. I want you to take the others out."

"What about Dumbledore, my lord?" Bellatrix asked. Voldemort gave a terrible laugh. Wormtail cringed at the sound of it.

"I will take care of him, too. Astrid, take Wormtail to his room and keep him there until I require his services further," Voldemort said. Bellatrix and Astrid, the above-mentioned Seer, nodded and bowed before Voldemort.

Ginny Weasley sat up, breathing hard. She looked around her room and saw that it was still dark outside. She got up and ran to Harry's room at top speed. Opening the door, she looked around for his bed. Her eyes still hadn't adjusted to the darkness. She saw Harry's sleeping form. He groaned quietly and shifted a bit. Ginny snuck quietly over to him. Harry could be lethal when pulled out of his slumber without warning.

"Harry! Harry, wake up!" she whispered loudly, shaking him at the same time. Harry turned over and pulled his wand out. It took him a moment to realize who he was pointing it at. He pulled his glasses on.

"*Lumos*. Ginny, what is wrong?" He asked when he saw the terrified look on her face. Ginny took a deep breath.

"April first, Harry. That's when Voldemort will attack. April first. I saw him meet with Wormtail and Bellatrix and a Seer named Astrid. Oh, Harry, that's only four months from now! We won't be ready! We haven't trained enough!" Ginny said, whispering urgently. That's when Ron, Hermione, and Aurora walked in. By then, tears were streaming down Ginny's eyes.

"What's going on?" Ron asked sleepily.

"I heard footsteps and followed Ginny. Ginny? Ginny, what's wrong?" Hermione asked, hugging her. Ginny continued to cry quietly. Harry told them what she'd said and they all frowned.

"We have to train harder. Much harder. Starting tomorrow," Harry said sternly. Ron and Aurora nodded. Harry sighed. It was going to be a long, hard, and grueling four months...

Chapter 11: FINALLY

Chapter 12 of 24

Ginny and Harry get together and Ron finds them in an awkward situation.

The Opposite

Chapter 11: FINALLY

"Draco, get ready. You have to be able to make your arrow strong in a short amount of time. You will be the only hope for long distance fighting," Sloan said. Draco aimed his arrow. The tip began glowing with white light. "Let it go," Sloan said. Draco shot the arrow a good distance from him. The dummy it hit exploded into fire. Draco smiled, but Sloan shook his head.

"What? That wasn't good?" Draco asked. He sounded a bit ticked. Sloan got up and walked towards him. He took the bow and arrow out of his hands. Draco stepped to the side and watched Sloan. The tip of the arrow began glowing. This time, though, a large ball of light formed. Sloan released the arrow. It flew to the ground 80 feet away from them and a large blast was made. The ground fixed itself back to the way it was. Sloan handed the bow back to Draco, who just stood there with his mouth hanging open.

"No, it wasn't," Sloan said, sitting back down. Draco frowned.

Neve wasn't far from him. She laughed a little and Draco thought about shooting her with one of his enchanted arrows. He tried again, this time using his anger at Neve to fuel him. Neve watched him, stifling a giggle. Draco released the arrow. A similar blast was made and Sloan smiled a little. "Much better, Draco! Next time, be a little quicker. It should only take fifteen seconds to shoot an arrow. If you get really good, you could shoot it in less than ten. I need you to work on your power-up ability," he said. Draco nodded then looked back at Neve, who was loading her crossbow. She liked automatic weapons better.

Inside, Ron and Hermione were with Drake. Today, Drake was teaching them to throw knives with better accuracy. Ron was getting very lazy. Hermione kept trying to encourage him, but Drake was being very tough. He was being insufferably tough.

"Hit it right on the mark, Weasley! What's so hard about that?" Drake yelled in Ron's ear. Ron rolled his eyes and sighed. He turned to face Drake. He was only about an inch shorter than he was and just as built from his training.

"Listen, I can't concentrate with you yelling in my bloody ear all the fucking time! Step away from me or the Death Eaters will have one less person to attempt to kill when they get here," Ron nearly yelled. Hermione watched with wide eyes at the two men. They were breathing very hard and Ron didn't look like he was going to back down. They stood like that for about a minute.

"Throw the damn knife and hit the fucking mark, Weasley. Or, you will regret what you just did. I will not tolerate insubordination," Drake said, his voice low and steady. Ron frowned and turned to face the target. He imagined Drake's head on it and threw the knife. He missed the target by less than a millimeter and Drake noticed it, even though Hermione and Ron didn't. Hermione clapped and hugged Ron. He hugged her back and swung her around. "**WEASLEY!**" Drake yelled. Ron put Hermione down and turned toward him.

"What do you want? I did what you asked me to do. Now, leave me alone," Ron said, turning his attention back to Hermione. Drake frowned and jerked Hermione out of his arms. He held her tightly and she squirmed. She could feel her bones being crushed under Drake's strength. Ron looked at him. "Stop it! You're hurting her!" He could see the tears of pain welling up in her eyes.

"You missed the target by less than a millimeter, but you missed nonetheless. Maybe what you need is a little incentive." Drake dragged Hermione roughly to the target board. He slammed her back against the board and took out a marker. He made to dots on either side of her head. He also made marks between her fingers. "Don't move," he said. Hermione nodded.

"What the hell are you doing? I could miss and hit her!" Ron yelled. Drake smirked at him and handed him pushed a tray with fourteen knives over to Ron.

"Well, then you shouldn't miss," Drake said. Ron looked at Hermione. She was obviously scared. She blinked and a tear rolled down her left cheek and Ron yearned to wipe it away. Why was Drake being so hard on them? Ron picked up the first knife. "You better have quick reflexes," Drake said. "Go."

Ron looked in Hermione's eyes, and then threw the knife at her hand. He hit the mark and Hermione breathed. He managed to hit all the marks on her right hand. Then he stared at the mark by the right side of her head.

'Come on, Ron,' Hermione thought. Ron closed his eyes and inhaled. He opened them and exhaled loudly. Drake watched. As soon as Ron raised his hand, he yelled. The knife hit the mark, but Ron was furious. He turned and looked at Drake with murder in his eyes.

"What is your damn problem? I could've killed her!" he yelled. Drake smirked and sat back down.

"Continue, Weasley," he said serenely. Ron mumbled a slew of unintelligible, but colorful words and turned to face Hermione again. She stood as still as stone, still looking Ron directly in his eyes. She blinked again and another tear rolled down her cheek.

Ron hit five of the six marks by her left hand. He looked carefully at the last one between her middle and index fingers. He threw the knife, and then heard a deafening scream. He'd missed the mark and hit Hermione in the center of her hand. Hermione started to cry for real now. Ron started to go towards her.

"Oh, Mione! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean..." Ron began walking forward. Drake stopped him.

"You have one more target, Weasley. Granger, don't move," Drake said. There was nothing more that Ron wanted to do then stab him with the fourteenth knife right in his chest. Instead, Ron looked at Hermione, who had not moved. She was sniffing now and looked faint.

Ron stared at the mark beside her head. He raised his hand and threw the knife just as Drake yelled again. Hermione's eyes widened as the knife cut her cheek, but hit the mark. Drake had made it deliberately that way. One way or another, she was going to get cut. Ron ran towards Hermione. He looked at her hand which was stuck to the wall.

"This is going to hurt a little, Mione. I'm sorry," he said. Hermione nodded slightly and closed her eyes. Ron pulled the knife out and Hermione screamed again. Ron picked her up just as she fainted. He turned to face a smug-looking Drake. "You pompous arse. You'll get yours eventually," Ron threatened as he carried Hermione off to find Aislin.

"Faster, Harry! One right after the other!" Aislin yelled at her pupil. Harry was working on decreasing the time between throwing spells without a wand. Normally, he would've needed about 15 seconds. He was down to ten, but he still needed to be faster. The dummy in front of him was throwing little red jets of light at him. Aurora watched with Ginny.

Ron burst through the door and Harry sent a hex accidentally towards him. Ron quickly dove to the side, minding Hermione. Harry gasped as he saw the condition that Hermione was in. Her face was smeared with blood and her hand was still bleeding.

"Ron! What happened?" Harry yelled, picking up Hermione off of him. She was still out of it. Ron stood up as Aislin walked over to them. Ginny was behind her. Aislin took one look at Hermione.

"Follow me, Harry. Ron, Ginny, you might as well come too." Aislin began walking off. They followed.

"It was that vermin, Drake. Because I missed the mark by less than a millimeter, he thought I needed some 'incentive' to help me. So, he made Hermione stand there and I had to throw knives right at her and hit marks close to her body. Treacherous snake. I could've killed her!" Ron said. He was so red he looked as though he might burst. Harry nodded. Drake had been particularly hard on both Ron and Hermione lately.

They entered the white room where Aurora and Harry were after their assessment a month earlier. Harry put Hermione on the table. Her breathing had slowed and her hand was still gushing blood. Ron paced back and forth. Ginny watched him, her heart reaching out to him. She could tell he was worried about her. Aurora walked in after them. They watched Aislin work her magic on Hermione.

"All of you out right now! Hermione needs to rest. She lost a lot of blood from that hole in her hand. I have a few choice words for Drake. He had no right to do that. You four better get to Fionnula or Sloan or wherever you're supposed to be now." Aislin ran off. Harry and Ron took one last look at Hermione, and then left the room. Ginny and Aurora watched her breathing, and then left also.

Fionnula was leaning against a wall, watching Neville shoot with a pistol. He had pretty good aim and was quick about reloading. Aurora and Ginny walked in. Fionnula

noticed them.

"Ah, Aurora and Ginny. Welcome. That's enough, Neville. Go to Sloan next. Your reaction time is still a bit slow. Ladies, come with me," Fionnula said, gesturing towards the door on the far end of the room. Aurora and Ginny followed her.

They walked in the greenhouse. It was simply the most serene and tranquil place in the entire castle. There was also a silencing charm around it so that they couldn't hear any of the destruction that Draco was causing.

"Ladies, have a seat." Fionnula gestured to the chairs. Aurora and Ginny took them and looked up at Fionnula. "Today, we're going to work on mind-control. Ginny, do not put up any blocks, yet. Aurora, clear your mind and think of something you want Ginny to do. Then, try to relay that message to her with your mind. Leave your eyes open. Look directly at Ginny. Since this is your first try, you should look in Ginny's eyes. It might make it a little easier." Aurora faced Ginny. They stared at each other for a moment, sitting still as stone.

Aurora felt the euphoric feeling she got when her mind entered another's. She saw Ginny's secrets and memories of beating up Ron and Harry. She saw her remembering what she'd done in her first year at Hogwarts. She saw Tom Riddle.

'*Get up,*' Aurora thought. Ginny stood up, her eyes glazed over. *Turn around and punch Fionnula. Hit her as hard as you can!* Aurora told Ginny. Ginny turned and looked at Fionnula. She balled her hand up into a fist and decked Fionnula across the jaw. Aurora left Ginny's mind after that. Fionnula stood up straight, rubbing her jaw. Ginny blinked twice and looked at Fionnula. Her face was turning purple.

"What just happened?" Ginny asked. Fionnula glared at her, then at Aurora. Aurora was nearly crying she was laughing so hard. Ginny looked around, still confused. She didn't even remember standing up. "What's so funny, Aurora?" she demanded to know. Fionnula was moving her jaw around, trying to get some feeling back in it.

"Sit down, Ginny. That was very good, Aurora. Next time, could you think of something a little more subtle? Now, Ginny, it's your turn," Fionnula said. Ginny sat back down and looked at Aurora. They stared into each other's eyes and Ginny felt her mind leave her body completely. She did not see Aurora's mind. Instead, she saw herself in Harry's room. Only she didn't know why she was there...

"**GINNY!**" Ginny heard Aurora yelling. She opened her eyes and sat up. How had she ended up on the floor? She looked around. Fionnula was eyeing her suspiciously. Ginny stood up.

"What did you see?" Fionnula asked. Ginny looked around, as if trying to remember something.

"I don't remember..." she whispered.

That night, after dinner, Harry sat in his room summoning things to and fro. He was supposed to be sleeping, but he was not tired in any way. In fact, he was rather hungry. He picked up his wand and started to walk to his door. Harry quietly opened it and looked around. The castle was deathly quiet. It was almost eerie.

"*Lumos,*" Harry said. The tip of his wand lit up and he started down the hallway. When he arrived at the kitchen door, he heard movement. He lowered his wand down and listened. He just heard a single, soft voice. Opening the door, he pointed his wand only to see Ginny sitting there, pointing hers as well. They stood like that for a moment, as if making sure it was really them. Ginny was first to lower her wand.

"Oh, come on Harry. It's really me. Do you want me to use telepathy to prove it?" Ginny giggled, sitting down to a large bowl of chocolate pudding. She pulled out another spoon and threw it at Harry. Harry finally lowered his wand and sat across from Ginny.

"Why are you up? Shouldn't you be asleep?" Harry asked, sticking his spoon in the pudding. Ginny looked at him as if he was speaking Japanese.

"I could ask the same of you, Mr. Potter. It isn't exactly like you're supposed to be up either," Ginny said, swirling the pudding. Harry smiled at her. Then he looked at the pudding.

"Gin, where did you get this anyway?" he asked, tasting it. Ginny smiled a sly smile.

"That's for me to know and for you to never find out. How about that, Harry? Besides, if I'm eating it, it's obviously not poisoned," Ginny said, innocently licking the spoon.

"Well, you could've made it so that the poison was meant only for me. You could be immune to it, Ginny," Harry said. Ginny rolled her eyes. She licked the spoon again, not knowing that she was being seductive as Harry watched her. She had no idea what she was doing. Her voice brought him back to planet Earth.

"Harry, what do you think my power is? I don't think I'm a telepath. My power is far more complex than that. I mean, I can completely separate my mind from my body and be in two places at once. Well, it's more like my mind is somewhere else and my body is another. I can also see a certain distance into the future. Why is that?" Ginny asked, sounding genuinely confused. Harry shrugged.

"It really sounds like you're a Seer, Gin. But the separation of mind and body is something new to me. No one has ever done it?" Harry asked, looking up at her. Ginny shook her head.

"If they have, it's never been documented. Otherwise, Hermione would know, wouldn't she?" Ginny laughed. Harry smiled and ate another spoon.

"She sure would. There's no doubt about that." They finished off the pudding. Ginny stuck it in the sink and picked up her wand. Harry followed her upstairs. They came to Ginny's door. Harry turned to face her.

"Good night, Gin," he said quietly. A short, five-foot-two Ginny looked up at Harry. They stared at each other for a moment.

"Good night, Harry." Ginny turned to go in her room. She shut the door and stood by it for a moment. She didn't hear Harry walk off.

Harry stood at Ginny's door, staring at. He hated that he could never bring himself to tell her how he felt. Maybe he was just imagining that she might be interested in him. Plus, if Ron knew all the **VERY** dirty thoughts he had about Ginny, he was sure that Voldemort wouldn't have to kill him. Ron would've beaten him to the punch. Harry stood by the door a few seconds more, and then walked two doors down to his room.

Ginny heard him go after a moment, and then walked to her bed. She lay there, thinking. Why wouldn't Harry just admit that he fancied her? Why couldn't she do it first? Ginny sat up, frustrated and shook her head. The glass of water by her bed broke, scaring her.

'*I've got to learn to control that!*' she thought derisively. Ginny swung her legs over her bed and stood up.

Harry lay in his bed with his hands behind his head. He was levitating one of Sloan's balls with his mind. He heard footsteps then a soft knock on his door. Forgetting that he had no shirt on, he traipsed to the door and opened it. A very flushed Ginny stood there. She stared up at him.

"Harry, I...well...I love you," she said. It looked as if she was going to cry. Harry stood there dumbfounded, then found words to say.

"I love you, too, Ginny," he said, smiling mischievously. Ginny smiled and threw her arms around his neck. In order to accomplish this, Ginny had to jump up, making Harry lean back as he caught her. They kissed and Harry kicked the door shut.

The next morning, Ron was walking down the hall. Harry wasn't up yet. He saw Neville coming down the opposite direction and waved him down.

"Let's go jump on Harry. It's odd. Normally he's the first one up," Ron said, scratching his head. Neville shrugged his shoulders. Hermione was coming down the hall with Neve.

"Where's Harry?" Hermione asked. Her hand was wrapped from the previous day's events. Ron cringed when he saw it and Hermione shook her head. "Ron, it is fine. I'll live to see another day," she laughed. Ron smiled, happy she wasn't mad at him. "Plus, it's Drake who's as ghastly as they come." They walked to Harry's room. That's when Hermione got a funny premonition. "Uh oh," she whispered inaudibly to anyone else.

Ron opened Harry's door. Hermione, Neville, and Neve entered behind him. They snuck up to his bed. Ron smiled giddily and pulled back the cover.

"**GET UP, YOU...**" Ron stopped as he saw his sister's body. Her head was on Harry's chest and they were both very much still asleep. Hermione and Neve looked at each other. Ginny's eyes fluttered open, as did Harry's. Ginny screamed and Harry pulled out his wand. All he saw was Ron.

Just as Ron reached for Harry, Neve and Neville pushed him into the wall. Ginny tried desperately to cover herself and scoot away from her brother. Neville and Neve held Ron back as he struggled to grab Harry. Hermione turned toward Harry. Harry was watching this scene with mild fascination.

"You'd do well to run. Ron is unnaturally strong. I don't know how long Neville and Neve can hold him," she warned. Harry nodded and grabbed his jogging pants and got up. Ron watched him. All logic and reason was gone from his eyes. Harry got his glasses as Ron let loose a yell. Neville and Neve were thrown backwards along with Ginny and Hermione. Harry was well on his way out to the snow filled grounds around the castle. Ron was hot on his heels.

"Come back here you little git!" Ron yelled. If there was one thing Harry was better at, it was running. He was a little faster than Ron. Draco and Aurora stuck to the wall as the two passed by. Then they saw Neville, Neve, and Hermione running after them.

Outside, Harry had to slow down. Running in the cold was a different story. Plus, he was barefoot. He stood still too long and Ron tackled him. They rolled down the hill until Ron was on top. He punched Harry in the jaw. Harry's head turned and spat blood.

"You sneaky little cunt!" he yelled and hit him again. Harry flipped Ron off of him and stood up. The cold seemed to have become hot as Harry stared at Ron. He hit Ron in the stomach and then did an uppercut when Ron bent over. Ron recovered rather quickly. Too quickly. He kicked Harry in the chest. Harry went flying backwards.

"Ron, stop it!" Hermione yelled. She started to go down there, but Neve stopped her. She shook her head.

"There's nothing you can do. You just have to let them fight. They'll eventually get tired," she said. Hermione nodded. She knew there was no way she could stop them.

"Stop it, Ron! You're being irrational! Ginny's a big girl, or haven't you noticed? Are you too busy shagging Hermione to..." Harry said. That earned him another punch to his jaw. Harry felt his jaw break. Then he hit Ron in the eye. Ron fell backwards. Harry kicked him twice. The second time, Ron caught his leg and threw him to the ground. Hermione was right. He was unnaturally strong. Both stood quickly. By the way Ron's nose was bleeding, Harry could tell it was broken. They both ran at each other and Ron ducked Harry's punch and hit him in the side, breaking two ribs.

Harry stumbled backwards. He looked over at Ron, who was watching him with wide eyes. Suddenly, it became very hard to breathe. Very, very hard to breathe. Harry fell backwards, trying to gasp for breath. Ron looked at Harry, raising his eyebrow.

"Harry?" he asked. Harry's eyes closed. Ron knelt down on him just as Ginny ran up with Aurora and Draco. Ginny gasped when she saw the condition both of them were in. Blood was in the snow and Harry wasn't moving. It didn't even look like he was breathing. Ginny ran down the hill with everyone else.

"Harry! Harry! Harry, answer me, damnit!" she yelled while crying. Ron stood and backed away. Hermione checked Harry's pulse. It was faint, but it was still there.

"Draco, Neville, carry him to Aislin's office. Ron? Ron!" Hermione yelled as Draco and Neville picked Harry up. Ron looked back at her, blood still running from his nose. Ginny pushed past Hermione and hit her brother very hard; so hard that Ron fell backwards.

"He's dying because of you! Because you can't control your damn temper! I hate you, Ronald! Don't ever come near me **AGAIN!**" With that, Ginny took off after Neville and Draco. Hermione looked at Ron, who looked very lethargic and pathetic. She sat next to him.

"I may have just killed my best mate," he whispered. Hermione held his head to her chest.

"Don't say that. Harry will make it, Ron. I know he will. I believe he will," Hermione whispered to him.

"This is all my fault," Ron whispered, putting his head in his hands and letting out a long sigh.

Chapter 12: Bellatrix's Ambush

Chapter 13 of 24

Ginny sees an attack in the making.

The Opposite

Chapter 12: Bellatrix's Ambush

Ginny sat at the edge of the bed Harry was on. It'd been two days since the gruesome fight between Harry and Ron. In a way, Ginny felt a little guilty. She shouldn't have rushed things so fast with Harry. But, then again, Harry wasn't too eager to stop her. Ron was two beds down with his head, nose, and left hand wrapped. Hermione walked and Ron opened his eyes.

"Herbione..." Ron said, talking through his nose. Hermione still laughed at him about it. She thought it was hilarious. Sitting on his bed, she handed him a handful of

Chocolate Frogs that Dumbledore had brought them from Honeydukes in Hogsmeade.

"Hello, Ron. Did you sleep well?" she asked. Ron shot her a dangerous look.

"Do I look like I slept well?" he asked sarcastically. Hermione tried to hide her smile, but was failing miserably. Ron struggled a little while opening the frog. Hermione sighed and snatched the frog away from Ron. She opened it and caught it before it could hop away. She gave it up to Ron's face and he frowned.

"Here," she said. Ron sighed and bit into it as she held it out. That's when the last person Ron wanted to see at that particular moment made his presence known to everyone.

"Wow. Now you need Granger to feed you, Weasley? This is too much! I must take a picture so I can cherish this moment forever!" Draco said, walking in with Aurora. Aurora kicked him in his shins. Draco shot her a look.

"Buck off, Balfoy," Ron said with a mouth full of chocolate. Draco continued to smile smugly at Ron. Ron tried to make a face, but the bandage on his nose wouldn't allow it.

"What happened to your hand anyway, Weasley?" Draco asked, crossing his arms. Aurora's looks seemed to have no effect on him. If looks could kill, Draco would be a very fine dust. Considering Aurora's power, if she really tried, her look could kill him. "Did hitting Potter break your knuckles or something?"

"He broke his wrist, Malfoy. Shouldn't you be terrorizing Neve or someone else?" Hermione said. Draco ignored her. Aurora sighed and turned her attention to Ron.

"Are you feeling better, Ron?" she asked, sitting on the other side of his bed across from Hermione.

"Not really. My nose still hurts something awful, even with Aiblin's potions," Ron managed to say. That's when Aislin walked in. She was furious with Harry and Ron after they were brought in, and her anger hadn't subsided. No one had ever seen her this angry. She looked at the "intruders" and growled something unintelligible.

"Out! Out! All of you! Leave Ron alone. It's bad enough that you didn't even attempt to stop the fight. I can't believe you just let them fight! This is slowing down their bloody training!" Aislin said, fixing Ron's pain potion. He watched the glass she was pouring it in cautiously. Although it helped, it hurt to take it.

"It's not like we could just walk up to them and say stop, Aislin. Once they start to fight, Ron especially, they won't stop until they deem it necessary," Hermione said, opening another Chocolate Frog for Ron. Draco snickered as she fed it to him. Then, he fell to the ground. Aurora smiled and winked at him. Draco mumbled something as he stood, and then hit the floor again.

"Yes, well. In this case I guess it was until Harry was maimed so that he was virtually dead. I mean the shape he was in when you brought him to me! That's why your damn wrist broke, Ron. Now, if you don't mind, I need all of you out. All of you except Ginny, of course," Aislin said, walking over to them. Hermione attempted to kiss Ron's face, but just settled for his other hand. Then she, Aurora, and a mumbling Draco walked out.

Aislin gave the cup to Ron. Ron looked at the bubbling red concoction. He tried to look unhappily at Aislin, but she just stared down at him with malice in her eyes. Ron looked back down at the potion and drank it reluctantly. He coughed as it burned down his throat. He coughed as he finished it.

"I think I'm gonna be sick..." he said quietly. Aislin snorted.

"For your sake, you better not. **I WILL** make you drink a whole cup, again, if I must. And I won't have any qualms about it. It will serve you right. I am thoroughly surprised at you, Ron. I thought you'd beat up Draco before you did Harry. Aren't you two supposed to be best mates?" Aislin said, putting up the ingredients to the potion she'd given Ron. Ron shrugged painfully. His sides constantly ached.

"When he wakes up, I wouldn't count on him being his best again," he said quietly. Aislin turned and looked at him. Her face softened somewhat at Ron's truthfulness.

"Well, I'm sure he'll be pretty pissed with you, but you two have fought before. He will eventually forgive you." She walked up closer to him and knelt down to his ear. "But, I think you'll have a harder time with Ginny." Then Aislin walked off, leaving Ron staring at Harry and Ginny. Ginny had been totally silent the entire time. She hadn't spoken to anyone since her outburst at Ron the day of the fight. Ron sighed and turned over, moaning as he did so.

Ginny continued to stare down at Harry. He looked horrible. His head was wrapped, and he had various cuts on his face. His jaw was wrapped, and his torso was covered in bandages. Bruises lined his arms, and he'd somehow managed to break most of the bones in his right hand. His ankle was sprained from Ron tackling him and his foot deciding not to move along with his body. Ginny still didn't realize how he managed to still fight with that injury. He probably hadn't realized it was sprained. Aislin handled his ribs and lung the moment he'd arrive so he could at least breathe correctly. Ginny could imagine the anger Harry was going to feel when he awoke.

Ginny looked over at her brother. She hadn't really meant what she'd said, but she was going to be very peeved with him for as long as possible. What she didn't realize was that she might regret these words later on and that she'd never truly hate her brother. Turning back towards Harry, she saw his eyes flutter a bit. Ginny stood to leave. She kissed her hand and placed it on Harry's head.

"Bye..."

"Faster, Neve! You still need to be faster!" Sloan yelled at Neve. She was having a little trouble with Bombe Boule De Feus. They were magical fire bombs that emitted green flames that were **VERY** hard to put out. They flew out of the launcher at a very high speed and they already traveled fast on their own. She'd caught fire eight times already and it was starting to burn through the leather of her armor. Next, it reached the enchanted spandex. After that came her skin. Enchantments don't reach that far.

"Come on. Neve! You can do it!" Neville yelled, trying to encourage his friend. Neve was obviously trying her hardest, and she was beginning to grow weary. Dodging wasn't exactly her cup of tea. Finally, she gave up and pulled her wand out.

"*Bombarda!*" she yelled. Sloan jumped back as the ball launcher exploded and a Bombe Boule De Feu blew up inches from Neve. She jumped back also. Neville stood, shocked at what just happened. Sloan coughed from the dust particles and smoke from the burning grass. Neve stood upright and sighed.

