

Summary: An incident with the Time Turners during the Battle of the Ministry sends Harry hurtling through time. Lost in a world that is no longer his own, he's forced to turn to the most unlikely of places for help...

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Chapter 5: Longing

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“So this Voldemort fellow is actually a half-blood with more mommy issues than sense and is also somehow one of the most powerful dark lords ever, while also leading around a crazed group of blood purists hell bent on enslaving all muggles – which might I add is fucking *insane* – and to top it all off for some reason there’s a prophecy about you and him which has only made him want to kill you more?”

Harry shrugged. “Pretty much.”

Across from him, Andromeda slumped back with a heavy sigh. “That’s bloody mental, mate.”

“Hey, you asked!” He protested. “Besides, does it really sound any more mental than accidentally becoming a time traveller?” He asked with a quirked brow.

Andromeda snorted and took a sip from her bottle. “Touché. Still, it’s a bit hard to take in. Don’t get me wrong, I believe you, but the fact that there’s not one, but *two* wars supposed to happen in the next twenty years is...” She trailed off, suddenly at a loss for words.

“I get it.” Harry sighed. “But regardless, it happens, and a lot of people are gonna die if I don’t stop him.”

Andromeda reeled back with a look of surprise. “Whoa! Hold up there! Why does it have to be you? Don’t take this the wrong way Harry, but you’re just a kid. Surely there was someone back in your time capable of stopping this Voldemort fella. What about Dumbledore?”

Harry surprised even himself with the disbelieving scoff that escaped his lips. “Dumbledore was adamant that it had to be me. Never explained why. He was rather keen on keeping me in the

dark for as long as possible. The only reason I even found out about the whole bloody prophecy was because of Voldemort.”

“That doesn’t sound like him.” Andromeda said with a frown. At Harry’s answering shrug her frown only deepened. Running a hand through her brown hair, the former Black sighed and swirled her drink thoughtfully. “What was the prophecy even about, anyhow?”

“Dunno. By the time I got my hands on it, my friends and I were ambushed by Voldemort’s followers.” He winced slightly when the memories of a particular witch’s cackling laugh reminded him just who he was speaking to. “Didn’t exactly leave me enough time to stop and listen to the bloody thing.”

“Unfortunate.” Andromeda sighed. “And with those gits in black looking for you, there’s probably a slim chance of going back to the DoM without getting yourself locked up for – well – *ever*.”

“There’s nothing to say the Prophecy has even been recorded yet anyway.” Harry sighed and took a sip of his own drink. The bitter taste of beer made him grimace slightly, but he managed. It was far better than the bootlegged swill Fred and George had always managed to sneak in during the Gryffindor Quidditch parties.

“Well I hate to say it, but you’re kinda fucked.”

“You think?” Harry snorted.

Andromeda gave him a sympathetic pat on the knee and leaned back into the couch. “You’ve got no money, no job, and, present company excluded, no friends to call for help.” She counted each item off on her fingers. “Not exactly an inspiring start to your little adventure.”

“Gee thanks Andy.” He snarked. “Tell me how you really feel.”

“Hey, I’m just trying to be realistic!” The brunette flicked an errant strand of hair over her shoulder with a huff. “Sides, you haven’t exactly been very forthcoming with any ideas since your little panic attack in the kitchen.”

“I didn’t have a panic attack.” He grumbled.

Not per se anyway. True, the realisation that his parents were alive was a startling one, but Harry thought he managed to wrap his mind around the idea pretty well. Did part of him yearn to seek them out – to find them and explain everything as he had with Andromeda? Of course! But the much more rational part of his brain knew that was impossible. For starters, he could unintentionally undo his very existence by doing so. If he had his math right, his parents would be around the same age as him, making them recent fifth years. Sirius had told him that his mum and dad hadn't started dating till their seventh year, and before that his mum all but *loathed* his dad. Some random bloke appearing out of nowhere telling them he was their future son would probably all but guarantee he'd never be born, with his luck anyway.

