

Інформація

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Книги

>

Гарри Поттер

Волшебное путешествие

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Следуйте за Куинном Уэстом в его волшебном путешествии, который попадает в мир Гарри Поттера, но является ли мир, в который он попал, таким же, как тот, о котором он когда-то читал? Сможет ли он найти свой путь в этом новом мире? Сможет ли он когда-нибудь почувствовать себя здесь своим? Какую возможность предоставит ему магия этого мира? Прочтите, чтобы узнать...

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271. Chapter 271: The Last Train

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Patreón.

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[Link in the Bio/Profile](#)

Quinn apparated on to the King's Cross Station, Platform Nine-and-Three-Quarters like he usually did on the First of September every year. But unlike every year, when his entry didn't go unnoticed. Instead, two grim-faced, bearded men in dark suits stared at stood at a distance of a few steps, staring at him without speaking.

Quinn quirked a brow at the two men. "Aurors. . . ? No, you guys are Hit Wizards," he said.

"That's a nice eye you got, kid," said the Hit Wizard with the more glorious beard. "How did you know that we are Hit Wizards and not Aurors?"

Hit Wizards and Aurors worked closely under the DMLE, and because of the nature of their duties, both sub-departments worked closely, and thus the cultures of both were quite similar — dressing sense and the general vibe.

"I can tell," said Quinn smiling at the two, "you guys feel sharper if that makes sense. Plus, you guys have a more disciplined bearing than Aurors."

The two Hit Wizards puffed their chests in pride. Most people held Aurors in higher regard than Hit Wizards because of their presence in the community but only Hit Wizards knew that while it was tougher to become an Auror than a Hit Wizard, it was more challenging to stay on the force as a Hit Wizard as they were required to maintain a level of dueling and magic skill to be considered effective. That strict regime had rendered Hit Wizards much more disciplined than their Auror

counterparts.

"You apparated here," said the Hit Wizard with a less glorious beard, but still glorious enough, "do you have a license?"

Quinn took out his Apparition License, which also worked as his age proof, and presented it to the Hit Wizard, who waved a wand at it before nodding. "It's legitimate," he said, handing the card back, "you're good to go. Have fun at school, and stay safe."

"Thank you for your hard work, both of you. I hope to see you around," said Quinn, waving them goodbye.

After Quinn left, the Hit Wizard with the more glorious beard asked his less-glorious bearded companion, "What did he mean by 'see you around?' "

"Hmm? Probably he meant by seeing us at patrolling Hogsmeade."

"Ah, that makes sense."

Quinn walked through the crowd of students and their protective parents, trying to ensure that their children made it onto the Hogwarts Express.

The Death Eater threat was fresh in the minds of the public.

Quinn took out his Headboy batch, placed it on the lapel of his maroon suit that he wore over a black shirt and tie, and held his briefcase over his shoulder. He looked behind to watch the King's Cross on First of September for the last time.

Quinn walked through the train with excited students crowding the corridors.

"Oh ho, Headboy!" said one person, patting Quinn on the shoulder. "I knew they would make you the Headboy; congratulations, mate!"

"Thank you," said Quinn with a polite smile and then repeated the entire thing to the troupe of students that made that stopped him to wish congratulations. "Thank you."

Quinn reached the expanded Prefect's compartment and entered to see a lot of Prefects had already arrived, and half of them were dressed in their Hogwarts robes. Even without looking at their faces, Quinn could tell that they were new fifth-year Prefects.

"Good morning, my dear Prefects," said Quinn as he closed the door behind him while noticing how all eyes went to his badge. "I'm really looking forward to working with all of you this year, so let's make it a fun one." Quinn took a spot in the compartment after the congratulations and took out his pocket watch to check the time, "Hmm, there's still some time before the departure. We are going to start the first meeting when the train leaves the station, but until then, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask."

Every year, it was a tradition in the Prefects circle of Hogwarts that the Headboy and Headgirl would give an addressal of sorts to the rest of the Prefects to set the tone for the next year, what to expect, and give a chance for the new Prefects to introduce themselves.

An eager hand went up immediately.

"Yes, Ms. Harper," asked Quinn, pulling out his mental profile to the brunette fifth-year Slytherin. Ambitious, studious, well-spoken, last checked she was dating a fellow Slytherin, and most importantly, she hadn't used AID services in her four years at Hogwarts.

"You know of me?" said Harper in surprise before she placed her question. "Doesn't matter. Are you aware if Professor Dumbledore is going to continue teaching this year?"

"Excellent question," said Quinn smiling. "From what I have been made aware of, Professor Dumbledore is going back to his full-time Headmaster duties and thus, unfortunately, will not be resuming his teaching duties." And unfortunate it was as Harper and the rest of the Prefects looked

disappointed at the news — Dumbledore was an excellent teacher after all.

"So, who's the new professor?" Harper asked.

Quinn had at start doubted if there was going to be a new professor in Hogwarts because Dumbledore had picked up teaching, but after his correspondence with his Hogwarts insider, the ever-lovely Matron Poppy Pomfrey, Quinn had found that Dumbledore had stepped down, and according to Poppy, the faculty had been made aware of the new professor, which meant Quinn knew of the new professor, though he already knew who it was going to be.

"The new professor is going to be—"

The door to the compartment opened, and stood at the threshold were sixth-year Gryffindor Prefects.

"Good morning, Harry, Hermione," said Quinn to the two pair the Golden Squad. "How are both of you doing this lovely day."

"Hello, Quinn," said Hermione entering the compartment with her trunk, which suddenly floated above to the overhead luggage rack and with Harry's luggage, who hurriedly closed the door, separating him from the people (mostly first years) stared shamelessly; some kids even pressed their faces against the windows of their compartments to get a look at him. Harry's fame had seen a spike during the summer break after the Ministry incident. And it didn't look like he enjoyed the sensation of standing in a very bright spotlight as he darkened the windows of the compartment's door.

"Working hard, eh, Harry," said Quinn grinning, making the Boy-Who-Lived groan.

"Congratulations, Quinn," said Hermione, noticing the Headboy batch, "but I guess it isn't much of a surprise."

"Thank you, Hermione. I, too, won't be surprised if you are named the Headgirl the next year," said Quinn.

"Oh, you jest!" Hermione waved it off with embarrassment, though it was clear from her expression that she liked it. "Ah, Quinn. . . thank you for the Aegis card, Quinn, my parents really appreciated it, especially after the person came home to explain everything in detail," she said.

Quinn had given the Granger parents a contact card to Aegis to ward their house when he had met them during his visit to the Weasley Wizard Wheezes.

"Did they choose to ward the house?" asked Quinn.

"They did," said Hermione, and Quinn could see that she was both glad and relieved of her parents' decision. "And thank god the person was a muggleborn; it was one the reasons they went ahead with the wards."

"It's the same for all living in the non-magical society," said Quinn with a grin and thumbs up. "Making people comfortable is the first part of making a successful sale."

"Speaking of," Harry chimed in, "where did you disappear to that day? Ivy said that you disappeared in a hurry."

"I remembered something I had forgotten, and well, it had to be taken care of urgently," said Quinn, putting on an embarrassed smile. He couldn't tell them that the reason he had run out of the shop was that the illegal bug in Amelia Bones' house had alerted him of an invasion, which turned out to be headed by the Dark Lord by himself.

"Ah, you took care of the thing that you remembered?"

"Yes, it was tough, and I barely got in time, but I got it done." He had to freeze multiple Death Eaters, stab Bellatrix Lestrange, and rescue Amelia with Voldemort staring at him. And after that, he finished with a comparatively lighter serving of abducting an Auror and then disarming

him in front of the then Head of DMLE.

Quinn was brought out of his thought by Harper. "Um. . . Quinn, about the new professor," she asked.

"Ah, my apologies, Ms. Harper," Quinn said, genuinely sorry for forgetting about the previous conversation. "Yes, the new professor—" The compartment's door opened again, and this it was the pair of sixth-year Slytherin Prefects who had come to the Prefect's compartment.

"It has been a while, Malfoy, Parkinson," said Quinn, greeting the newcomers with the same smile he had given to Harry and Hermione.

"Would you like help with your luggage?"

Draco and Pansy looked at Quinn, at his badge, then back up to his face.

"No, thank you," said Draco, pulling out his wand to levitate their trunks to the racks.

A heavy tension descended in the compartment as only two spots remained to sit. One of them was near the windows while the other was in the middle — the former was away from Harry, while the latter was right in front of him. The question was, where would Draco sit?

Draco walked to the spot in the middle of the room, sat down, and stared at Potter with a smirk on his face. As one would expect, Harry didn't appreciate that look and a snarl appeared on his face.

"Is there something funny, Malfoy?" asked Harry heatedly.

Everyone in the compartment became silent, all listening to what was about to happen between the two. Even Quinn stayed quiet to see what was going to happen.

Malfoy scoffed derisively, "I just wonder how long you're going to live, Potter. Now that the Dark Lord is back. . . I don't think you're going to make it to the next year," he leaned forward and whispered with a nasty grin on his face, "he's coming for you, Potter."

Harry laughed once before launching himself at Draco, grabbing his collar and slamming him into the wall behind. Draco replied with a kick to the stomach. Harry stumbled back, but it wasn't enough to stop him as he launched at Draco again and, this time, landed a punch squarely on Draco's face.

It was at this moment that the compartment full of Prefects sprung into action and pulled the two enemies apart while both tried to reach each other.

"He's going to come after everyone you love, Pottah!"

"Fuck you, Malfoy!"

"Enough!" said Quinn; he had seen enough to see where the situation stood, and with a wave of his fake wand, steel chains appeared out of the walls behind Harry and Draco and wrapped around them like vices of hell and pulled the two boys back, slamming into the wall.

The rest of the people backed away when Quinn stood up and walked to the two bound ones. "Listen, I don't really care what both of you think about each other, and I'm also fine with your regular Gryffindor-Slytherin fights, but if I see this thing come up and be the reason behind why two of your friend groups fight, I'll personally be responsible for your detentions, and believe me," he looked at both of them with stale eyes, "you won't like me after those detentions.

Do you understand?"

The two didn't reply but did look away and bowed their heads. Quinn stared at them for a moment before the chains disappeared.

He turned to Harry and said, "I don't want you inciting people against the children of accused Death Eaters. If I see you doing that, I would be very disappointed in you. You'd be turning into the same thing that has been plaguing you for years." He turned to Draco and said, "If I see provocative

comments like the one now, then I will be seeing your actions as they are now, Malfoy. If they create problems in Hogwarts, I'll bury you and your friends and make your life very difficult in Hogwarts."

Quinn stared at Draco, who looked up to see a stone look in Quinn's eyes, and till the moment Quinn removed his eyes, Draco wasn't able to look away.

Draco watched as Quinn, and maybe it was his imagination, but Draco saw a look of disappointment flashing in Quinn's eyes. Subconsciously his hands went to his forearm for a brief moment before he realized what he was doing and removed it instantly.

"Now, Ms. Harper, where were we? Ah, yes, the new professor," said Quinn, facing the new Slytherin professor. "So, the new professor—" The compartment door once again opened yet another time.

"This is ridiculous!" said Harper, an irritated expression on her face.

A breathless third-year girl stepped inside, and she looked to be shaking in her boots with all Prefects, Headboy, and Headgirl looking at her.

"I'm supposed to deliver these to Quinn West, Harry P-Potter, and Draco Malfoy," she said, faltering as her eyes met Harry's, and she turned scarlet. She was holding out three scrolls of parchment tied with violet ribbon. Quinn, Harry, and Draco took the scroll addressed to each of them, and the girl stumbled back out of the compartment.

"What is it?" Hermione asked as Harry unrolled his.

"An invitation," said Harry.

Quinn read his invitation with indifferent eyes.

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Mr. West,

I would be delighted if you would join me for a bite of lunch in compartment

C.

Sincerely,

Professor H.E.F. Slughorn

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He looked up at Harper and chuckled, "Ms. Harper, it seems you can finally get the answer to your question."

"What do you mean? Who is it from?" she asked, tilting her head.

Quinn turned the slip and showed it to Harper and everyone.

"Professor Horace Eugene Flaccus Slughorn," he said, "our new professor."

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Quinn West - MC - My disappointment is immeasurable, but my day isn't ruined.

Harry Potter - Boy-Who-Lived - Puncher.

Draco Malfoy - Malfoy Heir - Kicker.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

272. Chapter 272: Slug Club

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After the Headboy and Headgirl addressal, Quinn assigned the Prefects with their patrolling time slots and adjourned the meeting after taking questions from the new prefects.

"Are you two coming?" Quinn asked Draco and Harry.

Harry and Draco stood up silently, which Quinn took as their agreement. He opened the door to the compartment and smiled at the lunch trolley lady who was just starting from the very front of the train where the Prefect's compartment was located.

"Would you like something off the cart, dear?" asked the trolley lady with her dimpled smile.

Quinn peered at the snack cart filled with all sorts of sweets — Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans, Drooble's Best Blowing Gum, Chocolate Frogs, Pumpkin Pasties, Cauldron Cakes, Licorice Wands, among many assortments of sweets. Quinn wondered if he should buy something with his pockets filled with an ample amount of chocolate. Then he saw something on the cart that put a smile on his face.

"One Weasley's Candy In a Can," he said, forking a sickle in return for the assortments of candies that caused different joke-like effects upon eating them.

He thanked the cart lady and stepped aside from the door so that she could reach all the other people inside the Prefect's compartment. He looked at Draco and Harry and asked as he pocketed the can, "Do you guys want to buy something? It's my treat."

Draco turned his nose up while Harry politely shook his head.

"Chocolate?" Quinn took out chocolate balls, which yet again were refused by both. "Suit yourselves, now let's go see what Slughorn has to eat; I'm starving."

And thus began the long walk to compartment C. The corridors, which were packed with people on the lookout for the lunch trolley, were impossible to negotiate, even for a Headboy and two Prefects — all of them well known personally. Every now and then, students would hurtle out of their compartments to get a better look at Harry and congratulate

Quinn.

"Hi, Quinn," said Cho Chang as she stood at the threshold of her compartment. "Congratulations for getting the shiniest badge in Hogwarts."

"Hello to you as well, Chang. It indeed is shiny," said Quinn chuckling.

"So, I saw Diggory at the station; I suppose he was here to see you away," he smirked, "it seems you two are going strong, eh. Tell me, did your parents come to send you off, or it was just Mr. Loving Boyfriend."

Cho blushed to her neck at Quinn's teasing words.

"Oh ho, so it was just Diggory, eh. I see, I see," said Quinn grinning. His eyes then went inside the compartment and saw Marietta Edgecombe sitting in her seat, stiff. She turned her face away the moment Quinn looked at her.

"Edgecombe," said Quinn, smiling, "I hope you're doing well."

Marietta cranked her head towards Quinn with a cramped smile and nodded. She didn't speak. Quinn's smile turned wider, and he could see Marietta twitch. Marietta had been low-key after Quinn had threatened her to keep quiet about DA, but she turned frightened after Umbbridge had been sacked and Quinn was in the center of the entire incident.

"Let's catch up later, Chang," said Quinn when he noticed that his two companions were getting restless waiting for him.

Quinn, along with Harry and Draco, pushed on. When they reached compartment C, they saw at once that they were not Slughorn's only invitees, although judging by the enthusiasm of Slughorn's welcome, Harry Potter was the most warmly anticipated.

"Harry Potter, m'boy!" said Slughorn, jumping up at the sight of Harry Potter entering his compartment. Slughorn seemed so excited that his great velvet-covered belly seemed to fill all the remaining space in the

compartment. His shiny bald head and great silvery mustache gleamed as brightly in the sunlight as the golden buttons on his waistcoat. "Good to see you, good to see you! And you must be Draco Malfoy! I saw you a long time ago when you were a wee bit child. You remind me a lot of your father."

He turned his eyes around behind Draco and Harry and stretched his fat neck to peek outside. "My boys, I was told that Quinn West was along with you, but I do not see him. Did he not receive my invitation?"

Draco and Harry finally, after their brawl, looked at each other, wondering who should take the lead. It was Harry who decided to speak to the large professor.

"He's here, sir," Harry said and pointed behind into the compartment.

Slughorn turned, and he saw the crowd of invitees chatting among themselves. But then Slughorn's eyes caught a black-haired person decked in a maroon suit standing out from the rest of the group. He was standing over the appetizers table, looking at the options with his fingers tweaking before they went for the plate and picked up a sausage roll with a toothpick in it.

"Quinn West," Slughorn walked towards Quinn, who looked up from the appetizers with the sausage rolls on his lips.

Slughorn stared at Quinn, his mind going through the thoughts about Quinn. He knew of the Wests — he knew that they were significant, seclusive, and more importantly, ridiculously wealthy — though it puzzled him why they weren't well known. He had only come to know about the family when he saw Millicent Bagnold, the then Minister, and an impressive cohort of high-ranking Ministry employees walking with someone — and when Slughorn had asked about who the person was, he had received the name, George West. Slughorn decided to use his 'Slug

Club' connections to find more about George West, and to his surprise, it took him contacting Lucius Malfoy to find more about George West. Even then, Lucius had been reluctant to talk about George West or the Wests in general, and all he had got was that they were extremely wealthy.

But Slughorn knew that there was much more to it. He tried to find out more on his own, looked for other West; however, except for the one time he had seen George West, Slughorn never met another West, or even heard of them. . . that was until last year when he saw the name Quinn West in the corner of a newspaper. So when Dumbledore came to him with Harry Potter in tow, Slughorn already had an additional incentive to return to Hogwarts as a professor.

"Ah, Professor Slughorn," Quinn said with a light smile. "It's a pleasure to meet you, and I thank you for the lunch invitation. Putting that aside, I, as the Headboy of the student body, would like to welcome you back to The Hogwarts School Of Witchcraft and Wizardry."

Slughorn laughed wholeheartedly as he wildly shook Quinn's hand. "I can see why they chose you as the Headboy. You do seem to suit the role. I have heard a lot about you, West — top of your year, with praises on the lips of every professor I have talked to. I look forward to teaching you this year."

"And I'm sure the students, especially the Slytherins, would be excited to learn from someone who was once their Head of House. For I, for one, can't wait to attend your lessons."

Slughorn once again laughed joyously and slapped Quinn on his shoulder repeatedly.