"Nice, Neve. Real nice. You've just earned fifty laps, nonstop, around the field. Get to it," Sloan said. Neve looked defiantly at him and just stood there. She walked up closer to him as he examined the demolished ball launcher. She pointed her wand at his chin. Neville took a step forward. She looked at him and he stopped. Sloan rose slowly with Neve's wand still poking him in the chin. Aurora and Draco walked outside and saw this scene.

"*Soggiorno via, Neville. Cram i giri sul vostro asino, Sloan!*" Neve growled. Aurora covered her mouth with her hands. Sloan's eyes looked over at Aurora.

"What did she just say?" Sloan said. It was becoming a little harder to breathe with Neve pushing the wand into his neck. Draco nudged Aurora and she jumped a little.

"She said, 'Stay away, Neville. Cram the laps up your ass, Sloan.' What happened? Why is she doing this?" Aurora asked. Sloan looked back down at Neve, who hadn't blinked. She was staring at Sloan with hatred in her eyes. Aurora didn't want to use telepathy on Neve to control her. She walked forward slowly. Neve didn't flinch.

"*Neve, ha lasciato per andare di esso. Lasci Sloan andare!*" Aurora said. Neve didn't move. "*Non dovete fare funzionare cinquanta giri. Potete riposarsi dopo questo. Non è quello di destra, Sloan?*" Just nod," Aurora said. Sloan looked at Aurora then nodded slowly. Neve slowly dropped her hand and then looked at her sister and back up at Sloan.

"*Li odio, voi bastardi!*" she said spitefully. Then she ran off. Aurora let out a sigh of relief and looked at Sloan. He looked a little mystified as to what had just occurred. Then

he looked down at Aurora.

"What did you say to her?"

"I basically said that she did not have to do the laps and that she could have the rest of the day off. Oh, and she said that she hates you and that you are a bastard," Aurora said. Sloan nodded. He then picked up his wand and looked down at the annihilated launcher.

Ginny opened her eyes. She was lying on the cold, wet ground. Standing and looking around, she saw she was no longer at the castle in Dublin. It was dark outside.

"Not again," she sighed. Then she saw Voldemort and several Death Eaters. Bellatrix was among them, as was Lucius Malfoy. "Isn't he in Azkaban?" Ginny looked puzzled. She saw several people tied up and stunned on the ground around a fire. Bellatrix had a sinister look on her face. Ginny gasped as she saw the faces of the people.

Professor McGonagall, Onsu, Snape, and Tonks lay on the ground along with some students: Lavender Brown, Cho Chang, Parvati Patil, Dean Thomas, Seamus Finnigan, and a fist year she didn't recognize. McGonagall looked especially mangled. There were cuts and bruises on all of them. Bellatrix walked over to Snape.

"I am going to truly enjoy killing him. The lying traitor. He didn't even deserve to be brought here, master. Why do we need him? And this one..." she said, gesturing to Onsu. "...she put up a grand fight. She made one mistake, though. She should've been watching her back instead of only standing forward. Yes, she'd do well under our control. She's a Magas, is she not? Why do we need her?" Bellatrix looked over at Voldemort. Voldemort smirked, or at least that's what it looked like to Ginny.

"I have my reasons, Bella. Now, we need to send a little message to Dumbledore." After that, Ginny heard a kind of hissing noise coming from Voldemort. She figured that it was Parseltongue, but who was he talking to? Then she saw it. A large snake slithered past Lucius Malfoy and lifted its head at Voldemort. Voldemort said something else and the snake nodded. It slithered to McGonagall's body. "Yes, that's it Nagini," Voldemort whispered. Ginny looked with wide eyes as Nagini launched its head forward.

"**NOOOOO!**" The scene before Ginny disappeared and she saw herself in Hogwarts. She looked around and was standing beside Onsu. She looked bored to death.

Professor Catriona Onsu was watching Seamus and Dean go at it when she heard a loud bang. All the students jumped in their seats and turned to look at the door. Onsu was knocked out of her bored state of unconsciousness and was alert. Then Professor McGonagall's voice was heard over the intercom.

"All students report to their dormitories at once. Move quickly and as quiet as possible. All teachers report to an entrance of the school with wands at the ready. Do this as quickly as humanly possible." Her voice sounded very urgent. Onsu walked to the door.

"Leave your things and get to your dormitories. Hurry! Lavender, leave your bag. It is unimportant at the present moment." Once Onsu saw that everyone was gone, she caught up with McGonagall. She was walking hurriedly to the headmaster's office. McGonagall was coming down the stone steps. "What is going on, Minerva? Where is the headmaster?"

"He was called to the Ministry earlier this morning by Fudge. There are Death Eaters and dementors approaching the school. Hagrid informed us. He's trying to head them off. Are all the students securely in their dormitories?" McGonagall was practically running down the hallway.

"Yes, they should be there now. Professor, where are we going?"

"To the main entrance. Have your wand ready," McGonagall said as they turned the corner. Bellatrix and Lucius were standing at the bottom of the stairs. Bellatrix was smiling arrogantly up at McGonagall.

"Well, hello, Minerva. It's been a long time," Bellatrix said. McGonagall pursed her lips. She was not one known for cursing, but if anytime called for it, this would be it.

"Bellatrix. What brings you here? Surely you know that Professor Dumbledore is not here," McGonagall said, her voice sounding as if it was straining to be calm. Bellatrix laughed and Lucius smiled.

"That's not the problem. We wanted Dumbledore to be gone. Our target is not him," Lucius said. Onsu cut her eyes at him. He looked like a sniveling weasel if there ever was one. Lucius looked her up and down and apparently liked what he saw.

"Well, then what is your target, Lucius?" McGonagall asked, removing her hat. Onsu pulled at the strings of her red robe. It fell to the ground. She had a number of weapons on her. Bellatrix smiled.

"A little too prepared, aren't we? Surely you don't need to use all of those on us," Bellatrix said.

"You think so?" Onsu pulled out her wand. Bellatrix pointed her wand at her. "Try me, Lestrangle," she said in a low voice. McGonagall turned her attention to Lucius. They stood like that for a moment. Then, Bellatrix broke the silence.

"*Crucio!*" she screamed and a red jet of light flew from the tip of her wand. Onsu's reflexes were much faster than the curse and she dove to the side. She hopped on the railing and began sliding down. Bellatrix shot curse after curse at her but continually missed.

McGonagall looked at Lucius with all the malevolence she could muster. They weren't fazed by the noise the other two were making.

"Lucius, are we ever going to get to this? I've beaten you before and I won't hesitate to do it again," McGonagall said, pointing her wand at him. Lucius smirked and ran a hand through his blonde hair.

"Well, I was a little bit younger and less experienced at dueling then. By now, I think I've gotten a smidge better, Minerva."

"It's **Professor McGonagall** to you, Lucius. I still was your teacher." Then a jet of blue light whizzed between them and knocked a lamp down. Lucius turned his head towards Onsu and Bellatrix as the lights went out. "*Stupefy!*" McGonagall yelled and an abnormally large ball of light went flying towards her opponent. Lucius didn't see it and suddenly, all went dark. The lights flickered back on and Lucius lay on the ground, unconscious.

Ginny, who'd been watching this horrible scene, noticed it growing colder. The other four were too busy throwing spells at each other to notice. Ginny turned around and saw two dementors approaching. She looked down at Onsu. She'd somehow gotten behind Bellatrix and was holding a gun to her head.

"Do you know what this is, Lestrangle?" Onsu whispered in a deadly tone. Bellatrix, for the first time since that night in the Department of Mysteries, looked very afraid. She shook her head slowly. "Let's call it the Muggle version of Avada Kedavra. I could easily put four bullets in your head before you could say *Stupefy*. Do you want that?" Onsu asked. She still hadn't noticed the dementors and neither had McGonagall. She was too busy watching Lucius.

"What do you want me to do?" Bellatrix asked, her voice shaking. Onsu smirked.

"Call off the Death Eaters and I'll spare your life," Onsu said. Bellatrix said nothing. Ginny watched the dementor get closer. Then she remembered what she could do.

"*Professor McGonagall! There are dementors behind you guys! Use the Patronus Charm! Hurry! It's almost upon Professor Onsu!*" Ginny thought, squeezing her eyes shut. McGonagall stood up and looked around. She turned to see the dementors just as Onsu realized they were behind her.

"*Expecto Patronum!*" McGonagall bellowed. An unusually large cat jumped from her wand and chased the dementor away. Bellatrix jumped forward and pulled out a

wooden stick.

"Portus!" she said. She grabbed Lucius and they disappeared. Onsu looked at McGonagall, who looked extremely worn out. Remus Lupin burst through the doors with Kingsley Shacklebolt hot on his heels. He ran to McGonagall as she slumped to the floor.

"Professor, are you all right?" he asked. McGonagall nodded and cracked a weak smile. Hagrid came running down the stairs. Padma Patil and Colin Creevey were with him. Both looked tired and dirty. Padma was crying hysterically.

"Tonks and Snape are gone. I found this." Hagrid held up locks of black and pink hair. "They were taken by Death Eaters! Some of yer students are missing also! These two saw it happen," he said, gesturing to the two students. Lupin and Onsu stood up just as Ginny saw the flash of light again.

Chapter 13: Dumbledore's Fury

Chapter 14 of 24

Harry wakes up and Dumbledore gets angry, obviously.

The Opposite

Chapter 13: Dumbledore's Fury

Ginny opened her eyes. She was in a cold sweat. She sat up immediately to find that she was in her room. The sun was shining through her window. Looking outside, she saw Sloan and Neville trying to repair the ball launcher. Draco was practicing with his arrows while Aurora was trying to block them. Ginny tied her hair up and walked to the bathroom. Hermione was coming down the hall in the opposite direction. She smiled, but her smile faltered when she saw the look on Ginny's face.

"Ginny? Ginny, what's wrong?" she asked, grabbing Ginny's hand. Ginny looked up at her.

"I think I just altered time again. How long have I been asleep?" Ginny asked. Hermione looked utterly shocked. "Hermione?"

"Oh. Um, you came back last night from watching Harry around eleven. So, you've been asleep for almost a full day. We didn't want to wake you up. You looked so peaceful, and Fionnula said you hadn't really slept since the fight. What did you do this time?" Hermione led Ginny to her room. Hermione closed the door as Ginny sat on her bed.

"I woke up, like in the first one. I seemed to be in the same place. It started out the same as last time. Only this time, Lucius Malfoy was there..."

"Lucius Malfoy! Isn't he in Azkaban?" Hermione asked. Ginny shushed her and nodded.

"Apparently not anymore. Well, they were standing in a circle around a fire. I still couldn't be seen. There were bodies in the middle. A lot of bodies..." Ginny's voice trailed off.

"Dead bodies? Who?"

"None of them were dead. Just stunned and a little beat up. It was McGonagall, Professor Onsu, Tonks, Snape, Lavender, Cho, Parvati, Dean, Seamus, and another first year I didn't recognize. Bellatrix Lestrange said something about Onsu not watching her back and that she put up a grand fight. Voldemort said he wanted to send Dumbledore a message and called his snake..." Ginny seemed to be searching for the name.

"Nagini."

"Yeah, that's it. He was speaking in Parseltongue to it. I guess he told it to kill McGonagall because that's who it went for. Then I was pulled back, like before. I saw Onsu in class. I guess it was before the ambush. McGonagall came on the intercom and everything. She and Onsu went to the main entrance and fought Bellatrix and Lucius Malfoy. McGonagall and Onsu were about to win when a dementor appeared. I remembered what Bellatrix said about Onsu not watching her back. I told McGonagall using telepathy about the dementor. Onsu was distracted and let Bellatrix go as McGonagall produced a Patronus. Bellatrix and Malfoy disappeared using a Portkey. Then Remus and Kingsley came through the front doors. They checked on McGonagall. Then Hagrid came down with Colin and Padma. He told them about Snape and Tonks being taken by Death Eaters along with some students. Then I woke up." Ginny took a deep breath.

"Where was Dumbledore in all of this?" Hermione asked, frowning.

"McGonagall told Onsu that he was called to the Ministry by Fudge. Bellatrix and Malfoy said they didn't want Dumbledore. They never specified what they did want, though. I wonder why that is..." Ginny thought hard for a moment. Hermione seemed to be in deep thought also. That's when Aurora opened the door.

"Dumbledore's here," she said. Ginny and Hermione looked at each other and followed her to the meeting room. Dumbledore sat, looking very scary. To everyone's surprise, Catriona Onsu and Professor McGonagall were standing on either side of him. Hermione, Ginny, and Aurora sat without making a sound. Draco, Neve, and Neville were already there. The four Magi stood along the walls. Dumbledore made a small sound and the students jumped, all of them reaching for their wands. Then they sighed.

"I see you all have impeccable reaction skills. But, that's not why I'm here," Dumbledore said quietly. Draco looked confused.

"It's not? Then what news do you have for us?" Draco asked. Neville nodded. Neve rolled her eyes.

"*Attenda e veda, quello astuto,*" she mumbled and Aurora nudged her. She called Draco a moron.

"Hogwarts was attacked today. Students were taken," Ginny said feebly. Everyone except Hermione looked at her as if she'd said something foreign. Ginny felt all the eyes on her and looked up. Dumbledore didn't look shocked, but felt that she'd done something. McGonagall was staring at Ginny, as if she was analyzing her.

"It was your voice," she whispered. Ginny nodded.

"I saw Voldemort talking to Bellatrix Lestrange about the attack that apparently had already happened. Then I went back in time to right before it happened. The way it was supposed to happen was Bellatrix stunned both of you when the dementors distracted you. Instead, I told Professor McGonagall about it and she used the Patronus Charm

to drive it away. Bellatrix escaped with Lucius Malfoy..."

"My father? How is that possible? My father is in Azkaban!" Draco said, upstarting. Dumbledore raised a hand and Draco sat back down. He looked horrified as he sat. Aurora looked worried for him.

"Ginny, you altered destiny again?" Dumbledore asked. Ginny nodded slowly.

"If I hadn't, Professor McGonagall would've died by the mouth of that snake..."

"Nagini," Hermione said quietly. Dumbledore nodded and looked over at McGonagall. Her face had become very pale. Then, Hermione looked up, as if she'd just remembered something. "Headmaster? Might we have a word with you alone?" she asked. Dumbledore nodded and looked at the other six adults. They all silently filed out. Dumbledore picked up his wand.

"*Silencio*." Dumbledore said, putting a silencing charm around the room. "You are free to talk, Miss Granger," he said calmly. Hermione nodded.

"The other day, after you left, we saw Wormtail," she said. Dumbledore's eyes seemed to light up in fury.

"You what?" he asked. Somehow, the old man's aura seemed so powerful even though he himself looked so harmless. Hermione sank back in the plush chair she sat in. Aurora realized that Hermione wasn't going to say anything more.

"Headmaster, we saw Peter Pettigrew, only he was a rat. Harry and Ron tried to catch him, but he got away using a one-way portkey," she said. Draco nodded.

"He heard our whole conversation that day. At first, we thought that he snuck onto your robes somehow, but then we thought you would've noticed that. The only explanation would be that someone brought him here. None of us know how to make Portkeys. Plus, the Portkey was a wooden beam that a rat couldn't possibly carry," Draco said.

"That means that Wormtail relayed all the information about Ginny's power to Voldemort. Now they know about it and will most likely try to use it against us. He also knows where we are," Neve said. Dumbledore nodded solemnly.

"Is there anything else?"

"April first," Ginny mumbled.

"I'm sorry, Ginny?" Dumbledore said, standing slowly. He dusted off his robes. Ginny looked up at him, her eyes big and glassy.

"April first. That's the day Voldemort plans on attacking us. Here," she said. Dumbledore nodded, then left the room. Once he was gone, Hermione let loose a long sigh.

"I'm going to go check on Ron," she said.

"I'm going to go shower," Ginny said.

In the infirmary, Ron was sitting up. The bandages had come off his nose and he could talk normally. He was packing up his things to go back to his room when Hermione came running in. The only thing on him that was still wrapped was his hand and Hermione squashed it against his chest when she hugged him.

"**BLOODY HELL, MIONE!**" he yelled in pain. Hermione stepped back and smiled sheepishly. Ron looked at his hand and grimaced. Hermione just kissed him on the cheek.

"How do you feel, Ron?" she asked. Ron nodded.

"Loads better. The worst thing about being hurt is taking that god-awful potion that Aislin makes. The only thing that hasn't completely healed is my hand. Now it'll probably swell because of the way you crushed it," Ron said resentfully. Hermione blushed a little. Ron slung his bag over his shoulder as a rustling was heard. Hermione looked to her left and saw Harry moving. She walked over to his bed. Ron followed.

"Ron! Ron! Look! He's waking up! Harry?" Hermione asked, sitting on the bed. Harry was still bruised significantly, but it was definite improvement. His green eyes fluttered open and Hermione handed him his glasses. Harry looked at his hands, then Hermione put them on his face. The world became eons clearer. Harry winced. "How do you feel?" Hermione asked.

"Like the fucking Knight Bus hit me," Harry said. Out of nowhere, a hand connected with his face. Harry turned around and looked at Hermione like she'd lost her mind. "Ow! **HELLO! BROKEN JAW! VERY PAINFUL!**" he yelled. "What was the bloody hell that for, anyway?" he asked. Hermione crossed her arms. She looked ready to cry.

"You bloody jerk! Serves you right, you arse! Do you know you almost died? You gave everyone a right good scare!" Hermione said, her voice wavering. Harry touched her back and she turned and hit him again. Harry sucked in air sharply through clenched teeth and tried to hide the pain and glared at her again.

"All I remember is not being able to breath. I had a horrible pain in my chest," Harry said, rubbing his chest as he spoke. He only had a few bandages on it now. Hermione rolled her eyes. Ron still hadn't said anything and Harry still hadn't acknowledged that he was even there.

"That's because you punctured a lung, idiot. When Ron punched you, he broke two of your ribs. Both punctured your left lung. You broke Ron's jaw and his nose. You two are incompetent fools. Talk, both of you. I'm going to find Ginny and tell her the grand news." Hermione ran off, leaving the two boys in silence.

Harry looked over at Ron. Surprisingly, he wasn't that mad at all with Ron. But, he wasn't really all that happy with him, either. Ron was finding his bandaged hand very, very interesting. He finally looked at Harry.

"Uh, hi, Harry," he said slowly.

"Ron," Harry said, nodding. Ron sat down on the bed and sighed.

"Listen, I'm really, really sorry. I just lost it for some reason. To tell you the truth, I would rather see you with Ginny than her with any other bloke," Ron said, trying to smile, but failing miserably. His jaw still hurt also.

"Yeah, well. I guess it was just the 'older brother' in you coming out. I really think you should be apologizing to my bloody lung, my ribs, my jaw, and my ankle, though," Harry said, trying his hand at smiling, but his jaw wouldn't allow him.

"Sorry about that, too. It's just that, I never thought I'd see you...with Ginny. You know? It came as a complete and total shock, that's all. Plus, you did a real number on me, too. Especially my fucking face. You broke my bloody nose! Not to mention my jaw!" Ron said. Harry stared at Ron's face a little harder. Then it struck him.

"Something's different about your face," Harry said quietly. Ron looked at him and turned red.

"Oh, yeah. Well, I kind of let Aislin shrink my nose a little more than normal after it swelled like a sponge. I just let her keep going until I thought it was small enough. Mione said I didn't need to do it, but I can tell she likes it," he said.

"I bet she does from those marks on your neck," Harry mumbled, sitting up a little better. Ron looked shocked and appalled at what Harry had just said. Harry seemed not to realize what he said. He looked over at Ron to see the startled look on his face.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Ron mumbled in almost a whisper. Harry's face said *And-you-expect-me-to-believe-that*.

"Whatever, Ron. You've been saying that exact line an awful lot lately. You two should really put a silencing charm on your room, Ron. You two shag louder than a mandrake root's cry," Harry said, sitting back. Ron still looked startled.

"How do you know about that? About us shagging?" Ron asked, his face a ghostly white now. All the redness had drained out of it. If it wasn't so painful for Harry to laugh, he would've done it right then and there. His ribs still hurt and his jaw wasn't much better.

"Like I said... You two are very, very loud. It's a wonder that Aislin, Fionnula, Drake, and Sloan don't hear you on the other side of the castle. It's also a miracle that Hermione isn't pregnant. You guys do it every night almost. Your bedroom is right next to mine. Are you that daft?" Harry said. Ron still looked mortified at the fact that his best friend had put up with hearing them for about four months. He hit Harry in the shoulder and Harry winced a little.

"Shut up, Harry. She takes the birth control potion. Harry, can we please get off that subject?" Ron whined. Harry finally was able to smile.

"Not yet. Ron, Hermione's like a sister to me. If you hurt her, you'll be the one with the punctured lung. Savvy?" Harry asked. Ron raised an eyebrow at him.

"Yeah. Savvy. Same about Ginny, Harry. I've already proven that I can rip you to pieces. I don't want to have to do it again," Ron said, managing to smile too.

"Promise me one thing, Ron."

"What's that?"

"If you don't give me details about Hermione, you'll never hear a peep about Ginny," Harry said. Ron eyed him.

"Oh, Harry. Mione does this cute little thing with her tongue on my..."

"**RON!**" Harry yelled, looking positively grossed out. Ron laughed at his face.

"Sure." Ron held his hand out. "Best mates?" he asked. Harry looked at it.

"Best mates." He shook Ron's hand as Ginny and Hermione returned. Ginny saw them making up and smiled, but totally ignored her brother. She went to Harry's side immediately.

"Oh, Harry! It's so nice to see you, awake." Ginny hugged him. Harry closed his eyes and took the pain. Ron and Hermione laughed. Ron looked at Ginny and thought about saying something. Hermione noticed the tension and pulled Ron out of the room, leaving Ginny and Harry alone.

"How long have I been out, anyway?" Harry asked. Ginny shrugged.

"I lost count about a week or so ago. I say about three weeks. Ron really did a number on you and you to him. I am so angry with Ron," Ginny growled the last sentence. Harry raised an eyebrow at her.

"Why? I guess you can say he had justifiable reason to want to shred me like cheese," Harry said, testing his ankle. He didn't feel any pain as he stood up and guessed it was good. Ginny gave him a look that said *I'm-not-gonna-talk-to-him-and-nothing-you-say-will-make-me-either*. Harry raised his arms in defeat and picked up his things. Aislin walked in.

"And where, pray tell, do you think you're going? Sit back down now. I have to give you this potion before you go prancing off around the castle," Aislin said. She opened the cabinets with a wave of her hand and began making her "special" potion. Harry immediately sat back down.

"You should've seen Aislin when Draco and Neville brought you up here. She was hysterical. I've never heard so many swear words in one sentence that made sense. Even after that she was still constantly nagging Ron. She kept berating us for not stopping the fight and we kept telling her that if we tried, we would've been lying next to you guys," Ginny said as Aislin shoved a cup of the red bubbling stuff in Harry's face. Harry looked at it then at Aislin. The look on her face showed no signs of sympathy. Harry took the cup and drank it. Aislin turned around and started cleaning up.

"*Scourgify*. The burning will subside momentarily, Harry. Just make sure you drink it all or I will make you drink another cup," Aislin said, closing the cabinets. Then she strutted out of the room. Ginny looked at her in wonder.

"I've never seen a woman strut. Anyway, Harry, I saw Hogwarts being attacked. I managed to alter the past again, saving Professor McGonagall and Professor Onsu. But Snape and Tonks were taken. They took some students as well. Lavender, Parvati, Dean, Luna, Seamus, Cho, and some first year I didn't recognize. McGonagall is supposed to be dead," Ginny said. Harry looked very disgusted but solemn at the same time.

"I have to get back to training. Damn Ron and his temper," Harry said, standing up. Ginny stood along with him.

"It's not like yours is any better. Especially from the way you treated us all last year. Not to mention the way you, Fred, and George tried to murder Malfoy," she laughed. Harry smirked.

"I guess you're right. We definitely had good reason for that, though."

Meanwhile, Dumbledore was pacing around his office. Voldemort had sunken to an all-time low by kidnapping the students. Snape and Tonks knew how to defend themselves, but the others were just students. Professor McGonagall walked in his office. Dumbledore turned to face her.

"Ah, Minerva. Any news? Warnings? Messages?" he asked. McGonagall nodded and revealed a letter in her hand. Dumbledore took it out of her hand and opened it. It read:

Dear Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore,

It seems that we have five of your beloved students, one traitor, and one Metamorphmagus. What to do, what to do? As I'm sure the Weasley girl has already informed you, we will attack the castle outside of Dublin. I can see it now, Dumbledore...

Dead bodies everywhere and the one dead body my master will place above all others: Harry Potter. He's been a nuisance to us long enough. If you want your beloved students back, you'll have to do something for the Dark Lord. We will send you another owl soon.

Bellatrix Lestrangle

McGonagall watched the headmaster's face turn red underneath his white beard. He was definitely not happy. He balled the letter up in his bony hand and turned to face Professor McGonagall.

"Minerva, can you track where this came from?" he asked, his voice low and shaking with rage. McGonagall meekly shook her head.

"The owl that brought it simply blew up as soon as I took the letter out of its beak," she said quietly. Dumbledore nodded and walked around his desk. He sat down in the big chair roughly, looking as tired and worn as ever. "Is that all, Albus?" she asked.

"Yes, Minerva. You may go back to your class," he said. McGonagall nodded and headed out of the office. As soon as she got to the bottom of the stone stairs leading up to his office, she heard the old man yell and release an energy that shook the whole castle. McGonagall shook her head sadly.

'For everyone's sake, I hope he finds those children soon' McGonagall thought, looking back one last time.

Attenda e veda, quello astuto = Wait and see, smart one

Chapter 14: Ultimatum

Chapter 15 of 24

The spy is revealed.

The Opposite

Chapter 14: Ultimatum

Aurora sat, barely listening to Fionnula talk about causing pain with telepathy. Harry and Ginny seemed very interested in what she had to say. Aurora glanced outside. There were 4 ½ weeks left before Voldemort's set day of attack, and all they did was eat, sleep, and breathe training. Aurora saw a single butterfly fly by the window of the greenhouse. The snow was starting to melt, and spring was on its way. Then something clicked in Aurora's mind. She turned toward Fionnula.

"Fionnula?" she asked, standing up. Fionnula looked over at her and crossed her arms.

"You haven't paid attention to a word I've said, Aurora. What is it that you want?" She sounded annoyed that Aurora had interrupted her.

"Is it possible to lock on to another person's mind even when they are a substantial distance away from you?" Aurora asked. Fionnula squinted at the girl for a second. She seemed to be searching her mind for an answer.

"I can honestly tell you that I have no idea. Aurora, you have shown more talent at this than Soliopathy. Do you think you can reach my sister at Hogwarts? I assure you that you will not kill her. Catriona is rather skilled. I would imagine that you could. I have never tried it. Go on and imagine Catriona's mind," Fionnula said. Aurora closed her eyes. Harry and Ginny exchanged uncanny looks then looked at Aurora.