Then of course there was the...other reason. James Potter and Lily Evans were complete strangers to him. All he knew of the people they were came from a handful of scattered stories and brief anecdotes from those who knew them in life. It painted a decent picture for him to envision sure, but did he really even know who James and Lily were? The real them, not the rose-tinted versions that everyone else recalled. It pained him, but Harry knew seeking them out would only cause more problems.

"Fine, but as a healer it's my job to tell you that it's okay to feel a bit overwhelmed by such a realisation. Find out your parents are alive, albeit the same age as you now, is a lot to take in all at once Harry."

Harry waved the older woman off, not wishing to dwell on the thought of his not-yet parents further.

"Let's forget about it for now, yeah? You're right, I need to start thinking of what comes next." He rubbed the back of his neck in contemplation. "I'll need help, that much is obvious. The question is, who can I turn to? It's too risky trusting just anyone with the knowledge I have."

"Awe, good to know I'm special." Andromeda smirked.

Harry rolled his eyes and continued. "So who then? If I'm to stop Voldemort, I'd need someone with at least a little bit of sway both politically and magically speaking. Someone knowledgeable

too, who has studied magic enough to not immediately dismiss my story of time travels as bullshite. Some like-" He cut himself off with a groan, realisation washing over him in an instant. "What?" Andromeda asked. "What is it?"

Harry cursed under his breath and pinch the bridge of his nose. "I just realised who it is I need to speak with." He grimaced. "Albus bloody Dumbledore."

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Narcissa frowned as the sound of shouting from downstairs grew louder. With a huff she flicked her wand towards the Wireless upon her nightstand, cranking the volume up until the thrumming music of the Weird Sisterz drowned out her father and sister's argument.

After her release from the Unspeakables and her conversation with her Grandfather, Narcissa had tried her best to return to life as normal. Yet it seemed faith had other plans. Healer Abbott, in a rare show of geniality, had seen fit to put her on a week-long leave of recovery after her 'ordeal', as he called it.

Ridiculous.

Just because some wannabe auror had arrested her doesn't mean that Narcissa needed to be coddled like some child. She was fine! A bit more annoyed with the wizarding world's legal system than normal, true, but fine regardless! What she needed wasn't to be sent home to 'heal' or whatever shite Abbott called it, but to work! To hone her skills and expand her expertise as a healer! Narcissa Black was not made to sit at home like some souless trophy wife! She was made to be the best she possibly could, and she couldn't do that from her bedroom pouring over some old medical text while her father and Bellatrix screamed each other's heads off! A loud crash from downstairs interrupted her stewing, and with a groan, Narcissa stood. It seems Bella had reached her limit of their father's vitriol and now it was up to her to sopt thing before they turned physical.

Descending the stairs, she could now hear their words far more clearly than before. To her disappointment, it was yet again the same argument they've been having for the past three months.

"I will not!" Bellatrix screeched. "You embarrass the Black name father! I would rather marry a bloody squib than allow someone as lowly as a *Goy/e* to have my hand!"

Her father growled, and she heard the banging of his fist against his desk. "I am not asking him to marry the fool Bellatrix! Simply entertain his silly fascination enough for our benefit! As I've explained countless times, child, the Goyles own several beneficial mining contracts with the goblins! If we were to form our own alliance with that family of blundering oafs, those same contracts could be ours in a generation's turn!"

"Please!" Bellatrix scoffed. "As if the Goyles would ever risk their only source of income! And a paltry source of coin at that! The goblins are as greedy as dragons. Whatever coin those contracts do generate would be a pittance compared to our other ventures!"

"Bah! What do you know of business!" Their father scoffed. "A woman's mind could scarcely comprehend the complexities of negotiation! Hear me now daughter, this deal with the Goyles will be to our house's advantage, and you will do your duty as a daughter of House Black and string the imbecile lord along until I've snatched his fortune right from under his nose!"

"Fuck your deal!" Another crash sounded out just as Narcissa finally rounded the corner into her father's study. Bellatrix stood huffing with an angry gleam in her eye, scowling towards their father while glass littered the bookshelf behind him. "I'll not whore myself out just so you can swindle a bit of gold from a family of fools!"