When Slughorn was done making small talk with Quinn, he turned to the other guest, and it was then the compartment's door opened, and three people entered. Quinn's breath was taken away when he saw the people

at the door. Suddenly for Quinn, there was no one but them and himself.

He vanished the toothpick in his hand and moved towards them with vivid emotion in his eyes.

They looked like they were going to speak something, but Quinn enveloped them in a warm, loving hug, wanting to convey the multitude of emotions through this one gesture. Quinn even felt himself tear a little as he hugged tighter.

"The fuck's wrong with you?" said Eddie, staring at Quinn with a weirded-out look. He tried to push Quinn away, but the Muay Thai and Boy magic practitioners didn't budge.

Marcus, the gentle one of the Ravenclaw Trio, accepted the hug and hugged back, subconsciously patting Quinn's back. "Not that we don't appreciate the hug, Quinn, but may we know why the sudden hug?"

Quinn took a deep breath before ending the hug and looked at his two best friends with joyous eyes. "For six long years, I have ridden this train on First of September, and today makes it the seventh, and my last. For the past five years, I have tried to find both of you on this train, but some cursed power, something vile, has stopped our union," he placed his hands on their shoulder, "but today, today it seems the curse has been broken, and our friendship has triumphed over the hardships and finally have brought us together."

"Mate," said Eddie, "that's nice and all, but look around, will ya?"

Quinn turned to come face to face with his gorgeous but also frowning girlfriend. "Daphne," said Quinn, walking close to her, "even though it has only been a few days, I have missed you."

Daphne continued to furrow her brows as she looked at her smiling boyfriend. She had wanted to meet Quinn as soon as she boarded the train but knew that he would be busy with the prefect business. She

waited patiently with Tracey in a compartment they had occupied for their group. Then came Marcus, soon followed by Luna, and they all started to share their summer stories. But that was until Eddie arrived, and unlike her and Quinn, Tracey and Eddie weren't so reserved when it came to public display of affection.

Daphne (and Marcus) couldn't sit awkwardly as the couple, who had not met in close to a month, went at each other, trying to make up for the missed time. The unabashed couple didn't even notice that Luna was staring at them with her curious eyes.

The invitation from Horace Slughorn came just at the right time as Daphne wasn't sure she could take it anymore. Marcus, Eddie, and her had been invited. She had heard of Slughorn from her father, who had told her about the 'Slug Club.' Even though she wasn't interested in joining the 'Slug Club,' she knew Quinn would be there, so she thought accepting the invitation wouldn't be so bad.

When she finally arrived, as she expected, Quinn was there, but he walked past her and hugged Marcus and Eddie while speaking strange words about curses, friendship, and hardships.

Daphne sighed. She knew of his occasional penchant for theatrics. And she couldn't be mad at him for long. "I would appreciate if you wouldn't ignore me next time," she said, looking up at him.

"How could I ever ignore you," said Quinn. He leaned forward and whispered as he lightly kissed her cheek, "You're the most breathtaking one in every room."

Daphne's cheeks flushed and pushed Quinn away, though her hands held no power. "Not in front of everyone!"

Quinn grinned, enjoying seeing the blushing Daphne. It was a rare sight that he had only found after the two had started dating. He wanted to see

more.

"Ahem."

Quinn and Daphne turned to see Ivy Potter standing waiting to pass by.

They moved away, giving her space to pass by between them. But Ivy didn't move and said, "You left so abruptly the last time, didn't even say a proper goodbye."

Daphne's eyes narrowed. She looked sharply at Quinn for an answer.

"I met her during my visit at the Weasley's store," said Quinn, keeping his exterior normal, even though inside he was groaning, for he knew why Ivy was doing it. "There, I had to leave suddenly because of some business that had come up."

"I see," said Daphne, and her expression went back to her usual 'Daphne-esque' expression, even though she was bothered that Quinn had met with Ivy and she didn't know about it.

At a call from Slughorn, everyone sat down around the table. Quinn kept his eyes to his left, where Daphne sat beside him, trying to ignore his right where Ivy sat.

"Now, do you know everyone?" Slughorn asked Harry, whom the professor had made sit beside him. "Blaise Zabini is in your year, of course —"

Blaise and Harry exchanged a nod to each other. It was the most a Gryffindor and Slytherin would give each other, and those two had reached the level after working with each other in DA for months.

"This is Cormac McLaggen; perhaps you've come across each other —? No?"

McLaggen, a large, wiry-haired youth, raised a hand, and Harry and Neville nodded back at him.

"— and this is Marcus Belby, I don't know whether —? Oh, you do?"

Excellent!"

Even if a group of people in DA might not have talked to each other, there was not a single DA member who didn't have a talk with Marcus about secrecy and rules outside the Room Of Requirements.

"— and you must know Carmichael. You two have been playing against each other at the battlefield of Quidditch —!"

Eddie and Harry just bluntly stared at each other. All both were willing to do was acknowledge each other existence as human-shaped living organisms.

"— and here we have West. But I'm sure as a Prefect, you must know the Headboy!" Slughorn finished.

Quinn nodded politely to Harry, and there was yet again a wave of congratulations for Quinn becoming the Headboy.

"Well now, this is most pleasant," said Slughorn cozily. "A chance to get to know you all a little better. Here, take a napkin. I've packed my own lunch; the trolley, as I remember it, is heavy on licorice wands, and a poor old man's digestive system isn't quite up to such things. . . .

Pheasant, Belby?

Marcus tarted and accepted what looked like half a cold pheasant.

"I was just telling young Marcus here that I had the pleasure of teaching his Uncle Damocles," Slughorn told everyone, now passing around a basket of rolls. "Outstanding wizard, outstanding, and his Order of Merlin most well-deserved. Do you see much of your uncle, Marcus?"

Marcus waited till he had transferred some of the pheasant onto his plate before answering. "Not . . . not much of him, no."

"Well, of course, I daresay he's busy," said Slughorn, looking questioningly at Belby. "I doubt he invented the Wolfsbane Potion without considerable hard work!"

"I'm sure he did his share of hard work," said Marcus placing a bread roll onto his plate. "I haven't seen my uncle in years. My dad and uncle don't get along that much."

". . . I see," said Slughorn with a smile drained of its previous warmth.

"Now, you, Cormac," said Slughorn, "I happen to know you see a lot of your Uncle Tiberius because he has a rather splendid picture of the two of you hunting nogtails in, I think, Norfolk?"

"Oh, yeah, that was fun, that was," said McLaggen. "We went with Bertie Higgs and Rufus Scrimgeour — this was before he became the Head of DMLE, obviously —"

"Ah, you know Bertie and Rufus too?" beamed Slughorn, now offering around a small tray of pies. "Speaking of that," he turned to Susan Bones, "Dear, how's your aunt doing? I heard about the attack on her house. She must have been devastated — how the times have become, the Minster's house been attacked, this would've never happened before."

He meandered off into a long-winded reminiscence about the wide array of topics about things that made Slughorn seem important and well connected, which in truth, he was, but the bragging was getting a bit too much for everyone. The afternoon wore on with more anecdotes about illustrious wizards Slughorn had taught, all of whom had been delighted to join what the 'Slug Club.'

The Slug Club was an out-of-hours dining and social club made up of Horace Slughorn's most well-liked and sometimes famous students at Hogwarts. Along the course of the school year, Slughorn would hold various club get-togethers, often dinners with fine food. Slughorn would lead the conversation in order to get to know the members better and encourage them to associate with one another. For the grander parties, he would invite famous former members to impress. Slughorn's aim was

to cultivate talent and give his favorites a nudge toward fame and fortune, hoping to reap the benefits of his connection to them once they became the "high fliers" he expected them to be.

Finally, the train emerged from yet another long misty stretch into a red sunset, and Slughorn looked around, blinking in the twilight.

"Good gracious, it's getting dark already! I didn't notice that they'd lit the lamps! You'd better go and change into your robes, all of you. McLaggen, you must drop by and borrow that book on nogtails. Harry, Blaise — any time you're passing. The same goes for you, Ivy," he said, flashing a smile, "I have many stories about your mother that I think you'd be interested in. Eddie, you as well, have to sit with me sometime; I'll tell you about Gwenog Jones, she was my student, and I think you might know her from the Holyhead Harpies." He turned to Quinn, "Quinn, let's have some tea when you drop by during Headboy duties. Daphne, dear, did you know I was sort of a matchmaker for your parents. . . ."

"I'm glad that's over," muttered Marcus after they exited compartment C.

"Strange man, isn't he?"

"I'm not going back if he invites me the next time," said Quinn, bluntly.

"Why? I thought it was fun," said Eddie, stretching his arms above his head. "Though it was a bit long. . . .hmm, I wonder how's Tracey faring with Luna."

"The Slug Club can be a good place, no doubt," said Quinn to Eddie, "but for everyone here, it doesn't do much good. . . . maybe for Marcus, but he was rejected."

"What do you mean? Why was Marcus rejected?" Eddie said, frowning.

"The Slug Club is about creating connections," started Quinn. "Slughorn has constructed a long history of inviting influential students into his club and has created a network of now influential people in high places.

What he does is allow students to use those connections — and gives those students a chance at having first-rate careers ahead of them. Helping others become famous gained Slughorn his influence, such as being able to recommend the next junior member of the Goblin Liaison Office, and various benefits, such as free tickets to any Holyhead Harpies match or a box of his favorite exotic fruit."

"Daphne and I have connections that exceed Slughorn's. The same goes for Malfoy. Potters have their unique position, their father is an exalted Auror and a member of Wizengamot, so they also won't gain much from Slughorn. Zabini and McLaggen will definitely benefit from Slughorn, so it's good for them." He put his arm around Eddie's shoulder, "You are the most popular amateur prospect in all of British Isles, so as long as you don't screw up, you pretty much don't need Slughorn's help — he might have been able to provide you with a good agent, but with your popularity, good ones would flock around you, begging you to join them" Eddie puffed his chest. He knew he was pure awesome, but hearing it did feel good.

Now, Marcus. . . if he knew his paradigm-changing uncle better, Slughorn would have flocked around him as much as did everyone else, but because Marcus didn't, he didn't talk to him after he revealed his family status," said Quinn. "Slughorn isn't interested in students who won't give him returns — he doesn't think Marcus has anything to offer, so he just cut him. . . that's how Slug Club works."

Marcus bowed his head. Did that mean he didn't have any personal value?

"Slughorn is a fool to not consider Marcus," said Quinn, making Marcus raise his head. "Ask anyone in DA, and they will tell you who's the real boss." He looked at Marcus, "And I take it back, you don't need Slughorn

— you have connections much greater than his."

Marcus said, "What? Quinn, I don't know my uncle—"

"Who's talking about uncle," said Quinn and then pointed at himself. "You have me as your connection. You literally can't have a better connection than me. Whatever Slughorn can provide, I can do better."

Marcus looked at Quinn, who was now mimicking Eddie in his 'I am pure awesome' expression.

Marcus smiled. Quinn was right. He did have better connections than Slughorn, much, much better.

"Next time we go to Hogsmeade. It's my treat," said Marcus.

" "Seriously?! Nice!" " said Quinn and Eddie.

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Quinn West - MC - I'm better.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Damn, that was long, now I'm sleepy. . .

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

273. Chapter 273: The Last

Opening Feast

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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Link in the Bio/Profile

The Great Hall, with its four long House tables and its staff table set at the top of the room, was decorated as usual with floating candles that

made the plates below glitter and glow. The students of Hogwarts filled the room with their voices and words, bringing the life and energy back into the castle that it had been devoid of for the past two months.

At the staff table, the professors sat looking over the students with smiles on their faces. Dumbledore got to his feet with his twinkly eyes and bearded smile. He raised his hand, and the talk and laughter echoing around the Hall died away almost instantly.

"The very best of evenings to you!" he said, smiling broadly, his arms opened wide as though to embrace the whole room. "Now . . . to our new students, welcome, to our old students, welcome back! Another year full of magical education awaits you. . ."

The sorted first years stared at their new Headmaster with attentive ears, as if every word from Dumbledore was the truth of magic. Their pre-sorting ceremony jitters had vanished, and now decked in their house colors, they took everything from the color of the charmed ceiling to the scratched scribbles on the tabled with curious eyes.

"And Mr. Filch, our caretaker, has asked me to say that there is a blanket ban on any joke items bought at the shop called Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes."

Quinn took out his Weasley's Candy In A Can, passed the candies to his fellow Ravenclaws, and shared a smile with those who understood the jokes while winking at the first-year Ravenclaws who gazed upon with eyes as the Headboy violated the rules in front of them.

"Those wishing to play for their House Quidditch teams should give their names to their Heads of House as usual."

Dumbledore's words made the Ravenclaws interested in playing Quidditch for the house turned to Eddie, who they knew was the new captain as Flitwick had personally come by to congratulate him on

getting the position and had handed Eddie the captain pin.

"We are pleased to welcome a new member of staff this year. Professor Slughorn" — Slughorn stood up, his bald head gleaming in the candlelight, his big waistcoated belly casting the table below into shadow — "is a former colleague of mine who has agreed to resume his old post of Potions master."

"Potions?"

"Potions?"

The word echoed all over the Hall as people wondered whether they had heard right.

"Professor Snape, meanwhile," said Dumbledore, raising his voice so that it carried over all the muttering, "will be taking over the position of Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher."

"I knew it!" said Eddie pumped his fist, and loud enough that many eyes were attracted to him. He did not care; he was staring at Quinn and Marcus. "I said last year that the bat will get his greasy hands on the DADA post. Ha! I was right!"

Snape, who was sitting on Dumbledore's right, did not stand up at the mention of his name; he merely raised a hand in lazy acknowledgment of the applause from the Slytherin table, yet those who looked closely were sure that they detected a look of triumph on his ever scowling face.

"Wanna bet that he would be gone by the end of the year?" Eddie grinned at Marcus, who sat in front of him.

"Only if you bet him to stay, and I get to choose that he leaves," said Marcus. "Everyone knows the job's jinxed. No one's lasted more than a year."

Eddie clicked his tongue. He didn't want to take on a bet in which he couldn't win.

Dumbledore cleared his throat. Eddie and Marcus weren't the only ones who had been talking; the whole Hall had erupted in a buzz of conversation at the news that Snape had finally achieved his heart's desire. Seemingly oblivious to the sensational nature of the news he had just imparted, Dumbledore said nothing more about staff appointments but waited a few seconds to ensure that the silence was absolute before continuing.

"Now, as everybody in this Hall knows, Lord Voldemort and his followers are once more at large and gaining in strength."

The silence seemed to tauten and strain as Dumbledore spoke. At the Slytherin table, Malfoy was not looking at Dumbledore but making his fork hover in mid-air with his wand, as though he found the Headmaster's words unworthy of his attention.

"I cannot emphasize strongly enough how dangerous the present situation is and how much care each of us at Hogwarts must take to ensure that we remain safe. The castle's magical fortifications have been strengthened over the summer, we are protected in new and more powerful ways, but we must still guard scrupulously against carelessness on the part of any student or member of staff. I urge you, therefore, to abide by any security restrictions that your teachers might impose upon you, however irksome you might find them.

In particular, the rule that you are not to be out of bed after hours,"
Dumbledore paused for a second and pointedly stared at Quinn, sitting at the Ravenclaw, who didn't meet the Headmaster's eyes. "I implore all of you, should you notice anything strange or suspicious within or outside the castle, to report it to a member of staff immediately. I trust you to conduct yourselves, always, with the utmost regard for your own and others' safety."

Dumbledore's blue eyes swept over the students before he smiled once more. "But now, your beds await, as warm and comfortable as you could possibly wish, and I know that your top priority is to be well-rested for your lessons tomorrow. Let us therefore say good night. Pip pip!"

With the usual deafening scraping noise, the benches were moved back, and the hundreds of students began to file out of the Great Hall toward their dormitories. Quinn instructed his fifth-year Ravenclaw prefects to fulfill their prefect's duty of shepherding the first years and then joined Eddie, Marcus, and Luna.

"So, no more late-night visits, eh, Headboy West?" said Eddie grinning with one hand around Quinn's shoulder. "Or would the legend of the living ghost who wanders Hogwarts halls continue for another year?"

"No, I won't be wandering the halls after curfews. I'm the Headboy now; it doesn't suit the position. Want some?" said Quinn took out the Weasley's Candy In A Can.

"And it was fine when you were only a Prefect?" asked Marcus.

"Why look at the past when the future is so bright," said Quinn. "Also, hypothetically speaking, even if I do go out after the curfew, no one would ever know. . ."

"We sleep in the same room, doofus," said Eddie.

Quinn raised his hand, and hanging off his middle finger was a ring hoop with a solitary key in it. "Gentlemen, feast your eyes on the key to the infamous Headboy's Suite. The private living quarters, only available to the one who hold the title of Headboy, which is the great me." He patted Marcus and Eddie's shoulder, "Sorry boys, but the era of us three has come to an end."

Marcus and Eddie stared at the key in Quinn's hand with equal parts shock and surprise. They had not considered that with Quinn's Headboy

position came the part where he had to move out of the Ravenclaw dorms.

"Damn it. . . I should have aimed for Headboy as well," said Eddie, snatching the key from Quinn. "Are you sure there's only room for one? I mean, how much space do two people take. I am not one to brag, but I don't take much space, so how about it?"

"Hey, don't leave me out," said Marcus. "I too want to live in my own Suite."

Quinn smiled as his shoulders relaxed. Three of them had been roommates for six years. Their dorm room was a place filled with memories for all three of them. It represented a lot in all three of their lives. In the past six years, they had spent more time in that dorm room than they had spent at their own houses. To hear that there was going to be some change to that dorm room was a significant change. He was sure that Marcus and Eddie were bothered by him moving out, but seeing them making jokes did put him at ease.

"I'm still going to meet you in the morning for the workout," Quinn said to Eddie and then turned to Marcus, "and I'm going to be there at breakfast. I'm still going to attend classes with you. Hell, I probably will spend time in the common room. It just won't be there at night. . ."

"Shut it! I don't want to talk about it," said Eddie.

"And, you know, I'm going to be free after Christmas. . . Don't tell this to anyone yet, but I won't be doing AID after Christmas."

" "What?!" "

Now that blew both of their minds. AID was synonymous with Quinn.