Aurora concentrated, and she passed a whirlwind of thoughts. In her mind, there were different flashes of people going past and their thoughts calling out to her. Finally, she pictured herself at Hogwarts and found Onsu's mind.

At Hogwarts, Professor Onsu was grading papers when she looked up and around her class. She felt a faint sense of euphoria that only came when Fionnula tried to read her mind on occasion to help her remember something. But, Fionnula was in Ireland. She returned to her papers.

'Professor Onsu? Professor Onsu? This is Aurora Assante. Can you hear me?' Aurora's voice said in her mind. Onsu looked around. Aurora couldn't possibly be here in Hogwarts, could she? Aurora hadn't severed the connection yet, so Onsu tried her hand at thinking back.

'I can hear you, Aurora. How are you doing this? Are you near Hogwart?'

'No, I am still out past Dublin. This is just an experiment. Is there anything you want me to tell Fionnula?'

'As a matter-of-fact, yes there is. Tell her she owes me twenty Galleons' Onsu laughed. Aurora did also.

'I'll be sure to tell her. Bye' Aurora severed the connection. Back in her own mind, Aurora opened her eyes. Her head was killing her. It was immensely difficult to do what she'd just done. Fionnula was peering down at her.

"Well?" she asked impatiently. Aurora smiled, squinting from the headache. Harry and Ginny watched her with wide eyes. Suddenly, Harry got a headache also. It wasn't from his scar, though. Ginny noticed him rubbing his head.

"Well, Professor Onsu said that you owe her twenty Galleons." Aurora laughed. Fionnula crossed her arms and cracked a smile. Ginny clasped her hands together. Harry and Aurora both were still wincing in pain.

"I think the downside to that is the headache," Harry said, a little strained. Aurora looked over at him. She smiled sheepishly.

"Sorry, Harry. I forgot about that little connection," she said. Fionnula and Ginny looked confused.

"Connection? What connection?" Ginny asked. Harry and Aurora looked at each other, and then looked at Fionnula and Ginny.

"Well, sometimes, since we are opposites, Aurora and I can both experience the same emotion at the same time. Right then, Aurora was experiencing a pain in her head. So, I also experienced it. It wasn't a very comfortable feeling. There is a **major** downside to this. There are instances when Aurora might be doing something that I really don't want to share with her..." Harry's voice trailed off as Aurora blushed a deep red.

"Like what?" Fionnula asked, clearly confused. All three teenagers looked at each other and started laughing hysterically. "What is it?" Fionnula demanded to know. Aurora and Harry couldn't help themselves.

"Use your imagination, Fionnula," Ginny said, gathering her things and heading out of the greenhouse. About three hours later, Fionnula would finally get what they were

talking about.

Neve tackled Neville to the ground. Neville used his strength to flip her off of him. Neve stood up quickly. Her lip was bloody. Drake watched them closely. Neve was quicker than Neville when it came to fighting, but not when it came to dodging and reloading. Neville threw a punch. Neve grabbed it and spun around, her elbow catching Neville in the jaw. She tripped him up. Neville landed on his back, and Neve took out her wand. She held it to his neck. Drake started clapping.

"Well done, Neve. Since you won, you can fight Draco," Drake said. Draco was standing on the far wall. At the sound of his name, he looked up. Neve was eyeing him smugly. Draco unfolded his arms and walked up. Neve pulled Neville off his butt, and Neville ran off; to where, no one knew. "Face each other and shake hands," Drake said. Neve and Draco stood and stared at each other. They shook hands slowly then parted. Drake clapped his hand.

Neville ran outside where Sloan was launching the Bombe Boule De Feus at Ron. Neville paused for a second next to Sloan.

"What is it, Longbottom?" Sloan asked, sounding a little irritated. Neville held his hand up a second longer, gasping. He'd run as fast as he could. Ron looked up, rather shocked that the balls had stopped coming.

"What gives?" he asked, holding his hand out. Aislin and Hermione walked up. Aislin was watching Neville gasp in a horrible manner. "Neville, are you okay?" Ron asked, walking up next to his friend.

"Malfoy and Neve are about to fight," Neville said. It took three seconds for his words to sink in. Then everyone started running towards the large room where Draco, Drake, and Neve were. Aurora was almost run over by Hermione, and Ginny succeeded in running into Neville.

"What the bloody hell is this all about?" Harry asked, helping Ginny up. Ron turned and smiled.

"Malfoy's fighting Neve. This I gotta see!" Ron continued running. Like before, it took ten seconds for Ron's words to sink in, and then Aurora, Harry, and Ginny were off.

Draco stared at Neve. Neve lunged forward, trying to tackle Draco. Everyone entered as she did this. Draco grabbed her around the waist and tried to hoist her up. He saw her smirk, and she put her hands on the ground. She wrapped her legs around his neck and flipped him over. She ended up on top of him. Draco smirked.

"If you wanted me, *Neveah*, all you had to do was ask. I would've been happy to oblige you." Draco kicked her in the back of the head with his knee. Then he pushed her off of him. Neve stood up quickly, as did Draco. She tried to punch him, but Draco caught it and twisted her into a sleeper hold. Neve struggled.

"You bloody bastard," Neve said, barely able to breathe. Draco smirked.

"Ooh, I love it when you talk dirty," he said. Neve smirked also and moved her head to the side. Draco wondered what she was doing until he saw her leg come up. He was knocked backwards off of her. Neve bent over, gasping for breath. She turned around to catch a kick to her stomach. Draco then punched her. She fell back.

Neve rolled over, coughing up blood. She looked up at Draco, who was wearing an arrogant smile on his face. His normally combed hair was as wild as Harry's. Neve spat blood to the side. She stood up. She beckoned Draco and smirked. Draco frowned and went towards her. Neve did a roundhouse, and Draco knocked into the wall.

"Do you think they are hurt?" Aurora asked, worry in her voice. She loved both of them to death, and it looked like they were going to kill each other. Ron giggled.

"They won't let this go that far, Aurora. But, who cares if Malfoy's hurt?" Neville said. Aurora hit him in the head.

"I care, you idiot!" The group laughed as Fionnula walked up to see them standing there like a bunch of little kids who were waiting in line to see Santa Claus. Then she saw Draco and Neve going at it. She sighed.

By now, Neve had a black eye and Draco was missing a tooth. They stared at each other, both very tired and worn. They both ran towards each other and swung. Both fists connected with their intended targets. Neve and Draco fell backwards, too tired to even move. Drake clapped his hands.

"That's enough," he said. Aislin walked over to them and began working her magic, literally.

"That was awesome. That had to be the third greatest thing to happen since we've been here," Ron said like he was in heaven. Hermione looked over at him.

"What's the first and second?" she asked in wonder. Ron smiled and looked at her.

"Well, number two is finding the wine cellar. Number one is..." Ron whispered it in her ear. Hermione blushed and giggled like she was ten. Harry and Ginny rolled their eyes.

Late that night, Aurora was thinking while Draco was lying next to her. He was reading a book on the hardest and most powerful curses. Aurora rolled over to face him.

"Draco?"

"Hmm?" he said, not looking at her. Aurora sighed and put her hand in the book. Draco looked over at her. Her greenish-gray eyes stared back at him. She looked worried. "What is it?"

"I can reach people miles and miles away from me with my mind. Do you think I could find the ones that were kidnapped that way?" Aurora asked. Draco looked thoughtful for a moment. She looked back at him with her glassy eyes. "Well, do you?"

"You just might. Sounds like a damn good idea. Dumbledore is supposed to be coming tomorrow. Tell him about it. How did you find this out?" Draco asked. Aurora smirked.

"I tried reaching Fionnula's sister, Professor Onsu, at Hogwarts. I succeeded. Onsu is a telepath like her sister, so it did not hurt her. The only side effect is that it hurts like hell afterwards. Harry can attest to that," Aurora said. She slid her wand under her pillow. Draco did the same. He put the book down and blew out the candle. "Draco?"

"What is it now, woman?" he asked, sounding aggravated. Aurora giggled a little.

"*Ti amo, Draco*," she whispered and closed her eyes. Draco's eyes snapped open and he looked at her peaceful face. He moved a short piece of hair out of her eyes.

"*Ti amo anche, Aurora*," he said. Unbeknownst to him, Aurora smiled as she slipped into a dreamless slumber.

The next day, as everyone filed out from their meeting with Dumbledore, Aurora stayed behind. Dumbledore noticed her. The old man looked more tired and worn than ever.

"Um, Professor Dumbledore?"

"Yes, Aurora?"

"I found out just yesterday that I can communicate with people hundreds of miles away using telepathy. I talked to Professor Onsu while she was in her class. It hurt a lot afterwards, though. I was thinking that maybe I could reach one of the people that were kidnapped. Maybe we could find something out about where they are hidden," Aurora said. Dumbledore looked at her over his half-moon spectacles as if examining her. Aurora tensed under his gaze.

"You, Miss Assante, are something special. Maybe we could try this. I will be back tomorrow. Tonight, I want you to rest well. Maybe you should go to bed early without any distractions, eh?" Dumbledore said. Aurora stared up at the old man and blushed.

"What do you mean, headmaster?" she said, trying to sound innocent.

"Aurora, I may be old. Yes, I am very old. But, I was once young like you. In some cases, I may have forgotten what it was like. But, in others, I have not. As the saying goes, Miss Assante: I may have been born at night, but it wasn't last night. Good day to you." Dumbledore touched his trophy, and with that, he was gone, leaving Aurora feeling quite ashamed. Then she ran off.

The next day, Neve was working at dodging and throwing spells. Neville, who was usually her partner, was learning medical charms with Aislin. So today, her partner, yet again, was none other than Draco Malfoy. He was malicious when it came to his onslaught. He was unnaturally good at throwing the spells and curses in a quick succession. Neve wasn't even sure if most of them were legal.

A jet of white-hot light went zooming past Neve's cheek. A thin red line appeared on her face, and blood trickled down it. Before she could react, Neve was blasted backwards. Draco then stood over her, his wand pointing at her chest.

"You really should work on your reaction time. It's too terrible for words," he said. Neve stared up at him malevolently. She smirked.

"Oh yeah?" she asked. Draco nodded. Neve lifted her leg right between his legs and hit him in his groin. Draco's face turned red, and he fell over to the side. Neve stood up. "Well, at least I got the last hit in," she said, dusting herself off. Sloan marched up to her.

"Come with me, **Neveah**," he said. Neve still held a deep disliking for him and would gladly throw the Killing Curse at him. The curse would most likely work because she would mean it whole-heartedly. Neve followed him into an all black room in the castle. Neve had never been in here.

"What is this place?" she asked. Sloan apparently did not hear her. He turned to face her.

"You took a really cheap shot. Obviously, your greatest strength isn't casting spells or curses. You seem bent on physical contact. Well, if you hate me so much then fight me," Sloan said. Neve looked at him with one eyebrow raised. "What are you waiting for? Hit me," he said. Neve still looked at him like he was crazy. Then she sighed. Sloan, tired of waiting, threw a punch at the small girl. Neve caught it and succeeded in breaking his arm. She then kneed him in his stomach. Sloan bent over and coughed up blood. Neve backed away from him.

"That felt really good. You don't know how long I've been waiting to do that," she said. Sloan chuckled and lifted his head. He held his broken arm out. He pointed his wand at it and a white light surrounded it. After the light was gone, he grabbed Neve with it. He yanked her harshly over to a table with a plate on it. Neve looked worried. She couldn't get out of his grip. "What the hell are you doing?" Neve yelled. Sloan laughed maniacally. He let her go. She backed away. She reached for her wand but found it to be gone. She looked over at Sloan, who held it in his hand.

"Looking for this?" he asked. Neve frowned.

"Give it back! What the bloody hell do you think you're fucking doing!?" she yelled as loud as she could. Her words seemed to echo off the black stone walls.

"There is Silencing Charm on this room. No one can hear you. The Dark Lord will be very pleased to see you. Yes.**VERY!** Now, I think you'll go better unconscious. But first, I want you to feel pain, real pain." Sloan laughed maniacally. Neve realized something.

"It was you...You sold us out," she whispered. Sloan nodded.

"A little slow on the uptake, aren't you? Enough talk. Now, feel pain.*Crucio!*" he yelled. Neve was still in utter shock at Sloan being the snitch. She flinched as the curse hit her. Then all she felt was unbearable pain. She screamed and screamed and screamed. Then the pain subsided momentarily. Her breathing was ragged. "That, Neveah, was the Cruciatus Curse. Do you want more?" Sloan asked. Neve looked up at him like a lioness ready to pounce on her prey. Sloan smiled. "*Crucio!*" he yelled again. Neve screamed again, feeling the pain. After it subsided, she couldn't keep her eyes open.

'*Aurora, lo aiuta. La spia è Sloan!*' she thought before passing out. Sloan smiled and picked her up. He touched the plate, and they were gone.

Aurora dropped a plate in the kitchen, making Hermione and Ginny jump. They pulled their wands and were pointing them at Aurora, until they noticed her face.

"Neveah," she whispered. She ran out of the kitchen. Ginny and Hermione exchanged looks, and then followed her out. Aurora ended up on the field. She knocked into Draco. "Where is she? Where is Neve?" She shook him violently. Draco looked down on her short form. Her grayish-greenish eyes were becoming glassy with tears.

"Sloan took her inside about fifteen minutes ago. What's wrong?" he asked. Aurora thought for a second. She then ran back inside with Hermione, Ginny, and Draco following her. The four of them stopped in front of the door where Sloan and Neve had gone into. Aurora touched the knob and turned it slowly.

Inside the black room, Neve's cloak lay on the ground along with her wand. Aurora passed completely out and Draco caught her.

Professor Minerva McGonagall ran in front of Dumbledore's office.

"Ferret feces," she said hurriedly. The gargoyle didn't seem to be moving fast enough. When she finally got up the stairs, she nearly knocked down Dumbledore's door. He was sitting, stroking Fawkes' feathers. She put a letter on his desk. It was addressed to both of them, so McGonagall had taken the liberty of opening it herself. Dumbledore looked at her, and then picked up the letter.

Dear Albus Dumbledore and Minerva McGonagall,

We now have a new addition to our "Student Collection." That has a nice ring to it, doesn't it? That's beside the point. We have Neveah Assante with us. Our person on the inside delivered her to us earlier this morning. A spirited one, is she not? Put up a real valiant fight when she woke up. We had to Stun her and put the Cruciatus Curse on her more than once. She's really strong in physical combat, too.

Unless you want this brat subject to the Avada Kedavra curse, I suggest you do exactly as I ask. April 1st is less than two weeks away. Give me Ginevra Weasley, and you may have your precious students and teachers back.

Send Weasley, along with Potter, to the McCoy Pub in Dublin. ALONE. Not you or anyone else in the vicinity of the pub. Bellatrix and Lucius will be waiting there. They will bring Miss Assante with them, tied up of course. If Potter and Weasley attack, Bellatrix or Lucius will kill Miss Assante without hesitation. So, I suggest you tell Mr. Potter to mind his temper. After the exchange is made, I will see you on April 1st. Don't disappoint me. I will hate to have to kill an innocent young girl.

Lord Voldemort

Dumbledore threw the paper down. He grabbed a trophy and tapped it with his wand.

"Minerva, stay here. I am going to Dublin. If anymore owls come, send an owl to me."

"Yes, Albus," McGonagall said. With that said, Dumbledore was gone.

Ti amo = I love you.

Ti amo, anche = I love you, too.

Aurora, lo aiuta. La spia è Sloan = Aurora, help me. The spy is Sloan.

Chapter 15: Sacrifice

Chapter 16 of 24

Neve is tortured and encounters Lucius Malfoy.

The Opposite

Chapter 15: Sacrifice

Harry stared at Dumbledore in disbelief. Ginny was twiddling her thumbs. Aurora still hadn't woken up. Draco was sitting quietly in the corner. Hermione was sniffing. Ron was cracking his knuckles. Neville was staring at his hands. The person who had been most affected by Neve's abduction was not looking the least bit sad; Draco just sat there with a blank look on his face. Aislin stepped up beside Dumbledore.

"What do we do, Headmaster?" she asked. Dumbledore looked up at Ginny. Ginny looked back at him.

"I'll go," she said. Everyone looked at her with wide eyes. Draco frowned.

"No, you won't," Ron said. Ginny's head snapped back to him. Ron covered for a moment. Ginny reminded him too much of his mother. Then he sort of put on the elder brother face. Ginny continued to look at him like he was crazy.

"And I suppose you are going to stop me? Dumbledore said Voldemort wants me in return for Neve. Apparently he doesn't want to kill me. He's not that thick, Ron. He wants me for a reason," Ginny said as Harry grabbed her hand.

"You are not going," he said. Ginny snatched her hand away from him.

"Are you telling me that you all want Neve to die? Is that what I'm hearing?" Ginny asked. Everyone looked down. That's definitely not what they wanted.

A long way away, Neveah Assante finally opened her eyes. She was lying on a cold, hard floor. Her vision became clearer as she attempted to sit up. She miraculously did it after many attempts. Looking around the room, there were several others also. They wore Hogwarts' uniforms.

"Neve...you're awake," a feeble voice said. Neve squinted and turned her head to the source of the voice. Luna Lovegood was staring at her, her eyes wide as ever. She looked like the rest of them: tired and in need of showers.

"Are you guys okay?" Neve said, her voice a little hoarse. They all nodded as if it was second nature. Neve remembered what students that Ginny had mentioned from her vision. She counted and noticed one was missing. There should've been six. There were only five. "Where's Parvati?" she asked. All of them shook their heads.

"We haven't seen Parvati since yesterday. Bellatrix took her somewhere. We didn't even hear her scream or anything," Lavender mumbled.

Neve leaned her head back and sighed. She closed her eyes and tried to remember what'd happened in the past few hours.

When she awoke from being stunned, Sloan and some woman were standing over her talking. Then she moaned, and they looked down upon her. She remembered Sloan picking her up and the maniacal laughter of some people as she thrashed about in her tied up state. Sloan unceremoniously dropped her on the floor, and she looked up to face Voldemort. He was sitting merrily in his large chair with a snake at his feet. Neve was paying more attention to the snake.

Neve could remember that Voldemort said he liked her. He had even lifted her chin and gotten close to her face. He said she had spunk and a fiery spirit. He'd even said he'd kindly spare her if she were to become a Death Eater; he could use young blood on his side. Neve had spat in his face and spoke the first thing that came to mind, which wasn't something very polite or angelic. That's when she felt herself get hit with the same curse from three different people. She cringed as she thought of the painful experience. It was a miracle the pain hadn't driven her insane. No, Neve wasn't going to let these people get to her, not one little bit. That's when the door to the room opened. Bellatrix Lestrange walked in.

"Well, well. Our young bitch has finally decided to rejoin us. I've heard so much about you, Neveah." Bellatrix walked over to Neve, and kneeled in front of her. She smiled a nasty smile, and Neve frowned.

"You must be Bellatrix Lestrange. Oh, Harry's told me so much about you. He didn't quite specify how ugly that mug of yours is, though," Neve said spitefully. Her voice was still hoarse. The smile was instantly wiped off of Bellatrix's face. She pulled her wand and squeezed it.

"Fucking brat! **Crucio!**" she screamed. The curse hit Neve squarely in the chest, and all she felt was unbearable pain. Then it stopped. She opened her eyes and saw that she'd tilted over. Bellatrix put her right-side up. Neve continued to glare at the woman.

"It seems to me that the only way you can fight is by using that curse, huh? Not a very original person, are you?"

"Quiet! **Crucio!**" Bellatrix threw it again. The pain was shorter this time. It was more of a warning. Then Bellatrix smiled again. Neve opened her eyes and sat back up.

"Honestly, woman, can't you do **ANYTHING** else! Where's Parvati?" she asked. Bellatrix ignored her question and just continued to smile. Neve could tell by the way she squeezed her wand that she wanted to curse her again, but she restrained herself.

"Believe me, Neveah. I would like nothing more than to *Avada Kedavra* you into the next life. Talk to me, Neveah. I feel as though we can talk. You don't seem that different from me when I was your age. If you talk to me, I'll be able to keep Lucius Malfoy off of you. He just **LOVES** to fuck young, feisty girls like you," Bellatrix said, her smile never faltering. Neve made a disgusted face then nodded.

"Fine. What do you want to talk about?"

"You see them?" Bellatrix pointed to the other students in the room with her wand. They were watching the wand in Bellatrix's hand. Neve looked them all over. None of them appeared to have any physical harm, but Neve could tell they were all somewhat traumatized by the blank looks in their eyes.

"What about them?"

"Answer me truthfully, or I will punish them, instead of you. I think they've been tortured enough. They won't thank you for that. **WILL** know if you are lying to me, Neveah. Understand?"

"Yeah. *Come desiderate*," Neve said. Bellatrix smiled again. She understood Italian quite well, unlike her partners in crime. She sat back against the wall across from Neve, which wasn't very far considering the size of the room. Cho Chang was next to her, and she tried to shift a little to the right to get away from her.

"Answer me in Italian, Neveah. First question: What kind of people do you think we are? Us Death Eaters?" she asked. Neve raised an eyebrow at the question. She sighed and lowered her head.

"*Astuto, intelligente...*" Neve began. Bellatrix pointed her wand at Luna.

"**Crucio!**" she yelled. Luna twisted and screamed in a bloodcurdling way. Neve closed her eyes as Luna continued to scream.

"*Fermarlo!*" Neve yelled croakily. Bellatrix grinned and lifted the curse. Luna was breathing hard. She didn't bother moving. She curled her legs tighter to her chest. Neve glared at Bellatrix with all the malevolence she could muster.

"I told you to answer me truthfully. I told you that I can tell if you're lying, Neveah. What don't you understand about that? Now answer me truthfully before I let the words slip again," Bellatrix threatened.

"Fine." Neve held her head up and stared directly into Bellatrix's eyes. *Stupido e psicotico*," Neve coughed out.

"What else? I feel there is more."

"*Siete tutti gli asini e gente di malvagità*" Bellatrix looked thoughtful for a long moment.

"Really now?" she asked. Neve decided to just nod. Her throat was starting to ache from forcing sound out of it. "How would you describe Sloan?" Bellatrix asked. Neve's eyes narrowed to almost slits. If she ever got free, he was going to be the first person to face her wrath.

"*È un bastardo*," she said, barely audible. Bellatrix gave a disgusting laugh that everyone cringed to. The woman was truly ghastly and maniacal.

"*È buono per una risata* What would you call the Dark Lord?"

"*Il Malvagio*," Neve answered, coughing. She turned her head and spat to the side. Bellatrix chuckled, and Neve shot daggers at her. *Pensate che sono divertenti, non vo?!*" she said. Bellatrix nodded.

"What do you think he is?"

"*Stupido, l'uomo arrogante con l'emozione seria pubblica. Vi siete resi conto che è un'età-anima? O è stato vi che dice che fosse un'puro-anima? Realmente siete stupido se credete quella merda*," Neve said snidely. Bellatrix's smile disappeared and she pointed her wand at Seamus.

"**Crucio!** Shut up, you stupid bitch!" She said, taking the curse off of Seamus. Neve was breathing hard now. Her throat was killing her. Bellatrix was frowning and looked ready to pounce.

"*Lo seguite! Ho pensato che desideraste il mondo essere sbarazzati di tutti riteneste indegni. Non che lo includono le età-anime e, come dite che, Muggle-borns? Tuttavia seguite un'anima mezza. Voi idiot*," Neve said.

"**Crucio!**" The curse hit Dean. Neve squeezed her eyes shut. She wasn't going to cry. She felt a twinge of guilt that her friends were suffering more than her.

"*Fermarlo!*"

"*Buono*. The Dark Lord does not wish for me to kill you. Though, I would be the first to volunteer if he did say so. Tell me, Neveah. What is Potter's greatest weakness?" Bellatrix asked, her voice low. Neve looked at her with malice.

"Don't tell her, Neve!" a voice said. Neve turned her head as the Cruciatus Curse hit Lavender, the source of the words. Lavender screamed and twisted. Bellatrix lifted the curse. Neve opened her mouth to speak.

"No, don't!" Luna said from her place on the floor. Bellatrix hit her again with the curse. She writhed in agony. Neve looked at her with sad eyes. Her vision was beginning to become distorted.

"We can take it!" Seamus yelled weakly. Bellatrix hit him again too.

"Yeah, Neve. Don't worry about us," Dean said as he was hit. Bellatrix was growing angrier by the second. Cho sat up and looked into Neve's deep blue eyes.

"Don't tell her anything! Harry's more..."

"**Crucio!** Damn it! Shut the fuck up, all of you!" Bellatrix yelled, frustrated with the students. She lifted the curse from Cho. Cho slumped to the floor. Her eyes were wide open, and her breathing was ragged. Neve's eyes widened and then she glared at Bellatrix.

"*Come sapre?!*" Neve asked defiantly. Bellatrix cracked a smile.

"You know, Neveah. I know you know. You can't lie to me. I can see right through you." Bellatrix pointed her wand at Neve. Neve shut her eyes **Crucio!** Now tell me!" Bellatrix yelled. Neve rolled over and looked at Bellatrix. She spat at her.

"*Vaffanculo!*" Neve said rebelliously. Bellatrix pursed her lips together. This was clearly not her day. She inhaled and exhaled deeply.

"Neveah, this is only going to get worse. My patience is wearing very thin. Tell me right fucking now!" Bellatrix threatened. Bellatrix stood and pointed her wand right at Neve's face. Neve stared down it, showing no signs of fear at all. This is what made Bellatrix seethe with rage. She was used to feeling superior; she was used to feeling the fear emanate off of her victims. Voldemort was right. She definitely was a strong-willed girl.

"*Sopra il mio corpo guasto. Non sto dicendovi la merda!*" Neve nearly whispered, smiling weakly.

"I will not hesitate, Neveah. Do not tempt me," Bellatrix warned. Neve pushed her forehead against the wand. They stared at each other for a moment until Neve broke the silence, her normal voice loud and clear.

"*Faccia che cosa dovete fare!*" Neve said, her voice low and deadly. If only she wasn't tied up, she'd kill Bellatrix with her bare hands. Bellatrix growled something completely unintelligible.

"Hmph! *Come desideri, Neveah. Avada...*" Bellatrix began. Neve kept her eyes open. Then a flash of light was seen.

"*Expelliarmus!*" a deep voice said. Bellatrix's wand flew from her hand. She turned and picked it up quickly. Then she looked for the source of the spell. Lucius Malfoy stood in the doorway, looking as smug as ever. Bellatrix frowned. "Bella, leave her to me. Narcissa and Astrid require your services," he said. Bellatrix nodded and glared back at Neve.

"You're in for it now," Bellatrix said.

"Yeah, whatever," Neve said. Bellatrix squeezed her wand again.

"That's enough, Bella. Go help Narcissa and Astrid," Lucius said in an annoyed voice. Bellatrix rolled her eyes.