Bella's wand, which Narcissa hadn't even realised was in her hand, began to shake violently. Angry purple sparks flew from the tip as her father's own hummed in his hand. It seemed she would need to act fast lest spells start flying.

“And what does Grandfather think of this potential deal, father?” She interrupted. Both Bella and their father turned to her at once, her father’s scowl deepening but his wand hand relaxing just enough to signal she made it in time.

“Narcissa this is a discussion between your sister and I.” Cadmus Black growled.

“Well you should have thought of that before shouting loud enough for the entire world to hear.”

She scoffed. “I simply wish to know if Grandfather is aware of your negotiations father. After all, as Lord Black he-”

“I’m well aware of my obligations to our head of house.” Her father snarled. “Tread carefully daughter, before I am forced to remind you of your own obligations to me.”

Bellatrix bristled beside her, but before she could step forward with a retort, Narcissa held up her hand with a pointed look. Thankfully, Bella got the message and stepped back, though the look of fury on her face remained.

“Of course, father.” Narcissa replied with practised grace. “I simply wished to know the extent of Grandfather’s knowledge on the subject. I’d hate to let slip any ambiguous details of such a dealing without the proper explanation to assuage any misunderstandings when next he and I meet for tea.”

It was a veiled threat, but one her father was smart enough to catch easily. With a furious grimace, Cadmus waved them away. “I will speak to my father when I find it necessary. Now leave me! I have work to do, and the two of you will do nothing but distract me!”

Narcissa bit back her victorious smile and dipped into a curtsy, whilst Bellatrix merely scoffed and stomped out. Just before Narcissa could step away, however, her father’s voice spoke up once more.

“Do not think you are free from your own duty, daughter.” He said with a chilling tone. “Your Grandfather may be Lord Black, but I am your *father*. And I’ve had just about enough defiance from my children. I will allow such acts of disrespect no longer.”

Narcissa said nothing, refusing to even turn back to face her father. When he said nothing further, she gave a curt nod and left the study with a feeling of indignation weighing heavily on her chest.

Bloody hell, she really wished she was at work right now.

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Hogwarts was always eerily quiet during the summer. With its halls usually filled to the brim with gaggles of loud, boisterous students from fall till late spring, the large stone causeways of the ancient castle felt out of place in such a deep silence. The smallest of sounds could be heard by the few who remained after term ended. The smallest breeze a hurricane. The faint swishes of the house elves dusting a cacophony of noise. Even the irritated sighs of the castle's wizened old Headmaster were akin to that of an angry howl.

As it were, Albus Dumbledore wasn't exactly angry. Annoyed? Sure. After all, the constant headache of finding a new Defence Against the Dark Arts professor every year was becoming quite the thorn in his side. It seemed as if Professor Thugglebee somehow came down with a malady of unknown origin the week prior, evidently from his travels to an ancient cursed temple deep within the Amazon. The man was fine for the most part, but claimed that the constant visions of hellfire consuming the earth and the screams of the damned in his ears were too distracting to properly instruct a classroom full of students...

What rubbish.

So here he was, sifting through a stack of resumes for potential new professors that seemed to grow smaller every year. If things kept on as they were, he'd soon be forced to actually accept the ministry's offer of an appointed education professional before long.

Albus shuddered at the thought. The ministry and education never mixed well. He highly doubted that whoever their 'education professional' was would be even remotely qualified. No, if anything, they'd sooner try teaching the students about ministry bureaucracy and regulations than actual Defence.

A knock on the door tore him from his musings, much to his relief.

“Enter.” He called, taking this unexpected interruption as his chance to sweep the thrice damned stack of resume’s from his desk. He’d figure out his lack of defence professor issue later.

The door to his office opened at his command, admitting his longtime deputy headmistress.

Minerva nodded in greeting to him, her arms laden with a stack of paperwork, much to his dismay.

“The first quarter lesson plans for the upcoming year.” She said by way of explanation. The stack of parchment landed on his desk with a *‘thump!’* rattling a few of his ornaments in the process. “I also need you to review the new list of muggleborn first years and approve their tuition stipend from the yearly budget.”

“I see.” Dumbledore hummed. “Anything else?”

