

A Serpent Among Lions

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Ginny and Meghan pack for Hogwarts, but someone is missing. Where's Harry?

The answer? He's on the run, an accused murderer.

Anticipation, Hot chocolate, and longing

Chapter 1 of 2

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The room obviously belonged to a young witch. One wall was covered with Chudley Cannon Quidditch paraphernalia – posters, blankets, banners, etc. Another wall chronicled the life of Harry Potter. This in and of itself was not unusual since Harry Potter was the hero of most children of the wizarding world. What made this room unusual was that it belonged to Meghan Potter, daughter of Harry and Ginny Potter.

One the end of the bed lay a black cat, lazily stretched out, watching while his mistress searched frantically through her trunk, which up until now had been neatly packed.

"Mum! Where's my wand?" Meghan's panicked voice sounded through the house as it had many times that week.

Ginny, packing her daughter a lunch to take with her on the Hogwarts Express the next day, rolled her eyes and laughed. Going up to her daughter's room, she regarded her daughter with a mixture of mild amusement and sternness. "Same place it always is, Meghan, in your pocket. You need to be careful with that. You don't want to break it!"

Meghan looked down at her robe pockets and grinned sheepishly. "Oops." She was always leaving it in there ever since she got it from Diagon Alley. She supposed that she got that habit from her grandmother, who always had her wand in her apron pocket.

"It's okay, sweetheart. Grandmum does that too. Are you all ready to go?" she asked, looking at the mess that the room was now in from due to her daughter's frantic search. Sighing, she took her wand and repacked the trunk.

"Yep! I wish tomorrow was here already! I can't wait to go to Hogwarts," she said, excitedly bouncing up and down. When her mother repacked her trunk using her wand, she raised an eyebrow at her because she had sworn up and down that she would never use magic to clean up after her.

"Don't expect this every time you make a mess, Meghan Elizabeth Potter," Ginny said. "I'm only doing that because you're going to Hogwarts tomorrow and I don't want you to spend your last night repacking your trunk. Now, I made you some sandwiches to take on the Hogwarts Express with you, and," she said, reaching into her pocket and pulling out some money, "here are two galleons to spend on the train. Just don't blow it all on junk, all right?"

"Aw, Mum, thanks!" she said, giving her a hug.

Smiling, Ginny returned the hug, then broke it after a moment. Holding her daughter at arm's length, wanting to commit her to memory, Ginny's eyes played over her daughter. Her hair was the typical Weasley red colour, but like Harry's it was wild and untamable. Her eyes were green, like Harry's, and her small figure was thin and gangly.

"Tell you what, Meghan. Why don't we go downstairs and have our hot chocolate, and then we'll get you ready for bed? You have a big day tomorrow."

Meghan practically bounded out of her room and down the steps. Ginny watched her daughter, who was so much like herself at that age. Full of energy, without a care in the world. Smiling softly, Ginny followed her daughter down to have her nightly ritual.

The kitchen had been the room where the three of them had gathered each night before Meghan went to bed. They talked about their days and drank hot chocolate together, and then Ginny and Harry tucked Meghan into bed.

For the past month, though, Harry hadn't joined them. In late July, Harry's aunt and uncle had been murdered, and the witnesses who had come forward had named him as the murderer. Harry knew that he was innocent, but he had vanished in order to keep his daughter out of the media circus that had ensued. Fortunately, Meghan was none the wiser about her father's disappearance and simply thought that he was doing something for the Ministry of Magic.

The bittersweet taste of the hot chocolate made Ginny sad. Because of some faceless git, Harry was in hiding and would miss seeing his daughter off to her first year at Hogwarts. A lone tear traced a path down Ginny's cheek and was noticed by Meghan before she could wipe it away.

"Mum, what's wrong? You're crying," Meghan said, reaching across the table to take her mother's hand.

"Oh, I just miss Daddy, that's all," she said, smiling at her daughter. "I know that he's so proud of you, and that he'll contact you as soon as he can. You know how busy he is with work." Giving her daughter's hand a squeeze, she looked into her green eyes. "I am going to miss you very much too, Meghan. You're getting to be such a big girl."

"I miss Daddy too, Mum, and I'm going to miss you when I'm at Hogwarts. But I promise to write often and tell you everything that I'm doing. Do you think Daddy will be home soon?"

"I hope so, Meghan. I hope so..." Ginny's voice trailed off. She was on the verge of tears. By sheer force of her will, she regained her composure. "Okay, young lady. Finish up your hot chocolate, and then we need to get you into bed."

Harry, living under an assumed name of Daniel Radcliffe, was at that moment in London in a one bedroom flat, sipping hot chocolate as he thought about his wife and daughter. The walls were stark white, and the rug was an ugly grey color. The furniture was comfortable but nothing special. He had two recliners, in case Ginny visited while Meghan was at Hogwarts, a queen size bed, and a basic dinette set. He also allowed himself the luxury of a television set, but that was more to keep an eye on the world outside than anything else. It was a good distraction, though, and he often found old movies that were a good way to pass the time.

He hated being away from his family, especially now with Meghan about to start her first year at Hogwarts. But he was a fugitive from justice, even if he knew that he was innocent. He had mixed himself a hair dye, using a recipe he had found in an old potion book, and his hair was now blonde. He had stopped shaving and had grown a mustache and a beard, speeding up the process with magic.

He knew that someone had used Polyjuice potion to make it look as if he had killed his aunt and uncle, but who? He was afraid that whoever it was would go after Ginny and Meghan next. At least Meghan would be safe at Hogwarts starting tomorrow. But his beloved Ginny....Well, he could only hope that she would stay alert.

A Menacing Figure

Chapter 2 of 2

Someone lurks in the shadows. Someone who has evil plans in mind...

The man stood in his house, grinning with a sneer on his face. His plan was going perfectly. Harry Potter was on the run, and the people who had betrayed him were taken care of. He could afford some time to gloat before he put the next part of his plan into action.

Having no children of his own, he had spies set up at Hogwarts to keep an eye on Meghan Potter, spies which he had paid handsomely to make her life a living hell there. She was his enemy's daughter and must be treated as such.

Now, what to do about Ginny? He still had a stash of Polyjuice Potion, that was not an issue. He might just have to have some fun with her before figuring out what to do with her as well. He wanted Harry to know that his family was paying dearly for everything he had done before he finished him off.

He looked at the clock... It was almost ten on the evening of August 31st. Surely Meghan would be in bed by now, wanting to get a good night's sleep before going to Hogwarts in the morning. He could very well take some Polyjuice Potion now and go over there. But no, he had to wait. It wouldn't do to raise her suspicions now, would it?

Going to the refrigerator, he took out a cold six pack of beer and grabbed a bag of crisps from the counter, then flopped down on the couch in front of the television set. He knew that a lot of people in this world that he was a part of didn't have one, but he enjoyed the pleasures it brought. He didn't have many friends and it was a good way to pass the time. He didn't have to work; his parents had made sure of that before they died. So he was independently wealthy and could afford the finer things in life.

Sighing with satisfaction that all was going according to plan, he turned on the murder mystery channel and settled in for a long night of electronic enjoyment. He got some of his very best ideas while watching this channel and did most of his planning and scheming.