"Okay. Arrivederci, Neveah." And with that, Bellatrix LeStrange was gone. Lucius looked at Neveah and walked over to her. Neve watched him distastefully. He looked a lot like Draco, only Draco didn't look so cold. She could imagine he did at one point, though. Their hair was the same and everything. They even had the same scowl.

"You're such a beautiful girl, Neveah. Why are you putting yourself through such torture? A girl like you should be enjoying the riches of the world," Lucius said, touching her face. Neve moved out of his grasp.

"Don't you ever fucking touch me. The reason I'm sticking to being insubordinate is because I have morals. I don't need to follow around some dumbass to feel special. I have friends, and I would never betray them. On the other hand, it seems like you Death Eaters would gladly betray the other. You'll sell any of your dear *'amico'* out, wouldn't you, Malfoy? I can see why your son hates you so. Anyway, I'd rather die than give you any information regarding Harry and my friends. So, as I told Bellatrix: *Faccia che cosa dovete fare!*" Neve spat in his face. Lucius smirked and wiped the saliva mixed with mucus off his face.

"Admirable speech, Neveah. Truly, it was. I'm not going to put the Cruciatus Curse on you. Or them for that matter," he said evilly, gesturing to the others. Neve looked at him with a confused expression on her face.

"You're not? Then what..."

"Something far more traumatizing, Neveah. I'm sure Bella told you that I happen to like young, feisty, and pretty girls, such as yourself," Lucius said. Neve's eyes widened in horror.

"You wouldn't dare," she said. Lucius smiled down on her.

"Yes, Neveah. Yes, I most certainly would. The Dark Lord said by any means necessary," was all he said. Then Neve fought against him as he pulled her to her feet. Lucius bashed her head into the wall and darkness overcame her.

Harry sat on his bed. Ginny was sitting in a chair across from him, looking very serious. He looked up at her, and she looked at him. Ginny shook her head.

"I know what you're going to say, Harry. I'm going to go. I don't believe Voldemort will hurt me. I think he just wants to see the extent of my power. Plus, I'm sure Neve is more than ready to come back. I can only imagine what she is putting herself through with that mouth of hers," Ginny said, trying to crack a smile. She was failing to do so. A knock startled them, and they both pulled their wands as Ron and Hermione appeared in the doorway.

"Whoa, you two! It's just us!" Ron exclaimed, putting his hands up. Harry and Ginny lowered their wands. The duo entered and looked around. Ron looked at Ginny and Ginny averted her eyes. She hadn't said anything to him since the talk with Dumbledore. "Ginny..."

"Ron, no matter what you say, I'm going. If I have to sneak off alone, I'm going. Got it?" she said forcefully. Ron sighed and nodded. Hermione looked at both of them. She passed Harry his cloak. Ginny took hers off the chair. Harry put his wand in the holster on his belt.

"I can't believe I'm letting you do this. If we get out of this alive, I'm going to kill you myself," Harry said, trying to sound jovial. Ginny cracked a smile. Harry slipped on his boots, and Ron and Hermione followed the two out of the room. Dumbledore was waiting for them. His face was serious, and he looked immensely sad.

"I have brought down the barriers. You shouldn't have any trouble finding the pub. Just stay on the main street. It should be on the right. Be safe. Harry, control your temper. No matter what happens, make sure that you stay alert. You better get going. It's a long walk," Dumbledore said. Ginny looked back at her brother and friends. Tears were in her eyes. She ran to Ron and nearly knocked him down. She clung to him like wallpaper to a wall.

"Don't worry about me. I'll be perfectly fine," Ginny said. Ron looked very skeptical about that last sentence, but squeezed Ginny tightly. She let go and turned to walk away. She had a feeling that if she looked back, she would lose all her confidence. So, she fought the temptation.

Neve opened her eyes. She was lying on a bed, and she wasn't tied up. She had red marks on her wrists and ankles where the binds had been. Her entire lower half was aching. She curled her legs up to her, feeling nothing but pain. Looking around the room, she saw no one. Neve sat up as the door opened. Bellatrix and another woman walked in. The aura around the second woman held something about Draco. Neve assumed it was his mother, Narcissa Malfoy. Narcissa looked a little like Bellatrix also. Neve deduced that they must be sisters.

"Well, little baby Neveah is awake. I suspect you had fun, did you not?" Bellatrix laughed. She took out her wand, daring Neve to try something. Neve wanted nothing more than to fly at her and rip her to shreds.

"*Sareste niente senza quel wand, Bellatrix. Non pensate che sono tristi? Potrei dare dei calci facilmente al vostro arse pathetic con le mie proprie mani se avvertire l'esigenza,*" Neve said. Bellatrix snarled at her and threw her some clothes.

"Get dressed, child. We're going on a little road trip. Narcissa, watch her." Bellatrix left. Narcissa nodded and looked at Neve as she got dressed. Examining the girl, she noticed that the roots of her hair were changing color.

"Why do you deem it necessary to constantly say what's on your mind? Don't you realize it'll just get in trouble?" Narcissa asked serenely. Neve pulled her boots on and

looked at Narcissa as if she were speaking Japanese.

"What?"

"Why do you always say what's on your mind? Have you not realized that it will always get you into trouble? Do you say it just to hide your fear?" Narcissa asked. Neve straightened her body up and stared at the woman.

"I do not fear any of you. Not even Voldemort. If it is my time to die, then it is my time. I will not run from it or deny it." Neve looked Narcissa up and down. "I guess the reason your husband does what he does is because you let him or because you never express to him how you feel about it. Am I correct, Mrs. Malfoy?" Neve asked, staring into the woman's eyes. Narcissa watched them turn green. She was at a loss for words. Neve spoke the obvious truth. She'd never had the courage to tell Lucius what she thought about his "hobby."

"Shut up, wench. Are you finished?" Narcissa asked spitefully. Neve smiled and nodded. Narcissa nodded back and left the room.

Neve sighed and sat on the bed. She felt the need to cry. Every inch of her body ached from being subject to that horrible curse and Lucius' rape.

'Damn whoever made the Cruciatus Curse up. Damn them straight to hell she thought. Neve's tear ducts seemed to not respond to her, no matter how hard she tried. There was mirror across from where Neve sat. She looked into it. 'I can't cry,' she thought. 'I won't cry. I wouldn't give them that satisfaction.' She stared at her face in wonder. She was never going to forget this day. When she fought on April 1st, she was going to murder Sloan herself. She was going to murder him with a smile on her face. That's when Lucius came in, holding binds.

"Hold out your hands, girl," he said harshly. Neve held out her arms, and he bound her wrists tightly together. Neve winced. Lucius smiled. "I had a great deal of fun with you, Neveah. You were still ripe for the picking, which made it all the more fun," he whispered in her ear. Neve cringed. Then Lucius pulled her up and took her into a room. The fireplace was lit, and a chair was in the center of it. Bellatrix was standing next to it. Voldemort resided in it.

"Well, Neveah. The time has come. You will soon be with your friends again. All of your friends, except Ginny Weasley. You really would've done well, Neveah. You have a great fire in your eyes and hate like no other I've seen before you. Except Bella, of course. Bella is a true Death Eater. Tell Dumbledore this one word: Soon. Lucius, Bella, take her," Voldemort said. Bellatrix grabbed Neve's other arm and Lucius and herself attempted to drag her away. Neve tried to stand still. Voldemort looked thoughtfully at her. "Something to say, Neveah?" he asked.

"If you harm Ginny in any way, Harry and Aurora will be the least of your worries," Neve said in a deadly tone. Voldemort smiled a relatively serene smile.

"You must fear nothing, child. Such strong words. *Nagini*," he said to the snake. Neve looked down at it. The snake hissed at her and tried to bite her. Neve looked it in the eyes and made an equally horrifying hissing sound. Voldemort called it off, and it slithered back around his feet. "Well, that was interesting." Voldemort held his wand up and a red jet of light flew from it. He made an "X," and it burned into Neve's cheek. Neve winced as blood trickled down her face. "Now, you will never forget me," he said. Neve spat at his feet.

"I don't plan to," Neve said as Lucius and Bellatrix dragged her away.

Come desiderate = As you wish

Astuto, intelligente = Sly, intelligent

Fermarlo = Stop it

Stupido es psicotico = Stupid and psychotic

Siete tutti gli asini e gente di malvagità = You are all asses and evil people

È un bastardo = He is a bastard

È buono per una risata = He is good for a laugh

Il Malvagio = The Wicked One

Pensate che sono divertenti, non voi = You think that's funny, don't you?

Stupido, l'uomo arrogante con l'emozione seria pubblica. Vi siete resi conto che è un'età-anima? O è stato vi che dice che fosse un'età-anima? Realmente siete stupido se credete quella merda = A stupid, arrogant man with serious thrill issues. Did you realize that he's a half-blood? Or has he been telling you that he's a pure-blood? You really are stupid if you believe that shit

Lo seguite! Ho pensato che desideraste il mondo essere sbarazzati di tutti riteneste indegni. Non che lo includono le età-anime e, come dite che, Muggle-borns? Tuttavia seguite un'anima mezza. Voi idioti = You follow him! I thought you wanted the world to be rid of all you deem unworthy. Does not that include half-bloods and, how do you say it, Muggle-borns? Yet you follow a half blood. You idiot

Buono = Good

Come saprei = How would I know

Sopra il mio corpo guasto. Non sto dicendovi la merda = Over my dead body. I'm not telling you shit.

Faccia che cosa dovete fare = Do what you have to do

Amici = Friends

Sareste niente senza quel wand, Bellatrix. Non pensate che sono tristi? Potrei dare dei calci facilmente al vostro arse pathetic con le mie proprie mani se avvertire l'esigenza = You'd be nothing without that wand, Bellatrix. Don't you think that's sad? I could easily kick your pathetic arse with my own hands if I felt the need

Chapter 16: Innocence Lost

Neve confides in the most unlikely of people.

The Opposite

Chapter 16: Innocence Lost

Harry and Ginny looked around the pub. No one was in sight. Ginny leaned against the wall. She looked very poignant and grim. She didn't appear to be afraid, but Harry knew that was just a façade. He reached out to her. Ginny looked at his hand then at him.

"What?" she asked, clearly perplexed. Harry took a step forward and grabbed her arm. He pulled her into an embrace. Ginny wrapped her arms around his neck. "Harry, I'm not scared. I just don't want to be the downfall," she said quietly. Harry nodded.

"I understand. You won't, though. Just tell them the truth. Don't get too flippant with them, especially Bellatrix. She's a really nasty one," Harry said. Suddenly, he heard the swishing of robes. He turned to face Lucius Malfoy and Bellatrix Lestrange. Two short, rough looking girls were being held up by them. Their hands were bound and one looked ready to murder. Ginny peered over Harry's shoulder and gasped.

"Parvati?" she whispered. Sure enough, Parvati Patil was with them. Neve looked positively evil. She was in better shape than Parvati, though. Parvati's eyes were glazed over. She didn't look well at all. She looked quite unbalanced. Bellatrix was holding onto her arm tightly.

"Welcome, Potter, Weasley. I see you've kept up to your end of the deal. The Dark Lord decided to be generous and let you have one of the kidnapped students back. Now, Miss Weasley, if you would be so kind as to walk over this way," Lucius said. Ginny stepped around Harry. Harry put his hand out, blocking her.

"Give us one of them. Only then will I come over," Ginny said. Lucius looked at Bellatrix. She nodded at him, and he sighed.

"Fine. Here." Lucius pushed Neve towards Harry. Harry pulled her over to him.

"I'm going to meet Parvati in the center between us. Then I'll come with you." Ginny took a step forward. Bellatrix walked forward, practically dragging Parvati. Ginny took Parvati's hand and sort of pushed her into Harry. She turned to look at them. Then Lucius grabbed her arm and pulled her off. Bellatrix stayed, staring at Harry.

It was taking all of Harry's strength not to just charge at the woman and rip her to shreds with his bare hands. She'd been the one to kill Sirius. Neve was still staring at her maliciously. Bellatrix smiled and turned sideways.

"Soon, little baby Potter." With that, she was off after Lucius.

Harry picked up Parvati properly and looked over at Neve. Harry muttered a charm, and her binds broke free. He looked her up and down. Dried blood was over her face. He couldn't really see her left eye on account of her hair covering it. Neve looked like a deranged murderer. He also detected a sort of crazy, distant feeling. It was like she wasn't there. Parvati shivered in his arms.

"Can you walk all right, Neve?" Harry asked. Neve nodded stiffly. She looked at Parvati. Her eyes hadn't even closed yet. "You decided to backtalk, didn't you?" Harry asked as they walked. Neve nodded again. Harry noticed her eyes were a bright red. "Do you know what they want with Ginny?" Harry kept asking her questions. Neve looked at him. He almost shivered with the coldness he saw in them.

"I have not a fucking clue, to tell you the truth. They never really talked about it," she said coldly. Her voice sent chills down his spine. Neve turned her head to face the front once more. They quietly continued walking down the street to the castle. No more words were said.

Dumbledore and Drake were awaiting their return at the gates. Drake took Parvati from Harry, and Neve shrugged off any help from anyone. When they got inside, Aurora took one look at her sister and sorrow filled her heart. Neve stared back at Aurora. Aurora's eyes were filling with tears. She ran to Neve and threw her arms around her. Neve just stood there, not moving. Then the two disappeared up the stairs.

Harry went to where Hermione, Ron, Neville, and Draco were. Aislin and Fionnula were there as well. When Harry entered, Ron and Draco stood up. Harry nodded, signaling that everything had gone well. He sat down in a lazy way. Ron and Draco returned to their seats.

"How is she?" Hermione asked quietly. Harry looked over in her direction.

"She looked awful. If her hands weren't bound, I think she would've slaughtered both Lucius and Bellatrix. I can only imagine what she'll do if she comes face to face with them again. They also brought Parvati. Now, Parvati looked slightly insane. Her eyes were all glazed over. They must've put the Cruciatus Curse on her a lot," Harry said dryly. Hermione nodded as Dumbledore opened the door.

"Aislin, your services are needed," he said. Aislin nodded and left the room. Dumbledore walked over to the seat she once occupied. He sighed. "I fear that Miss Patil is permanently insane. To imagine torturing a child like that is unbearable," he said, looking weary. He intertwined his long fingers and looked out over them.

"What about Neve, professor?" Draco asked. Everyone looked at him in an astonished manner. They all expected the last person to care about Neve's well being was him. Draco noticed this. "I'm sorry. I forgot what a cold, heartless bastard you all take me for," he said gloomily.

"That's not it, Draco. We might've used to think you were that way. But, we don't anymore," Hermione said. Draco blinked. This was the first time she'd ever called him by his first name, and it shocked him. He nodded as Dumbledore cleared his throat.

"Miss Assante doesn't appear to be damaged physically except for her muscles being a little sore from the curse. But, mentally, I think she's a little worse for the wear," he said. Hermione and Neville exchanged looks.

"What do you mean?" Neville asked. Dumbledore sighed, as if he feared someone asking this question.

"Well, Neveah is a very strong person. She has a very strong mind. If you ask me, she looks like she needs a shoulder to cry on. But, I don't believe she'll give her captors that satisfaction. If anything, I'd say she's in shock or just a little traumatized. She'll never be the same, though. I don't think the Cruciatus Curse had anything to do with her being this distant or traumatized. Something else happened to her. I don't think she'll share it with us, yet. Well, I must return to the school. I will visit again in about a week. Good night." Dumbledore left the room.

Upstairs, Neve stared out the window in her room. She hadn't said anything since she spoke to Harry. Aurora watched her sister worriedly. Aurora jumped when the silence was broken by Aislin opening the door. Neve didn't flinch one bit. Aislin looked over at Aurora who shrugged.

"Has she said anything?" Aislin whispered. Aurora shook her head.

"She will not even look at me. You talk to her. I will go get her some food." Aurora stood up and left. Aislin looked over at Neve. She was still staring listlessly out the window. She'd let Aurora clean her face. Her face held no readable emotion. It was like looking at something transparent.

"Neve?" Aislin asked. Neve didn't move. Aislin stepped closer to her. Neve finally turned her head. Her eyes were still red. She looked possessed by some kind of demon. "Neve, are you okay? Does anything hurt?" Aislin asked. Neve opened her mouth.

"No," she said. Then she turned to stare back out of the window. "How's Parvati?"

"She'll make it. But, the damage to her mind might be beyond repair. I'll try my best. Neve, your sister went to get you food. Are you hungry?" Aislin asked. Neve turned back towards her.

"No. I'm going to sleep," Neve said. She stood and walked over to her bed. Aislin nodded and left the room, closing the door behind her.

Aislin saw Aurora coming down the hall. Aurora carried a tray of food with her. She looked very tired and sad. She noticed Aislin walking briskly down the hall.

"What is wrong?"

"She said she wanted to sleep and that she's not hungry," Aislin said. Aurora looked at Neve's door and nodded. She turned on her heel and left.

The next day, Neve was shooting magical arrows at dummies. Her face was hard as stone. Draco and Drake were watching her in utter shock. Her arrows were packed with such power. Draco's arrows were white. Neve's arrows were red. He didn't understand how she could've come up with this amount of power in such a short time. She was never good with enchanted arrows.

Neve focused on the target in front of her. Picking up an arrow, she pulled it back. The tip began glowing red and a large ball was formed quickly. Neve let it go and hit the target head on. The explosion was phenomenal.

Inside, a chandelier fell, barely missing Fionnula. She'd jumped to the side quickly when she heard the chain snap. Aurora and Harry looked at each other. Fionnula was breathing hard.

"Now that was surreal," Harry said. Aurora nodded. Harry grabbed Fionnula's hand and helped her up. Fionnula looked up, dusting herself off. "What do you think that was?" he asked.

"It sounded like an explosion, a very strong explosion," Fionnula said, her eyes narrowing. Aurora and Harry followed her outside. Neve was furiously shooting arrows. Draco and Drake just stood there amazed. Fionnula looked from them to Neve, then hit Drake on the shoulder. "Aren't you going to stop her before she destroys this place? She already caused a chandelier to fall and nearly kill me!" Fionnula yelled over the explosions. Drake looked at Neve. She dropped the bow and looked at the bunch. They were watching her with wide eyes. She ran past them.

"Neve," Aurora said as she watched her sister go. Harry looked at the longing in her eyes. Neve clearly wasn't normal anymore.

Neve ran into the bathroom. She put her hands on either side of the sink. Her breathing was deep and hard; exerting that much energy was hard work. She looked at herself in the mirror. When Neve woke up in the morning, her hair had grown significantly. It was also black again. The only difference was that it was black with red stripes. Her eyes hadn't changed from the fiery red.

"Neve?" a quiet voice said after a knock was heard on the door. Neve looked towards the door. It was Hermione's voice. She was sure of it. Opening the door, Hermione stood there, looking up at her.

"What the fuck do you want?" Neve asked, her voice low. Hermione cringed at the coldness in it. She looked at Neve's arms and saw the lines from the binds hadn't quite disappeared. Hermione looked back up at Neve's face. Neve had the same blank expression on her face.

"Can I talk to you?" Hermione practically whispered. Neve continued to look down on her, as if she was contemplating Hermione's words. She narrowed her already narrow eyes and sighed.

"I don't fucking want to talk," she said, and then pushed past Hermione. She walked quickly to her room and shut the door.

"*Colloportus*," Neve said, pointing her wand over her shoulder. She looked at the glass of water on the nightstand next to her bed. She pointed her wand at it. Mumbling a curse, a white jet of light flew from it. The glass shattered, leaving shards all over the place. Neve picked up one. She put it on her arm and slid it across, making a long vertical gash. She dropped the shard and put her head on her pillow. She was out in ten seconds.

Later that day, Aurora knocked on Neve's door. There was no answer after she waited a minute. She knocked again, and there was still no sound.

"Neve, stop brooding, and open the damn door!" Aurora yelled. There was still no sound. Not even the sound of rustling or turning over. Aurora tried the door to find it was locked. She pulled out her wand and pointed it at the keyhole. "*Alohomora*," she said. The door unlocked, and Aurora entered.

Glass littered the floor next to Neve's bed. Her arm was hanging off the bed and blood dripped from her fingertips. Aurora gasped and ran over to her sister. She turned Neve over just to see that she was asleep. Aurora ran to get Aislin.

"She cut herself with a piece of broken glass. It does not look too deep, just a scratch..." Aurora trailed off. Aislin examined Neve's arm, then waved her arm over it. The gash disappeared, and she stood up. Neve was still asleep through all of this. She closed her mouth and turned over.

"*Scourgify*," Aislin mumbled, and the glass disappeared. She turned toward Aurora. "Watch her. Make sure she doesn't do anything rash. When she's ready to talk, she will. Trust me on this one." Aislin left.

Late that night, Draco opened his eyes. It was still pitch black outside. Aurora was asleep next to him. Draco tried to move, but Aurora's head was on his arm. He carefully slid it from under her, trying his hardest not to wake her. Aurora mumbled in her sleep and lifted off of him. Draco stood up and put on some jogging pants.

"She sleeps like a she's dead," he whispered, looking back at Aurora. Her mouth was open, and little whistling sounds were coming from her nose. Draco shook his head and left the room. He went to the kitchen. He found candles to be lit inside. He pulled out his wand. No one was there. He put it back in his pocket and got a glass of water.

Walking back to his room, he heard little sounds coming from the exercise room where Drake taught them. It sounded like someone was fighting another. Moving slowly to the door, he opened it quietly. Draco gasped slightly at what he saw.

Neve was practically murdering a dummy that was enchanted to fight back. Neve threw a punch and knocked the dummy's head off. It fell to the ground, the enchantment worn off. Draco walked closer. Neve turned quickly, pulling out her wand. Draco put his hands up.

"Relax, Neve. It's just me," he said, putting the glass of water down. Neve put her wand back up and stared suspiciously at Draco. He began to approach her slowly. She just stared at him.

"Why the hell are you up? Shouldn't you be fucking my sister?" Neve asked, crossing her arms. Draco chuckled, and Neve cringed. He looked at her. She'd never cringed at the sound of his laugh. What was wrong with her?

"I should be asking that of you. You slept all day after you attempted to destroy the field. Where did you get all that power anyway?" Draco asked. Neve raised an eyebrow at him. She did not want to have this conversation.

"I was letting off some steam." She tried to rush past him. Draco grabbed her arm. By second nature, Neve turned, swinging her leg up. Draco ducked and tackled her.

"What's wrong with you?" he asked, holding her down tightly. Neve struggled under his grip, her eyes burning.

"Release me," she growled. Draco's eyes widened.

"Not until you tell me what's wrong with you. You haven't said more than five words to any of us. We care about you, and you're treating us like shit. So, what the bloody hell is wrong wi..." Draco didn't finish.

"I said release me, damnit!" Neve knocked him off of her and rolled onto her feet. Draco stood, looking at her.

"You want to fight?" He threw a punch. Neve blocked it with her arms. She tripped him up. Draco kicked her in the shins. Neve fell backwards as Draco stood. He stared down at her. "Then fight," he said evilly. Neve smirked.

"All right. You don't have to tell me twice, bitch." She stood and started her onslaught. She was extremely fast. Draco was starting to wonder what exactly was fueling her. After fifteen minutes of nonstop torture on their bodies, Draco pushed Neve into the wall, holding her there by her arms. Neve looked at him, panting. Draco stared back.

"What the bloody hell is wrong with you?" he asked again. Neve kneed him in the stomach. Draco's grip faltered for only a moment. He continued to hold her tightly. Neve stared back at him furiously.

"You wouldn't fucking understand, Draco, so just drop it," she whispered. Draco's grip loosened as her words hit him. Neve looked away from him. She began punching him hard in his chest. Draco just stood and took the hits. She looked in his eyes, wondering why he wasn't fighting back. It was starting to irritate her. Draco grabbed her arms and pulled her into a hug. Neve didn't struggle against him.

"What happened to you?" he asked. Neve sighed and pushed away from him. She sat on the ground, still panting. Draco sat next to her. He continued to look at her. Her facial expressions had changed so much.

"*Lo ha torturato e colza me,*" she said quietly. Draco's eyes widened. He just stared at her in a strange stupor. Neve looked up at him.

"Who?" Draco asked, his voice sounding strained.

"Bellatrix and..." She didn't know how he would take it if she said his name. Draco continued to look at her. Neve looked away.

"Who, Neve?" he asked.

"Bellatrix and...your father," she whispered, barely audible. Draco heard her just fine. He looked utterly shocked that his father would do such a thing. How could he sink that low? How could Draco possibly have his blood running through his veins? Neve noticed his facial expression change from worry to horror to just downright hatred. "Draco..."

"He is mine. I will kill him with my bare hands!" Draco yelled. Neve jumped back a little from the shock of him talking that loud. Draco was literally shaking with rage. He'd always known his father was a little...eccentric, but he never thought he would do something like that. It was so dishonorable, so shameful. Neve almost cracked a smile at him.

"Why, Draco Malfoy! I didn't know you cared!" she said, trying to sound cheerful. Draco looked sideways at her.

"Am I the only one who knows?" he asked. Neve nodded her head. "Why didn't you tell your sister?" Neve shrugged her shoulders. Then she yawned.

"I could really use some sleep," she said, standing. Draco stood and nodded stiffly. Neve turned toward him. "Don't tell Aurora, or anyone for that matter," she said. Draco nodded and they headed upstairs, limping slightly.

Ginny woke up. She was lying on a rather comfortable couch. The fireplace in the room was lit. She sat up, looking around. There was no sound, except for the crackling of the fire. No one was in the room. Then Ginny heard a hissing sound. Looking at the floor, a large snake that could only be Nagini slithered around. It stopped and looked up at her, and then continued on.

"I see you have awakened, Ginevra," an icy voice said. Ginny stiffened and turned her head. A black figure seemed to glide across the floor. Ginny watched it as it sat in the chair across from her. "As you've probably already gathered, I am Lord Voldemort," he said. Ginny nodded slightly. "It's all right, Ginevra. You can speak freely. I promise I won't kill you," he said, a slightly happy tone in his voice. Ginny still looked skeptical.

"How do I know that you always keep your word?" she asked, relaxing into the chair a little bit. Voldemort's snakelike eyes surveyed her for a moment. Then he adjusted himself in the chair.

"You'll just have to make up your own damn mind in that one, Ginevra. Now, do you have the slightest idea as to why you're here?" he asked. Ginny stared maliciously at him. She immediately put up walls around her mind. Harry told her he was a skilled Legilimens.

"No, I don't," she said. Voldemort stared at her, looking quite cynical. Ginny stared right back at him, in his eyes. Voldemort smirked, and Ginny cringed. He really was an ugly man.

"I want to know about your little power. Do you know what it is?" he asked. Ginny shook her head. Voldemort surveyed her again. Ginny heard the door open. Bellatrix walked up beside her master's chair, her eyes fixated on Ginny. Ginny glared at her, and then turned her attention back to Voldemort.

"No, I don't," she repeated. Voldemort nodded, taking in her words.

"Does Dumbledore know what it is?"

"No, he doesn't."