AID was part of Quinn, and it also went the other way around. Just the thought of Quinn not doing AID in that office seemed strange and unnatural.

"So, you're going to close AID?" asked Marcus.

Quinn shook his head, "No, AID isn't closing. I'm going to pass it onto another person — my successor."

"Who?"

"That's a secret. Everyone will know when I announce it, which is going to be soon — most probably the day after tomorrow."

"Is it Luna?"

"No, it's not Luna. . ."

"Does she know who it is?" asked Marcus, but then narrowed his eyes at Quinn. ". . . You haven't told her yet, have you?"

Quinn shook his head. He hadn't gotten the chance to talk about it with Luna. He was going to talk to her tomorrow. He just hoped that she would take it as he thought she would take.

"Damn, that's one start to a year," muttered Eddie. "Snape's left behind Potion to teach DADA. You're moving out of the dorms. And now AID is going to be run without you. . . by someone else," he made a face as if he ate something strange, "it just doesn't feel right."

"Any other surprises you want to share with us?" asked Marcus, his thoughts the same as Eddie.

"Hmm. . . not yet, I don't think so," said Quinn, putting on a mysterious smile.

"Oh, don't do that!" Marcus groaned. "That smile just makes me curious!"

"What can I say fellas, I'm a mysterious fellow," said Quinn.

"What else is there?" asked Eddie. "You're going to stop being a commentator?"

"Oh, not all. Why would I do that?! Who's going to praise you if I leave.

In Ravenclaw, only Luna is interested in being the commentator, and you know her; she would talk about everything but Quidditch. So, if I leave,

someone from the other three houses will take over, and believe me, those guys don't like you."

The amount of dislike that Gryffindor, Slytherin, and Hufflepuff felt for Eddie was unprecedented. Harry Potter had been sneaking snitches under the other teams' noses for five years, and in Quidditch circles, the Seeker wasn't liked at all(except Gryffindor) — they would boo at him when Harry would come out. But Harry had nothing on Eddie. It has taken just one season of Hogwarts Quidditch Cup for Eddie to become the villain of Hogwarts Quidditch.

Eddie smiled an evil smirk, "Let them come. . . their petty jealousy will be music to my ears as I tear havoc through their defenses."

"Do you want me to push that image?" asked Quinn. "Because I think I can turn the dislike to hate. . ."

"Oh ho?" Eddie put his hands on his chin. "That. . . doesn't sound bad. . ."

Marcus stared at his two best friends as they put their heads together to formulate how to make Eddie more hated. Sometimes he wondered if he was the only sane one between them.

Quinn might have been moving out, but it seemed nothing was going to change for the three amigos.

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Quinn entered the Headboy Suite for the first time after doing his Headboy duties of the day. It was guarded by a portrait of the first Headboy of Hogwarts, and behind it was a locked door which Quinn had the key of.

He roamed his new quarters and took the lay of the land. The Suite was bigger than his dorm room — however, unlike the dorm room, he was

going to live alone here. There was a dedicated living room area, a spacious bedroom, a walk-in closet, there was an in-floor bathtub in the bathroom, and all the space any student would need.

After breaking in the bathtub, Quinn sat on his new bed in his nightclothes.

He slipped his hand into his shirt and pulled out a thin silver chain around his neck. Hanging from that chain was a pendant piece in the shape of a triangle with a circle inside which had a line going through it — the Deathly Hallow symbol.

Quinn wrapped his fist around the pendant piece, and when he opened it, the black Resurrection Stone sat in his palm. It was the thing from the legends and the urban story tale that could summon souls of the dead back to the mortal plane.

"Now, let's see what you can teach me about the Soul," said Quinn with a deep, thriving curiosity and desire to learn hiding behind his eyes.

It was time to take the first step towards completing the Trinity.

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Quinn West - MC - Magic is always at the forefront.

Eddie Carmichael - Seventh Year - Villain image suits him more.

Marcus Belby - Seventh Year - The sane one.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Tomorrow, we see what Quinn does every year after returning to Hogwarts.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

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274. Chapter 274: Start Of The

Transition

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The second of September, the second day back at school for Hogwarts students, and the first day they would attend classes. It was an exciting day for everyone, but for Quinn, it was earmarked in his calendars for him to set up the AID office for business after the day classes.

Quinn stood in front of the glass wall that partitioned the classroom into the office space and workshop. He picked up a canvas frame with a still painting fit inside it, held it against the wall, and the frame stuck to it as if it was glued to it. With that final painting, the office was done being set up.

"Now, I only need to take care of the workshop, and I'll be done for the day," he said with a smile.

He looked at the rectangular door in the glass wall — he hadn't installed the special reinforced door yet. "I would need to teach Astoria to use that," he said to himself as he picked up his briefcase off the floor, which held the entire inventory for the workshop.

Quinn was about to walk into the workshop area when the door chime rang, and he looked over to see Luna enter the office with an assortment of flowers in her hands.

"Done with your classes?" asked Quinn.

"There's only Astronomy at midnight." Luna walked to one of the wall side cabinets with an empty flower pot. She took out a tiny flask that she had made herself and poured water stored in its expanded canteen into

the pot — conjured water through spells would eventually vanish and thus wasn't suitable for drinking or flowers.

Quinn gazed at Luna setting the flowers into the pot, then at the empty workshop, and then at his briefcase. He pursed his lips before deciding that it was the right thing to get it done as soon as possible. He set the briefcase inside the workshop by the door and walked back into the office.

"Luna," said Quinn as he sat down on his barstool. When the blonde looked at him, he motioned her to sit down in front of the table. "I would like to talk to you about something."

Luna took out her wand and waved it over the flowers. The flowers bloomed into vibrancy as the color of the petals gained a beautiful contrast, and the leaves looked as if they had been collecting dew overnight. Only after she was satisfied with her work on the flowers did she take a seat opposite Quinn.

"Luna, as you know, this will be my last year at Hogwarts," said Quinn. She nodded, "Quinn's a big boy now."

Quinn chuckled, "Yes, that's one way to phrase it. Well, because it's my last year at Hogwarts, it entered my mind that I need to address some things before I graduate," he tried to keep his expression bright, "and one of the things that needed to be discussed was AID. . . .

Luna. . . I'll be leaving AID after Christmas."

Luna's hands that had started to braid a few strands of her hair into braids froze in their work. She stared at Quinn, her eyes that usually held a dreamy gaze, now looked at Quinn with a stunned attention.

"Christmas, but that's. . ." — so close. Hogwarts school year started late in the year, leaving only a few months to Christmas — three to be precise.

The sudden revelation brought Luna out of her thoughts filled with

whimsy, and now she was paying a hundred percent of her attention to Quinn. "Can't you stay till the end; why do we have to leave so early?"

"I think it's the right time," Quinn said, keeping his expression and tone comforting, "I finish my time at AID before Christmas, go home for break, and then return after the new year to enjoy the rest of my year."

Also, Luna, there's no we in this. . . I'm leaving AID, and in no way means that AID will be closing."

"Why does that matter. . . you'll be gone," said Luna, with a rare frown on her face.

The grumpy tone with the clear notes of anger made Quinn scrunch his face ever so slightly. He was afraid that she wouldn't like his decision at all. It was no secret that Luna didn't have many friends outside of Quinn, Eddie, and Marcus; her time in AID was just so that she could spend time with Quinn, even a lot of it was spent in silence. Quinn leaving AID meant that she would lose that time.

"You won't be at AID alone, you know," said Quinn, trying to get to the good part as soon as possible, "Astoria will be taking my place."

That caught her attention. Luna thought she would be managing AID alone. But according to Quinn, Astoria was taking 'his' place, which meant. . .

"Astoria becomes the proprietor and not me?" she asked.

The few friends that Luna had outside the Ravenclaw circle came from the DA group. But even before that, Luna had been well acquainted with Daphne, Tracey, and Astoria as Quinn and Co. hung out with the Slytherin girls. Astoria found Luna interesting and, being the extrovert she was, tried to make friends with eccentric Ravenclaw. Luna was a bit cautious at first, but the persistent ball of sunshine didn't stop until she was friends with Luna.

"Yes, you don't have to do all the boring work," said Quinn chuckling, reading between the words. "You'll have to do more work than now because Astoria's new and well. . . she's not me."

Luna went silent and started to stare at the table with a thoughtful gaze.

Quinn stared at his long-time partner with an expecting gaze.

"Okay, you can go after Christmas," said Luna. "It's your loss; I'll have fun with Astoria."

Quinn grinned. It would indeed be his loss.

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Astoria stood waiting on the fifth floor, just outside the Grand Staircase.

She leaned against the wall, looking at her shoes that slowly inched forward as she let her weight skid her foot forward at a snail's pace.

"I'm here. Sorry for the wait."

She looked up to see Quinn walking out of the Grand Staircase.

"What's this?" said Quinn, and Astoria spotted the teasing smirk on his face. "Are you nervous?"

Astoria pushed herself off the wall and bumped he shoulder into Quinn for his teasing. She was indeed nervous. They were about to go meet Flitwick to inform him that AID was changing ownership, and more importantly, ask his permission to move forward.

"What if he doesn't like me?" asked Astoria. "He might want AID to remain in the Ravenclaw house."

Quinn laughed at that. "Oh, dear. That's not how things work between AID and Professor Flitwick. True, we need his permission as AID is his responsibility, and yes, he's the Head of Ravenclaw House, but AID is not a Ravenclaw legacy. I have never portrayed it to be a Ravenclaw

exclusive, and Professor Flitwick has never seen it such.

He knows what AID means to me and what I put in to make it work. AID is my legacy, and I get to choose who succeeds me. And I have decided that it would be a student-run operation with the faculty having no power over it. AID will never turn into something like the Prefect group — controlled by the faculty."

They started to walk together to Flitwick's office — not the faculty room, but the Head of Ravenclaw House office.

"How did you even get Professor Flitwick to agree to this?" asked Astoria.

"If it was Professor Snape, he would have never agreed to start anything remotely like AID —or maybe he would, it would depend on who was asking."

"Honestly, I didn't do anything special," said Quinn, shrugging. "I sent a letter listing out what I wanted to accomplish with AID and how I was going to accomplish it. My only demands were that I required a classroom to operate and nothing else — and in this humungous castle, Professor Flitwick didn't have any reservations to lend a room to his best student."

After that, Quinn's track record and popularity had carried AID into becoming a mainstay in Hogwarts. He hadn't fielded a single complaint from Flitwick since the inception of AID (the insistent ones from Umbridge didn't count.)

They finally reached Flitwick's office, guarded by a man with a bent nose dressed in a funny set of robes. When they called to him, the man looked up from his perpetually unfinished stone statue and pointed his chisel at them.

"What do thee want?"

"We are here to see Professor Flitwick," said Quinn, "he's expecting us."

The chisel-bearing man squinted his eye at Quinn's Headboy badge before disappearing from his portrait. When he returned, the door opened, and the two of them went inside.

"Mr. West, I wasn't expecting you today," said Flitwick behind his desk, but then he saw Astoria beside him. "Ms. Greengrass, you're here as well. I hope it's not because of some trouble — it's too early in the year for that." He motioned them to sit as his hand flourished his wand to conjure two chairs. "So, what brings you here today?" he asked.

Quinn and Astoria exchanged a glance before Quinn started, "Professor, I have decided to retire from AID, and Ms. Greengrass here is going to succeed me as my successor."

Flitwick squeaked at the sudden news. He leaned stood on his chair and leaned forward onto the table. "Mr. West. . . this is such big news. I mean, when, how," he glanced at Astoria. "I would like to get some details."

"Astoria starts next week and will work under me to learn till Christmas, which is when I retire," said Quinn. "The reason why we are here is that you're the one who gave me the permission to start AID — and because I'm leaving, the accountability falls onto Astoria's head, so we want to know if you'd be alright endorsing her moving forward."

The relationship of trust that Quinn and Flitwick had built was strong, and that was the reason that Flitwick hadn't interfered with or even supervised AID in any form for all five years. But that wasn't the case between him and Astoria. Quinn wanted to know if the status quo would remain the same — he didn't want any faculty interference with AID.

Flitwick looked at both Quinn and Astoria for a long hard moment. The two students remained stayed still under the watching gaze of the half-goblins. "Mr. West, do you think Ms. Greengrass will be suitable in charge

of AID. Can I trust her to maintain the same integrity and standards that you have built, and I have come to expect?" asked Flitwick.

It wasn't Quinn who answered the question.

"Sir, I personally assure that AID will remain at the reputation it has built," said Astoria. "Even without Quinn, I'm confident that I will be able to operate AID at an elevated level — that room won't turn into anything apart from what it was given for. AID's motive is to help Hogwarts students, and it will stay that. The students will continue to come to the office because I'll be effective in solving their problems.

I'm a Slytherin, Professor Flitwick, and ambition is one of our traits.

Forget about maintaining the reputation; I'll raise it to something greater."

Quinn, who sat beside her, smiled. He made no moves of his own and let Astoria take charge.

Flitwick stared at Astoria, and this time didn't give a glance to Quinn. His goblin-eyes remained fixed on her face as if trying to look past her confident words to find a hidden falsity. It was only when Astoria didn't falter under his gaze that Flitwick, who had been standing on his chair, sat back down.

"If that's the case, I have no reservations towards the changing of ownership, as you have put it. When the new year arrives, Ms. Greengrass will be in charge of AID."

Astoria's expression set in her most dignified and confident evaporated into one of bubbly joy. She turned to Quinn, and he gave her an approving nod on her performance.

Astoria Greengrass was set to take over AID.

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The next day, during breakfast, the Hogwarts gathered in the Great Hall to start their day with a hearty meal before proceeding to a new day of classes. Among the sound of clattering cutleries and talking students, Flitwick turned to McGonagall, who nodded.

The Charms Professor stood up on his chair and put his wand on his throat. "Ahem, if everyone would give me your attention for a minute," Flitwick's voice traveled throughout the Great Hall, making all students and ghosts look towards the staff table.

Flitwick peered over the entire Hogwarts student body before speaking, "There's an exciting announcement to be made, which I'm sure all of you wouldn't want to miss, so please listen with your ears peeled. The Headboy will be taking it forward from here."

All eyes went to Quinn, who climbed the steps to the staff table to gain a little altitude. He faced everyone and could feel the hundreds of pairs of eyes on him. He tapped his throat with his fake wand and began his announcement.

"Before I start, I would like to make it clear that this announcement isn't made in my position as the Headboy, but in my position as the proprietor of AID."

As Quinn said that people got more interested. Those who had been in Hogwarts for a few years hadn't seen Quinn speak to make this sort of announcement — this was new, and they were interested in what Quinn had to say, expecting to hear about some big event that Quinn would set up this year.

"As you all know, this is my last year at Hogwarts," said Quinn, "and I'll be leaving at the end of this year, so the question arises what will happen to AID when I leave. It has been decided that AID won't be closing after I

leave. Instead, I'll be passing it onto another person, who will become the second proprietor of AID."

A lot of eyes went to Luna and found her sporting a large headpiece that resembled a patch of long grass.

Quinn looked at everyone. It was time — this was an AID announcement, and it would be incomplete without some theatrics. "If you'd all lift up your plates, you'll find something very interesting stuck to the bottom."

Instantly, everyone looked at their plates; it looked normal to them. They lifted them to see what Quinn was talking about. Those who had food on their plates slipped their hands underneath the plate to feel around for the surprise, while others flipped theirs over.

It was an AID card, the words AID were written on it, but it was a card different from the usual cards they had all become accustomed to seeing. Gone was the black background, replaced by a deep, luxurious shade of magenta velvet and written on it with striking silver words, the successor's name.

Somewhere on the Gryffindor table, a certain girl with bushy-brown hair screamed behind her fist as she took out her wand to conjure a box and a pair of gloves that she put on to carefully transfer the card into the box.

"I present you," all heard Quinn's voice again, and they were surprised to see the person whose name was on the card standing beside Quinn, "Astoria Greengrass of AID."

Astoria raised her wand above her head, and the many House Banners hung in the Great Hall all turned to velvet color with the letters A - I - D written in silver words.

"I hope all of you would visit," said Astoria with a composed smile, "we have answers to all your problems. . ."

Quinn turned to the staff table and the professors while sporting a grin.

He pointed at Astoria before giving her a thumbs up and mouthed the words:

'She's good!'

.

Quinn West - MC - His Hogwarts Legacy. . . . ?

Astoria Greengrass - The Next Proprietor of AID - She's going to fit right in.

Luna Lovegood - AID First-Gen Member - Master headpiece crafter.

Filius Flitwick - Faculty-Liason - Will see generations of proprietors of AIDs.

[? ? ?] - Collector - Panting at the stunning new design.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

275. Chapter 275: Moving

Towards The Future

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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Link in the Bio/Profile

The ceiling of the Great Hall was serenely blue and streaked with frail, wispy clouds, just like the squares of sky visible through the high mullioned windows. While they tucked into their meat pies and eggs and bacon, Quinn, Marcus, and Eddie conversed about the AID announcement that had just happened.

"So, Astoria got a detention," said Eddie while looking at a book of Quidditch schemes and plays, "and that too with Snape."

"As much as I loved Astoria's little stunt," said Quinn, swallowing his bite of the fried egg. "She should have done her preparation and got the permission to change the banners. I mean, Astoria should have known that she would get detention — the Weasley twins got one every time they did a prank in the Great Hall."

Quinn had to bring Astoria to at least a level that she would be able to operate AID without a hitch, and doing it in three months was a challenge. Like a baby wouldn't touch a burning flame a second time, Quinn had to make sure that Astoria would learn her lessons after a single mistake — and the best way to do that was to make her experience the punishments/consequences. He was well aware that Astoria would get in trouble with her banner stunt, but he didn't tell her so that moving forwards, she would do her due diligence and always cover every addressable point that could give her problems.

"How did you do the card trick?" asked Marcus, digging into his rashes of bacon. "There was a card beneath every plate; I'm sure you didn't transfigure cards beneath every time someone sat down at the tables."

"That was quite easy, actually," said Quinn. "I passed the cards to the house-elves down in the kitchen and asked them to attach the cards to the bottoms of every plate they sent to the Great Hall." As there was no fixed seating on the House long tables, the house-elves would send a plate in front of every student, no matter where they sat.