“As a matter of fact there is.” Minerva reached for the top of the stack, pushing forward a long list of magical items nearly seven feet long. “Argus’s updated listing of banned items. Mr. Potter and his friends’ antics are responsible for seventy-six new additions in the past year alone.”

“Impressive.” Dumbledore muttered, casting a quick glance over the sprawling list. Now what exactly could they have done to have Muggle duct tape banned?

“Hardly!” Minerva scoffed. “I don’t know why you continue to entertain their antics, Albus.

Honestly! They are the prime source for a number of my headaches year-round!”

Dumbledore chuckled and pushed the list aside. “Oh it’s all in good fun Minerva. Besides, you always see fit that their more...egregious jokes are punished.”

“Hanging another student upside down for the whole of the school to openly laugh at is hardly a joke Albus!” She growled. “Mr. Snape was mortified!”

“If I recall, it was young Severus who started that altercation.”

“That does not make it acceptable! I’ll admit a fair few of their antics are amusing, but their little group toes the line between pranks and bullying far too often for my liking!” Minerva crossed her arms with a huff, forcing Albus to raise his hands appeasingly.

“You do speak truthfully Minerva. A gesture of goodwill then, hmm? I will write to Lord Potter Lord Black about their respective heir’s behaviour. With any luck, Mr. Potter and Mr. Black will be able to rein in their other friends a bit, yes? If I recall, Remus Lupin and Peter Pettigrew are hardly the decision makers of their little group.” The aged headmaster hummed.

Minerva huffed but nodded regardless. “Fine. But the first prank that goes too far and I’ll let Argus hang those four up by their thumbs as he’s so keen to do!”

Dumbledore smiled with amusement. “Of course. Now I-”

Before he could continue, a deep russet coloured owl flew in through the window, landing upon the large stack of lesson plans with a soft hoot. Dumbledore eyed the owl with a frown. He didn’t recognise it, yet that altogether wasn’t strange. With his positions as Headmaster, Chief Warlock, and Supreme Mugwump he received a great many letters from unfamiliar owls. No, what he found strange about this one was, in fact, the letter that sat tied to its leg and the familiar triangle symbol that adorned its face.

The owl seemed to grow impatient with his assessment, hooting impatiently as it held its leg up. He untied the letter without further preamble, allowing the owl to hoot one more before it moved to rest on Fawke’s perch. His trusty phoenix had recently undergone another rebirth and was, as such, resting within his quarters for the time being.

Dumbledore gave the owl one final glance before turning back to the letter.

“Most strange.” He muttered, idly tracing the familiar symbol with his fingers. The Deathly Hallows was a legend known by very few. The children’s story was a point of fascination for him once, back when he and Gellert were young and foolish. It was this symbol which drove Gellert to wage his foolish war. This symbol which forced Albus to take up arms against his love and nearly kill him in the process. This symbol which caused the knotted wand in his pocket to weigh heavily in his hand nearly every day...and now it gazed back up at him from the yellowed parchment of a single letter.

For the first time in thirty years, Albus Dumbledore felt a shred of fear grip his heart.

“Albus?” Minerva prodded gently. “Are you alright?”

The aged headmaster shook himself from his thoughts with a smile. “Yes! Perfectly fine! I simply wasn’t expecting a letter so late at night. If you’ll excuse me Minerva, I find myself quite tired suddenly. These old bones of mine grow wearier with each day.” He smiled again but Minerva seemed unsure.

“Would you like me to fetch Pomfrey? If you’re feeling ill-”

“Oh pish-posh! None of that now! I’m perfectly fine! I’m simply tired. Now go on and retire for the night as well now, yes? Perhaps pour yourself a nightcap of that scotch I gifted you last Christmas. I dare say you’ve worked far harder than I have today.”

Thankfully, his deputy headmistress seemed to take the hint. With a small bow of her head and a whispered goodnight, she left, the door closing behind her with a light *‘thud!’*.

“Now then...” Dumbledore furrowed his brow as he turned his attention back to the letter before him. “...Who exactly are you from, hmm?”

Without another word he tore the letter open, worried not for any curses or deadly hexes. The wards around Hogwarts were sound and would have incinerated any letter, and the owl that carried ill intent passed the wardline.