"She lies! How dare you lie to the Dark Lord!" Bellatrix said. Ginny looked at the woman like she'd grown catlike ears and a tail. Voldemort put up his hand, silencing Bellatrix. Bellatrix went back to looking like a normal, composed woman.

"You are sick and twisted. Something is really wrong with you," Ginny said. Bellatrix mumbled something.

"Quiet, Bellatrix. Do not be rude to our guest. Well, Ginevra. Do you use it at free will, or does it just happen?" Voldemort asked. Ginny looked back at the vile being before her.

"If you mean can I do it right now, then no, I can't. It only happens when I'm asleep or something. I can't control it at all," Ginny said. Voldemort nodded. Ginny stiffened

again; she didn't like him surveying her like that.

"Do you know anything about how you've managed to alter the past?"

"I know that someone altered my past. I'm not supposed to exist, Voldemort. Someone other than **YOUR** Seer saw what was to come. They apparently went back and altered that. If I wasn't born, you probably would've already killed Harry and the rest of my friends." Then something dawned on Ginny. She looked thoughtful for a moment. "That means that someone knew what Professor Trelawney was going to predict and also knew that it wouldn't be that way because I was never born. They saw that in another time or something that I would be born and alter things the way I've been doing," Ginny said, looking upward at the ceiling. Bellatrix looked utterly confused.

"What?" she asked. Voldemort seemed to be in deep thought.

"So, Ginevra, you're saying that someone from an alternate universe is trying to make this universe turn out in your favor?" he asked. Ginny looked at him.

"You missed it. Someone from **OUR** time saw this same situation in another time. They might've even seen it play out two different ways: one with me, the other without me. They wanted to make it happen here. That way, we would be saved from you. The only way to do that is to go back in time to ensure that I would be born. The **OTHER** Seer saw it two ways. Is this making any sense to you? Are you that daft?" Ginny asked, directing the last two questions at Bellatrix. Bellatrix snarled and raised her wand.

"You insubordinate little wi..." she began. Voldemort held his hand out.

"Calm yourself, Bella. How is it that you figured all this out by yourself?"

"I consider myself to be relatively smart. I seem to see the events when you Death Eaters are discussing the past event. Then I return to the event in question and alter it so that it happens a different way. The Seer who made it possible for me to be born knew this by seeing it in two ways: the one where I exist and the one where I don't exist," Ginny said. Voldemort cracked an evil smile at the young redhead.

"Bella, take Ginevra to the room she will be residing in until April first. Make sure she's comfortable. I want her to be taken care of well. Do you understand?" Voldemort said.

"Yes, my lord. Come, girl," Bellatrix demanded. Ginny rose slowly. Nagini snapped at her, and she jumped. Voldemort hissed something and the large snake backed down. Ginny followed Bellatrix out of the room.

When they came to the door, Bellatrix turned to look at Ginny. Ginny stared in her eyes. Bellatrix's eyes turned light brown. Ginny kept staring.

"Where are we?" she asked. Bellatrix continued to look down on her. Then she smiled.

"We're in my country home just outside of Southampton. It's protected by all sorts of barriers and is invisible to the outside person," Bellatrix said happily. Ginny nodded and blinked. Bellatrix blinked also and looked at Ginny. She sighed and turned to continue walking.

"This is your room. Get comfy. You're going to be here for a long while." Bellatrix slammed the door. Ginny heard her mumble something. Then she heard Bellatrix's hard footsteps. Ginny turned to look in her room.

The room was very simple. The bed was very large. The walls were painted white, and there was one window in it.

"Well at least it's not some hole in the wall." Ginny walked over to the bed.

Lo ha torturato e colza me = She tortured me and he raped me.

Chapter 17: Raiding Malfoy Manor

Chapter 18 of 24

Harry and Draco team up.

The Opposite

Chapter 17: Raiding Malfoy Manor

Harry looked absolutely miserable two days after Ginny had gone. Ron looked just as miserable and put his heart and soul into destroying everything within reach with a curse or his fists. Neve still hadn't told anyone but Draco about her horrific experience at the hands of his father. Draco had been rather distant like her as of late. Aurora was starting to worry about him. The only ones who could function normally were Hermione and Neville.

Harry and Draco were eating lunch in the wine cellar when they heard footsteps. They looked at each other, wondering who it would be. They tried desperately to hide the evidence of them drinking. Then Drake stuck his head out the door.

"D-D-Drake!" Harry stammered. Drake rolled his eyes and walked forward.

"I've known you guys knew about this place for quite some time. It's quite all right. I can understand if you need a drink every now and then. Just don't let Fionnula and Aislin catch you. You two are going on assignment," Drake said, taking a glass and pouring some firewhiskey in it. Draco and Harry exchanged blank looks.

"Assignment? What assignment?" Draco asked. Harry straightened up in his chair. Drake took a gulp of the strong drink and sat back, looking at the two serenely.

"You two are going to see first hand what an Auror and a Magus do. We have deemed you two ready for this assignment. Seeing as there will be no 'important' Death Eaters at this place, you should have no trouble. You leave tonight. It'll just be you two," Drake said. Harry almost choked on his drink.

"You're sending us on a raid?" Harry asked. Drake nodded. "Where?"

"Oh, you don't need to worry about that. Ron, Hermione, Neve, Neville, and Aurora will have their time soon. Get ready. You leave in two hours." Drake stood and walked

to the door. He turned back towards the young men. "Also, wear your battle uniform. You will be taking a Portkey to this place." And with that, he was gone. Draco stood up and followed Drake out, leaving Harry seated and looking amazed.

A raid? He wasn't ready for a raid. Let alone a raid against Death Eaters. What if Voldemort was there? Drake said no "important" ones would be there. But, how could he know that? Sighing, he got up to follow Draco out.

Two hours later, all of the trainees stood, looking at Draco and Harry. Hermione hugged Harry and shook Draco's hand.

"Good luck, you two," she said, looking as though she was going to cry. Ron shook both of their hands and Neve nodded in their direction. Neville wished them well, and Aurora nearly knocked Draco down. Aislin walked over to them.

"You're looking for any prisoners or information that might be in this place." She took out a glass *Portus*. This Portkey will reach both ways. Once you are done, touch it. You will be brought back here. Tie all of the Death Eaters up, and Aurors will be deployed to take them to Azkaban. Good luck." Aislin sat the Portkey down. Harry and Draco looked at each other and touched it.

The familiar tugging was felt, and Harry landed on his butt. Draco did the same. Draco stood quickly, dusting himself off. He looked up and paused completely. Harry stood and walked up beside Draco, who looked like he'd just seen a ghost.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked. Draco stood, speechless. He couldn't believe this. This couldn't be the place. It had to be an illusion. It just had to be. Harry shook Draco, bringing him back to reality. "What is it?" Harry asked more urgently.

"This is Malfoy Manor," Draco whispered. "We're going to raid my house?" Draco said quietly. Harry looked at the place. It looked very depressing. He didn't understand how Draco could've lived here. "Come on." Draco started walking. Harry went for the front door, but Draco pulled him down in the bushes.

"What are you doing?" Harry whispered. Draco rolled his eyes.

"I think I know this place a smidge better than you do, Potter. We're not just going to go in, wands firing. Are you daft or something? We need a plan. Remember, we're supposed to be subtle and tactical. The keyword there is **TACTICAL**. Come. There is another way in through the dungeons." Draco pulled Harry along.

"I'm not daft, Malfoy. This is a house. Why do you have dungeons?" Harry asked, looking quite skeptical. Draco sighed and pointed his wand at a stone door.

"*Aprire*," he said. The door swung open quietly. Apparently, it had a password. Draco went in followed by Harry.

The dungeon was a quiet, dark, and gloomy place. It smelled of wet dogs. As Harry followed Draco, door slammed shut behind him. Harry jumped and whirled around, pointing his wand at the door. Draco looked around and heard shuffling. Harry was still moving, making more noise.

"Quiet, Potter! Do you hear that?" he whispered. Harry stopped moving and looked around. The shuffling was heard far off to their right. Draco looked down the dark hallway and went forward. Harry followed. When they came to the door, Draco unlocked it and opened it. They both gasped at what they saw.

Nymphadora Tonks was tied up on the ground. Her face was dirty, and she was gagged. She looked up at the two, and her eyes widened. It was like she couldn't tell the difference between them and Death Eaters. Harry walked forward and pulled out his wand. Tonks tried to scoot away from him, mumbling unintelligibly. Harry realized what he must look like to her. He removed his hood. Draco stood guard.

"Tonks, it's me, Harry. We're here to rescue you. Hold still." Harry untied her, and she removed her gag. She coughed loudly, and Draco turned his head quickly.

"Death Eaters are coming. Tonks, hide. Potter, get ready." Draco took out his wand. Tonks went and hid in a dark corner. Harry didn't bother pulling out his wand. He looked out the door and saw three Death Eaters approaching.

"Potter! How did..." a woman's voice said. She was in the center of the two taller Death Eaters the boys assumed were men. She pulled out her wand. "*Stupefy!*" she yelled. Harry held his hand out and reversed the spell. The woman just stood there, shocked. She went flying backwards. Harry heard Draco chuckle.

"Good one, Potter. *Tarantallegra!*" Draco pointed his wand at the other Death Eater. He dove to the side and sent curse at Draco. Draco moved and Harry stunned another Death Eater. "*Petrificus Totalus!*" The Death Eater's body went rigid, and he fell forward on his face. Draco started to walk off.

"And where do you think you're going?" Harry asked, tying up the Death Eaters. Draco turned and looked back at him.

"To look for information." And with that, Draco was gone. Harry sighed and continued his task. He conjured an invisible binding around them. Tonks came out of hiding. Harry turned to look at her.

"You're pretty good, Potter. I see they've been training you well," she said, smiling weakly. Harry almost blushed.

Draco looked around his house. He armed his bow with a magical arrow. He turned a corner and saw three other Death Eaters, sitting and conversing. Draco took out one of his knives and threw it. He hit one Death Eater in the arm. An ear-piercing scream was heard. Draco snorted and hid behind the wall, picking up another one of his arrows. He charged it, and then shot it. The other two Death Eaters dodged while the one with the knife in his arm was flailing about. Because of the blast, Draco's hood had fallen back. He stood, facing the two Death Eaters.

"You're Draco Malfoy. What are you doing here?" one said. Draco smirked and looked at him.

"Trying to take my home back. Not to mention kill all of you." Draco aimed at them. They stood there, their wands still in hand. "Drop your wands, or I'll blow your heads off," Draco said, looking very serious. The Death Eater who'd spoken dropped his wand. The other looked cynical.

Suddenly, the banging of a door startled him. Draco lost his bearing for a moment as Harry and Tonks appeared. The Death Eater still holding his wand took this opportunity to strike.

"*Rictusempra!*" he yelled. Draco was blasted backwards. Harry looked at him, then at the Death Eater. "Well, if it isn't baby Potter. The Dark Lord learns to see you, baby Potter. I see you've found Nymphadora. Well, this should be a new change of scenery. *Crucio!*" The Death Eater threw the curse at Tonks. Harry pushed her hard on the ground. Tonks hit it just as the curse flew above her head. Harry looked at the Death Eater again. "Looks like you're up the creek without a wand, Potter," the Death Eater said, laughing maniacally.

"Who says I need a wand?" Harry asked. The Death Eater stopped cackling for a moment. Harry smirked and held his hand out. A white light flew from it, and the wand in the Death Eater's hand flew out of it. "Who's without a wand now?" Harry asked, taking a step forward. The Death Eater looked at him with wide eyes.

"Potter, step aside," Draco's voice said from behind him. Harry turned around. Draco was standing. His slicked back hair had fallen into his eyes. He looked positively homicidal. Draco walked forward, holding his wand. Harry and Tonks watched him. Draco stepped over the fallen Death Eater. "Take care of him, Potter. I've got this one." Draco grabbed the man around his neck. Harry stunned the quiet Death Eater.

"Malfoy, what are you doing?" Harry asked, looking at him in a peculiar way. Draco looked at Harry, then at the man whom he was holding.

"Quiet, Potter." Draco pulled out a knife. He pressed it against the man's neck. The Death Eater swallowed hard. Draco smirked, sensing the man's fear. "Not as bold as before, huh? Tell me where Voldemort is hiding, and I might let you live," Draco said in a deadly tone. The Death Eater grimaced.

"I wouldn't betray the Dark Lord's whereabouts to a traitor," the Death Eater managed to choke out. Draco smirked.

"Then it seems to me that you have a death wish. Have it your way." Draco moved the knife from the man's neck. Then, suddenly, Draco stabbed the man in the side and twisted. Harry cringed as blood splattered everywhere. Draco licked his lips. He was enjoying this killing bit a little too much.

"Draco, what are you doing?" Harry asked. Draco looked up at him and removed the knife. The Death Eater squirmed on the ground. Draco looked down on him smugly.

"He refused to help. Out of that wound, his blood will flow. So, technically, I didn't kill him. I just stabbed him. I like this raiding thing. I really could get used to it." Draco wiped off the knife. Tonks and Harry just stared at him. Then, a loud pop was heard. Draco and Harry turned around, both pulling their wands.

"Someone else was here," Harry said quietly. Draco nodded.

"They just Disapparated, though," Draco said. He turned back towards Harry and Tonks. He pulled the glass out of his pocket. *Funzionare*." Draco tapped the glass with his wand. "Let's go." And with that, they left the place.

This time, Harry and Draco landed a little more gracefully on the ground. Hermione jumped in shock at them just appearing out of nowhere. Harry laughed at her. Neville snickered from the corner he sat in.

"You really should've seen your face," he said between giggles. Hermione hit him hard on the shoulder. Harry pretended to be hurt. Drake and Dumbledore walked in the room. Ron followed behind them. Everyone noticed that Tonks was standing there.

"Nymphadora! I see you've been rescued thanks to Harry and Draco. Well done, gentlemen," Dumbledore said, for the first time in a while sounding relatively happy. "Did you find out where the others are hidden?" he asked.

"No," Draco said. Aurora came in the room and saw Draco drenched in blood. She ran toward him, touching him everywhere. "What is your problem, woman?" Draco demanded. Aurora continued looking, unfazed by his outburst of annoyance.

"I am looking for an injury; you are covered in blood," Aurora said. Draco grabbed her hands. She looked up at him.

"I'm fine, love. It's not my blood," Draco said. Aurora stepped back from him. Her eyes seemed to be examining him. Draco just stared back at her. "What?" he asked. Aurora just kept staring at him.

"Why are you covered in another's blood?" she asked. Draco smirked smugly. He crossed his arms.

"Because..." he began.

"...he had to kill a dog. A very big, vicious dog," Harry said. Draco and Aurora looked at him in wonder. Harry made the slightest movement with his eyes, and Draco understood.

"Uh, yeah. This dog attacked me. I had to stab it because I couldn't reach my wand," Draco said. Aurora nodded slowly. Draco wasn't quite sure she believed him. If she had her doubts, she didn't express them to him. Dumbledore cleared his throat.

"Well, I must take Nymphadora to St. Mungo's to have her thoroughly looked over. I bid you all adieu and goodbye. Come, Nymphadora." Dumbledore turned to walk out of the room. Drake followed, but Tonks hung back.

"Thanks again, you two," she said, smiling. Draco and Harry nodded. After everyone was gone, Hermione sensed that the boys needed to talk. She grabbed Aurora's hand.

"Let's go make them something to eat. They look worn out," Hermione said. Aurora nodded absentmindedly and managed to tear her eyes away from Draco. Once they were gone, Draco rounded on Harry quickly. Ron and Neville watched them.

"What did you do that for?" he asked, sounding a bit furious. He walked up on Harry. Harry stepped forward.

"I don't think your girlfriend knowing that you're a murderer is normal, Malfoy. How do you think Aurora would've acted knowing that you killed another man in cold blood and had no second thoughts about it?" Harry asked, crossing his arms. Draco narrowed his grey eyes at Harry. Harry stared directly back at him.

"He's right, Malfoy. How do you think Aurora will see you?" Ron asked. Draco cut his eyes at Ron.

"No one asked you, Weasley. Potter, you think lying to her is a good idea?" Draco asked. Harry nodded.

Ginny opened her eyes. She was breathing very hard. She'd just seen the exact events that occurred at Malfoy Manor. She sat up as the door to her room opened. Bellatrix and Astrid walked in. Astrid examined Ginny, and Ginny looked at her.

"What? Were you a vulture in another life?" Ginny asked. Astrid touched Ginny's hair and smirked.

"She's not a Seer, Bellatrix. But, she does have a funny aura about her. I can't quite place it, though. I will report this to the Dark Lord," Astrid said. She strode out of the room, looking back at Ginny once. Ginny turned her attention to Bellatrix.

"What I wouldn't give to curse you right here and right now, little girl," Bellatrix whispered in a demonic tone. Ginny grinned arrogantly.

"What's stopping you now, Bellatrix? Has Voldemort really got you that tight on a leash?" she taunted. Bellatrix pursed her lips together tightly. She turned on her heel and stomped out of the room, leaving Ginny alone. Ginny sighed and laid back down.

Chapter 18: The Wrath of Neve

The Opposite

Chapter 18: The Wrath of Neve

Neve and Hermione were dueling furiously. By now, both girls had cuts and bruises all over their bodies. The guys watched with wide eyes. There was nothing more entertaining than two girls wearing tight, red unitards getting sweaty and dirty in a catfight. Neville actually had popcorn with him. Aurora sighed, watching the guys be very chauvinistic.

"You four are completely hopeless," she sighed. Aislin and Fionnula walked in as Neve disarmed Hermione. Hermione's wand went flying across the room, narrowly missing Aislin. Neve tackled Hermione, and the two girls began a fight with fists. Hermione threw Neve off of her and stood quickly. Neve threw a punch. It connected with Hermione's stomach. Hermione doubled over then fell to the ground. Neve stood over her in a superior manner.

"That really hurt, Neve," Hermione said. Neve smirked and helped Hermione up. The guys all blinked.

"Is it over already?" Ron asked. Hermione glared at him as Harry laughed. Aislin walked over to the girls as they grabbed towels.

"The next group to go on a raid is Ron, Hermione, and..." Aislin paused as the group all looked at her. "...Neve. Get ready. You leave in an hour." Aislin disappeared with a flat tone. Ron, Hermione, and Neve all exchanged glances. Then they looked at Harry, Neville, and Draco.

"How was your raid?" Hermione asked, sounding a bit apprehensive. Harry and Draco looked at each other. Harry decided to speak first.

"Relatively easy, now that you think about it. There weren't many competent Death Eaters there. They didn't know that I am a Soliopath. They also didn't know how strangely tactical Malfoy is," Harry said. Draco looked smugly at Hermione.

"Plus, it *was* my house. Since my father is out of Azkaban now, I guess he's entrusted the manor to be used by the Death Eaters," he said. "I knew all the secret places and stuff," he said. Hermione rolled her eyes, resisting the urge to blast that egotistical look right off his face. Ron held her hand.

"Let's go get ready," he said. Hermione nodded.

Ginny opened her eyes. She wasn't in her bedroom at the Lestranges' country home. Instead, she was in another place. It looked like the same meeting place as before. Astrid and Bellatrix were visible, as was a man who looked oddly like Crabbe. Ginny deduced that this was the same type of meeting they held after they'd done some neurotic deed.

"So, Sloan narrowly missed them?" Voldemort said. Bellatrix nodded.

"Neveah Assante seemed very eager to go the other direction. Sloan took that opportunity to go Apparate and warn us. They're raiding all of our hideouts. Thankfully, no one knows about my country home," Bellatrix said. Ginny crossed her arms and smiled arrogantly.

That's what she thinks Ginny thought, smirking. Voldemort nodded and looked at Sloan. Sloan looked unscathed.

"Why didn't you attempt to capture the Assante girl again?" he asked. Sloan looked more than a little worried. He seemed to be trying to find the right words to say. Voldemort cleared his throat, obviously letting Sloan know that he was still awaiting an answer.

"I needed to warn the other Death Eaters at other hideouts," he croaked. Voldemort narrowed his eyes and then nodded. Suddenly, the scene before Ginny disappeared.

Neve was strapping on her utility belt. It held all types of bombs and weaponry. Her crossbow was strapped to her back. She walked down the stairs, not in her cloak. All the guys found themselves ogling her. Aurora noticed this as her mind filled with a dozen dirty thoughts. She made a choking sound, and the thoughts ceased.

"What are you all staring at?" Neve asked, oblivious to the way she looked. Neville, amazingly, spoke truthfully about her. He said what was on everyone's mind.

"You look hot. There's nothing I like to see more than a girl in battle uniform," he said, completely forgetting himself. Hermione and Aurora exchanged looks. Neve cracked a smile and kissed Neville on the cheek.

"Thanks, Neville," she said kindly, or as kind as she could get with her hard exterior. Ron and Hermione stood as Fionnula walked in, carrying cards. She gave each of them two. "What are these?" Neve asked.

"These are Portkeys. Just in case you find any other prisoners, they can use their own Portkeys. Dumbledore thought it was a swell idea. Remember, try not to kill anybody. We need information on where to find other prisoners and where Ginny is being kept. So, off you go," Fionnula said. She pointed at each of their cards and mumbled one word. All three of them disappeared.

Hermione looked up. It was pitch black outside the enormous estate. It looked every bit like a Death Eater hideout. She tried to walk forward, but Neve put her hand up.

"What are you doing?" she asked. Neve threw a rock at the house. It hit a barrier and was flung back at them. Ron ducked to avoid it. Hermione raised an eyebrow.

"How're we going to get passed this?" Ron asked. Neve took out a strange looking object. It seemed to be made of glass. Ron and Hermione watched with wide eyes and she drew a line down the barrier. The line seemed to open, and Neve stepped in. Ron and Hermione followed.

"Where'd you get that?" Hermione whispered. Neve just smirked. She put the object back on her belt.

"Gift from Drake. Let's go," she said. Hermione rolled her eyes. Neve slinked around the yard with great stealth while Hermione and Ron kept crunching on leaves. Neve tried a window. "It's locked. Hermione, would you do the honors?" she asked. Hermione nodded.

"*Alohomora*," Hermione whispered. The lock opened and, Ron hoisted the girls up into the dark room. They silently snuck around, their wands at the ready. Ron came upon a tall Death Eater who was obviously drunk. The Death Eater didn't seem to realize who he was.

"*Petrificus Totalus*," Ron said in hushed voice. Hermione and Neve caught him before he hit the ground. Neve stood up and looked around. There was a light at the end of the corridor.

"You two go that way. I'll go this way to look for prisoners," she said. Ron and Hermione took off down the hall. Neve smirked as she heard the screams of shocked Death Eaters. Neve turned the corner and came to a fork. She heard a rustling noise coming from the right door. She started to go down it.

No. Go down to the left. Go to the left, a voice said in her head. Neve could've sworn she heard Ginny talking to her. She looked at the door to the left and opened it. Her

face hardened at what she saw.

Sloan was standing there, pointing his wand at a girl on the floor. The girl was tied up and squealing in pain. He was obviously using the Cruciatus Curse on her. Neve moved silently up behind him. She put her wand to his head, and her gun to his back.

"Try something. I dare you to," she whispered in his ear. Sloan smirked and dropped his wand. Neve turned him around. She kept the gun on him as she picked up his wand and snapped it. He stared smugly at her.

"Well, well. Neve, we meet again. Grown a bit of a backbone now, haven't you?" Sloan attempted to take a step forward. Neve held the gun to his chin and dropped her wand.

"Give me a reason, Sloan. Give me one good reason why I shouldn't blast your brains all over this floor," she said. Sloan dropped the smirk off his face. That's when Ron and Hermione walked in. Hermione looked at Neve, and then saw the girl on the floor. She ran to her and took off the gag. It was Luna Lovegood. She looked slightly deranged.

"Ron, help me," Hermione said, trying to hoist the girl up. Ron bent down and picked Luna up. He headed out of the room. Hermione started to follow, but turned and looked at Neve and Sloan. Neither was blinking and Neve's eyes were practically burning with unprecedented hatred for the man. "Neve, are you going to be ok?" she asked. Neve inclined her head slowly. "All right. Hurry up. Ron and I will call the Aurors." Hermione ran after Ron and Luna.

Neve put her gun down.

"I want to beat you fair and square. No weapons and no magic. You're just going to get an old-fashioned arse-whooping," Neve said, cracking her knuckles. She decked the unsuspecting Sloan hard across the jaw. Sloan recovered quickly and hit her in the stomach. Neve put her hands on the ground as she doubled over and flipped her legs up in a handstand. She wrapped her legs around his head and pulled him over.

Sloan landed hard on his back. Neve stood up and watched him slowly rise. She was going to enjoy this. Sloan attacked her again, and Neve pulled his arm as he threw a punch. His jaw met her elbow in a powerful hit. Neve had succeeded in breaking it. She kicked him in the back and he went flying forward. Sloan recovered quicker than before.

"What's the matter, Sloan? Can't beat up a fifteen year old girl?" Neve taunted. Sloan growled something illegible and attacked her. Neve was ready for him. She grabbed his chin, and the top of his head and twisted hard. It seemed to take Sloan ages to fall. His head was twisted in a painful looking way. Neve rubbed her knuckles. "I need to work on making them a little stronger. I can't keep breaking them every time I get into a fight," she sighed. Picking up her wand and gun, she headed out after Ron and Hermione.

Suddenly, another Death Eater jumped out after her. She pushed Neve into the wall. Neve pushed the woman off of her, and they both pulled their wands at the same time. Neve stared hard at the woman. She was panting hard.

"Lower your wand," Neve said in a deadly tone. The female Death Eater didn't move.

"Neve..." Hermione came around the corner, and the female Death Eater grabbed her around the neck. In one fluid movement, Neve had pulled her gun from its holster and was aiming at it slightly passed Hermione's head. Hermione was breathing rather hard.

"Seems like we're in a bit of a predicament, Assante," the woman said. Neve smirked. "I know you won't shoot her, so why don't you just put that gun away?" she continued. Hermione's eyes flickered back and forth from Neve to the woman. Neve held the gun steadily. Hermione moved her eyes down, and Neve understood.

Suddenly, Hermione stomped on the woman's foot. The Death Eater screamed and bent down. Hermione pulled her wand.

"*Petrificus Totalus!*" she yelled. The Death Eater's body went rigid. Hermione turned toward Neve. "Let's go. Ron's called the Aurors and tied up the last of them. Where's Sloan?" she asked. Neve looked up at her and smirked.

"Let's go," she said, tying her cloak around her more securely. Hermione just looked at her in a quizzical way and followed her out.

The trio appeared with Luna, startling Aislin. They stood in her office, looking worn out. Ron carried Luna to a bed and laid her down. Aislin came rushing to her side. She checked her vitals and everything. Luna was unconscious. It was going to be hard to find out what was wrong with her. Fionnula and Drake walked in.

"How did it go?" Drake asked. Hermione, Ron, and Neve exchanged smug looks.