After they had eaten, they remained in their places, awaiting Professor McGonagall's descent from the staff table. The distribution of class schedules for NEWT classes was more complicated than the ones from year first to fifth, for Professor McGonagall needed first to confirm that

everybody in the sixth year had achieved the necessary OWL grades to continue with their chosen NEWTS, while the seventh years were required to prove that they at least had an acceptable (the lowest pass grade) in their chosen NEWT subjects to continue studying them this year.

"Mr. West," said McGonagall, "please ask the Prefects to guide the students into lines so that I can confirm their eligibility — seventh years come first and then the sixth."

"Of course, professor."

Eddie and Marcus were immediately cleared to continue with their chosen subjects, as neither has scored below an 'Exceed Expectations (EE)' in any of their subjects. McGonagall didn't even flip to Quinn's report card to check if he cleared his subjects. There were barely any Ravenclaw seventh-year students that didn't pass in their subjects. Even in the sixth year, Ravenclaws got the subjects they wanted — though everyone had their own strengths and weaknesses.

Next came Gryffindors, and the first one in the sixth-year students was Neville Longbottom, who took a little longer to sort out; his round face was anxious as McGonagall looked down his application then consulted his OWL results.

"Herbology, fine," she said. "Professor Sprout will be delighted to see you back with an 'Outstanding' OWL. And you qualify for Defense Against the Dark Arts with 'Outstanding.' But the problem is Transfiguration. I'm sorry, Longbottom, but an 'Acceptable' really isn't good enough to continue to the NEWT level. I just don't think you'd be able to cope with the coursework."

Even after a year's worth of DA, Neville's motivation and a new wand resonance could only take him so far. Neville had to catch up with

multiple years of practice that he missed because of a non-compatible wand. And while he had done an impressive job, he could only do so much. Moreover, DA was primarily focused on Defense Against Dark Arts, and Neville's motivation led him to focus more on those, leaving Transfiguration, a subject Neville disliked to be left on the back seat. Neville hung his head. McGonagall peered at him through her triangular spectacles. "Why do you want to continue with Transfiguration, anyway? I've never had the impression that you particularly enjoyed it," she asked. Neville looked miserable and muttered something about "my grandmother wants."

"You have to grow a backbone, young man. It's your life, not hers. If you don't step up, then she will never let go. Please have confidence in yourself, Mr. Longbottom, you're a fine individual, and you have to understand that there's no need to compare yourself with your father." Neville turned very pink and blinked confusedly; McGonagall had never paid him a compliment before.

"I'm sorry, Longbottom, but I cannot let you into my NEWT class. I see that you have an 'Exceeds Expectations' in Charms; however — why not try for a NEWT in Charms?"

"My grandmother thinks Charms is a soft option," said Neville in a low mumble.

"Hmph," snorted Professor McGonagall. "Should I send Professor Flitwick, the duelling champion, to your house, and maybe they will have a pleasant talk about Charms being a weak subject.

Take Charms, Mr. Longbottom, and I shall drop Augusta a line reminding her that just because she failed her Charms OWL, the subject is not necessarily worthless." She smiled slightly at the look of delighted incredulity on Neville's face; McGonagall tapped a blank schedule with

the tip of her wand and handed it, now carrying details of his new classes, to Neville.

Quinn winked and gave thumbs up to Neville, who passed by him with a positive glimmer in his eyes. Slowly but surely, Neville Longbottom was gaining the confidence he never had.

McGonagall turned next to Parvati Patil, whose first question was whether Firenze, the handsome centaur, was still teaching Divination.

"He and Professor Trelawney are dividing classes between them this year," said McGonagall, a hint of disapproval in her voice; it was common knowledge that she despised the subject of Divination. "The sixth year is being taken by Professor Trelawney."

Quinn made a wildly displeased hearing that the centaur was staying as Parvati walked away looking crestfallen.

The next ones in the line were the Golden Trio. The first in line was Hermione, who, like Quinn, didn't need to have her scores checked as McGonagall remembered her grades.

"So, Potter, Potter, Double Potter . . ." said Professor McGonagall, consulting her notes as she turned to Harry and Ivy, who stood behind her brother. "Charms, Defense Against the Dark Arts, Herbology, Transfiguration, Potions . . . all fine. I must say, I was pleased with your Transfiguration mark, Mr. Potter, very pleased. Are you going to go down the same path as your father and become an Auror?"

Harry nodded. If it was a couple years back, he would have spoken about becoming a professional Quidditch player, but right now, he was serious about becoming an Auror and helping his father, who had been facing dangerous situations with rising Death Eater activity.

"As for, Ms. Potter, are you still on your path to becoming a Curse Breaker?" asked McGonagall, passing Ivy her schedule after confirming

her scores. "Your Ancient Runes, Arithmancy, and Charms scores were high even in the 'Outstanding' category — you will do well in the curse and ward space."

Now that was something Quinn didn't know about Ivy. Curse Breaker. . . it was a generalization for the people who wanted to work with complex wards and spells. They studied runic languages to understand wards and inscribe runes to build their own wards. They even learned how to deconstruct spells, reverse engineer them, create new spells as not all spells were general knowledge — and say to undo a curse or spell, one needed the counter-curse, which could be gained through vigorous research on the casted curse or spell. And it was one of the most sought-after magical jobs in the magical society and thus one of the few jobs with stringent requirements with high scores in Ancient Runes, Arithmancy, Charms, Transfiguration, Astronomy, and a strong base in Magic History and Theory.

"Yes, Professor, I haven't changed my decision," said Ivy. Even though it was one of the more dangerous jobs, she wanted to pursue it. She turned to Quinn, who stood by McGonagall's side and asked, "What about you, Quinn? What do you want to do after Hogwarts?"

Eyes turned to the Headboy. There were several DA members within earshot, and all looked back to their time in the Room of Requirements to remember if Quinn had ever talked about what he wanted to do.

"I plan to travel the world after Hogwarts," said Quinn. He already had a job as an inventor, which paid him well enough for a lifetime in royalties. He wasn't looking for a conventional job. "I have an apprenticeship lined up that I will undergo when I'm ready, but apart from that, I don't have any short-term plans on what I want to be."

"Travelling the world to gain a wider outlook is an excellent plan," said

McGonagall, glancing back at Quinn. "You see places different from home and learn to appreciate all the wonderful and beautiful that the world has to offer."

Quinn nodded with a smile. He was here, after all, to see what this world had to offer him.

Ivy twirled a strand of her hair as she muttered to herself, "Traveling the world, mhm, that sounds nice. . ."

Ron was the next in line, and he cleared the five core subjects — Transfiguration, Charms, Defense Against The Dark, Potions, and Herbology. Maybe it was because Hermione, but Ron had barely passed the requirements; however, the Weasley hadn't taken any other subjects than the five, nothing more.

Next came the Slytherins. The first in line was Draco. He stood in front of McGonagall with an uninterested gaze. He didn't care about school, grades, subject — not after he had gained a very special branding on his forearm. He wasn't even planning to return to Hogwarts for his last year — as he saw it. . . Hogwarts didn't matter.

"Mr. Malfoy, you qualify to sit in NEWT classes for all the subjects you gained OWLs in," said McGonagall. He had nine 'Outstandings' and one 'Exceed Expectations.' "Will you be attending all your classes?"

Draco glanced at the empty schedule and was about to ask that his subjects were cut down to the core five, but his eyes caught Quinn standing behind McGonagall. Quinn was staring at him with fixed eyes.

Draco couldn't tell the meaning behind the gaze, but it made him conscious. He looked away, unable to face the gaze that felt like it was judging him, looking down at him. . . disappointed with him.

Draco clenched his fist tight and looked at the still empty schedule. He looked at McGonagall and spoke, "Knock out Astronomy, Care, and

History. . . I. . . am taking the rest."

"Off you go," said McGonagall, handing Draco his filled schedule.

As he turned away, Draco glanced at Quinn, who was no longer looking at him, and then at his schedule with complicated eyes.

"Next is. . . Daphne Greengrass," Quinn said as he watched Daphne walk out of the Slytherin line and step in front of McGonagall.

"Ms. Greengrass, hmm, your year only have a handful of students who're aiming for Healers. . . and I don't know how many will make graduate with enough requirements for healers," said McGonagall with a sigh as she looked up at Daphne. "I hope you haven't changed your mind about it."

"My goal to become a Healer is set, professor. I'm not going to change it ever," said Daphne. She glanced at Quinn. He was the reason why she could study and learn without the looming pressure of hurrying things. Without Quinn, Astoria's illness would continue to bubble inside her body.

"Good, good," McGonagall said, sighing in relief. It was one of her responsibilities to make sure that students who were aiming for high-requirement careers didn't get scared away from them.

She had been having problems with Aurors for a very long time — since Snape had started teaching. Aurors only selected the very best, and they, on their end, weren't having any problems as those who scored well in Snape's tough class were elites, but McGonagall had a problem as the number of applicants had been declining over the years.

She turned to Quinn. "Mr. West, you have been learning from Poppy; why don't you try being a Healer." She glanced at Daphne and said knowingly, "You can give Ms. Greengrass some much-needed company."

Daphne had a faint shading of red on her cheeks. She didn't believe that

the 'serious as a warden' McGonagall would imply what she was implying. It also made her aware that the professor knew her and Quinn's relationship.

"I won't lie, professor, that's an attractive prospective," said Quinn, gazing at Daphne, "and maybe if the flow takes it, I'll go with what you suggest."

There were a few 'oohs-and-aahs' from the girls in earshot, which made Quinn smile and made Daphne's blush grow deeper.

"Now, Ms. Davis," McGonagall said to the smiling brunette, the sunshine of Slytherin, "you have chosen to go into your family's Herbology and Apothecary business," she looked at Tracey's grades, "and you have chosen the appropriate subjects for that. . . though you have chosen to eliminate Care of Magical Creatures. . . won't that be detrimental?"

"It's okay, my father's going to teach me about Care on his own," said Tracey politely. She, like so many, didn't want to say that they didn't want to attend because Hagrid was going to teach the subject, and after taking the subject for a couple of years of attending the class, they knew it was going to be crazy. . . and not in a good way.

After everyone was done and everyone had left, McGonagall stood up from her chair and faced Quinn. "Mr. West, will you be joining your family business in the future?" she asked.

"Hmm? No, I won't be involved in my family business actively. That's not for me, professor. I'm more interested in magic," said Quinn.

". . . and that's why you want to travel?"

"Yes, I'm going to learn magic all around the world," then Quinn paused before continuing, "and then I'm going to solve problems. . . yeah, I'm going to use magic to solve problems."

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Quinn West - MC - Maybe that's it.

Draco Malfoy - Sixth-Year Slytherin - 'Why did I do that. . . ?'

Ivy Potter - Sixth-Year Gryffindor - Aiming to go into magical research.

Daphne Greengrass - Sixth-Year Slytherin - 'Studying Healing with Quinn.

..'

Harry Potter - Sixth-Year Gryffindor - Following into his Father's footsteps.

Tracey Davis - Sixth-Year Slytherin - Family Business, here I come.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

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276. Chapter 276: First Of Two

Subjects

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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In Hogwarts, the people attending a specific lesson were decided upon the number of people attending the subject. For core subjects like — Charms, Potions, Herbology, Transfiguration, Defense Against The Dark Arts, Care of Magical Creature, (and, History of Magic, Astronomy,) where a lot of students attended, the classes were divided into groups of two Hogwarts Houses. But, for the subjects like Ancient Runes, Arithmancy, Divination, which weren't chosen by every student, those classes were merged into one class where all House students would learn together. This model was adjusted on the NEWT level (sixth and seventh-

year students.) NEWT students had the absolute choice of only taking the subjects they needed or liked. If a subject had many students attending, they would be divided into two batches, but if that's not the case, there was only one batch.

Even in the NEWT years, Defense Against The Dark Arts still had enough people attending for two batches. It was a subject popular enough that even the prospect of Snape didn't put a dent into the number of students. The seventh-year Ravenclaw and Gryffindor waited outside the classroom in a queue, waiting for it to open so that they could enter. The classroom door opened as they chattered away, and Snape stepped into the corridor, his sallow face framed as ever by two curtains of greasy back hair.

Silence fell over the queue immediately.

"Inside," he said.

The classroom had changed from the last year. Snape had imposed his personality upon the room already; it was gloomier than usual, as curtains had been drawn over the windows, and was lit by candlelight. New pictures adorned the walls, many of them showing people who appeared to be in pain, sporting grisly injuries or strangely contorted body parts. Nobody spoke as they settled down, looking around at the shadowy, gruesome pictures.

"I have not asked you to take out your books," said Snape, closing the door and moving to face the class from behind his desk; a majority of Ravenclaws hastily dropped their copy of *Confronting the Faceless* back into her bag and stowed the entire bags away. "I wish to speak to you, and I want your fullest attention."

His black eyes roved over their upturned faces.

"You have had five teachers in this subject so far, I believe. Six if we add the Headmaster."

"Naturally, these teachers will all have had their own methods and priorities. Given this confusion, I am surprised, so many of you scraped an OWL in this subject. I am further surprised that so many of you were able to get a grade above 'Acceptable' in your sixth year, which was much more advanced than your OWL course.

This year is your final, and believe me when I say that this will be the toughest of them all. If you got to the seventh year by scrapping together an 'Acceptable,' then be ready for a rude awakening."

Snape set off around the edge of the room, speaking now in a lower voice; the class craned their necks to keep him in view.

"The Dark Arts," said Snape, "are many, varied, ever-changing, and eternal. Fighting them is like fighting a many-headed monster, which, each time a neck is severed, sprouts a head even fiercer and cleverer than before. You are fighting that which is unfixable, mutating, indestructible."

Quinn stared at Snape. There were those who despised the Dark Arts, then there were those who respected the category of magic as a dangerous enemy. But Quinn was sure that when Snape spoke of it, the man had a loving caress in his voice.

"Your defenses," said Snape, a little louder, "must therefore be as flexible and inventive as the arts you seek to undo. These pictures" — he indicated a few of them as he swept past — "give a fair representation of what happens to those who suffer, for instance, the Cruciatus Curse" — he waved a hand toward a witch who was clearly shrieking in agony — "feel the Dementor's Kiss" — a wizard lying huddled and blank-eyed, slumped against a wall — "or provoke the aggression of the Inferius" — a bloody mass upon the ground.

"Has an Inferius been seen, then?" asked a Gryffindor in a high-pitched voice. "Is it definite, is he using them?"

"The Dark Lord has used Inferi in the past," said Snape, "which means you would be well-advised to assume he might use them again. Now . . ."

He set off again around the other side of the classroom toward his desk, and again, they watched him as he walked, his dark robes billowing behind him.

". . . you are, I believe, complete novices in the use of nonverbal spells.

What is the advantage of a nonverbal spell?"

A few hands went up. Snape took his time looking around at everybody, giving time for late entries; he even glanced at Quinn, who hadn't raised his hand, before saying curtly, "Mr. Kotler, please tell."

"Your adversary has no warning about what kind of magic you're about to perform, which gives you a split-second advantage."

"A Ravenclaw answer. . . copied almost word for word from The Standard Book of Spells," said Snape dismissively (some Gryffindors sniggered), "but correct in essentials. Yes, those who progress to using magic without shouting incantations gain an element of surprise in their spell-casting. Not all wizards can do this, of course; it is a question of concentration and mind power which some" — his gaze lingered maliciously upon the Gryffindors who had sniggered — "lack."

The Gryffindors went deadly silent as the Ravenclaws straightened in vindication, only to be brought down by Snape the very next second.

"Bookish knowledge will not work one bit without practical experience," said Snape with a grave eye.

"You will now divide," Snape went on, "into pairs. One partner will attempt to jinx the other without speaking. The other will attempt to repel the jinx in equal silence. Carry on."

Although Snape did not know it, Quinn had taught at least one-third of the class (everyone who had been a member of the D.A.) how to perform

a Shield Charm the previous year. However, except for a couple, none of them had ever cast the charm without speaking. A reasonable amount of cheating ensued; many people were merely whispering the incantation instead of saying it aloud. Snape among them as they practiced, looking just as much like an overgrown bat as ever, lingering to watch a pair perform the task and see them fail as they couldn't cheat under his dull gaze.

He arrived at Eddie and Quinn's pair as the two exchanged spells in total silence. Eddie Carmichael, the eternal challenger, had scoured the books for dueling advantage against Quinn, and he had earlier in his string of losses had found about nonverbal casting, so the task was nothing unusual for him, second nature even. He sent a potent hex at Quinn, who repelled it down to the ground.

Snape observed closer and saw how Eddie would slightly change the aim of the hex every time, but Quinn would repel it down to the same spot on the floor. He gazed at the two Ravenclaws who had made a game of his task, and while their feat would have earned them twenty points each for Ravenclaw from any reasonable Professor, but which Snape ignored and walked away.

A couple steps away, Snape turned towards and whipped out his wand so fast that Eddie and Quinn reacted instinctively; two Shield Charms manifested just in time to stop two Banishing Charms. Eddie skidded on his feet while Quinn's front foot stepped back to become his back foot. By the time the whole class turned and looked, the exchange was over, and Snape had put his wand back into his robes. Snape walked away to stalk another pair.

". . . Oh, come on, that was at least worth five Snape points," said Eddie, throwing up his hands.

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Unlike the Defense Against The Dark Arts, only a dozen people had been able to take up Potions in the sixth year — four Slytherins, two Hufflepuffs, two Gryffindor, and four Ravenclaws, out of which two of them were Quinn and Marcus (Eddie had chosen to forgo Potions as it held no importance to his future goals.) The low number was conventional as Potions had the highest jump after the fifth year and had the steepest learning curve. Moreover, the baby population had taken a hit during the war and only boomed after Voldemort's defeat, so the class size had been small for a decade. And Snape acting like a guard, had just served to drive the numbers lower.

The dozen people stood out on the dungeon floor of Hogwarts, waiting for the class to start. The dungeon door opened, and Slughorn's belly preceded him out of the door. As they filed into the room, his great walrus mustache curved above his beaming mouth, and he greeted Quinn with particular enthusiasm.

The dungeon was, most unusually, already full of vapors and odd smells. The students sniffed interestedly as they passed large, bubbling cauldrons.

