

Taste of the Storm

by Gelsey

Bellatrix makes demands that cannot be met. Arthur/Bellatrix, Arthur/Molly

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Arthur,

Meet me tonight under that tree in Hogsmeade. I need a favour. You always said if I needed anything, you would help.

Bellatrix

Arthur stared at the note but couldn't find an ulterior motive. She couldn't know his plans to elope with Molly tomorrow – only Molly and he knew. And he had promised years ago to be Bella's friend and help her should she need it.

Arthur hated breaking promises.

He found himself under the gnarled tree that Bella loved. It was darker than he expected, storm clouds roiling in the sky. Lightning flashed distantly, and thunder grumbled.

Bella appeared out of the darkness as if borne of it. The wind whipped her inky hair. She looked like a fallen angel coming to wreak havoc upon the world.

He shivered, and it wasn't entirely because of the wind.

"What's wrong, Bellatrix?" he asked, voice raised to be heard.

Her gaze was disconcerting, like looking into a window webbed with cracks. "You're running away with Prewett tomorrow."

"How do you know that?" he asked, but her sly smile was enough. Bella had her ways. "What do you need, Bella?"

Surprisingly, the harshness of her face softened slightly, and he remembered why he'd fallen for her his sixth year.

"Don't run away with her." He could barely hear her. "Run away with me."

There were many reasons she could be asking – the Dark crowd she ran with being the worst. He was a pureblood and placed usefully in the Ministry, or so he'd been warned.

It could be sheer spite against Molly – they had always hated each other.

Or it could be that what Bella wanted, Bella got – and for some reason she'd wanted him for years. He'd wanted her once, too. She had a wild magnetism that fascinated, similar to this unpredictable storm.

She reached out and touched his face, the clean line of his jaw, and when he didn't immediately pull back, she leaned in and kissed him.

Kissing her had always been like having a taste of the storm, a bit of unrestrained wildness. Drugging and tantalizing both, but dangerous. Like all pleasure might turn to pain any minute. It stimulated the senses, certainly, but always left one unsure. It was that off-putting edge that had led him to break up with her.

Molly was passionate and fiery, but she was the warm comfort of home where one waited out the storm. Safe, steady, and passionate.

He pulled his senses together and pushed her away. "No," he said. "I love Molly. We're getting married."

All softness vanished at the declaration, leaving a wrathful goddess; he imagined she was Bellona, goddess of war, ready to join Ares in his chariot and leave behind a trail of blood and pain.

Lightning further fractured the darkness in her eyes. "Why not me?" she yelled. "Why won't you pick me? Choose me! Love me!" The demands grew successively louder. She looked truly mad, the first spitting rain mixing with her fury. "You said you loved me!"

He pitied her even as uneasy fear settled in him. He felt a twinge in his heart, though he loved Molly completely. "That was years ago, Bella. We were young."

The storm howled around them, giving voice to her ire. She said nothing, which was more unnerving than words. Bella always had a taunt or curse readily available.

Lightning flashed again, and she was gone; Apparated back to her Manor, he assumed, now that she was out of school.

He went home unsettled, jumping when a storm-tossed owl pecked the window.

The note was unsigned, but the author obvious.

You'll regret it.

He threw away the parchment, refusing to be afraid.

~*~*~*~

Months later, he and Molly Apparated to the Prewett estate for dinner with her parents. The humid summer air was laden with the stench of smoke, and hovering above the house was a hazy, sickening-green Dark Mark.

He restrained Molly, holding her tight as horror welled in his heart. Marshalling himself like Kingsley was teaching him, he concentrated and produced a Patronus to summon the Aurors.

Three dead – her mother and two younger brothers, Gideon and Fabian. Her father had been running late, or he would have died too.

Arthur couldn't bring himself to tell his grieving wife that just before the Aurors arrived, he thought he'd seen a figure in the window. A twitch of the curtain, a flash of dark hair and pale skin and then nothing.

You'll regret it, she'd written.

Author's Notes: Arthur was born Feb. 1950, Molly Oct. 1950, and Bellatrix sometime in 1951, meaning that Arthur would probably be one year ahead of the other two women, assuming that Bellatrix was born before Aug. 31.

There's a nod to *Grey's Anatomy* in here – I couldn't help it.

And this is written for , who asked me to write a plausible Arthur/Bella, if it was at all possible. I hope it works :)