"We saw Sloan," Hermione said. She looked at Neve, who was removing her gloves. Neve looked up at Drake and smiled.

"*Ho avuto mia vendetta. Sì, ho avuto completamente mia vendetta!*" she said quietly, walking out of the room. Drake and Ron exchanged bewildered looks.

Elsewhere, Aurora was trying to practice focusing on one mind. Lately, her telepathy was on the fritz. She could hear almost everything someone was thinking in the immediate vicinity. It was out of her control. She wasn't sure why it was acting like this. Fionnula walked in the room.

"What are you doing?" she asked. Aurora opened her eyes and looked up at Fionnula. Fionnula was thinking about how stupid Aurora looked at that particular moment.

"I do not look stupid. Recently, I can read anyone's mind without trying to. It sounds like a bunch of jumbled up words. They are just random thoughts. It hurts sometimes. I cannot seem to focus on just one person," Aurora sighed. Fionnula nodded. Then she got an idea.

"Have you been practicing using that distant connection of yours?" she asked. Aurora nodded. "Well, see if you can focus on one mind. Ginny's mind. She's a partial telepath. She can take it. Maybe she knows where she is." Aurora nodded and closed her eyes.

Ginny was staring listlessly out of the window in her room. No one had come by to talk to her today or anything. The only thing she'd done was save Luna Lovegood's life by telling Neve which door to go through. Suddenly, it felt as if she was being pushed.

Ginny? Ginny, this is Aurora. Can you hear me? Aurora's voice said in Ginny's mind. Ginny looked around. No one was in the room except her. How was Aurora doing this?

Yes. I can hear you just fine, Aurora. What is it? Ginny asked. She also focused on not severing the connection with her friend.

Can you tell us where you are? Aurora asked.

Yes. I manipulated Bellatrix Lestrange's mind so that she could tell me. She said that I'm at her countryside home outside of Southampton. She says it's protected by all sorts of enchantments and can't be seen to the outside eye, Ginny said.

Are there any others there with you? Students, maybe? Aurora asked.

No, I think I'm the only one. But, every now and then I hear them talking about Professor Snape. I don't know for sure if he's here, though! Ginny said. It was silent for a moment, and then Aurora spoke again.

Ginny, gather as much information as you can. I will tell the headmaster where you are and hopefully, we'll bring the fight to them. Do not do anything rash! Aurora said. Ginny nodded, suddenly realizing that Aurora couldn't see her doing this.

Aurora?

Yes?

Tell Neve that it was me. She'll know what I'm talking about. Bye! Ginny severed the connection just as Bellatrix walked in. Ginny looked at her, rubbing her head. Bellatrix eyed her strangely, as if contemplating how to kill her.

"The Dark Lord wants to see you, Ginevra," she said. Ginny nodded and stood. She followed Bellatrix back to the room where she'd first spoken with him. Ginny made her way around the large snake as it hissed at her. She sat on the sofa across from Voldemort.

"Welcome, Ginevra. Tell me, have you been altering any timelines as of late?" Voldemort asked. Ginny stared at him blankly. She immediately blocked her mind from him.

"No," she lied. That's when Astrid stepped up beside him.

"She lies, my lord," Astrid said, smirking at Ginny. Ginny glared at her.

"How do you know whether or not I'm lying? I already told you that I cannot alter anything on my own. It sort of just happens. So recently, it hasn't, okay? Is that all you wanted?" Ginny asked, sounding annoyed. Astrid made to reach for her wand, but Voldemort stopped her.

"Calm yourself, Astrid. Ginevra, you are familiar with the Cruciatus Curse, no?" Voldemort asked. Ginny nodded meekly. "I asked you a question, Ginevra. I want a verbal answer."

"Yes," Ginny answered simply, her voice not showing the little fear in her. Voldemort intertwined his long fingers.

"Well, there is a curse similar to the Cruciatus Curse. It is not deemed illegal in Britain, of course. Few know about it here. It is said to be more painful than the Cruciatus, but is much harder to do. It is called the Dolore Curse. I want to show you the difference." Voldemort pulled out his wand. Ginny's eyes widened. "*Crucio!*" Voldemort yelled. The curse hit Ginny quickly, and she felt all the pain in the world. She didn't even realize she was screaming until the curse was lifted. She noticed she was on the floor. She stood and sat back on the sofa. Bellatrix and Astrid were smiling.

"Did you like that, Ginevra?" Bellatrix taunted. Ginny shot her a nasty look.

"Right, then. That was the Cruciatus Curse. The Dolore Curse is illegal in Italy. It's where the name of it comes from. Pain in Italian is *dolore*, hence the name Dolore. This curse is painful; it is nearly unbearable to witness someone being tortured by it. So, without further adieu, I want to show you this curse." Voldemort pointed his wand at Astrid, who looked startled. "*Dolore Mortale!*" he yelled. What looked like a blast of air was emitted from the tip of his wand.

Ginny watched in horror as Astrid sank to her knees. There was no sound coming from her mouth, although it looked as if she was screaming. Astrid's body curled up in a terrible way. Her eyes rolled into the back of her head. Ginny twisted in her seat as she watched. She tried to wrench her eyes away, but found that she couldn't. Even Bellatrix was staring wide-eyed.

"**STOP IT!**" Ginny manage to yell. It sounded forced. Astrid was evil, but she didn't deserve this. Voldemort snickered and lifted the curse. Astrid's body relaxed, and she rolled over. Her eyes were staring up into space at seemingly nothing. She looked dead to the world. Her eyes were glazed over. Nagini slunk over to her and looked down at her. Voldemort hissed something, and Nagini went away.

"That, Ginevra, is the Dolore Curse. If you ever lie to me, I will do that exact thing to you. Do you understand?" Voldemort said. Ginny was still staring down at Astrid. A white fluid was starting to drip out of her mouth. "Do you understand me, Ginevra?" Voldemort asked again, this time louder. Ginny was jerked out of her stupor and nodded quickly.

"Yes," she whispered. Voldemort nodded at Bellatrix. Bellatrix grabbed her arm and drug her off back to her room.

Ho avuto mia vendetta. Sì, ho avuto completamente mia vendetta = I had my revenge. Yes, I had my revenge thoroughly.

Chapter 19: Learning the Truth

Chapter 20 of 24

The group is visited by someone special. Ginny sees Snape.

The Opposite

Chapter 19: Learning the Truth

Dumbledore was sitting in his office, reading biographies of registered Seers. He'd come to none that seemed to have the amazing power that the Seer who changed everyone's destiny did. He sighed and sat back in his plush armchair. Fawkes made a noise, and he looked over at his master. Dumbledore smiled at the loyal Phoenix. He then continued his search through the papers. He came to one witch that caught his eye. She didn't seem particularly old. In fact, she looked rather young. She had white hair and crystal blue eyes. She appeared to be frowning at the camera that was taking her picture. Something in her eyes made Dumbledore think twice. He took out a quill and parchment and scribbled a quick note to Professor McGonagall. He handed it to Fawkes.

"Take this Professor McGonagall, Fawkes. She'll know what to do," Dumbledore said, for the first time looking remotely happy." Fawkes took the parchment from his master and disappeared in a flash of light. Dumbledore sat back in his chair, smiling serenely.

"*Dannato! Ciò ha doluto!*" Aurora yelled as a burning hex hit her arm. Harry stopped moving and smiled sheepishly. He'd gathered that the Italian words she said weren't good.

"Sorry, Aurora," he said. Aurora glared maliciously at him and then examined her arm. It wasn't burned, but it was stinging like hell. She rolled up her sleeve and looked at the red skin. Hermione ran up to her and examined it.

"You'll live, Aurora," Hermione giggled. Aurora continued to frown and rub her arm. Harry sat down next to Ron. Ron was currently murdering Draco at chess. Draco was scratching his head furiously. Ron looked smugly at him, sitting back in his chair.

"Checkmate," he said calmly. Draco glared at him.

"You cheated."

"Can't take a fair loss, huh, Malfoy? That's so like you. This is chess. I'm King of Chess Strategies. There is no way your simple-minded arse," Ron said sarcastically. Neve chuckled a little. Then Drake and Fionnula walked in. Drake observed the scene before him and crossed his arms.

"Shouldn't you all be practicing? Why is all this loitering going on? You don't have that much longer before the first." Drake sounded very annoyed. Everyone tried to look as innocent as possible, but, unfortunately, this was Fionnula and Drake Onsu. They were like American drill instructors; they weren't lenient at all. Hermione stood up and cleared her throat.

"Well, we were just resting, right guys?" she said, turning towards the others. They all looked at her and nodded quickly. Drake and Fionnula stood, unmoved by their display. Hermione sighed. "Please, Drake! We need to rest. We've been practicing so, so much. We give our all every time. Now, we just need to sit for a minute," Hermione said, reaching out to touch Drake's shoulder. Drake grabbed her by the wrist and twisted it. Hermione whimpered in pain.

"Do you think Voldemort and his cronies will wait when you say timeout?" he asked. Hermione shook her head. Ron stood up.

"Let her go! You're hurting her! You're just gonna let him do that?" Ron yelled at Fionnula, who just nodded her head.

"He's right. You shouldn't be loitering and hanging around sluggishly. We need you all to be in tip-top shape, and you're just wasting time," Fionnula said. Drake released Hermione, and she stumbled back into Ron's arms, holding her wrist close to her.

"Get back to work," Drake said. Both Drake and Fionnula turned on their heels as Dumbledore, McGonagall, and a new face appeared in front of them. Drake and Fionnula jumped back and pulled their wands. Dumbledore smiled a little.

"It's alright, you two. I have with me someone I like you all to meet," he said. Fionnula and Drake put their wands up and looked past the headmaster at the small woman with long, stringy white hair. She stared back at them. "This is Sofia Cartell. She's the Seer who altered the past," he said. Sofia nodded as she looked around the room. Dumbledore conjured chairs in the room and everyone sat. Sofia looked at Ron.

"You are Ronald Weasley, no?" she asked. Ron nodded hesitantly. Her eyes bore into him for a moment. Then she looked over the rest of the group. Her eyes rested on Aurora and Neve. They both stared at her with blank expressions on her face. "I see that my plan has worked," Sofia whispered. Aurora and Neve looked at each other and then back at Sofia.

"You're the one who went back and made it possible for Ginny to be born?" Neve asked. Sofia shook her head.

"No, I was not the one who did that. I was the one who saw the future in two different ways. I am what they call a Doppio Seer. I can see the future happen in more than one way and choose to change it if I feel the need. I am not a fan of the Dark Lord, nor will I ever be. I saw what could happen if Ginevra Weasley was never born and what could happen if she was. I told two confidantes of mine. One was a Graviostetria, and the other was a Time Keeper..."

"A Time Keeper? What's a Time Keeper?" Neve interrupted. Sofia gave her a funny look, and then went back to talking; she apparently didn't like to be interrupted.

"A Time Keeper is just that: a person who keeps time. Well, not necessarily keep. They more or less are the ones that make sure that when witches or wizards use time altering devices such as Time Turners and such that they suffer the consequences if they are seen. Not many people know about them, but being a relatively knowledgeable person, I knew one that could help me. This Time Keeper was a German witch named Lorelei Braun. Lorelei went back in time with one other person, Jendayi Sef, an Egyptian Graviostetria. Together, they altered time by slipping Molly Weasley the Gravidanza Potion, giving her the ability to bear another child. I saw all of this before Sibyll Trelawney made that prophecy about Harry Potter, the Dark Lord, and Aurora Assante. Then, I saw Sibyll Trelawney make the prophecy and knew that I had to change it. Believe me; you all should be grateful that I altered this," Sofia said. Draco raised an eyebrow.

"Why?" Draco asked. Sofia looked at him. She stared at him for a long moment, as if reading something in him. Then she blinked twice.

"The future without Ginevra Weasley is a horrible one. Harry needs Aurora's help in defeating Lord Voldemort. Because Aurora was killed by that dementor, Harry did not live in his battle against the Dark Lord. Voldemort became a genocidal maniac, which I guess you can say he's always been. He killed every witch or wizard that opposed him without a care or doubt in the world. Muggles were being killed if they refused to do his bidding. It was a very, very bleak future. I could not let that happen, so I decided to change it."

"Can you tell us if we survive this ordeal?" Hermione asked, looking hopeful. Sofia looked her way and smiled.

"No. To reveal what I know would be to alter it yet again."

"Why?" Neville asked. Sofia sighed and intertwined her small, chubby fingers.

"If I was to tell you what would happen in another week or so, you would know, but then you wouldn't be able to complete that. Thus, my prediction would not be true. Contrary to popular belief, Seers *can* be wrong. That and a person who has Ginevra Weasley's talent can alter a Seer's words. I can, however, give you subtle hints. I have only a few for three of you. If I may, Headmaster?" Sofia asked Dumbledore. Dumbledore nodded and stood up. Sofia looked out on the group. "I will start with you, young one," she said, looking at Neve. So, everyone left except Neve.

"So what is my destiny?" Neve asked once everyone had gone. Sofia smiled wryly.

"I cannot tell you that. What I can give you is guidance. I can give you a choice. Listen, you need to do something. The choice you make can affect any one of your friends. You have to choose who. That's all I can tell you. Tell the Longbottom boy to come in," Sofia concluded. Neve nodded and then left. Neville entered.

"Yes?" Neville asked. Sofia observed him for a moment and then sighed.

"Well, Longbottom, I can tell you this. You are not known for your magical abilities, are you?" she asked. Neville blushed and shook his head no. Sofia nodded. "There will be a time when you will be the only hope someone has in surviving. I cannot tell you who or what to do when this time comes. Just know that they will need you. Tell the Weasley boy to come in." Neville nodded and left. Then, tall, muscular Ron entered. He sat down in front of the small woman, staring at her intently. "Ronald, you have the one choice that I think is the hardest," Sofia said. She pulled out a cigarette and lit it with her wand. Ron looked at her with a blank expression.

"What do you mean?"

"Are you sure you want to know this?" Sofia said, looking at him with a dismal expression on her face.

"Yes."

"There is a difficult choice you must make between the two people you love the most. I think you are not that daft as to not know to which two I am referring to. But, this choice is one you must make on your own."

"Are you saying that I have to choose between Harry and Hermione?" Ron asked. Sofia sighed, looking distraught. She nodded. Ron's face went very pale. He sat back in the chair lackadaisically.

"I'm sorry to say this. One of them will die. There is nothing you can do to stop it. Which one is your choice," Sofia said. Ron stared at her with unbelieving eyes. He was going to have to choose between the two people he would give his life for. Sofia looked sadly at him. "Ronald, there is one thing I can tell you though."

"What's that?" Ron said his voice uneven. Sofia took a long hit of the cigarette and sat forward. She looked very mischievous and rather happy. Ron didn't understand why someone could look like that after giving someone news like that.

"There is something you can do to change it after the fact. But, you must make the choice first." She took out a box and handed it to him. "Open it after the battle. Then, go talk to your sister. You must not tell anyone what I have told you." Sofia stood. As if on queue, Dumbledore and McGonagall walked in. Ron stood along with Sofia, looking down at the box.

"Finished, I presume, Sofia?" Dumbledore asked happily. Sofia nodded.

Ron walked slowly up the stairs, trying to avoid seeing Hermione or Harry. Hermione saw him first and ran over to him. She saw the dreadful look on his face.

"Ron, what's wrong?" Hermione asked. Ron looked at her and tried to smile. Hermione could see he was faking it.

"Nothing, Mione." Hermione frowned at his words.

"What did that woman say to you?" Hermione asked as they walked out to the ball launcher on the field. Ron sat down and sighed.

"I can't tell you. I'm not supposed to tell anyone. So, please don't ask me about it or remind me about it." Ron looked down at the box in his hand. He resisted the urge to open it at that moment. Hermione got up and turned on the launcher.

"Help me practice, Ron," Hermione said. Ron nodded and stood up.

Aurora tapped Dumbledore on his shoulder. Dumbledore turned around and smiled down on the short girl.

"What is it, Miss Assante?"

"I know where Ginny is," she said quickly. Dumbledore looked at her in an odd fashion.

"I beg your pardon?" he said. Aurora realized that she must've said that a little too quickly.

"I know where Ginny is. I managed to reach her yesterday. She is at Bellatrix Lestrange's country home near Southampton. She said it was virtually invisible and is surrounded by charms and such. She also said that she does not know if anyone else that is missing is there. She just heard them mention Professor Snape's name. She has not seen him," Aurora said quickly, but not as quickly as the first time. Dumbledore stared at her for a long moment.

"We cannot take action, but I will alert the proper authorities of their location so that when they come to us, we can send some of the Magi and Aurors to the Lestranges' home simultaneously. We cannot risk them hurting Ginny or anyone else for that matter. While they hit us, we'll hit them," Dumbledore said, his eyes twinkling down on the young girl. Aurora nodded sternly. "Off you go. I will return soon," Dumbledore said. Aurora nodded again and ran off.

Ginny was staring up at the ceiling when she heard the door to her room open. Turning her head, she saw Lucius Malfoy enter with another girl. Ginny's eyes widened when she realized who it was.

"I just thought maybe you two could use some company." Lucius pushed the other girl inside. It was Lavender. She looked a little malnourished, and her hair was wet. She smiled weakly at Ginny and nearly collapsed on the floor. Lucius smirked and left the room. Ginny helped Lavender to the bed.

"How are you?" Ginny asked. Lavender nodded in an awkward way, like it was hard to do it. She turned her head and looked at Ginny.

"Well, I haven't been cursed nearly as much as Luna or Seamus. So, I'm pretty good. I learned to keep my mouth shut. Can't say as much for Seamus or Luna, though. Parvati was the first to go. She mouthed off to Bellatrix Lestrange. "We have no idea what became of her..." Lavender's voice trailed off.

"She was returned when they got me," Ginny said quietly. Lavender looked at her. "Are you the only one here?" Ginny asked. Lavender nodded.

"They split us up into different places after Neve left. I guess that was so no one could raid one place and find us all. How is Parvati?" Lavender asked. Ginny looked down.

"Last I saw her, she looked slightly insane. They really did a number on her. She might be beyond repair. Dumbledore took her to St. Mungo's. Do you know if Snape is here?" Ginny asked. Lavender shook her head.

"Most of the time, I've been blindfolded or whatnot. I haven't really seen anything. That's why this room's light is starting to hurt my eyes. Every morning they would come to feed me, then torture me shortly thereafter. They say their intention is not to kill me. That I'm not worth that honor or something like that. Ginny, what day is it?" Lavender asked. Ginny's eyes widened at this. It was March 25th, exactly one week before April 1st.

"It's nearing the end of March. That means we will be getting out of here soon," Ginny said, sounding both relieved and afraid at the same time. Lavender nodded, and then closed her eyes. In mere seconds, she was out cold.

Bellatrix opened the door and looked at Ginny malevolently. She walked forward and grabbed her by the arm. Ginny was wrenched upward. It was pretty painful.

"Ouch! You almost dislocated my arm, you bitch!" Ginny yelled. Bellatrix ignored her for the first time and kept walking, pulling Ginny painfully along. They went back to the room where she would normally meet with Voldemort. He was sitting in his usual place and smiled when Ginny came in. Bellatrix practically threw her down on the sofa across from him.

"Hello, again, Ginevra," Voldemort said. Ginny stared at him, putting up her blocks. He put his hands on the armrests and continued to look at her in his usual manner. Ginny squirmed in her seat.

"Hello," she said, knowing that he always liked answers.

"Well, Ginevra. As you've probably already guessed, next week is the final day I will see you. I need you to tell me two things," Voldemort sneered. Ginny glared spitefully at him.

"I'm not telling you anything. At least, I'm not telling you anything that might harm my friends or give you an edge," Ginny said. Voldemort's smug look vanished from his

face. He snapped his fingers, and Lucius walked in with none other than Professor Severus Snape. Ginny gasped at the condition the man was in. His greasy black hair was messy, and he had cuts and dried blood all over him. He looked as though he'd been through hell and back.

"Ginevra, I really don't want to kill this man. He really means nothing to me. He's more or less just a bargaining tool. Even if he is a traitor. I see no reason to shed unnecessary blood." Voldemort waved his hand carelessly. Lucius was gone after practically pushing Snape on the ground. Snape looked Ginny in the eyes. He seemed to be pleading with her. "Now, Ginevra, tell me two things, or the professor here dies." Voldemort took out his wand.

"What?" Ginny asked, squeezing her fist together.

"What kind of powers do Harry and Aurora possess separately and what do they possess together?" Voldemort asked. Ginny stared at Voldemort with all the hate she could muster. She looked over at Snape, who was shaking his head furiously.

"I can't tell you that," Ginny whispered. Voldemort frowned and pulled his wand. He pointed it at Snape, whose eyes widened. He closed his eyes in anticipation.

"*Crucio!*" he yelled. The light shot from his wand and hit Snape in his chest. The man squirmed and reeled in pain, screaming. Then Voldemort lifted the curse. He turned back toward Ginny, who was squeezing her eyes shut. Snape let out a long sigh of relief. "Tell me, Ginevra, or next time I will not be so kind," Voldemort said. Ginny looked back at Snape.

"Don't tell him anything, Weasley." Snape croaked. Voldemort snapped his head towards the man. Snape looked defiantly back at him. Then Voldemort turned his gaze back to Ginny, who was practically shivering with fear. Tears were burning her eyes. Her vision was becoming distorted and blurry.

"No..." Ginny said quietly. Voldemort frowned and turned towards Snape. He sighed deeply and pointed his wand.

"You leave me no choice, Ginevra. I will not kill your beloved professor, though," Voldemort said slowly. Ginny's face softened.

"You're not going to kill him?" Ginny asked. Voldemort looked at her and smiled. Ginny cringed at it. He really was a horrible looking man. She looked in his snakelike eyes and saw something she didn't want to see. "No..." Ginny whispered as she realized what he was going to do.

"*Dolore mortale!*" Voldemort yelled, all the while smiling at Ginny. Ginny watched as Snape took the curse head-on. He opened his mouth in the same way that Astrid had done. Ginny's eyes widened. She looked horrified at the sight before her.

"**STOP IT!**" she yelled. Voldemort didn't stop. He kept the curse going. Then, Snape stopped moving. That was when Voldemort lifted the curse. Ginny by now had tears streaming down her face. Voldemort smiled evilly.

Ginny looked down at Snape. He had the same listless look in his eyes as Astrid. He didn't seem to be breathing. He stared up at Ginny. Then he blinked, signaling that he was alive. Ginny breathed a sigh of relief.

"Lucius! Bella!" Voldemort yelled. The two aforementioned people came in. "Bella, take Miss Weasley back to her room and don't feed her. Lucius, get this scum out of my face." Voldemort waved his hand. Bellatrix grabbed Ginny viciously and pulled her off. Ginny watched Lucius Malfoy carry Snape off.

Aurora's eyes popped open. She was breathing hard. Draco was making his usual noises as he slept. Aurora snuck out from the bed and headed downstairs. She passed the wine cellar and paused. Then she went down to it. A light was lit already down there. Walking slowly down the stairs, Aurora saw Ron, drinking his heart away. Ron pulled his wand rather slowly, and then realized it was just Aurora. Aurora sat down next to him.

"What's wrong, Ron?" Aurora asked. Ron looked at her and took another swig of firewhiskey. He passed it to Aurora. She took the bottle and looked at it. Then she glanced back at Ron.

"I can't tell you that, Aurora. Just know that there is something wrong," Ron said, slightly slurring. Aurora looked at him sadly. Then she narrowed her eyes.

"Does it have something to do with what that woman told you?" Aurora asked. Ron nodded.

"I can't tell you exactly what it entails, though. She gave me this. I'm not supposed to open it, though. Not until after the battle. Aurora, is this going to be the end?" Ron asked. Aurora took a long gulp of the firewhiskey and coughed as it went down her throat. She made a face. Then she looked at Ron.

"I cannot predict the future, Ron. I do, however, have a feeling that this is not the last time we'll have to fight Voldemort," Aurora said. Ron nodded lazily, and then snatched the bottle out of her hands. Aurora jumped a little at his aggression, then watched as he chugged the stuff. Aurora smiled a little. "You know that stuff is not good for you, right?" she said, giggling a bit. Ron looked at her and swallowed.

"I didn't see **you** complain when **you** were drinking it," he retorted. Aurora laughed.

"I did not drink it like it is water, though." She took the bottle from him.

Dannato! Ciò ha doluto = Damn it! That hurt!

Chapter 20: Le Maledizione Pericolose

Chapter 21 of 24

Before the showdown, the Magi decide to teach the group four new curses that are equivalent to the Unforgivable Curses...

The Opposite

Chapter 20: Le Maledizioni Pericolose

Harry's eyes flinched. He sensed someone in the room with him. Slowly reaching under his pillow, he sat up, pointing his wand at the intruder. Ron jumped back, putting his hands up. Harry sighed and relaxed a little.

"Ron, I could've easily blown your head off. What is it?" he asked sounding slightly annoyed. Then he looked out of the window to the left of him. It was still very dark outside. Ron sighed and sat at the end of Harry's bed. He looked very tired. "Ron, what time is it?"

"It's past two in the morning. Harry, do you realize that the first is in two days?" he said, looking up at his best mate. Harry nodded slowly. Then he narrowed his eyes at Ron.

"Did that woman tell you something that's bothering you? You've been kind of distant since you saw her," Harry stated. Ron nodded his head. "Well, what is it already?"

"I can't tell you. She told me not to reveal it. Plus, I really don't want to think about it. Let's just say it's not the most joyous of news. Besides, the real reason I'm here is that Aislin woke me up. She wants us to start learning four new curses that are apparently really powerful. They'll take a lot of time to learn. That's why we're up so early. So, get up," Ron said, standing. Harry looked at his friend. He'd never seen Ron look so down.

"Ron?" he said. Ron turned before he left the room. Harry smiled at him. "Don't worry. I'm sure everything will work out for the best. We're some of the most powerful wizards now. So, look a little happier. You don't want Hermione harassing you, believe me," Harry said, trying to sound jovial. Ron smiled a little.

"Thanks, Harry." With that, he was gone.

When Harry got downstairs, everyone was sleepily leaning on one another. Aislin was standing, looking very much awake. She clapped her hands.

"Let's look alive, people. Today and for the next two days, I will be teaching four of the most dangerous curses in the world. They are not illegal in this country, but they are illegal in other places such as Italy, Spain, Germany, and France. These curses require a lot of energy. I don't expect all of you to master them. They are really hard." Aislin took out a box of spiders. Ron cringed and took a step back behind Hermione. Hermione rolled her eyes.

"I can't believe you're still scared of spiders, Ron," Hermione grumbled. Ron scoffed.

"Try being really young and all of a sudden, your favorite toy has too many legs and arms..." Ron shuddered at the thought. Hermione sighed and watched Aislin take out on. She held her hand out and the spider got a little larger.