Quinn leaned near Marcus and whispered, "My workshop has an amazing ward system that would eliminate all spells at a single command of mine."

Marcus glanced at him and put on a 'that's cool' face while inwardly finding cute how Quinn has proud comparing his workshop to a Potions classroom.

The four Slytherins took a workstation together, as did the four

Ravenclaws, leaving the Hufflepuff and Gryffindor to share one together.

Now then, now then, now then," said Slughorn, whose massive outline was quivering through the many shimmering vapors. "Scales out, everyone, and potion kits, and don't forget your copies of Advanced Potion-Making. . . ."

"Now then," said Slughorn, returning to the front of the class and inflating his already bulging chest so that the buttons on his waistcoat threatened to burst off, "I've prepared a few potions for you to have a look at, just out of interest, you know. These are the kind of things you ought to be able to do after completing your NEWTs. You ought to have heard of them, even if you haven't made them yet. Does anyone tell me what this one is?"

He indicated the cauldron nearest the Slytherin table. Others raised them slightly in their seats and saw what looked like plain water boiling away inside it.

Quinn looked around, and there were no hands raised, which meant he was clear to answer the question — he only answered when no one had the answer. He raised his hand; Slughorn pointed at him.

"It's Veritaserum, a colorless, odorless potion that forces the drinker to tell the truth," said Quinn, having brewed and used the potion on certain natural Legilimens.

"Very good, very good!" said Slughorn happily. "It is Veritaserum - a Truth Potion so powerful that three drops would have you spilling your innermost secrets for this entire class to hear. Now, the use of this potion is controlled by stringent Ministry guidelines, so don't go brewing it on your own for your personal use — if someone finds out, you go straight to Azkaban."

"Now," he continued, pointing at the cauldron nearest the Ravenclaw

table, "this one here is pretty well known. . . . Featured in a few Ministry leaflets lately too . . . Who can tell me which is this one?"

Once again, Quinn looked around and saw that no one had recognized the slow-bubbling, mudlike substance in the second cauldron, so he raised his hand — this sort of thing happened a lot when the class studied a new topic, and that was when Quinn did his portion of class participation.

"It's the Polyjuice Potion."

"Excellent, excellent! Now, this one here . . ." Slughorn pointed at the third and last cauldron that bubbled with a lime-green potion, glowing in fluorescent light. It looked ominous, almost eerie, yet there was a strange vigor as if the potion wanted to burst out of the cauldron like a raging flood.

"Essence of Insanity," said Quinn, his eyes reflecting the green.

"It is indeed. It seems almost foolish to ask," said Slughorn, who was looking mightily impressed, "but I assume you know what it does?"

"A dose from the potion can cause the drinker to act irrationally for a month — they might act like insane people. . . or their inhibitions lower to the point where they don't hold back any desires," Quinn then whispered in a voice not audible to anyone but him, "complete annihilation of the ego, leaving id in charge."

"Quite right! You recognized it, I suppose, by its distinctive glowing shade of green?"

"And the steam rising in characteristic puffs," said Quinn plainly.

"Fabulous, Quinn! Take thirty well-earned points for Ravenclaw," said Slughorn genially. "As expected from the best in the year!"

"And now," said Slughorn, "it is time for us to start work. Today we are going to work with. . . ."

"Quinn, is something wrong?" asked Marcus, looking at Quinn, who seemed subdued after answering the questions.

"It's nothing. . . I just don't like Essence of Insanity," said Quinn. "I have read about what can do to a person, and well, let's just say they aren't pleasant." He couldn't say that the potion reminded him of a hell he had personally experienced.

Slughorn's assignment was the Exstimulo Potion, which was a magic restoring potion after the core was depleted. It was an emergency potion that left severe side effects if taken repeatedly or in a wrong dose, but it would make a person feel like they were drowning with magic when used correctly.

Everyone started to brew the potions. There was a scraping as everyone drew their cauldrons toward them and some loud clunks as people began adding weights to their scales, but nobody spoke. The concentration within the room was almost tangible. Those here were serious about studying potions.

Everyone kept glancing around at what the rest of the class was doing; this was both an advantage and a disadvantage of Potions, that it was hard to keep your work private. But Quinn kept to himself, brewing his potion at his own pace, without paying attention to what the others were doing.

Within minutes, the whole place was full of bluish steam. Everyone was either was attending to their cauldrons or had their heads buried in their books.

Slughorn glanced at everyone, satisfied with this batch of students. Even though they were rough around the edges, he could see the potential and drive. His eyes went to Quinn, and he noticed something different from others. While everyone was fussing over their potions, Quinn was

cleaning his workstation while keeping an eye on his potion — it was a simple sign of a disciplined and practiced potioneer.

"And time's. . . up!" called Slughorn. "Stop stirring, please!"

Slughorn moved slowly among the tables, peering into cauldrons. He made no comment but occasionally gave the potions a stir or a sniff. At last, he reached the table where the Ravenclaws were sitting. He gave an approving nod to Marcus' brew. Then he Quinn's, and a look of incredulous delight spread over his face.

"The clear best!" he cried to the dungeon. "Excellent, excellent, Quinn! Good lord, now that's one potent brew, Quinn! That will make a person feeling like a traveler in a desert see the paradise."

Quinn bowed with a polite smile. Unlike Harry Potter, he didn't need a 'Half-Blood Prince's Potion Book' — he was the damn book. And the 'Half-Blood Prince,' that person didn't have anything on him.

In a brew-off, he would crush 'Half-Blood Prince,' who was suffering from Eighth-Grade Syndrome.

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Quinn West - MC - I am simply superior.

Severus Snape - Half-Bood Snape - Somehow feels like his honor has been challenged.

Horace Slughorn - Potions Professor - Only had one Felix Felicis and chose to go with a class(sixth-year) with more(quantity) of influential children.

Eddie Carmichael - Aiming to become Pro-Athlete - Pretty good with a wand.

Marcus Belby - One of the Potion 12 - Knows Quinn pretty well.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - "Sukinako Ga Megane Wo Wasureta,"

suggested manga - Warning: Diabetes Inducing, keep Insulin nearby.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

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277. Chapter 277: An Unusual

Morning

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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Link in the Bio/Profile

Switching up from the Ravenclaw dormitories to the Headboy Suite was definitely a step up.

Every morning Quinn would open his eyes on a King-sized bed that he got to use all by himself, which was great even though he still used the same amount of space as he did on his dorm's small-double bed. He was on the fourth floor, meaning that he needed to climb one less flight of stairs to get to his room; however, that also meant that now his office and room were no longer on the same floor and that the Room of Requirement was a floor higher than before. He didn't need to vacate the bathroom in a set amount of time for his roommates' use, though after bathing in a shared bathroom for years had made Quinn uncomfortable to take any more time than he was used to. In his new living quarters, he had all the space he needed. . . which didn't matter as Quinn had his briefcase. The Headboy Suite provided a personal space for Quinn's use alone where he could relax without worrying about Luna and Astoria coming into the AID Office, Eddie and Marcus coming into the dorm

room, a DA member trying to illegally access the Room of Requirement, or the ever-present concern of someone messing up with his briefcase while he was inside. . . but that also meant that Quinn couldn't walk down to the Great Hall for breakfast with his friends (the Slytherin Headgirl wasn't much of a talker.)

. . . Switching up from the Ravenclaw dormitories to the Headboy Suite was somewhat of a step up — maybe.

Like every day, Quinn walked out of the Headboy Suite and gave a good morning to the First Headboy of Hogwarts' portrait. He jogged across the halls in his workout clothes as he enjoyed the morning air. On the Grand Staircase, he played the game of predicting the directions and destinations of every moving staircase that he could get his eyes on. The Entrance Hall outside the Great Hall was empty like every early morning, with only a couple of ghosts that would exchange morning greetings with Quinn every day.

Like clockwork, Quinn's stride lengthened, and his legs started to gain speed as he exited the castle into the grounds outside. The sprint would continue until he reached a specific greensward on the castle grounds. Quinn looked around and saw that his partner hadn't arrived yet, so he started to warm up on his own while thinking about whether he could cause an isolated artificial earthquake using vibrations and how that would hold up compared to Earth magic.

"Mornin'."

Quinn was doing slow push-ups on his knuckles when he heard Eddie's voice from the back. He turned his head and caught half of Eddie on his peripherals.

"Good morning," said Quinn. He got up and dusted his hands off the grass as he turned; however, his hands stopped mid-dusting when he

completely faced Eddie.

"Tracey?" he said, bewildered.

Standing in front of him was Tracey Davis. . . dressed in non-magical workout clothes. Quinn squinted his eyes at the clothes; he recognized them.

"These clothes. . ." They were one of the many sets that he gifted Eddie.

"Eddie asked me to wear them. . . he said that you said they're made for exercising," Tracey asked as she turned around. "Do I look strange in them? I feel a little strange wearing them."

Quinn turned his eyes to Eddie, looking at Tracey from the side. He turned his eyes to Quinn and said, "A little resizing charm and they look they were custom made to fit her." And the way Eddie was looking at Tracey showed that he was pleased about his work.

"So. . . Tracey, what made you wake up so early in the morning just to come down here?" asked Quinn.

"Eddie was telling me about his day, and he said that both of you train here every day," said the girlfriend as she hugged her boyfriend's arm. "I wanted to see what both of you exactly do every morning."

"Ah. . . I see," said Quinn, eyeing his best mate. "Well, we basically just train. Eddie works on his physicals so he can fly on the broom better."

"Flying a broom takes physical training? Isn't it just sitting and controlling the broom?" asked Tracey tilting her head.

"Oh no-no, there's much more to the art of competitive flying than just sitting on a broom," said Quinn, feeling his trainer side come up.

"Quidditch players are some of the fittest athletes in the world and adhere to unique physical and mental preparation strategies. There is a lot of misconception regarding a Quidditch player's physical exertion, so I don't blame you for knowing; after all, they are just sitting on a broom

and letting magic do the rest, but believe me, there's a lot more.

To provide some context, a Quidditch player's equipment weighs a lot — they're padded all over their bodies to protect themselves against the hits from a Bludger, and because of rules, the weight can't be reduced through magic. Unlike when someone casually flies a broom, Quidditch players regularly rise up to speeds during games that get difficult to follow with the naked eye and require Omnioculars to enjoy the game.

All the twists, turns, air maneuvers, and sudden breaking puts an immense force on the riders. To combat this, players require the highest degree of robustness, stability, and lower body strength. At the professional level, the games can get intense enough that it's not strange for players to lose a couple pounds through the game, which can be dangerous for health if not trained for."

Quidditch, even compared to the non-magical sports, was up there on the physical training requirements scale. It involved intense Endurance training to enable through games run on a system with no time limit on the play. The sport demanded Strength training — lower body training, upper body training, posture and stability training, and the strengthening of the neck to take the brunt of the force felt during flying, and because. .

. .

"And you're no stranger to the physicality of the sport. Bludgers are always crashing into the players. Players are crashing into players, there are intentional head-on collisions. . . crashes into the pitch below or the stands around the stadium are common sights," Quinn touched the back of his neck as he turned his neck. "Which is why every Quidditch player needs to be on the top of their physical training game to play effectively.

You remember Victor Krum, right?"

Tracey's brow furrowed for a split second before her eyes showed the

light of recognition, "The Durmstrang Champion, Victor Krum?"

"Yes, him. He's a Quidditch player, and more importantly, he plays as a Seeker." Quinn could see the confusion in Tracey's eyes. "Seekers need to be agile and light to fly faster than other position players as the Snitch moves at high speeds with sharp angles. Now, the archetypical Seeker physique would be Harry Potter's physique — lean and lightweight. But Victor Krum? That guy had big muscles. At the pro-levels, even the so-called lightweight Seeker needs to train their body to even stand a chance to play."

There had been cases of Quidditch players fracturing their necks and spines from high-speed collisions. So every player on every team made sure to train themselves to not get injured. Even if injuries could be healed without lingering damage, no club wanted a player who would get injured mid-game and be out for the rest of the game, and maybe even the next game. It was a competitive sport, and players worked for their livelihood.

Tracey turned to Eddie with a watery gaze and clung to him.

"It's not as bad as he makes it sound," said Eddie, in a placating manner.

"I have been training regularly a few years now. I don't even feel the hits from other guys these days; they're like light bumps to me, and even that's on a bad day."

Eddie gave Quinn a glaring side-eye. Quinn shrugged with his brows. She was the one who asked. . . well, not really, but what he was to do, it came out.

It took a while to calm down Tracey's worries before they could start their workout. And while Quinn went on his workout as usual, Eddie played around with Tracey, acting like a trainer to the new girl at the gym.

"Why did you bring her here?" Quinn asked Eddie as they watched Tracey lying on the ground, covering her eyes, starfish mode, with her chest heaving up and down.

"Didn't she say? She wanted to see what we did in the mornings," said Eddie, sipping from his water bottle.

"If she asks, you refuse," said Quinn, snatching the bottle. "That's obvious."

Eddie placed his hands on his sides, "And why would I do that? I got to see my girlfriend first things in the morning, in workout clothes — which I must say, she looks stunning in, and she's so cute when trying to do exercises she isn't used to."

There was another expression on Eddie's face that made Quinn's face scrunch up ever so slightly. He knew his friend enjoyed getting all handsy with Tracey while trying to 'teach' her.

"What if she decides to come every day?" asked Quinn. "I don't know if you noticed or not, but you essentially relaxed all the time today. If Tracey comes every day, you won't be doing anything in the morning. And I don't think you have time this year to regularly cover-up later in the day — you have to prepare for NEWTS, you're the Captain, so you have to prepare the lead the practices, formulate the playbook, then there are tryouts coming and that responsibility also falls upon you.

This year is crucial for you, Eddie. Scouts will be coming to every game you play in, and if your performance suffers this year, your stock price will fall. If you end up signing with a lower club, you'll be stuck with them for the duration of your contract — and that's going to delay your career position.

You know how the leagues work."

Just like English Football (soccer), the Quidditch professional scene was

also divided into different leagues. Major Quidditch playing country had a league that had divisions and worked on the parity and relegation system, which meant that the winner of a lower division would be promoted to a higher division while the loser of a higher division would be demoted down to a lower division. Only the clubs in the highest division were allowed to play for the Championship Cup.

Then there were inter-league tournaments that featured national champions (and runner-ups for some countries) to play in an International League Tournament.

Eddie's current stock as a prospect was sky-high because of Quinn's Quidditch Tournament and his performance in the last year's Hogwarts Cup. If Eddie wanted to sign with a professional club, he would've started playing while in school like Victor Krum, but it was the Carmichael family's decision that Eddie wouldn't start playing before graduation, and even the negotiations for signing would only start after his graduations. If Eddie was selected by a club in the highest division of the English League, then even if he didn't play right away, he would get training and resources to improve himself and begin his professional journey at a higher starting point. If he started in a struggling club, Eddie would need to play out his contract with the struggling club as England was one of the countries where player transfer/trade wasn't popular.

"This year for you is probably more important for you than any other student in Hogwarts," finished Quinn with serious insistence in his words. One of the most important things on his docket for this year was to make sure that Eddie didn't slack in his training — the Ravenclaw Chaser and now Captain, was already outplaying his Hogwarts peers last year and seemed to be in a different league.

It was Human tendency to slack when complacent, and Quinn feared that

Eddie would decrease his training with his current competition. And Quinn was going to make sure that those fears didn't become a reality. As unfortunate as it seemed, Tracey's presence in the morning training sessions was highly detrimental to Eddie.

"You worry too much," said Eddie sighing. "She's not going to come here every day."

"Are you sure?" asked Quinn, feeling hopeful. He preferred not coming between the couple. "Davis family technically are a farming family. They are one of the largest agricultural landowners in the country for their Herbology business. From what Daphne has told me, Tracey's used to waking up early in the morning, a typical farm girl — she might not mind getting up early in the morning and coming to the grounds with us."

"I am sure she won't come. I mean, look at her," Eddie pointed at Tracey, who was still panting on the grass. "She's got really poor stamina; no way she would be willing to go through this every day without some serious motivation."

It wasn't that Tracey had zero stamina. No student in Hogwarts had zero stamina; they, on a regular, walked through long hallways and climbed long and confusing staircases. It was just that Quinn had skewed Eddie's perception of what was considered a light workout, and poor Tracey was the victim.

Quinn gazed at Tracey, who didn't look like she would get up anytime soon.

". . ."

". . ."

"Maybe, you're right. . ."

"I'm right."

Eddie wrapped an arm over Quinn's shoulder. "Thank you, Quinn, for worrying so much. It means a lot that you care so much. . . I probably wouldn't be here in my current position if you didn't pull me out of my bed in the morning all those years ago." He chuckled, "I probably would've already left Quidditch and would have been looking for another way to get a girlfriend."

Quinn chuckled. He sometimes forgot about Eddie's primary motivation.

"Everything turned out well, didn't it? You did get a girlfriend."

"Uh-huh, a beautiful one at that."

"Not more beautiful than mine."

"No way, mine's much more pretty."

"Keep dreaming, buddy. You're convincing no one."

Quinn then softly touched Eddie's chest with his fist and said, "And you know the most important reason I'm doing this, right?"

"Most important reason? What's that?" asked Eddie, confused.

Quinn raised both his hand in front of his left peck and made a heart shape with them. "Exercise Bros For Life. I won't let a hussy break our beautiful bond."

This time it was Eddie's turn to scrunch up his face.

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Quinn West - MC - Exercise Bros For Life 3.

Eddie Carmichael - Top Prospect - Living the dream high school jock life.

Tracey Davis - Heir to a large Herbology agro-business - "Eddie, carry me to the common room. . . I can't mov. . .e. . ."

FictionOnlyReader - Author - This chapter was purely Quinn's perspective. I didn't write a single Eddie and Tracey thought. Third-person semi-limited.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

278. Chapter 278: The Failed

Assault

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

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The residents of the small township, Rosensten, were peaceful people. The community only held two dozen families, and it was a place where everyone knew everyone. If there was a fight in a household, and the heated discussions leaked out the four walls of their home, then the entire village would know every word exchanged the next day. All would meet in the township Church on Sunday mornings, and then the people would file into the sole pub after the sermons with the Church priest along with them. It was that sort of place. Simple people living simple lives.