The letter unfolded to reveal a messy scrawl that Albus failed to recognise.

Professor Dumbledore-

You don’t know me, and perhaps now never will, but I know you. I expect you have a great deal of suspicion regarding this letter, and to be frank, I have a great deal of my own for even reaching out to you. However, it’s necessary if we’re to prevent the threat growing right under the Ministry’s nose.

You know of what – or more accurately – whom I speak of.

Tom Riddle is a greater threat than even you know. If I’m right, then he’s already gone to terrible lengths to obtain power. It’s only a matter of time before he makes his first move, and when he does, countless will die.

We must meet face to face. I will tell you all that I know then, but only then. You have no reason to trust me. I understand. That being said, I've attached a memory that will hopefully convince you to hear me out.

I hope you consider my words Professor. My grievances with you aside, I do still believe you're a great man.

Give Fawkes my regards.

-H. P.

Dumbledore read the letter twice more, each time the concern only growing in his chest.

Someone knew of Tom's plans then? He'd been suspicious for some time true, but he never had any information to truly act. He'd known for some time that his former pupil was the new leader of the blood purist movement, Lord Voldemort, as he's come to call himself, but he never had any real evidence to fully support his claim. So he'd been forced to watch and listen, watch as his former pupil's power grew and listen as what few whispers he could hear told of increasingly concerning plans that reminded Dumbledore of Gellert's own foolish mission.

And now here this stranger was proclaiming to know the same, if not more, of Tom's plans and asking for help to stop him.

The question was, could Albus trust him?

Reaching for the envelope, Albus found that there was indeed a small vial containing the shimmering liquid of a memory. A quick incantation ensured the memory hadn't been tampered with in any way, meaning whatever scenes it contained would be true, from the viewer's perspective at least.

Dumbledore hummed to himself. He found no reason to at least hear the stranger out. With a flick of his wand, his personal Pensieve floated over. Pouring the memory inside, the aged headmaster took a breath and pushed his head into the water.

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Dozens of scenes flew past his vision – collections of differing confrontations. In one, a small raven-haired boy faced off against a professor and the abomination fused to the back of the man's head. He watched as this boy bravely fought, refusing to cave to the abomination's honeyed words and fighting to keep the Philosopher's Stone from its clutches. He watched as the boy was forced to take the man's life to save his own, a heavy burden for one so young.

The next saw the same raven-haired boy, slightly older now but no less too young, deep within the bowels of Hogwarts. It was with a gasp that Albus realized where the boy was. The fabled Chamber of Secrets was real after all, and so was it's monster...

Albus faced down many horrors in his day. Wraiths, leshens, and even a dragon or two, but none of them compared to the true horror of watching this young man face a Basilisk alone. He watched the boy run, narrowly escaping death dozens of time. He watched as he was saved at the last second by Dumbledore's very own phoenix, the small blurb about wishing Fawkes well making all too much sense now. He watched as the young boy pulled a sword from a hat and slayed the beastly snake, earning himself a death sentence as well from the deadly serpent's venom. The shade that orchestrated this – the one that spoke from Tom Riddle's lips and gloated with his voice – was expelled by the boy's quick thinking, and Albus found himself nearly cheering with delight when Fawkes willingly gave his tears to heal the boy's wound.

More scenes played out. He saw himself aiding the boy and a bushy-haired girl in rescuing an innocent man. A man who bore the same name as one of his students. He watched the boy, now a young man, facing off in the Triwizard tournament. Witnessed the triumphs and the utter failure when Tom Riddle resurrected himself with a vile ritual.

He knew not how these events came to be. By all means, he never lived a single moment, yet he was there within the memories all the same. Yet he did no one thing. Every scene and harrowing memory reflected the same thing. Tom Riddle had lost himself completely to the darkness. Tom Riddle was a threat. Tom Riddle was no more.

Only Lord Voldemort remained.

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Author's Note

So Dumbledore is brought into the loop...sort of! Next chapter we'll see the meeting between him and Harry and maybe even see some...grievances aired out lol.

Thanks for reading!