"They are called 'Le Maledizioni Pericolose.' That means 'The Dangerous Curses' in Italian. The four curses are the Dolore Curse, the Assassinio Di Anima Curse, the Suicidio Curse, and the Détruire Curse. These curses all cause extreme pain. The Détruire Curse is more devastating than the Avada Kedavra Curse. This curse kills, but it kills in a painful way. If you want your victim to suffer before they die, you would use this curse. I will teach you how to do this curse." Aislin took out her wand and pointed it at the spider. "You merely point your wand at your victim. Then you say the incantation. *Détruire Fatale!*" Aislin yelled. The spider started to twist in what looked like pure agony.

Harry watched the spider with awe and amazement. He looked at Aislin. Her wand began to vibrate violently. She seemed to be concentrating very hard. Her eyebrows furrowed. Suddenly, the spider stopped moving. Aislin raised her wand and looked at them.

"If the spider had a voice, I'm pretty sure it would've been screaming. The next curse is the Dolore Curse." Aislin took out another spider and enlarged it. Ron shuddered again and Hermione sighed. "This curse is like the Cruciatus Curse, but ten times as painful and whomever you use it on is guaranteed to go insane, no ifs, ands, or buts. Observe. *Dolore Mortale!*" Aislin pointed her wand. What seemed to be a jet of air hit the spider.

Hermione and Aurora recoiled as the spider turned over and began shaking uncontrollably. Suddenly, Aislin lifted the curse. The spider twitched every now and then. Its body was twisted in an awfully painful way. Aislin looked at the young adults. They all looked horrified.

"Scary, huh? Your victim isn't making any noise while this is going on, but they do feel extreme pain. The pain is so powerful that the victim cannot describe it; therefore, they cannot scream. They are in awe of it." Aislin took out another spider and enlarged it. "The next curse is the Suicidio Curse. This curse is like the Imperius Curse in an awkward way. The only difference is that you are telling the person to do one thing. Can anyone guess what that is?" Aislin looked around the room. Neve raised her hand.

"To commit suicide. I believe that is the English word for it, right?" she asked, looking at Aislin. Aislin nodded and pointed her wand at the spider.

"*Suicidarse!*" she yelled. A jet of green light shot from the tip of her wand. It was amazing what the spider did. It simply put its own legs into its eyes. Then, the spider went still. Aislin looked out at the kids. They all were making disgusted faces. She took out another spider and enlarged it. "This is the last curse. The Assassinio Di Anima Curse. This curse, to me, is the most devastating. It causes the victim's soul to die. You don't want to know what it is like living without a soul. Not a very tempting occurrence. You must have a soul to do it. I don't think that I can do it on a spider, actually. Spiders do not have souls. I don't recommend teaching you this curse." Aislin returned the spider to its normal size. "The incantation is *Uccidere L'anima*. There really is no way to practice it. Now, let's see what you make of the first curse I taught." She gave everyone spiders, except Ron; she gave him roaches.

Later that day, Hermione had her nose in a book. Neville walked over to her and looked over her shoulder.

"What are you looking for?" he asked, sitting down. Hermione looked up at him.

"I'm looking for a way to block these different curses. Plus, I don't understand why they aren't illegal here," Hermione said, returning to her book.

"That's because not many people know about these curses. They were made mostly by Italians and the French. They are very difficult to perform, also. You must be a relatively powerful wizard or witch to do them. You will find it is much harder to use these curses on a person. Unlike the Unforgivable Curses, you must really despise that person. Justifiable anger and rage will not do it. You must really want to do that person harm. Serious, deadly harm. This comes easier for Dark wizards than anyone else. The Magi are trained to do these curses," a voice said. Hermione and Neville turned to face Fionnula. She was leaning against the wall.

"So, you're saying that if I was to throw one of those curses at Ron, it wouldn't work?" Hermione asked. Fionnula nodded and walked forward. She sat across from Hermione and Neville.

"You're in love with Ronald. You care for him. Your heart will not allow you to kill him or do him any serious harm. You could say the words. You will get the jet of light or air. But, the most he would feel is a tingling sensation. Now, Neveah could easily have killed Sloan with one of the different curses because she truly despised him. It wasn't just anger. She wanted to do him serious, justifiable harm for betraying us. I'm guessing she killed him with her bare hands, knowing Neveah."

"What about Harry?" Neville asked.

"Harry would have a better chance at doing one of the curses to its full potential on Bellatrix Lestrange than Voldemort. Harry did not watch Voldemort murder his parents. Actually, I'm pretty sure he did. But, his memory does not serve him. He witnessed Bellatrix kill his godfather. He told me he tried the Cruciatus Curse on her right after, but at the time, he didn't truly hate her. Harry now has let his hatred for her stew over the past year. He now has another reason to hurt her; she helped Voldemort take Ginny away," Fionnula said. Hermione and Neville nodded unconsciously.

"So, Harry has a better chance of using one of the curses on Bellatrix than Voldemort? Harry utterly hates Voldemort," Hermione said. Fionnula nodded.

"That is very true. Harry loathes Bellatrix. He hates Voldemort. Unless Voldemort does something to completely and totally push Harry over the edge, Harry will not be able

to use the curses on him. I guarantee you that they will work much better on Bellatrix than anybody. The other person who could use these curses to their full extent would be Draco." Hermione and Neville looked at each other with incredulous looks on their faces.

"Malfoy? Why Malfoy?" Neville asked, sitting back and crossing his arms. Hermione nodded in agreement with him. Fionnula sighed and crossed his arms.

"Draco knows something that no one else knows, and it's been eating at him since he first knew it. If Draco hated his father before, it is nothing compared to what he feels for him now. It is not my place to disclose what he knows to you, but let me tell you, it's definitely not good. So, that occurrence pushed Draco over the edge. Now, he feels nothing for his father except loathing and contempt," Fionnula said. Hermione nodded.

"Wow. Who would've thought Malfoy would have no problems with killing his father."

"I did. I always knew he hated his father. What I didn't know was to what extent," Hermione said. Neville and Fionnula both looked surprised. Hermione noticed their looks and blushed. "Oh, it's so bloody obvious. I noticed it first in second year. We saw them in the bookstore on Diagon Alley. Draco acted like he hated us. Then, his father walked up. He moved Draco out of the way to speak to us. Behind his back, Draco was glaring daggers at the man. That was when I could tell that he wasn't the insufferable git he makes himself out to be. He only acted that way to appease his father. Still, the things he said were so mean and spiteful, you couldn't help but hate him. It was inevitable," Hermione said.

Upstairs, Draco was practicing on one of his spiders. He concentrated on the spider. Aurora sat on the other side of the room, watching him. She was trying to read his expression. Draco pointed his wand at the spider.

"*Dolore Mortale!*" he said. The jet of air hit the spider. The spider moved around in tremendous pain. Draco lifted the curse when the spider started twitching. Aurora smiled and clapped her hands.

"Who did you imagine?" Aurora asked. Draco faced her. He smiled smugly.

"Do you really want to know?" he asked, sitting on his bed. Aurora crawled over to him.

"Si," she said softly. Draco turned his head to look at her. Then, he looked down at the floor. Aurora began massaging his shoulders. Draco sighed.

"I imagined my father," he whispered. Aurora stopped massaging his shoulders. Then, she started back up again.

"Why your father?"

"He's done some pretty awful things in his time," Draco said, his breathing slowing down. Aurora nodded in slight understanding. "He's done some really awful things. Things I can't even describe. Things I care not to describe," Draco muttered. Aurora turned him around. She kissed him softly.

"Go to bed. You look very tired," she whispered mellifluously. Draco nodded. Smiling, Aurora left the room as Draco got into bed.

Ron and Harry were also practicing their curses. Neve sat on the side. Aislin walked in the room. Harry looked over at her.

"Can you use Soliopathy to do these curses?" Harry asked. Aislin smiled sardonically at him. Ron stopped doing what he was doing to watch this exchange.

"Well, why don't you try it? Harry, when you do these curses, do not picture Voldemort. Picture someone else," Aislin said. Harry looked at her like she was speaking French.

"You said picture someone you loathe, right?" Harry asked. Aislin shook her head.

"I said picture someone you hate, not loathe," Aislin said. Harry still looked downright perplexed. Aislin sighed. "There is a difference between hatred and loathing, Harry. You loathe Voldemort. You hate someone else. Loathing will not cause your curses to be completely and totally effective. You are not a Dark wizard. They hate just about everything except their wives or husbands and their children. That's what makes it easier for them to do these curses. There is one person I think you would like to kill a little more than Voldemort."

"Why would you say that?" Ron asked, also looking confused. Aislin shook her head. Then, Neve stood up.

"Harry hates Voldemort for the simple reason that he killed his parents. The thing about that is, Harry doesn't remember seeing this happen. He was only told. Surely, Harry has lost someone that he held dear and watched that person die by the hands of another," Neve said. Everyone looked at her.

"I watched Voldemort kill Cedric Diggory," Harry said. Neve shook her head.

"You didn't consider Cedric a close friend, did you? Not like you think of Ron, Hermione, or Neville, do you?" Harry shook his head. Neve nodded. "See, that's why you can't truly loathe Voldemort. You watched someone else die, didn't you?" Neve asked. Harry's face darkened.

"I watched Bellatrix Lestrange kill my godfather, Sirius Black," he murmured. Neve nodded.

"I take it you held him very dear," Aislin said. Harry nodded slowly.

"He was the closest thing I've ever had as a parent," he said, barely audible.

"Well, you would hold a greater hatred for Bellatrix than Voldemort. You watched her murder your godfather. You saw how she cackled and boasted about it. You hated her for it," Neve said.

"But, I couldn't do the Cruciatius Curse on her..." Harry began.

"At the time, you were extremely angry at her. You didn't completely and totally hate her. Now, you do because it's been almost a year. I'm pretty sure you've thought about killing her. You hate Voldemort because you are... how do I put this... supposed to or expected to. You hate him so that you won't think twice about killing him," Neve said. Harry nodded, realizing what he needed to do.

"Well, try it now," Aislin said. Harry nodded and turned to face his spider. He pictured that night in the Department of Mysteries and saw the jet of red light hit Sirius and Bellatrix taunting him. His heart filled with absolute blackness. He opened his eyes and held his hand out.

Détruire Fatale, he thought with all his might. A jet of light flew from it, and the spider wrenched around on the table for a moment and then keeled over completely. Harry smiled a bit, looking at the slightly twitching spider. Ron clapped.

"Good job Harry! Now, who would I pick?" Ron looked thoughtful for a moment. Harry frowned. He'd never thought of Ron as one that would loathe someone. He didn't even think Ron had that power. Ron looked like he had an epiphany and pointed his wand at his roach.

"*Dolore Mortale!*" he yelled. The spider started having mad convulsions. Ron smiled and lifted the curse. He looked at Harry who clapped him on the back.

"Who'd you picture?" Aislin asked. Ron looked at her and smiled mischievously.

"I'll never tell," he said. Neve stepped up and enlarged her spider. She held her wand towards it.

"*Suicidarse!*" she yelled. The spider promptly proceeded to kill itself.

"Who'd you picture?" Harry asked.

"Guess," was all Neve said. She retreated to her corner and continued to watch Harry and Ron kill their insects.

Chapter 21: April 1st

Chapter 22 of 24

April 1st is here...

The Opposite

Chapter 21: April 1st

Ginny opened her eyes. Bellatrix was standing over her. Lavender was in the bed next to her. Ginny sat up, glaring at Bellatrix.

"What do you want?" Ginny asked, rubbing her eyes. Bellatrix smirked.

"Get up. Today is the first. We're going on a little road trip to Dublin," Bellatrix said. Ginny stood up, jarring Lavender awake.

Harry sat in the middle of his room, rocking back and forth. He was extremely hyper and ready to see Ginny again. They were not told exactly when Voldemort would be attacking. Suddenly, his door opened without warning. Harry threw a Stunning Spell using Soliopathy. He heard a loud thump, and he walked to the door. Ron lie on the ground, obviously Stunned. Harry sighed and revived him. Ron stood up, fuming.

"Why are you so jumpy?" he asked. Harry looked at him with a blank expression.

"Why do you think, you arse? Today is the day. Today, one of us might..." Harry's voice drifted off. Ron clapped a hand on his back.

"It'll be all right, mate," Ron said, trying desperately to sound buoyant. Harry cracked a smile. As soon as they finished, a loud **BANG** was heard.

The castle shook, jolting Aurora and Draco awake. Draco fell out of the bed. Aurora turned over.

"What in the bloody hell was that?" Draco asked, standing up. Aurora looked at him in a confused manner.

"I do not know, Draco." Aurora got up and began hurriedly getting dressed.

Aislin and Drake stood at the entrance to the castle. They saw figures in the distance. Harry and Ron ran up next to them.

"Is that them?" Harry asked. Drake nodded and turned to go back inside the building. Hermione was pulling on her robes with Neve following close behind. She stopped and watched Drake walk past them.

"Where are you going?" Hermione asked.

"To get the headmaster. We're going to need all the help we can get," Drake replied and continued walking. Hermione nodded then looked ahead of her at Aislin, Ron, and Harry. They had their eyes fixed on the figures heading up the walkway. Harry blinked when he saw Ginny. She was being held by none other than the demoness herself, Bellatrix Lestrange. Bellatrix looked at Harry and smiled. Harry grimaced. Another tall figure stepped in front of Bellatrix and Ginny. By the snakelike eyes, Harry knew exactly who it was.

"Come here, Potter," Voldemort said. Harry stared at him as if he'd said something offensive. He continued to look at Voldemort skeptically. Voldemort sighed. "Potter, come here. I have no desire to attack you at the present moment. I just wish to return a little friend of yours." Voldemort motioned to Ginny. Bellatrix pushed her forward. Ginny fell to the ground. Harry took a step forward, and Aislin grabbed his hand.

"If anything seems remotely fishy, use your Soliopathy," she whispered softly. Harry nodded and kept walking forward, his eyes trained on everyone. Behind him, Ron, Hermione and Neve all had their wands pointed. The fifteen Death Eaters had their wands raised also. Harry knelt down beside Ginny and helped her up. Pushing her behind him, Harry began backing up. Voldemort just smirked smugly as he did this.

"Bella?" Voldemort said. Bellatrix looked at her master.

"Yes, my lord?" she asked. Voldemort still had that smug look on his face as he watched Harry watch him.

"Go find the elder Assante bitch. Take a few Death Eaters with you," he said so that everyone could hear. Neve's eyes widened. She turned to go inside, but something happened unexpectedly.

Ginny blinked. Looking around her, she saw that everyone was still around her. The only difference was, no one was moving. It was like they were all frozen in time. A loud **POP** was heard, and Ginny nearly fell back. A woman with pale skin and really long blonde hair stood before her. Her face looked very stern.

"Who the hell are you?" Ginny asked. She realized that she didn't have her wand or anything. The woman stood, just looking at her with a firm expression. "Answer me! Who the hell are you, and what the fuck do you want?" Ginny yelled. The woman took a step forward and Ginny took one back.

"You shouldn't curse. It is not becoming of a lady. I'm Lorelei Braun, Ginevra," the woman said. Ginny looked her up and down.

"Am I supposed to know who you are? How do you know my name?" Ginny asked, still looking quite apprehensively at the woman now identified as Lorelei Braun. Lorelei took another step forward.

"Ginevra, I am a Time Keeper. I am the one who went back along with a Graviostetria named Jendayi Sef. We ensured that you were born on the orders of a friend of mine named Sofia Cartell," Lorelei said. Ginny looked the woman up and down. She relaxed a bit.

"So, you're a Time Keeper, huh? Why are you here now?" Ginny asked. Lorelei smiled.

"Sofia gave your brother a heads up on what was to come when she came and visited them. You are supposed to help him change something that is about to happen in the near future using your little power. Your brother has a box with an object in it that will help you on your quest after the battle," Lorelei said. Ginny frowned.

"I can't do that. I don't know how to use my power at free will. I don't even know what it is," Ginny said. Lorelei nodded slightly.

"Listen, child. You have the power to alter history by seeing the aftermath of one, then transferring yourself into the past before the first event you saw happened. This ability is the gift of a special Time Keeper called a Shai. 'Shai' is the Egyptian goddess of fate and destiny. Shais are **VERY** rare. You are the first in about five centuries. You do not know how to control it, right?" Lorelei asked. Ginny was looking at her as if she was speaking French. Then she looked around at her frozen friends and enemies.

"You're correct. Do you know how I can control it?"

"Yes. All you really need to do is concentrate on what you want to change. You will realize what to do when the time comes. First, I need you to run upstairs to Aurora and the Malfoy boy. They will need your help shortly." Lorelei turned to go.

"**WAIT!**" Ginny yelled. Lorelei turned around. "Did you stop time?" she asked. Lorelei smiled.

"Yes, I stopped time, Ginevra. But, I wouldn't tell you how to do that. It's a secret of the Time Keepers. I would really appreciate it if you didn't tell anyone about this. Strictly speaking, I'm not supposed to do this. But, desperate times call for desperate measures. Get upstairs now. When you hear me Disapparate, you need to be in Draco's room. Go, now," Lorelei said. Ginny nodded and ran upstairs. As soon as she opened Draco's door, the loud **POP** was heard.

Bellatrix began walking forward. Two Death Eaters followed. Both of them were women. Harry looked to his side and noticed that Ginny was gone. He looked over at Ron, who was getting ready to attack Bellatrix as she approached. Then Bellatrix smiled. The three of them all Disapparated. Aislin looked shocked.

"This is a Non-Apparition zone," she said quietly. Voldemort snorted out a cackle.

"There are ways around that, Douglas," Voldemort said, pulling out his wand.

Aurora and Draco stood, staring at Ginny with awkward looks on their faces.

"Where did you come from?" Draco asked. Ginny shook her head.

"Not enough time, Malfoy. Bellatrix is..." Ginny began, but she was interrupted by the loud **POP**. They all whirled around to see Bellatrix and her two minions behind her. She smiled as she looked past Ginny to Aurora. Draco stepped in front of Aurora, shielding her.

"Hello, young Draco," Bellatrix said, smirking. Draco's glare bore holes into her. He held his wand out. "Get out of the way, Draco. We don't want you," Bellatrix said, pulling out her wand. Draco didn't budge. Bellatrix sighed. "Have it your way. *Stupefy!*" she yelled. Aurora held her hand out. The spell hit an invisible wand. Bellatrix raised an eyebrow. Draco smirked.

"*Dolore Mortale!*" Draco yelled. Bellatrix dodged out of the way. The curse hit an unsuspecting Death Eater. The affect was devastating to watch. Bellatrix watched Draco torture the woman.

"Ginny! Here!" Aurora yelled. She gave Ginny her wand. Ginny trained it on the other two Death Eaters.

Downstairs, Harry watched Voldemort. Something in Harry clicked. Without turning his eyes, he spoke.

"Ron, Aislin, Hermione, and Neville..." he said so that only they could hear.

"Yes, Harry?" Hermione asked. Harry sighed.

"Get inside... now," he said, his eyes moving around the line of Death Eaters.

"Harry, we just can't..." Aislin began.

"**NOW!**" Harry yelled. The other four nodded and headed back inside. Aislin took one last look at Harry and closed the door. Voldemort smiled and watched Harry with interest.

"You have balls, Potter. You think you can face me alone?" Voldemort asked. Harry smirked.

"The last time I checked, I've faced you six times before and have lived to tell the tale. Apparently, your methods of getting rid of me aren't very good. What makes you think I won't escape your sorry arse now?" Harry said, holding his wand tightly. Voldemort raised an eyebrow.

"I still don't understand that fact, Potter. How is that you can live through all of our encounters?" Voldemort said, brandishing his wand. Harry laughed.

"What are you going to do? Disarm me?" he asked. Voldemort's smug look disappeared. Harry was clearly not telling him something. He stared intently at him. Then he pointed his wand.

"*Expelliarmus!*" Voldemort yelled. The white jet of light hit Harry's hand, sending his wand flying. Harry just stood there. He hadn't even bothered to move.

"How did you do that?" Bellatrix asked Aurora. Aurora said nothing, but continued to stare at the woman. Draco lifted the curse off of the other Death Eater. She lay on the ground, unmoving. He then turned his glare on Bellatrix, pointing his wand firmly.

"Leave now, Bellatrix," he said, his voice very cold. Bellatrix smirked at her young nephew.

"You'd curse your own aunt, Draco? What would your mother say?" Bellatrix asked. That was when Narcissa Malfoy made her presence known. She stepped from around Bellatrix, looking very faint. Draco's eyes widened. Narcissa put her hood back, her silvery-blue eyes staring at her son. Aurora watched her. She looked almost nothing like him, except in the eyes.

"Mother?" Draco whispered. Narcissa nodded and half-heartedly smiled. She looked as though she wanted to cry. Her eyes were glassy. Aurora and Ginny watched the two stare at each other. Draco seemed to have weakened considerably.

"Draco, put down the wand," she said, taking a step forward. Draco shook his head and gripped his wand tighter. Narcissa took another step slowly forward.

"I-I-I c-c-can't do that, mother. Y-Y-You're one of t-t-them," Draco stammered. Aurora looked back and forth between the two. Narcissa took another step. Ginny kept her wand trained on Bellatrix, who was watching the scene with interest. Narcissa kept advancing on her son. "Do not come any closer. Damn it, mother! Don't make me do this," he said in a pleading voice. Narcissa took one more step. Draco closed his eyes. "*Stupefy!*" Narcissa was blasted backwards. Bellatrix dodged her sister, and Narcissa hit the stone wall. She fell to the ground, her head bleeding. Draco let out a long sigh. Bellatrix turned and glared at him. She pulled out her wand.

"You son of a bitch. *Avada...*" Bellatrix began. Aurora wasn't sure what made her do it. She didn't even realize that she capable of doing it. She pushed Draco to the side and held her hand out as Bellatrix began the curse. "...*Kedavra!*" Bellatrix finished.

"*Retromarcia!*" she yelled, holding her hand out. The curse hit an invisible wall. Aurora looked as though it was draining a vast amount of power from her. Bellatrix's eyes widened in fear as the curse reversed itself. Bellatrix dove to the side as quick as she could. Draco and Ginny stared at her with wide eyes. Aurora lowered her hand, and her eyes rolled back into her head. She fell to the ground, out cold.

Bellatrix regained her composure and started to get up. Both Draco and Ginny held their wands to her.

"Going somewhere?" Ginny asked. Bellatrix dropped her wand.

"*Legatura,*" Draco muttered. Light shot from his wand and wrapped around both Bellatrix and Narcissa, should she wake up. Ginny picked up Bellatrix's wand and put it in her pocket. Bellatrix growled something illegible.

Lucius Malfoy Apparated in front of Neve as she was running down the hall. Neve slid to a stop and immediately pulled her wand out. She stared at the blonde man in disgust.

"Well, hello again, Neveah. It feels as if it's been months since I last saw you." Lucius took a step forward. Neve's face contorted into one of utter antipathy. She held her wand unflinchingly. "Surely you don't have the guts to curse me, Neveah." Lucius dared to take another step forward.

"*Il bastardo sporco marcio,*" Neve mumbled. Lucius laughed in a horrible way.

"I haven't the faintest idea as to what that means, Neveah. Would you mind enlightening me?" he asked politely. Neve cringed at his sarcasm.

"I said that you are a dirty, rotten bastard. I have no desire to kill you. Would you be so kind as to step out of my way?" Neve said, motioning with her wand. Lucius looked at her suspiciously.

"You really have no desire to kill me, eh? Why is this, Neveah?" he asked. Neve smirked.

"Someone has already marked you for death. I care not to disclose what particular person that is, but I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised when the time does come. Now, would you please excuse me?" Neve said, not flinching. Lucius stared uncertainly at her, then stepped out of her way.

Hermione, Ron, and Aislin ran down the hallway, looking for Aurora. Five black hooded figures cut Ron off from Hermione and Aislin. Hermione and Aislin whirled around, pulling their wands out. Ron stopped and looked at the five figures.

"You two go ahead. I'll handle them," Ron said. Aislin nodded and turned. Hermione looked at him apprehensively. "Go, Mione!" Ron yelled. Hermione nodded and ran to catch up with Aislin. She looked back one last time, then kept running. One of the Death Eaters removed their hood. It was Wormtail. He looked more mangled than usual.

"Handle us? You'll handle us? You expect to do this alone, Weasley?" Wormtail laughed frenziedly. Ron smirked and got on his guard.

"Believe me, you should be a lot more worried than I should." Ron held his wand out. "*Fumos!*" he yelled. Smoke was emitted from his wand's tip. The Death Eaters all glanced around and began wondering aimlessly. Wormtail looked around, worry in his eyes. He saw occasional flashes of light and the sound of bodies dropping.

"Damn it! *Chiarire!*" he said. The smoke cleared at a surprisingly fast rate. The other four Death Eaters were sitting with their backs together. They were all apparently unconscious and bound. Ron was nowhere in sight. Wormtail looked cautiously around. "Come out, come out, Weasley. Come and face your doom," he called out to Ron. He heard a door shut behind him. Spinning around, he walked towards the door slowly. Opening it, he entered the same room where Sloan had taken Neve. "Weasley, I'm not going to ask again. Come out and I might be able to persuade the Dark Lord to go easy on you, considering you sheltered me for twelve years," he said. There was still no sign of Ron. Then, the door shut behind him. It was pitch black. "*Lumos,*" he whispered.

"Peek-a-boo!" Ron yelled as he knocked the wand out of a startled Wormtail's hand. Ron then held his wand to Wormtail's throat. "You really aren't even worth the energy required to do this spell. I see no point in killing you or even driving you to insanity. You were pathetic as a rat, and you're even more pathetic now. *Legatura,*" Ron said. The binds made of light surrounded Wormtail. The sniveling man whimpered as Ron dragged him outside with his fellow Death Eaters.

"*Rictusempra!*" A voice yelled from behind Hermione and Aislin. The spell hit Aislin in the back, sending her flying headfirst into a wall. Hermione whirled around to face one Death Eater. They stood, wands pointing at each other in a stalemate.

"You cannot possibly hope to defeat me, girl. I'm one of the strongest Death Eaters there are. I'm not as dim-witted as my counterparts," the man's voice said. Hermione kept her wand trained on him.

"Well, neither am I. Though, I wouldn't go as far to call my counterparts dim-witted, either. Let's just say that I'm not the most powerful, but I consider myself to be the cleverest and most cunning. *Expelliarmus!*" Hermione yelled, catching the Death Eater by surprise. He managed to dodge.

"*Crucio!*" He aimed at Hermione. Hermione ducked, and the curse hit the wall behind her. She moved to the side and tripped over Aislin. Her wand went skidding to the side. Cursing she looked up to come face to face with a wand. "Well, well. It looks like this is the end of the line for you," he said, getting ready to say a curse. "Cru..." he began.

"*Suicidarse!*" a voice said. The spell hit the Death Eater in the back. White light shone, and the Death Eater turned around. He slowly sank to his knees. He pointed his wand at himself and a green jet of light shot from it. He fell to the ground, dead. Hermione looked in the direction of the voice. It was Fionnula. She ran up to her. "Are you okay?" she asked. Hermione stood up and nodded. They both looked down at Aislin, who stirred. A pool of blood was forming underneath her head, staining her blonde hair.