However, that didn't mean that Rosensten was a dull and uninteresting place. To the eyes who could see beyond the veils that hid the things outside the norm, there were plenty of things of interest in Rosensten. For one, there were a large number of empty houses in the town. That itself wouldn't be strange — Rosensten was far from the city; thus, it wasn't a place that one would consider prime real estate. No. The thing that seemed strange was that all the houses looked ready to move in from the outside — the bushes always seemed to be in shape, the lawns freshly

mowed, and not a single sign of abandon on the properties.

The residents assumed that the owners, whoever they were, had hired someone to maintain the properties — though it was strange that no one from the township was hired. . . maybe someone from outside came into doing the maintenance — they sure hadn't seen them.

The village goon, Bobby Burton, had once bragged in the pub that he would go inside one of the houses and spend the night as a dare between his good friends, who all believed that the house was haunted. The entire friend group saw Bobby jump the walls that fenced the house boundary and run inside with a flashlight beaming light over his grinning face.

The next day.

"Wha' are you talkin' about?" Bobby put down his pint glass to look at his friends. "I went into no house yesterday."

"What are spiffin', Bobby boy," said one of his friends. "We all saw you climb the walls and run into the house." He looked at the others, who nodded. "See? We even saw you open. . . . open — wait. . . ."

Bobby glanced at his friends and burst into laughs. "If you clowns were trying to stitch me up, then at least have your plan straight. I went into the house? Yeah, right!" he finished with a scoff.

The friends exchanged dark looks.

"We saw him, right?" asked one of them.

"I did. . . I think," said another, frowning. He ruffled his hair, "Maybe we had too much to drink. . ."

". . . or maybe the house is really haunted," said a third one; he gulped with a fearful look. It didn't look like Bobby was lying, and if he was indeed telling the truth, there was only one possible explanation.

The house was haunted, as they had joked about.

As Bobby and his friends talked, another person was sitting beside him

with a fedora over his head and an overcoat on his body. He raised his wand, and a beer mug behind the counter flew up towards the tap in the wall. The tap twisted, and golden beer came sloshing out, falling into the mug with white foam topping it off. The filled mug flew over the bartender's head and landed in front of the man.

The man took a gulp of his self-served beer with his ear listening on the boys' conversation. They had stopped talking about foolish Bobby and his more foolish attempt to squat in the 'empty' house and had moved over to haunted houses.

He took another gulp before picking up his wand from the bar counter and waving it towards the group of boys. One by one, their eyes went dull, blank, and far-looking, and they stopped talking. The man observed them for half a minute before lowering his wand, and the moment he did, the boys started talking again; however, now they were talking about the butcher's daughter.

The man stood up from his barstool as he took a big gulp to finish the beer and slammed the mug on the counter with a throaty sigh of satisfaction.

The bartender picked up his rag and started wiping the counter when he found an empty beer mug sitting in front of him. 'Did I pour this one?' he wondered as he picked up the mug, but he couldn't remember pouring one.

He chuckled. Maybe it was the ghost from the haunted house the useless boys' group talked about.

The fedora-clad man walked through the village, gazing at the calm village. He liked places like these. They were much easier to work in; he rarely faced any problems like he did in the big cities. Plus, it was so much more easier to work alone rather than in groups.

He walked into the same house Bobby had trespassed yesterday. There was a tingling feeling as he stepped past the property gates. He knocked on the double doors with a bull-shaped door-knocker.

The door opened, and a woman dressed in wizarding robes appeared from within.

"Mrs. Westen," said the man, placing his removed fedora on his chest, "the matter has been cleared up. The muggle boy and his friends won't be talking or even thinking about your house anymore."

The town of Rosensten was a mixed village that housed both muggle and wizarding-kind.

There were two types of mixed-villages. The first type were the ones where the wizarding families lived among their muggle counterparts without completely hiding and pretended to be part of the muggle society — usually occupied by families of muggleborns or halfbloods.

Then there were mixed-villages like Rosensten, where the wizarding families preferred to live in complete obscurity. The houses that were believed by the muggles to be empty were homes to the wizarding families who lived under the guise of wards and charms that kept them hidden from those who weren't supposed to know. They traveled through the floo and at most went out to their gardens which too were obscured.

"Thank you, Mr. Whyte," said Mrs. Westen, bowing to the Ministry Obliviator. "Would you like to come in for some tea, Mr. Whyte? My husband and I would be delighted to host you."

"I appreciate the offer, Mrs. Westen, but I'd like to decline," said Whyte, putting his fedora back. "Please don't hesitate to contact the Oblivator Department if someone else decides to barge into your house."

Whyte tipped his hat to the lady and walked out of the house. There was no rule barring him from having some tea, and Mrs. Westen was beautiful

enough for him to thoroughly enjoy her presence, even if her husband was present. However, her husband, Randolph Westen, was the problem — he couldn't offend the Head of the Floo Network Authority. . . so it was wise for Whyte to stay clear of the big man.

Whyte withdrew his wand, and the three Ds of Apparition surfaced in his mind.

"What do we have here. . . An Obliviator? What a coincidence."

Whyte turned towards the deep voice and saw a group of men dressed in black robes over identical dark uniforms. He found the uniform familiar, but before his mind could find why, it directed his attention to the man's face. Whyte's heart started to bang in his chest cavity as his throat went dry, and his eyes started to shake ever so slightly.

"A-Augustus Rookwood!"

There were few Ministry employees who didn't recognize the ex-Unspeakable and the now on-the-run Death Eater. All Ministry employees had been given repeated seminars on alerting the Aurors Office the moment they spotted any of the known Death Eaters — every Ministry Employee had Death Eater faces memorized by heart.

"Ah, so you know me, that makes it easier," said Rookwood with a placid smile. "We are here to pay Randolph Westen a visit. Seeing that you're here with anti-muggle charms covering your body," the ex-Unspeakable's knowledgeable eyes roamed Whyte's body, "would you be so kind as to lead us to the Westen household."

Whyte gripped his wand tighter in his hand. His head throbbed as his face started to feel hot — what was he supposed to do here? He couldn't escape; there were half a dozen Death Eaters in front of him. He couldn't call for Aurors, and he was alone. . . . His thoughts ended there as he felt a jolt on his body, and everything went dark.

Rookwood eyes followed the collapsing body before looking up at the source of the Stunning Charm. The man was matchstick thin, pale as a vampire and eyes dead like those of a fish.

"Why are you wasting time with an Obliviator?" asked Rivers Lock in his flat voice as he lowered his wand. "I know Westen's home and, so do you."

Rookwood shrugged, took out his wand, and pointed it at the fallen man.

"Avada Kedavra" — a green zap flashed out of his wand. Rookwood pocketed his wand and turned to the Death Eaters behind him. "Bring him along; we will dump him at the Westen's."

There was nigh a change in the group's expression as a Death Eater from the group levitated the soul-less body and brought it along as they moved towards their destination.

When they reached the destination, Rookwood frowned at the house. His gaze looked into the air around the entire property. He turned to Rivers.

"Didn't you say that the Westen's didn't have a protection ward?" he asked, his eyes expecting an answer.

"They don't," said Rivers. "I had sent people a couple days back when no one was at home for scouting — the report clearly said no wards."

Rookwood raised his wand, and a cloud of soft blue dust shimmered out of the ex-Unspeakable's wand. The blue dust which was flowing freely in the wind suddenly came to stop mid-air and rested against an invisible wall.

"Then answer me, what is this?" Rookwood pointed his wand at the blue dust illuminating an invisible wall. "Why is there a ward around the property?"

Rivers gazed at Rookwood's magic silently before answering, "The wards might have set up in the time between the scouting report and today."

"Thank you for stating the obvious," said Rookwood in his gruff voice. He sighed deeply and closed his eyes for a moment before speaking, "Very well. . . I will disarm the wards and then continue as usual."

"Will you be able to do it without alerting the Westens?" asked Rivers plainly.

"Unlike you, who was a lowly clerk, I was an Unspeakable," said Rookwood and narrowed his eyes when Rivers showed no response. "I have studied Goblin wards; I'll be able to disarm them without notifying the insiders."

Rookwood began chanting magic, and his wand sent out soft spotting orbs of light drifted towards the wards, but the moment they touched the wards, they turned into a vile yellow color.

". . . What?"

Something unexpected to Rookwood happened as the invisible ward turned an angry red, and a dome appeared over the Westen's property.

"What did you do, Rookwood?" asked Rivers as he caught a shift of a window curtain from the first floor of the house. They had been seen.

Rookwood's eyes remained fixed on the red ward as he studied the flow of the magic and the sudden unexpected change that had occurred.

"These wards. . . they aren't goblin wards I know of," said Rookwood.

"We are aborting the mission," said Rivers.

Rookwood removed his eyes from the ward; his gaze bore holes into Rivers as he warned, "That's not for you to decide, Rivers. You're stepping your bound—"

Pops sounded around the Death Eaters, and when they turned away from the home to look, they were greeted by the sight of a team of Aurors surrounding them.

"Drop your wands!" said the Auror in the lead. "Death Eater, I repeat,

drop your wand!"

Rookwood brandished his wand towards the Aurors and was about to launch magic when he heard a sound. He turned to see the vanishing visage of Rivers Lock as he touched a ring on his hand. Just before disappearing, Rivers glanced at Rookwood with his dead eyes as if not a bit bothered by his actions.

A growl escaped Rookwood's throat. The inner-circle Death Eaters were all provided with a Portkey that keyed to a safe location in case they needed to escape in time of peril. Even though their Master had been hindered by Dumbledore in at the Ministry, the Carnival mission had been successful — pleased by Rivers' performance, their Master had provided him with a Portkey, which Rivers had just used.

Rookwood's eyes went to his raised wand hand and at the ring identical to Rivers on his thumb. He eyed the Death Eaters before him and then closed in Aurors. Rivers was right in his decision, he thought and pointed his wand at the land between him and the Death Eaters and let out an exploding spell which sent out flying bodies and earthen rubble towards the Auror, who weren't expecting the sudden change.

Rookwood touched the ring on his hand and muttered, "Walpurgisnacht." By the time dust settled and Aurors dealt with the flung Death Eaters, they found that the Azkaban escapees Rivers Lock and Augustus Rookwood had disappeared.

.....

The day the Dark Lord Voldemort had attacked Ossuary, the house to the Bones family, to kill the now Minister Amelia Susan Bones, the company Aegis Warding Solutions, whose wards the Dark Lord had brutally ripped apart, reached out to the DMLE.

Aegis put together a proposal for collaboration between Aegis and DMLE.

They proposed that if an Aegis ward over property was triggered and the owners didn't cast a simple spell in case of a false alarm, then Aurors would arrive at the scene. Amelia Bones, who was still the Head of DMLE at that time, approved the testing of the collaboration as her last command before her promotion to the Minister's chair.

To test if the system worked, certain members of the Ministry's upper hierarchy were approached, and among those, a number willingly volunteered to have Aegis wards around their homes.

Randolph Westen, the Head of Floo Network Authority, just so happened to be one of those volunteering test candidates.

When asked by Amelia Bones, who came up with the idea, which she thought was brilliant. The Aegis representative answered that it came from a person higher up in the organization, someone who had a part in creating the Aegis warding scheme.

.
Quinn West - MC - It's obvious, isn't it? Goblins won't work with the Ministry, but Aegis surely can. . . so here you have it.

Rivers Lock - Death Eater - My life takes priority.

Augustus Rookwood - Ex-Unspeakable - A new type of goblin ward?

Whyte - Obliviator(Dead) - Was keyed in the wards when he first called.

Voldemort - Dark Lord - Hmm? Why would I study a ward during an assassination when I can rip it apart.

Westens - Wizarding Family - Chose not to have their wards target muggles. Muggles aren't capable of hurting those who have magic.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - I hope you got why the Death Eater targeted Randolph Westen.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction

or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

279. Chapter 279: Returning To S

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Link in the Bio/Profile

The calm surface of the Great Lake was a sight to behold. When entirely still, it would reflect the mountains that landlocked it, and from the other side, it would reflect the glorious Hogwarts castle. The Great Lake was an integral part of Hogwarts. So much so that the Great Lake was legally a part of Hogwarts, and long ago, it was named as an aquatic-life habitat, housing multiple species living in their unique balance.

There weren't many things that would disturb the mirror known as the Great Lake. But there was a being living inside the waters that would occasionally turn the mirror back into a lake. The being was a significant reason why the Great Lake was termed an aquatic-life habitat.

A tiny bubble surfaced on the surface of the lake, sending ripples when it popped, which, when compared to the size of the lake, were minuscule.

However, the very next moment, a shadow appeared beneath the surface of the lake — the dark shadow grew until it couldn't anymore and, a large squid-like tentacle broke through the surface and rose towards the sky, the tip wiggled in the air for a moment before the moments became sharp and the tentacle dove back into the water like an arrow shot from a bow.

Inside the lake, Quinn raised a hand over his hand, and the water bubbled violently. The tentacle above speared towards him, but Quinn's eyes followed the eight others swishing in the water. As the incoming tentacle got into range, the bubbling water burst into an aquatic explosion and sent it flying like a limp noodle.

He grinned. His eyes smiled as he gazed into the yellow orbs without sclera of his opponent. They seemed to say, 'Come on, you can do better.' In response, half a dozen more tentacles broke out of the lakebed and joined the eight of their kind. The Kraken's eyes shone with an excited vigor as it swished its appendages, sending dense waves of underwater waves towards Quinn.

Quinn swiped his hand into an arc, and the incoming wave fizzled out into bubbles, but those bubbles were parted and crushed as another wave followed, this one bigger and faster than before. Quinn raised his hand towards the waves, and once again, it fizzled away, but the next second he felt a jolt as another wave came crashing. . . then another, again, and again, and again. . . multiple underwater waves assaulted with all their aquatic brawn.

'I just had to have such thoughts!' thought Quinn, clicking his tongue as the water around him started to thrum. The gill flaps on his neck and chest spread open to let out carbon-dioxide rich air bubbles.

The waves had started to pile up at a point between Quinn and Kraken, and with every swish of Kraken's tentacles, the balance began to shift as the violent water inches towards Quinn. But then thin water streaks like those left behind by bullets when shot underwater manifested around the pile-up point.

The Kraken stopped its swishing movements, its eye observing the streaks with caution as they appeared everywhere — left, right, above, behind —

hundreds of the tiny streaks appeared, all pointing towards the pile-up.

And then it happened.

As if the water streaks were ropes attached to the water — hundreds of directing pulling force all pulled at the water in the pile-up, and even the great water waves couldn't stick together, and a grand ripple surged in all directions, violently bubbling the water in its wake.

The Kraken's yellow eyes squinted at the bubbled mess, trying to look past at his tiny human opponent, though there was no need as the tiny human came shooting out the bubbles.

Quinn's entire vision filled with the Kraken and its looming tentacles.

However, instead of cowering under the terrifying visage, Quinn grinned, and his hands which were pulled back, seeming to hold a massive weight, snapped forward.

Kraken's tentacles about to zoom in upon Quinn froze. Its eyes rose up to look ahead and found a ginormous wall of water rushing forward. The Kraken looked down and saw through his special eyes the special aura surrounding the tiny human — the aura only possessed by those loved by the water. The Kraken's entire set of tentacles rose from the lakebed to face the water — it was the might Kraken after all.

A bulge of water rose on the lake's surface and rushed to the shore at a blazing speed. The bulge disappeared at the shore, and Quinn dressed only in swimming trunks broke through the surface to step out on the land, water shedding around him. He breathed out of his mouth, and a plume of white escaped his mouth in the chilly air of mid-November.

A chilly dip and an intense physical and magical workout was just the thing he needed to kickstart his evening. While his thrice a week Muay Thai practice sessions inside the Room of Requirements got him ample exercise, they lacked the blood pumping and exhilaration factor of

fighting against the Kraken, the event he reserved for only a couple times a year.

He shook his arms, and every drop of water on his body shot towards the ground — no need for a towel. Quinn turned back to where his clothes were, only to pause in the spot as he stared in front of him. He had an audience.

"Golden Squad," Quinn said to the Potter twins, Hermione, and Ron sitting under a tree near the shore. "What are you all doing outside in this much cold — go inside the castle, or you'll catch a cold — if that happens, you'll have to listen to Madam Pomfrey's lecture."

Quinn walked to the earthen dome a few steps from him and bent down to touch it for the earth to crumble to reveal a sling bag. The dirt on the bag jumped away from the fabric as Quinn picked it up to take out his clothes.

"We should be saying that to you, mate," said Ron, looking between the chilly waters and Quinn. "What are you doing going swimming in this weather?"

The two girls in the group eyed Quinn, who was only dressed in swimming trunks, leaving the rest of his body at full display for their eyes to gaze (feast) upon. They knew that Quinn worked out in the mornings before breakfast, and a couple years ago, they had chanced upon Quinn and Eddie during said workouts. But at that age, they didn't think of much of it — but now, at the sweet age of sixteen (and seventeen), both girls' eyes could tell that all those years of early mornings had paid dividends. They tried to pull their eyes away but were helpless that their eyes didn't respond to their wishes.

Quinn shrugged as he retrieved his fake wand and conjured a changing curtain to change out of his swimming shorts in some privacy. From

inside, he spoke, "I like the cold water; it feels good against the skin — refreshing if I may say."

Ivy and Hermione looked away from the changing curtain, but they could still hear the rustling of clothes. And while Hermione kept her gaze away, Ivy peeked at the curtain and felt disappointed at the opacity of the thin layer between them.

The conjured curtain vanished to reveal Quinn dressed in his Hogwarts robes with the Headboy pin shining on his lapel. "So, brings you here today?" Quinn asked, looking at the place — maybe it was time to change his shoreside spot to avoid encounters like this.

He turned to face the group and raised his brow at the varying expressions on the faces. Ivy was staring at him intently with a strange glint in her eyes. Hermione had her face turned with redness on her cheeks which he thought was a winter blush. Harry's eyes were going between him and Hermione, with a displeased expression. And he could tell that Ron was eyeing his Headboy batch.

"We wanted to get out of the castle," said Hermione, finally looking at Quinn, "no one is out here these days, and well, a warming charm does the trick against the cold."

In the cold, the only time Hogwarts students went outside was to visit the Herbology greenhouses, or when it was snowing and people were in the mood of playing with snow — other than that, the only ones who regularly went out were Quidditch players for practice, flying in the biting cold.

"Ah, now that I remember," Quinn looked at Ivy, "didn't you get a vial of Luck Potion — Felix Felicis, from Professor Slughorn. Congratulations, that potion is a headache and a half to brew, plus a couple ingredients can get difficult to procure."

Daphne had been mighty miffed when Slughorn had chosen Ivy's potion to be the best out of her, Hermione, and Ivy.

"It was to be expected," said Harry, "she's brewing potions with mum since she was little. She would even get angry if mum brewed something without her," said the twin brother snickering.

"I didn't get angry!" said the twin sister snappily.

"So you say, but didn't you refuse to eat dinner once because mum started brewing the potion without telling you."

"Shut up!"

Quinn watched the twins bickering with a smile, and after enjoying the two siblings airing their embarrassing laundry in retaliation, Quinn spoke, "Half-blood prince."

The four looked at Quinn, and he studied their faces. . . they should no sign of recognition.

"What? Half-blood prince, what is that?" asked Hermione.

Quinn sighed a white cloud. The cold white mist didn't dissipate like usual; instead, it grew bigger in size, and the color deepened. The suspended cloud expanded, contracted, spun, and in a couple of seconds, it had taken the shape of a bird — a raven. The cloud bird flapped its wings and flew into the sky under the gaze of five sets of eyes.

"How did you do that?" asked Hermione, her words quick and brimming with curiosity.

"Drop by the office, and I'll tell you," said Quinn chuckling. He took out his pocket watch and flicked it open, "Now, lovely people, if you'd excuse me, I'd take my leave — I have my successor to train."

Quinn walked away from the Golden Squad; however, he only had taken a few steps when he recalled the time in the Great Hall when he had stood beside McGonagall as she checked the student's results and

assigned timetables. He turned and looked at the redhead puffing out white breaths and pointing her wand at them. He recalled her career goal and sighed.

Quinn opened his mouth and mouthed out some words before turning away and walking away. Not waiting to see Ivy turn to him look at him with a startled and surprised look.

". . . Look for Half-blood Price's book in the Potion classroom's cupboard?" Ivy repeated the words whispered into her ears.

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The night's moon hung shining in the sky.

In the empty Hogwarts halls, Quinn walked unseen by all, under the guise of invisibility. He arrived at the head of a certain corridor of the sixth-floor of Hogwarts and took a deep breath before walking into the corridor. His steps silenced with magic didn't make noise, but if they did, they would be as heavy as hammers banging onto anvils.

Quinn stopped in front of a magical portrait of a man with a neat beard and mustache dressed in nightclothes, sleeping in his frame.

Quinn stared at the sleeping man for a few seconds before speaking up, "Wake up." The man in the portrait didn't open his eyes, so Quinn said again, this time with magic in his voice, "Vindictus Viridian. . . wake up!"

Vindictus Viridian, Potioneer, Author, and Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the early eighteenth century. The man who wrote the book that transcended generations — Curses and Counter-Curses: Bewitch Your Friend and Befuddle Your Enemies With Revenges.

The man in the portrait finally opened his eyes and looked at Quinn

standing in front of him. "What do you want?" he asked, grumbling.

"Adversus Timorem," said Quinn, speaking the password to the portrait.

"Come back tomorrow," said Portrait-Vindictus and was about to close his eyes when Quinn spoke up again, his voice this time firmer, "Adversus Timorem."

"Why do you kids are so annoying!" said Portrait-Vindictus as the portrait swung open on its hinges.

Quinn ignored the man and stepped inside the room, but his steps came to a halt just after stepping through the threshold. He stared at the rows and columns of shelves from one end to another. The shelves were filled with black binders with standard gold letters in gold on the binder spines.

Room of Rewards.

He hadn't stepped into this room since his third year and had avoided walking anywhere near the corridor leading to it for the years since then. Things hadn't gone well the last time he had entered the room after all. He slowly walked in a straight line and reached the center of the room. He looked down at his feet, and there it was. . . a shield seal of Hogwarts — H in the middle with a Lion, Badger, Eagle, and Snake with school's motto on a wreath.

Draco Dormiens Nunquam Titillandus

He knelt on the floor and touched the seal with his hand. Quinn didn't do anything and simply stared at the seal for a moment. Thoughts passed through his mind, the memories flashing by.

Quinn shook his head — no, he had decided to face it; he was ready for it. Quinn's other hand went to his neck and pulled out the chain with the Hallows pendant piece hanging from it. He had prepared for it.

"Aperio." Latin for open, reveal, uncover, and in this case. . . unseal.

A slight rumble shook the floor beneath Quinn's feet as the letters on the seal turned into a familiar cipher of the past. When the rumbling stopped. . . . the seal had disappeared, leaving behind a hole in the floor.

It was a dark hole.

It was the path to the Sin vault.

.

Quinn West - MC - ". . . let's do it, shall we?"

Ivy Potter - Winner of Felix Felicis - . . . Half-Blood Price?

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Want it or not. . . are you guys ready?

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

280. Chapter 280: Ah I should—

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

Under The Seal, The Antechamber Of Sin Would Be Revealed.

Quinn stared down the pitch dark opening. . . the entrance to the Sin Vault, the greatest tragedy of the life was under the room called the Room of Rewards. He didn't know if it was ironic or not — his magic reserves had received a boost but at what cost. . . he had lived under the influence of a curse for months and lost control of everything for what were the excruciatingly hard months of his life.

He placed his hands on the floor and let his feet dangle in the narrow

tunnel. He wasn't one to be scared of the dark, especially not after Tohem's Delight — but something about this particular darkness settled a weight in the base of his heart.

"Fortune favors the bold. . . . I should have asked the Felix Felicis from Ivy."

Quinn pushed himself off the floor and let himself drop into the tunnel. He breathed out, and a gust of wind flew in an updraft pushing Quinn's already flying hair straight up. There was a second and half of the wind-resisted fall before the tunnel opened up to the antechamber, and Quinn came to a hovering stop in mid-air.

The dim light from the Room of Rewards shone upon him, casting a halo of light around where he flew while the rest of the antechamber remained drowned in darkness. The snap of fingers reverberated in the room as two dozen white sparks lit up in the room, bright like magnesium set on fire before turning into orbs of soft lights illuminating the room.

Like the seven sins, the antechamber had seven shapes making it heptagonal in form with polished smooth walls, floor, and ceiling, lending it an out-of-the-ordinary feel, eliciting a frown of deep discomfort from him. It was bare as the last time he had seen without any visual clue of the horrors that it held.

Quinn gently flew to one of the walls, and as he did the last time, he touched one of the walls with both of his hands and closed his hands while his magic flooded into the walls, floor, and ceiling.

His brows furrowed, and his facial muscles twitched, and a snarl tugged on the corner of his mouth. Even after five years, he couldn't sense iota magic in the antechamber. He, who had undone Dark Lord's Voldemort protections charms that guarded his precious as life Horcrux, couldn't

sense any magic even when he knew there was a magic hidden in here waiting to reveal its predatory nature.

He slammed his rage-fueled body magic-infused fist on the wall, and not a single speck of dust got displaced. It only further angered as he knew it was because of magic. . . . which he once again couldn't detect.

Quinn turned back to look at the center of the antechamber. He stared at the slick floor and knew the moment he stepped on it, the pandemonium would start, whatever it was — he didn't even know what it was, for he had been rendered unconscious before knowing what had happened.

He was grossly unaware of what had happened, with no way to find out without triggering the events again.

The chain around his neck and the pendant piece against his chest felt cold. The cold felt reassuring when the rest of his body burned in slight heat. Winds blew Quinn to the center of the room with his eyes fixed on the floor below. The more he waited and dawdled in his thought, the more he felt he was not reading.

"I'm ready," the words flowed out of his mouth. "I'm going to win this time."

The supply to wind magic was cut, and Quinn's feet to the ground. His senses turned up to eleven as his magic flowed to every inch of the room, flooding the Hogwarts classroom-sized room into a magically charged environment.

His magical bid paid off as Quinn felt a foreign magic manifest into the room, and it instantly zoned in on him. Quinn flexed his magical muscles and turned his magic to combat the attack that came barreling towards him from all the sides. The continuous assault of magic was like a beast trying to sink its claws into him — they were the heaviest hands of magic he had felt launched upon himself. And they didn't seem to stop.

"What?"

Quinn, who was staring ahead, suddenly stiffened as the smooth walls in front of him took on a liquid sheen and rippled before runes emerged on it. He hastily turned to look at the other walls, and complex runes had overtaken the previously glossy walls.

He squinted his eyes at the runes on the walls, and his heart dropped just at the first few observation that caught his eyes. In a glance, he had caught seven interconnected layers of runes, pointing to the complexity of the magic. . . but that was just the first strike of the hammer as Quinn noticed upward of seven different runic languages flashing in multicolored light.

The Aegis wards were Quinn's most complex runic invention, and he only used three different runic languages as he couldn't achieve harmony and synchronicity for more than that. The last hammer strike. . . out of the various symbols, alphabets, and hieroglyphics, he could only recognize three sets — two types of Futhark and an ancient strain of proto-hieroglyphical Egyptian, the latter he only had seen rough records of and knew the translations were lost with time. He couldn't even tell which languages the other runes stemmed from.

The magical imbalance and chaos snuffed out Quinn's light orbs, and the room was dominated by seven different lights — Violet, Green, Orange, Blue, Yellow, Pink, and Red.

'What's going to happen?' Quinn's eyes bounced from rune to rune, glowing brighter and brighter as he fought off the other magic in the room.

A sudden yet eerie silence fell upon the antechamber as the other magic vanished without a trace, and in its place, a heavy, viscous, suffocating weight started to leak out from the runes.

Quinn's heart palpitated out of rhythm as his base instincts, the core of his being, shouted at him to run! Body magic jolted throughout his body as wind magic ran rampant as he shot towards the only exit/entrance. However, only a magic-aided wide step after the magics from the rune struck. Beams of seven different colors shot towards their intended target at laser speeds, screaming as the room grew brighter.

"Gah!"

The beams hit Quinn, and he stumbled onto the ground, kneeling. He could feel the shearing hot and cold magic break through his skin and drill its ways through being.

"No!"

Quinn's squeezed shut eyes snapped open and defiant purple glared, not willing to submit. His magic roared and the reserves built through the years that had long past the level of obscene for a human to hold were put to work. Quinn knew that he didn't have the magical focus or experience to fully utilize his reserves, and he doubted that he would be able to reach the levels desired any time soon; it would take at least a few couple more decades to reach a point where he would have complete control of his magic.

He didn't like pumping eleven units of magic into a spell that could only correctly utilize ten units of magic. If he wanted to utilize eleven units of magic, he would find another magic that could do so. But there was no spell that could utilize the hundred of thousands of units of magic inside Quinn. . . so he had no choice but to push magic past the efficient limit. Quinn's entire body glowed in seven different colors as brighter streaks covered his body. The magics from the beams had long broken through the physical barrier of the body and had reached the residence of the ethereal soul.

The bright soul floated in a pure white place, but suddenly streaks of seven different colors invaded the pristine whiteness and raced towards the bright soul in the center. The streaks bared their sharp spear-like edge and stabbed towards the soul.

However the soul wasn't helpless. It was one of the rare souls who had dared to wander into the realm of soul magic — a magic part of the trinity.

A shield appeared around the soul that the streaks stabbed into.

Screeches pierced throughout the pristine white space. They tried to drill a hole into the shield, but it stood solid like an unshakable mountain.

The streaks switched their gears in a split-second, and the streaks stopped drilling instead, seven-colored veins sprouted on the surface of the shield and stuck to it like a parasite. Immediately after, the entire pure white space was covered into blotches and streaks of seven different colors.

However, the soul was safe.

Quinn heaved with both his knees on the floor. The beams had stopped.

His mouth was chalk dry, and he gulped, which felt like he was swallowing a ball of bile. His shirt was thoroughly drenched, and his head felt like it was on fire. His heart was beating so fast that it hurt, and his fingers shook like a starved addict.

"Ugh. . . . shit, shit, shit. . . . ! I'm in control. I'm in control. I'm in control!"

He could feel it, the curse; he could feel it. It was — inside of him. If for one second he stopped the very rudimentary shield around his soul that was keeping the curse on the bay.

«I should just let the curse take over. . . it felt so good the last time.»

Quinn's eyes widened when he heard his voice, lazy and uncaring, echo inside his mind. He could tell what it was. He had thought about the Sin

curse for long through the year, so he knew that this was his Sloth speaking.

«It would only do good. . . it'll feel good and the power boost it would give would be so nice!»

Quinn shook his head at the thoughts of Greed.

«I recovered from the focus loss once, I can do it once again, I know the formula. . . I am me, after all.»

Pride reared its ugly violet head.

«Whatever, I am hungry! I used too much magic; I should go to the kitchen!»

He felt his body growl under Gluttony.

«Ugh, this is such a pain! I should take Daphne to Room of Requirements. . . yeah.»

He clenched his hands to keep the tremor under control. He looked around the antechamber to see if there was something. . . anything.

«I mean, who made this?! Why can't I detect any magic! Maybe I will get the answer if I let the curse take over!»

He could feel the Envy rise up his throat.

«Why won't the voices in my head shut up! The last time was so less annoying!»

He bit the inside of his mouth and taut his neck to calm his Wrath.

Quinn got up from the floor, stretched his back straight, and felt the dull ache that spread through his body. He took slow steps towards the tunnel. He turned his tired eyes towards the ceiling and peered through the hole.

He didn't want to move. He just wanted to go to sleep on the spot and just. . . get away for a while. Everything was going to start all over again, and this time he was 'conscious' instead of being blissfully unaware of the grave situation he was in.

This time, he wasn't going to enjoy the cloud nine feeling for months.

«Only if I struggle against the curse. . . .»

Quinn blankly stared at the dim light coming from the tunnel.

"This. . . This is going to be a problem, isn't it?"

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Quinn West - MC - «Ah. . . this is such a pain.»

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Na, peeps. It wasn't going to be so easy.

Also, check out Chapter 53 if you desire a recap.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

281. Chapter 281: BFF

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

The winters spread its cold blanket over the country.

While Hogwarts students preferred to stay indoors to beat the cold, there was one day they couldn't miss going out on. . . that day was the Saturday of a Hogsmeade weekend. No matter if it snowed, rained, or hailed, the teenagers of Hogwarts would descend into the all-magical village of Hogsmeade.

Marcus stepped off the Grand Staircase, running, and slowed down to power walk to get the huff in his breath in control. He arrived at the Entrance Hall next to the Great Hall and was greeted with a windchill

coming through the open gats that broke goosebumps under his thick, warm, padded clothes. He looked around the hall, sorting through the flux out people entering the Entrance Hall from the Great Hall and others exiting the castle through the gates.

He found who he was looking for a distance away from the gates standing at a corner, staring at the walls.

"Sorry, sorry, I'm late," said Marcus, rubbing his arms with his hands.

Quinn glanced away from the wall and quirked a brow. He waved his hand, and Marcus felt a warmth spread through his body, loosening his tense body.

"Everyone needs to get into the habit of using Warmth Charms liberally," said Quinn. "Is it fun to shiver in the cold?"

Marcus removed the glove off his hand and touched Quinn's cheek with the back of his hand. "You're colder than me!" he said, pulling his hand back.

"I'm used to the cold, my insulated friend," said Quinn, pulling his overcoat wide open.

«Like hell I would need something as weak as a Warmth Charm.»

"What are you looking at?" Marcus asked, putting the glove back on and turning his eyes to the wall covered with framed portraits. "Talking to a portrait, huh, find anyone interesting?"

"I was just looking at something interesting that I found a couple years back," said Quinn. He pointed at the portrait hanging just above their heads. "It's the only non-magical portrait in Hogwarts."

Marcus craned his neck at an angle and looked at the portrait in question.

It was the photo-realistic painting of a man in his late years with a flowing white beard, long white hair, dressed in a dark maroon-burgundy gown-styled robe, and sat atop on his head was a round cap that had a

black veil flowing from the top and flowing down to shoulders and the to the entire body, at least what was visible in the portrait.

"Isn't he just. . . Headmaster Dumbledore?" said Marcus.

Quinn laughed, nodding in agreement. "Yeah, they both have the long white beard and hair looking going. But no, that's not Dumbledore. This fine gentleman is Myrddin Wyllt."

"Who?"

"Merlin."

Marcus' eyes blew open at Quinn's words, and he said, "Merlin, wow!"

Merlin was a legendary British wizard who lived during the Middle Ages.

It was during his lifetime that magic had entered its golden age, and he had spearheaded the rise and growth of human magic. He was part of the legendary King Arthur's Court, and without doubt, the most famous wizard of all time. He only had one peer at his age — the Dark Lady Morgana, King Arthur's half-sister, but even she couldn't gain the upper hand on him.

"Uh-huh, did you know," said Quinn, "that before Merlin was the famous sorcerer of King's Court, he was a student right here at Hogwarts."

"Seriously? I didn't know that," said Marcus.

"He was one of the first Slytherins, studied right from Salazar Slytherin himself," said Quinn. "It's said that his wand was made from English Oak, though it can't be proven as Merlin's grave was never found. However, the theory could be credible as Merlin was good at Charms."

"Why do you think he didn't make a magical portrait?" asked Marcus.

Quinn shrugged, "Who knows what went through the mind of someone like Merlin. Maybe he did paint himself a magical portrait, but he didn't put one in Hogwarts — maybe it's out there somewhere in the ancient remains of Camelot, still intact, waiting to be activated, or maybe

activated. It could be even in some rich person's collection, who knows. .

. if it exists, the possibilities are endless."

Marcus glanced at his best mate and saw the intent look on Quinn's face as he gazed at Merlin's portrait. He nudged Quinn with his shoulder, "I look forward to the day when I hear someone use Quinn's beard in place of Merlin's beard."

A smile appeared on Quinn's face. "Now, that's a thought, isn't it," he said.

"Though I don't know if I will grow a beard, I don't think I'm the beard type of guy, you know."

«Merlin, huh. . . now that's an appropriate stepping stone for someone like me.»