"Let's get her to the hospital wing." Fionnula grabbed her arms. Hermione took her legs, and they hoisted her up.

Outside, Harry stared maliciously at Voldemort, who was still eyeing him with interest.

"I sense a different aura about you, Potter. What have you been training in?" he asked. Harry continued to look arrogantly at him.

"Now why the hell would I tell you that? I'd rather just go with the element of surprise," Harry said. Voldemort's face distorted into one of frustration. He pointed his wand steadily at Harry.

"Why do you not make a move to retrieve your wand?" No answer. Harry just stood there with the look of a very confident person on his face. Voldemort stared at him with a look of suspicion. "Answer me, Potter, or I will be forced to curse you," Voldemort said.

"Why should I retrieve something I don't necessarily need? Plus, how do I know you won't curse me anyway?" Harry asked nonchalantly, his expression never changing. He didn't really care about the answer to the question, though. Voldemort realized this and, his frown grew deeper.

"Enough! *Imperio!*" Voldemort yelled. Harry made no move to dodge the curse. Instead, he just simply stared at it. The curse disintegrated before it hit him. Harry smiled. Voldemort looked utterly astounded. He frowned and put his wand out again. "*Crucio!*" This time, the spell hit Harry. Harry closed his eyes. Voldemort smiled wryly. Then he promptly stopped smiling almost as soon as he started. Something wasn't right.

He's not screaming in agony, he thought. Harry threw his head back, and the curse was thrown off of him.

"The Cruciatus Curse won't work on me, Tommy-Boy," Harry said, taunting Voldemort and laughing at his own joke. Voldemort continued to frown at the boy.

"Why is that, Potter? It affects everyone else so very much. Why not you?"

"Well, the difference between them and me is that I know the pain is not real," Harry said, crossing his arms. Voldemort smirked and looked down for a moment.

"You have real confidence, Potter. You're almost a little too confident. That could very well be your downfall." Voldemort took aim again. *Dolore Mortale!* Voldemort threw the curse at Harry. Harry held his hand out and threw up a barrier. The curse tried to burn through it. After about a minute, the curse was thrown back. Voldemort ducked, and the curse hit one of his fellow Death Eaters. He turned to face Harry once again.

Suddenly, a loud *POP* was heard. Dumbledore appeared between Harry and Voldemort. Voldemort took a step back and looked a little worried.

"Harry, go inside," Dumbledore said quietly. Harry frowned.

"I was fairing rather well against him, headmaster," Harry said through clenched teeth. Dumbledore turned his head to the side.

"**NOW**, Harry," he said softly but very firmly. Harry looked shocked for a moment. He growled a few choice words and held his hand out towards his wand. The wand came flying towards him. Dumbledore looked at his longtime foe. Voldemort crossed his arms.

"It seems to me that you have been training Potter rather well, Dumbledore," Voldemort said matter-of-factly. Dumbledore nodded.

"Well, it seems to me that you've met your match, Tom."

"Funny. I always thought you were my match, Dumbledore," Voldemort said. Dumbledore nodded, a twinkle in his eye. "Tell me, Dumbledore. What power does the boy have?"

"I think you have just witnessed it, Tom. I thought it would've been obvious what it was. He wasn't using his wand, was he? Yet, he still managed to fend for himself. Surely you can't be that dense," Dumbledore said in an abnormally calm voice. Voldemort frowned at Dumbledore's words. Then, a look of realization came over his face.

"You mean to tell me that Potter is a Soliopath?" he asked, sounding rather shocked.

"And a very good one, I'd wager," Dumbledore said with slight pride in his voice. Voldemort snorted.

"What does it matter, Dumbledore? I am a Soliopath also. So are you. Potter can't possibly have mastered the art in such a short amount of time, you old fool. Soliopathy is no easy craft," Voldemort said. Dumbledore smiled and shook his head slowly. Voldemort looked confused at this action.

"Tom, there are still many things to which you do not understand. The difference between you and Harry is that Harry didn't really need to learn to do magic without a wand. He is a natural Soliopath. Not a trained one. The only training he received was to control it. He can do it naturally on his own. He just needed to learn to harness the power that is Soliopathy," Dumbledore said. Voldemort growled. He turned toward the three remaining Death Eaters.

"Go find Potter," he said. The three nodded and Apparated. Voldemort then turned his attention to Dumbledore, who was still just standing there in his own serenity. "Shall we commence?" Voldemort asked. Dumbledore nodded and pulled out his wand.

"We shall," Dumbledore said in a surprisingly deadly tone.

Inside, Neve found Draco, Ginny, and Aurora. Aurora was coming around. She sat up as Neve walked in the room. Bellatrix was the only one still awake. She was eyeing them malignantly. Neve cut her eyes at her, then looked at Aurora.

"What happened?" she asked Ginny.

"She blocked the Avada Kedavra curse and reversed it towards Bellatrix. Then she just fainted. It was amazing. You should've seen it, Neve," Ginny said. Neve looked amazed at the feat. Aurora blinked everyone into focus. She looked over at Bellatrix and Narcissa.

Suddenly, it grew very cold and dark. Everyone looked at each other. Bellatrix smiled, even though she felt miserable. Ginny gasped at what she saw behind Neve.

"Neve," she breathed out. Neve turned around slowly. Four dementors entered the room. Each went for one of the teenagers. Ginny pointed Aurora's wand at hers.

"*Expecto Patronum!*" A silver mist was produced, and the dementor bounced away off of it. It glided over to Neve. Aurora fended off hers along with Draco's. They all flocked towards Neve.

"We... have... got... to... help... her," Draco said right before he passed out. Aurora and Ginny promptly followed suit. Neve backed up. All four dementors were continuously sucking her soul out of her. Neve remembered that day back in Diagon Alley. She fell to the ground, just as Neville turned around the hallway.

"Neve!" He ran towards her. A light began rising from Neve's mouth. Neville looked horrified at the dementors around him. He backed up and pointed his wand, desperately trying to remember the incantation for a Patronus Charm. Neve's soul continued to rise towards the dementors. They circled around her like vultures. Neville continued to rack his mind. Then, he got it, snapping his fingers.

"**EXPECTO PATRONUM!**" he yelled as loudly as his lungs would allow him to. His Patronus shot forth and drove the dementors away quickly. The light lowered itself and Neve gasped. She slowly sat up, as did the rest of them. Neville was breathing hard. He sat down next to Neve. Neve looked at him and smiled weakly.

"Thank you," she whispered. Neville nodded, unable to speak. That's when he fully realized what happened. Sofia told him that it would happen. He smiled and sighed.

"Sofia told me this would happen," he said softly. Neve smiled. Then she remembered what Sofia told her about a choice. She'd made a choice earlier. The choice to forego a battle with Lucius Malfoy. She wondered silently how it would play out and who it would affect the most.

Harry caught up with Ron and Hermione. Fionnula and Drake were with Aislin. Hermione and Ron waited in the hallway. Hermione smiled and ran to him as he came up to them. She hugged him tightly.

"Hermione... can't... breathe..." Harry managed to sputter out. Ron laughed, and Hermione let him go, blushing.

"Harry, did you defeat Voldemort?" Hermione asked, sounding hopeful. Ron's eyes brightened considerably. Harry looked around at all the captured Death Eaters around him. Then he looked knowingly at Ron. Ron blushed a little.

"I see you've been working rather hard. No, I didn't defeat Voldemort. Dumbledore arrived and told me to come inside. I guess now the two are having a go of it. Who's in there?" he asked, motioning toward the hospital wing's door.

"Aislin, Drake, and Fionnula. Aislin flew into a wall and is unconscious with a rather serious concussion. She was bleeding and everything from hitting the wall headfirst," Hermione said, sounding a bit saddened. Harry nodded.

Out of nowhere, two Death Eaters appeared behind Hermione and Harry, grabbing them around their necks and pointing their wands at their heads. Instinctively, Ron pulled his wand out and pointed it. He looked from Harry to Hermione. They both struggled in the grasps of the two Death Eaters.

"What a predicament this is, Weasley! Who to save? Who to save? That's the problem with having two best friends. Makes choices like this relatively hard, doesn't it? Especially if you're shagging one of them," the one holding Hermione snarled. He smelled her hair, making Ron's ears turn red. Hermione struggled in the Death Eater's grip. Ron frowned and went from Harry to Hermione to Harry to Hermione. He didn't know which one to save.

"Ron, forget about me! Save Hermione!" Harry yelled, still struggling. Hermione shook her head furiously.

"Harry, are you fucking daft! You are the one who has to kill Voldemort, remember? I'm just a nobody. Ron, kill that Death Eater. Kill the one holding Harry," Hermione said through a strangled voice. Both Ron and Harry looked a little shocked at her words. Hermione wasn't known for using colorful phrases. Ron's eyes began watering. Sofia's prediction was coming true. He was hoping that it wouldn't come to pass.

"You can't kill both of us, Weasley. Choose wisely," the other Death Eater said smugly. Ron closed his eyes, and a single tear ran down his face. He pointed the wand just as Ginny, Draco, Neve, and Aurora turned the corner, dragging Bellatrix and Narcissa. They stood still as stone as they observed the scene before them. Time seemed to slow down. The following events seemed to happen in slow motion.

"*Avada Kedavra!*" Ron yelled. Everyone gasped.

"*Avada Kedavra!*" one of the Death Eaters yelled. Two bodies hit the floor in a collective thump as Ron dropped his wand.

Chapter 22: The Shai

Chapter 23 of 24

Who did Ron shoot?

The Opposite

Chapter 22: The Shai

Everyone stared in utter shock at what had just occurred. Ron's arm fell limply to his side. His wand was rolling around by his feet. One of the Death Eaters was still writhing on the ground, and then the body stopped moving. Ron stared down at Hermione's body. Her eyes were staring up at the ceiling. Fionnula and Drake opened the door and gasped at the sight they saw.

Aurora was first to recover from the stupor of shock. She closed her eyes and thought quickly. The Death Eater who had been holding Hermione began to shudder uncontrollably. He fell to the ground, and then stopped moving altogether. Aurora opened her eyes. She'd killed him. They all looked at Ron, who was standing there, still in awe of what he'd just done. Harry walked over to him. He grabbed Ron by the shirt and began shaking him.

"Why the fuck didn't you kill me! I told you to bloody kill me!" he yelled frantically. Ron just stood there, not really hearing Harry at all. Ginny walked forward as Harry sunk to the ground. He felt as if his legs couldn't support him any longer. Ron was still in his state of shock. Ginny had tears streaming down her face.

Suddenly, Lucius Malfoy caught them all off guard. He observed the scene before him, and then saw his wife and Bellatrix. Draco saw his father first and pulled his wand on the man.

"Don't even try it," Draco said, his voice dangerously low. Lucius raised an eyebrow.

"You'd really hurt your own father, Draco?" he asked, pulling his wand out of his staff. Draco held his wand tightly.

"You better believe it. I did that to my own mother," he paused, gesturing towards Narcissa, "and I won't hesitate to kill you; not after what you did to Neve," Draco said in a noxious tone. Lucius's eyes narrowed at his only son. Aurora looked confused, and Neve looked down.

"What? What are you talking about, Draco? Neve? What did you do to my sister, Malfoy?" she asked, looking from each of the three frantically. Draco's eyes never faltered. "Would somebody please tell me what the fuck is going on?" Aurora yelled slowly losing her patience.

"He raped Neve," Draco said as if the words tasted disgusting.

It took a minute for the words to sink in for Aurora. Aurora looked at her sister with pleading eyes. It was like she was asking for Neve to say it wasn't true. Neve nodded slowly. Then Aurora turned her gaze to Lucius. Everyone noticed how abnormally cold it had gotten. Harry looked up from his place on the ground next to Ginny and Ron. Aurora was starting to lose control. Draco looked at her, finally turning his gaze away from his father. Lucius was also occupied at Aurora's display.

"*Voi il bastardo inimmaginabile...*" Aurora said. She began glowing blue, and her irises and pupils disappeared. Draco took a step back from her. Neville grabbed Neve and pulled her to the ground as Aurora threw her head back and screamed. Every piece of glass within a 100-foot radius broke. Everyone was thrown a considerable distance away from her. She looked back at Lucius, who was trying to stand up. Everyone watched with wide eyes.

Outside, Dumbledore and Voldemort looked up from their duel. Voldemort's eyes flickered around quickly, looking for the source of the amazing power that had just been dispensed. Dumbledore also looked frantic. Voldemort smirked and took this time to Apparate to the source. Dumbledore silently swore and followed suit. They appeared a considerable distance from Aurora.

"What the bloody hell is going on?" Draco asked Harry. Harry shrugged nonchalantly. He didn't care one way or the other what happened at this point in time. One of his best friends was gone.

"*Voi muore adesso. DÉTRUIRE MORTALE!*" Aurora yelled. A jet of blue light flew from her hand. Lucius dodged to the side. Aurora dropped her hand. Her aura disappeared, and she fell to the ground, totally spent. "I did all of that and missed," she said weakly and half smiled. Aurora passed out. Neve ran forward to her sister. Draco stood up and pointed his wand at his father.

"Insolent brats..." Lucius got ready to kill both Neve and Aurora. Draco beat him to it.

"*Dolore Mortale!*" he yelled. Lucius stopped moving and watched as the curse hit him. He looked back up at his son. Narcissa's eyes widened in horror. Lucius fell to his knees. Draco walked forward as he kept the curse on his father. He watched his father squirm for a minute and then lifted it. Lucius lay on the ground, his mouth hanging open. A white fluid began dripping from it.

"**NOOOOO!**" Narcissa yelled, the sound of tears in her voice. She struggled in her binds, and then she looked at her son. "Why, Draco **WHY?**! Why didn't you just kill him!" she screamed, crying hysterically now. Draco looked back at his mother.

"He didn't deserve to die for what he did. Death would've been too great an honor to bestow upon him," Draco spat in a rather diplomatic voice.

Suddenly, everyone noticed that Narcissa, Bellatrix, and Voldemort were gone. They all looked around at each other, downright mystified.

"Where in the bloody hell did they fucking go?" Harry demanded, standing abruptly. Dumbledore shook his head.

"He slowed time down to disappear with the two ladies. He escaped," he said. Harry sighed.

"It's not over," he whispered in a tired voice.

That was when reality finally set in for Ron. He looked over at Hermione's body. It seemed strange. This was the part where she was supposed to be talking about their recklessness and patching them up. He went over to her and fell to his knees, looking down on her. He ran his hand over her face, closing her eyes. He felt nothing but anguish. Ron then turned towards Harry and stood. He went over to him and punched him.

"**YOU MADE ME DO IT! I DID IT TO SAVE YOUR BLOODY ARSE! IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOU!**" Ron yelled. He punched Harry with every syllable. Harry just stood there and took it until Ron tired himself out and sank to his knees. Ginny walked over to her brother and hugged him. For the first time, Harry saw Ron openly cry. Everyone stood around in silence. Then, Ginny looked up, wiping the tears away.

"Ron, where's that box that that Sofia lady gave you?" she asked anxiously. Ron looked at his sister as if she'd gone mad.

"What?" he asked. Ginny sighed, her face turning red.

"Ginny, what are you on about?" Harry asked.

"I can't explain it right now. I know a way we can save Hermione. Where is that box that the Seer gave you?" Ginny said urgently. It finally registered in Ron's mind what she was talking about.

"Come on," he said, standing up. He pulled his sister along, leaving everyone staring after them with confused looks on their faces. They ran all the way to Ron's room. Ron practically knocked the wooden door down. He ran to the desk and opened the drawer. Pulling out the red box, he opened it. A string of jewels was in it. Ron pulled it out. A note fell out of the box. Ginny picked it up.

Ginevra Weasley,

This is a Cordicella. Ginevra, this will allow you to travel with Ronald. You will not be seen when you go back before Harrison and Hermione were attacked. Remember, they can only hear you when you use telepathy, Ginevra.

In order for your power to work, Ginevra, you must first concentrate on whom you want to see and what time. To take Ronald with you, put the Cordicella around both of you. Then start concentrating. It might take a minute to work. When you open your eyes, you should be where you wanted to go. In order to get back, merely concentrate on returning.

If you succeed, when you return, Ronald will have no recollection of what happened before. However, Ginevra, you will. It would be best if you did not tell Ronald of your little escapade. Bad things will happen if he remembers it. He will think he's gone insane. You will return after Voldemort leaves with Bellatrix and Narcissa. The only thing that will be different is that Lucius Malfoy disappears with them. The only reason he came was because he heard Hermione scream. If Hermione does not scream, then Lucius will not come. The reason Voldemort will come along with Dumbledore is because of something that Harry will do.

Good luck to both of you.

Sofia Cartell

Lorelei Braun

Ginny looked at the string of jewels her brother was holding. She put it around them.

"Ginny, what are you doing?" Ron asked, confused at her actions. Ginny sighed.

"Just stand still, Ron. This will only take a moment." She began concentrating.

*Ron, Harry, and Hermione before the Death Eaters came. Ron, Harry, and Hermione before the Death Eaters came...*Ginny thought over and over again. Ron looked around and suddenly saw a flash of light. They appeared in the hallway by the hospital wing. Ginny removed the Cordicella from around them and looked around. Harry

was running down the hallway.

"Ginny, what in the bloody hell just happened?" Ron asked, looking around in an awed manner. Ginny sighed and closed her eyes. She wasn't sure how she knew what to say, but she said it anyway.

'*Pare tempo*,' she thought. Opening her eyes, she saw that Harry had stopped moving. Ron looked utterly confused. Ginny turned toward her brother.

"To answer your incessant questions, I separated our minds from our bodies and went back before Hermione was killed. This is what my power is. When we were outside talking to Voldemort and before Bellatrix Apparated to Draco's room, a woman named Lorelei Braun appeared. She is a Time Keeper. She stopped time in order to speak to me. She told me what my power is called. I am a Shai," Ginny said quickly. Ron looked at her with a blank expression.

"What the fuck is a damn Shai? Sofia told us about this Lorelei bird you speak of," Ron said, looking thoughtful. "Why didn't we see this?"

"Are you really that thick, Ron? She's a **TIME KEEPER!** She **STOPPED TIME** in order to talk to me alone! I just told you that! Bloody hell, you are really daft. Anyway, 'Shai' is the name of the Egyptian goddess of fate and destiny. That's why people like me are called Shais. Basically, I can control the fate of people and change their destinies at free will. She also told me how to use it on my own. Because we are in the past like this, they cannot hear or see us. Now, if you are done asking dumb questions, we need to figure out a way to save Hermione. Tell me exactly what happened before I start time again," Ginny said quickly. Ron looked dizzy for a moment and then blinked back into reality.

"Ooohh," he said slowly. Ginny rolled her eyes. "Well, Harry came running down the hall after I took all the Death Eaters I captured down this hall. He said Dumbledore was fighting Voldemort now. Harry and Hermione were facing me because I was standing against the wall. That's when the two Death Eaters appeared and grabbed them. How are we supposed to change that?" Ron said shrugging. Ginny thought for a minute. Then she snapped her finger, startling Ron.

"Oh, stop being so jumpy," she said.

"It comes with training to be a Magus. What is it?"

"We need to tell Harry and Hermione to stand on either side of you. They shouldn't be where the Death Eaters will Apparate. That way, the Death Eaters can't grab them, and you three can defeat them. Everything else should fall into play after that. When we get back, no one will remember anything. The only difference will be that Malfoy doesn't drive his father to insanity. Let's go." Ginny closed her eyes.

'*Empiece tempo*,' Ginny thought. Ron's eyes widened as Harry continued running. Ginny and Ron followed him. They saw Harry and Hermione hug. Ginny walked up closer.

"Won't they see us?" Ron asked, following closely behind her. Ginny rolled her eyes and sighed.

"You don't listen to shit, do you? They can't hear or see us, nitwit! The only way we can connect with them is through telepathy. It's also a one-way type thing. They can't connect with me. Now, watch me work," Ginny said. Ron nodded.

"Ginny, the Death Eaters will appear when Hermione finishes talking. Whatever it is that you need to do, do it now," Ron said urgently. Ginny nodded and closed her eyes.

Hermione, Harry, stand next to Ron. Two Death Eaters and getting ready to appear behind you. Move now she transmitted with all her might. Ron watched as Harry and Hermione looked at each other. Ron didn't remember seeing them doing that. They both walked over to stand next to Ron. Suddenly, the two Death Eaters appeared. All three drew their wands. Ginny opened her eyes and sighed. She put the Cordicella around them. *Return*, she thought. Ron watched with wonder. Then he blinked.

Opening his eyes, he was standing next to Hermione. Harry was seething because Voldemort had gotten away. Dumbledore was talking. Ron couldn't understand why he felt as if he'd just been somewhere else, somewhere far away. He looked over at Ginny, who was standing next to Harry. Ginny winked at him, and Ron honestly didn't understand why. Ron then realized what Dumbledore was talking about. He tuned back into them, still feeling like he missed something.

Voi il bastardo inimmaginabile = You unimaginable bastard.

Voi muore adesso = You die now.

Epilogue: Understanding the Facts

Chapter 24 of 24

The Terrific Trio parts ways with friends once again for the summer to prepare for the defining moment in all of their lives.

The Opposite

Epilogue: Understanding Facts

"I need to get these Death Eaters to Azkaban. Drake, contact the rest of the Order for them to send some Aurors down here," Dumbledore said. Drake nodded and Disapparated. Dumbledore turned his attention to the students. "Is anyone seriously injured?" he asked. Everyone shook their heads no. The old wizard nodded and looked up. "I wish this was the end," he said in a distant voice. Harry squinted at him.

"So, eventually, I will have to fight him again?" Harry said. Dumbledore nodded.

"I'm afraid so, Harry," Dumbledore said sadly. Harry sighed. Ginny and Hermione exchanged looks. They knew what was coming. Harry looked like he wanted nothing more than to kill the old warlock by strangulation.

"Why didn't you just let me fight him just now! I could've beaten him!" Harry yelled. Ginny put her hand on his shoulder. Dumbledore just stared serenely at Harry. He looked as calm as ever, and it was starting to irritate the hell out of Harry. "Stop looking so bloody tranquil; it aggravates the hell out of me!" Harry continued to yell.

"Harry, calm down," Ginny whispered. Harry shook off her hand.

"Don't try to fucking pacify me, Gin," he snapped at her. Ginny frowned and took a step back.

"I'm sorry to say this, Harry, but Voldemort would've killed you. You know Soliopathy, and you are extremely talented at it. But, there are a lot of techniques you still must learn before you can truly defeat Voldemort. He still overpowers you by a lot," Dumbledore said. Harry's mouth literally hung open.

"I cannot believe what I am hearing. You just told me that I'm weak. Some great faith you have in me!" Harry threw his hands up and began to walk away. He stopped and turned around to face Dumbledore once more. "Why didn't you just finish him off, then? Apparently you're supposed to be so powerful and shit. He fears you more than he fears me. So why didn't you just finish him off and save me the trouble?" Harry said spitefully, crossing his arms in the process. Dumbledore sighed.

"Don't you think if I could finish him off, I would've done it already, Harry? The fact of the matter is that **YOU** are supposed to defeat him. Not anyone else. It is impossible for anyone else to defeat him. Just like no one can kill you, either. When you and Mr. Weasley got into that fight, did you ever wonder why you didn't die? Having two punctured lungs and internal bleeding would've killed anyone else almost immediately. However, you survived. Until one of you is destroyed, no one can kill either of you. That means you are virtually immortal until one of you is killed," Dumbledore said. Harry stared at him with malice. He turned on his heel and stormed off without another word.

Two months passed by without incident. Dumbledore had informed them that they wouldn't need to return to school for the rest of the year. One day, Lupin appeared.

"Dumbledore said that you all may take the Knight Bus home in a couple of days. It will drop you all off at your appointed places to stay for the summer," he said. Everyone practically jumped for joy, except Harry. Lupin walked over to the brooding youth. "What is it, Harry?" he asked. Harry looked up at Lupin.

"Remus, I just wish this was all over. I'm tired of having to live with the Dursleys. I'm tired of being the target every year at school. I'm tired of being famous for something I didn't realize I did. I'm really tired of all this shit. And I'm tired of letting Voldemort and Dumbledore practically run my life for me," Harry said. Lupin nodded.

"I understand how you must feel, Harry. It must be really tough knowing that you have to actually kill someone to live a normal life. You're a really powerful wizard, Harry. I'm sure you'll give Voldemort a real tough time when the final battle comes. But, until that time, enjoy being a teenager," Lupin said. Harry tried to crack a smile.

"I'm glad to hear that **SOMEONE** believes in me. Dumbledore stopped me from fighting Voldemort on April first. I believe I could've beaten him. He said I needed more training. I've trained harder than anyone else here. I trained even when I was off," Harry said, getting more frustrated.

"I'm sure Dumbledore had his reasons for stopping the fight between you two, Harry. Maybe he wanted you to be really strong before you actually finished Voldemort off. Maybe he believed you really did need more training. There is so much you still have yet to learn, believe me. I'm sure he has your best interests at heart, Harry. Dumbledore really is a great man, and he really does care about you more than you know. So, cut the old man some slack," Lupin said. Harry glanced at him sideways.

"Thanks," he said.

"Anytime," Lupin said.

The next day, the eight of them were on the Knight Bus. Hermione looked as though she was going to be sick. They talked and laughed jovially the whole way there. Then the time came for the Ron and Harry to split up. They looked at each other. Harry stuck out his hand. Ron looked at it and took it, pulling Harry into a hug.

"Take care of yourself, mate. You'll be able to do magic in a month, so then you could terrorize your aunt and uncle. Not to mention that obese cousin of yours," Ron said laughing. Harry smiled. Ron turned and walked over to Hermione. Ginny looked at Harry. She threw herself into his arms, kissing him.

"Be good, Harry. Don't listen to Ron. I'll try to write you everyday," she said, tears in her eyes. Harry laughed. Ginny playfully hit him in the chest. "It's not funny, Harry."

"Ginny, it's only two months. You'll see me sooner than you think, I believe. There's no need to cry," he said soothingly. Ginny nodded. She kissed him one last time.

"I love you, Harry."

"I love you, too, Gin," he said. Ginny nodded and got off the bus. That left Harry and Hermione. When the bus got to Hermione's house, her parents stood waiting. Hermione looked at Harry.

"Really, Harry, don't listen to Ron. He's nothing but trouble. I'll write you as often as I can, okay?" She hugged him.

"Take care, Hermione," he said. Hermione nodded and kissed him on his cheek. Then she departed. She turned to face him before the bus sped off.

"Harry, for what it's worth, I believe that you could've beaten Voldemort," she said smiling. Harry smiled back smugly.

"Thanks, Hermione," he said. Then the bus was gone.

For the first time in about three years, Harry felt truly at peace. Now, all he had to do was survive the summer with the Dursleys before he ended up murdering them.

That ought to be extremely easy, he thought sarcastically and smiled to himself, relaxing into his chair.