Quinn exhaled before his lips pressed into a thin white line. He shook his head, put on a smile, and threw his arm over Marcus' shoulder. "Come one, let's get going. Time waits for no man, except those who have mastered the mysterious magic of time, which we're not."

"If you're not going to grow a beard, then what do you think people would refer to?" asked Marcus as they walked towards the gates.

"Hmm. . . Quinn's glorious suits because I would be only seen in suits!"

Quinn nodded with satisfaction. "Now, that's a nice thing for everyone to say."

"Glorious suits, you say. . . isn't that a little long? I don't think that's going to work," said Marcus.

"Do you know what Eddie would say?" asked Quinn, grinning.

Marcus sighed with a smile, "Saggy balls or something like that. . ."

"Right on the money," Quinn grinned.

"So that would make it. . . . Quinn's sag—"

"Don't complete that sentence!"

The two friends made their way through the snow-covered paths and

roads to Hogsmeade village, with Quinn working as a snow sweeper while doing the scenery a favor by making snow and ice sculptures along the way — snowmen, swans, goblins, house-elves, dwarves, you name it, and Quinn had created it.

"Do you know there's a world ice sculpture competition, I wonder if I could win the competition and become the youngest champion or something," said Quinn, fondling his chin. "I think a scaled-down model of Hogwarts would do the trick, don't you think?"

Quinn turned to Marcus when he got no reply and saw Marcus staring at the ground ahead as they walked, seemingly lost in thought.

"Marcus?" called Quinn and poked him.

Marcus jolted and hastily looked at Quinn. "Would you repeat that? I didn't catch that.

Quinn studied his friend and saw that Marcus had once again wandered off to his own world. "You're worried, aren't you?" he asked.

Marcus shrugged as he kicked some snow to the side. He stuffed his hands into his pockets and raised his shoulders to push the coat collars to cover more of his face.

"There's no need to be worried," said Quinn, "you'll be fine, I taught you everything I knew that would help you, and I seriously don't think you're going to need anything else — just be yourself, and you'll be just fine."

"What if I end up making a fool of myself?" asked Marcus. "I'm not like Eddie, who's just phenomenal at Quidditch. Even Luna is really passionate about becoming a Magizoologist. Daphne is set on becoming a Healer. Tracey knows she wants to return to her family business. Astoria is doing AID. And there's no need to talk about you."

'And here I thought he had gotten over it,' thought Quinn. It had been a while since he had seen Marcus doubt himself. Marcus had cruised

through with high confidence built by high competence and working on an objective the entire last year. While everyone had gone through magical growth in their time with DA, Marcus had gone through additional character growth.

"Oh, Marcus, you know you have got it all wrong," Quinn said, waving his hand once for meters of the path in front of them to clear, making some of the people who walked in front of them jump. "Half of the people in the group mentioned are brats from rich families," he pointed at himself, "look at me, I'm a complete brat — a loveable one, but still a brat. . . ."

Daphne didn't arrive at her decision to become a healer because it interested her; no, she's becoming a healer because of another reason. Sure she finds the subject matter interesting, but her motivation is not loving the field of healing. Tracey doesn't have a bottom-of-the-heart 'passion' towards her family business; she's doing it because it's the best option for her. AID is a short-term thing for Astoria — that girl has no idea what she wants to do in the future; she might bounce around from thing to thing after Hogwarts without a worry because of her parents. If I wasn't a magic maniac, I would have simply followed Tracey's example and went into my family business, and who knows, things might have not worked out, and I might have ended up becoming a wastrel.

My point is that half of us don't have the same worry as you because we aren't thinking about the problem. In a way, you're better than all of us because you're actually giving it serious thought. You want to know what you want to become in the future — not because of some fear, or because it's easy, or because. . . it's all you have."

Quinn cocked his hand and slapped Marcus tight on the back, sending the latter stumbling a few steps.

"W-What was that?!" Marcus asked with wide eyes and a hand on his back.

"In the name of my saggy balls'," said Quinn confidently, "Marcus, you're seventeen, get over it; you have the rest of your life in front of you to figure it out — right now, just do whatever feels like fun, and the thing will find you before you find it."

Marcus blinked. The slap on his back sizzled, but it wasn't bad. He straightened his back and took a deep breath of the cold air.

"You better hire me if I don't end up failing to get a job," said Marcus.

"Deal! But be ready because I'm going to dump all the annoying on you while I chill in the back," said Quinn, grinning. But he knew it wasn't going to come to that. His friend had much less trust in himself than he should have.

Both of them reached the one shop in Hogsmeade that Quinn knew well. The door chime rang when Quinn entered the door. The place smelt like ink, paint, and paper.

"Bob," Quinn said to the man sitting behind the counter, looking as if life had been sucked out of him.

The Manager of Scrivenshaft's Quill Shop looked up. For a moment, Bob's blurry eyes stared at Quinn before they sharpened in half-panic and half-hurry, and he stood up straight.

"Q-Quinn, you're here," said Bob, looking as if he was about to cry.

Quinn chuckled as he walked to the counter, "You were asked for the shop's books, weren't you? And then questioned on them?"

Bob nodded pitifully.

"It's okay, you'll be fine," said Quinn, patting Bob's back.

«Ugh. . . grow a spine, will you?! Pathetic!»

"Now, you sit back and relax," said Quinn, "leave it to me." He turned to

Marcus, who was fixing his clothes. "Let's go."

Quinn and Marcus climbed to the store's second floor and arrived at a single corridor in front of the furthest door.

"Ready?" asked Quinn.

Marcus nodded.

Quinn opened the door, and a smile appeared as he watched the man in front of him flipping through account books.

George looked up from the table, and a hint of a smile made its way to his face. "You're here," he said, and then his eyes went behind Quinn.

"You must be Marcus Belby."

Marcus stiffly nodded. "Yes, sir, it's finally nice to meet you. Quinn has told me a lot about you."

"And he similarly had told me about you and the boy named Eddie Carmichael," said George. He glanced at Quinn, "Is the Luna girl here? I would like to meet her as well."

"Maybe some other day," said Quinn, "today, it's just Marcus."

"I see, that's fine. I would like to know more about you, Marcus," said George and gestured to the chair opposite to him.

Quinn placed his hand on Marcus' shoulder and whispered to him,

"Alright, now it's all up to you. I have buttered you up in his eyes, so answer anything he asked, and ask him all the questions you want. You can keep him here as long as you want, so ask him what HE can give YOU." Then he gently pushed him forward.

"You're not staying?!" Marcus asked in a rushed whisper.

"No way, mate. It's Hogsmeade weekend, and I have a girlfriend," said Quinn, winking as he walked backward and closed the door behind him, leaving Marcus and George behind.

Marcus turned to George and found the older gentleman who looked

much like Quinn starting at him. He walked to the table and sat down on the chair.

"So, Marcus," said George, "Quinn says you'd like to work for our family."

Marcus clenched his hands in nervousness, but then Quinn's words flashed through his brain, and he loosened his grip. He stayed silent for a moment before sitting straight up and looking George in the eye.

"No, sir, that's not the case."

George's hand, which was flipping through the account book, stopped. He studied Marcus for a moment and then closed the book and pushed it to the side.

"Is that so? And why's that, Marcus."

Outside Scrivenshaft, Quinn looked up towards the second floor. Marcus didn't know what he wanted to do, which meant he wasn't averse to trying things out . . . so he set up a meeting with a man, who owned a lot of things in a lot of areas. And Quinn knew that while Marcus didn't see it, he knew that Marcus had an aptitude for leading.

"I wonder if Marcus would end up becoming to Lia what Uncle Elliot is to grandfather," Quinn muttered, revealing how much of a high opinion he had of Marcus to compare him to Elliot, who he thought was the best man he had ever met. ". . . I would like to keep Marcus to myself. . . I wonder how this would turn out."

.

Quinn West - MC - Alright, both of my friends are set.

Marcus Belby - Traits of Leader - Talked with George for 4 hours, more than anyone outside family had done in years.

George West - Grandfather - Overqualified Interviewer*.

Bob - Manager of Scrivenshaft - Drained, but it's the manager's fate.

.

If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

282. Chapter 282: The Necklace's

Curse

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

After dropping Marcus at Scrivenshaft, Quinn continued on with his day at Hogsmeade.

The walk outside in the Hogsmeade streets wasn't enjoyable, with the cold winds leaving the exposed parts of the skin raw and numb, and though it didn't bother Quinn, he could see scarves covering half of the people's faces. The streets were full of students bent double against the bitter wind, and the shops and stores were boarded up with many more students escaping the weather.

Quinn took out his pocket watch and studied its clicking hands; there was still time until he and Daphne were to meet. He looked around, wondering what he should do before finally coming to the decision to visit Honydukes to place a bulk order of choco-balls, the franchise product of the 'brand' Chocolate West. He had gone through the initial batch he had brought from home quite quickly — no one told him that being a well-liked Headboy who would give out chocolates after reprimanding people would be so hefty on the pocket.

'I feel like the little gluttons are messing with me just to get chocolate;

maybe it's my fault. . . is my giving out chocolate after making a mistake reinforcing that sort of behavior. . . no — that can't be it, right?' Quinn thought about the first to third years as he walked out of Honeydukes after waiting in a long line of people buying some stuff to justify staying inside the story.

The High street outside was not very busy; nobody was lingering to chat, just hurrying toward their destinations. Though he did see a group of Gryffindors walking a distance from him — the Golden group in the back with Katie Bell and her friend Leanne in the front, seeing them made a memory surface in his mind.

Quinn's jaw set in place as he followed after them. He didn't know if it would be the same as in his memories, but if it was, then he couldn't ignore it. As they were making their way to their destination through the frozen slush, which seemed to be Hogwarts, his eyes were fixed on the Katie-Leanne pair, and his apprehension only seemed to grow when he saw them bicker with each other.

"It's nothing to do with you, Leanne!" he heard Katie say.

The Golden squad walked behind Katie and Leanne, listening to their voices carried by the wind to them as they increasingly became shriller and louder. They rounded a corner in the lane, sleeting coming thick and fast, blurring Harry's glasses. Just as he raised a gloved hand to wipe them, Leanne made to grab hold of the package Katie was holding; Katie tugged it back, and the package fell to the ground.

Katie hurriedly crouched down to pick up the package, and at once, Katie rose into the air, suspended comically by the ankle, but gracefully, as though she was about to fly. Yet there was something wrong, something eerie. . . . Her hair was whipped around her by the fierce wind, but her eyes were closed, and her face was quite empty of expression.

Harry, Ivy, Hermione, Ron, and Leanne had all halted in their tracks, watching. Harry had finally done cleaning up his glasses, and just as he had got a clear view of the situation, he felt a grip on his shoulder and was pushed to the side and saw Quinn walk past him.

"Quinn?" Harry heard Ivy say; there was a fear in her voice.

They saw Quinn raise both his arms and jutted them forward forcefully, and as if in response, Leanne was pushed back, away from the floating Katie and fallen package. He then raised his arm above and jerked it back for the still rising Katie to be pulled back to the ground.

A terrible scream from Katie pierced the cold street, and her eyes flew open with only whites visible. . . whatever she was feeling was clearly causing her terrible anguish.

She had just started writhing and flopping on the floor when reels of ropes broke out the snow beneath and clamped down on Katie — her arms, legs, torso, even her head, all were bound down to the ground, forcefully stopping the girl from shaking.

"W-What are you doing?" asked Leanne, her hands clutched at her chest as she saw Quinn straddle her best friend.

Quinn didn't respond and placed his hand on Katie's forehead. His jaw was set together as he felt a terrible curse coursing through Katie's body.

«This is a laughable design.»

For once, Quinn agreed with his Sin-voice in his mind, which, if it had been another situation, would have scared him as it was never good when his regular thoughts and Sin-thoughts overlapped. But right now wasn't the time to think about himself.

His magic flew into Katie, and within seconds, Katie's scream subdued to groans and her violent shaking loosened in his twitching. After a few more seconds, when Quinn got up, Katie's terrible responses had gone

like they had never existed, and the only thing that remained was that she was unconscious.

"Wha' happened to her?" asked Ron, walking towards Katie, and his eyes dipping down to the silver necklace with glittering green opal jewels peeking out of the package.

Quinn raised his hand, and Ron was sent skidding and tumbling back to the rest of the Golden squad. He turned to the necklace, and it was pushed back into the package, and the package was secured tightly. Only then did Quinn summon the package and pocketed it.

He turned to Hermione and spoke, "Go to the Three Broomsticks, ask Madam Rosmerta to tune her floo to Madam Pomfrey that I'm bringing in an injured student, then call Professor McGonagall and inform her to come to the Hospital Wing."

The Gryffindor Prefect nodded and hurried off to the popular pub.

Ivy stepped forward, "Quinn, listen, I—"

"I will listen to you later, Ivy; right now I have to get Katie to Madam Pomfrey," said Quinn.

"I will come with you," said Harry, the other Prefect.

Quinn opened his arms up, and Katie flew up into them. "Sure, let's get going," he said and walked to Harry. "Hand on my shoulder."

"Ah, okay" Harry looked at Quinn's shoulder and saw some snow. He raised his hand to brush it off, but the second his hand touched the shoulder, both boys, along with Katie, were gone with a pop.

They appeared right outside the Hogwarts gates that opened towards Hogsmeade, and accompanied by the sound of feet hitting the snow was Harry's startled screams.

"Could you not shout so loudly," Quinn said to Harry, "it's only apparition."

"Tell me before you do that!" Harry wasn't having it; he placed his hand over his mouth. "Oh, crap. . . I feel like I'll puke. . ."

"You take your time; I will go on," said Quinn.

He lowered his hand, but Katie remained afloat and straightened out; her unconscious body floated beside him as he looked at the castle.

"Ugh, this wouldn't have happened if you gave me a second to prepare myself," Harry took in a deep breath. "I will come with you."

"Then make sure to keep up," Quinn streamed a bit of body magic and began his sprint journey to the Hospital Wing that he covered without breaking a sweat, though that couldn't be said about Harry.

"You-you. . . how do you. . . run so fast. . . for so long," Harry heaved on his knees and then laid down on Hospital Wing's floor.

"Madam Pomfrey!" Quinn called.

The matron came hurrying out from inside her office, where her floo was located and pointed at one of the empty beds when she saw Quinn.

"I just got Ms. Granger's floo-message," she said. "Potter, lay on a bed if you want to sleep. I don't want to treat you if you got a cold from lying on the cold floor."

«Damn, I was slower! Ugh, slowpoke Potter screwed me over!»

Quinn bit the inside of his cheek to stop himself from grimacing. These petty thoughts whispered into his mind were the most annoying thing about the Sin-curse; they were frequent and ticked him off massively.

"She says Ms. Bell suddenly started to scream and writhe on the floor, but she didn't know what caused it. Did someone cast a spell? Do you know?"

Quinn laid Katie on the empty bed and stepped back to give the matron space to operate. "It was a cursed item that Bell was carrying. She touched it just before she was levitated by her ankle and started to scream and writhe. I have secured the item in question."

Pomfrey glanced up at Quinn and her gaze swept over him.

"I am fine, Madam Pomfrey. I didn't touch the item directly," said Quinn.

"As for the curse, it's a terrible yet simple one; I undid it before it did some long-term damage. She'll be back to top shape in around one week."

Then he told her about his discoveries which she took into consideration while treating Katie. "Also, she was Imperiused, so please take note of that."

Poppy's wand halted for a moment before she continued her treatment in silence.

McGonagall came rushing into the Hospital Wing but came to a startled stop when she saw Harry on the floor. Her eyes popped out, and her breathing hitched before she took a closer look.

"Mr. Potter, please get up from the floor. It's middle of the day and no time to sleep," she said and stepped over him to get inside the Hospital Wing.

"What happened to Katie Bell?!" asked McGonagall.

"The girl's been hit by a curse from a cursed item and under the effects of Imperius," said Poppy as she replaced her wand in her holster. A wide-eyed McGonagall gasped in horror as she glanced at the sleeping Katie.

Poppy continued, "Fortunately, Quinn was there to handle the situation and undid the curse before it could cause lasting damage. She'll wake up in a few hours and will be back taking hits from a Bludger on the field in a week."

McGonagall glanced at Quinn, who had taken a seat on a barstool beside the bed.

"Excellent job, Mr. West," said McGonagall. "Where's the cursed item?"

Quinn took out the brown paper package tied up with twine. "There's a necklace inside. Don't let it touch your skin; it's how the curse is

transferred."

McGonagall took out a thick woollen glove and placed it over her right before taking the package. "I'll have Severus take a look at it. . . . Where did Ms. Bell get the necklace?"

"You will have to ask Leanne Paige about it. She was there with Bell when it happened and before it," said Quinn, getting up from his chair.

"I will," said McGonagall before sighing. "Albus would be shocked when he returns on Monday."

Quinn raised an eyebrow at that. "The Headmaster not in the castle?"

"No, he's been out since yesterday morning."

Quinn hummed nonsensically. He caught sight of the Headmaster only twice over the past few weeks. He rarely appeared at meals anymore.

And now McGonagall had said that Dumbledore was out overnight.

'He must be out there looking,' he thought as his hand went to his chest, feeling for the pendant piece beneath his clothes.

After leaving the Hospital Wing, Quinn made his way to the AID office.

There was no use to go back to Hogsmeade now, and spending some time in the workshop would do him good.

When he reached the Grand Staircase to change the floors, Quinn caught the sight of Draco Malfoy on a moving staircase as he stood on another one.

«Oh, it's the Junior Death Eater!»

Quinn's eyes went to see if there was someone else on the Grand Staircase. There were only him and Draco in the Grand Stairwell.

«There's no one here. . . one shot and no one will know.»

His fingers resting on the railings of the staircase twitched. But then

Quinn sucked in a sharp breath and looked away from Draco.

'Control, Quinn, control. . . '

There were petty whispers, but then there were whispers that would, at times that would, momentarily make him take physical action. They came far in-between, and Quinn had only experienced them a couple of times.

'I have to find a way to make this go away, quick,' Quinn thought as his hand went to feeling the pendant piece the second time in the day.

He arrived at the office and was thinking of cooling his mind when he saw the redhead he knew well standing outside his office.

Ivy noticed when he came to a stop and pushed herself off the wall to face.

"Can we talk?"

.

Quinn West - MC - The voices in his mind come in different flavors.

Harry Potter - Boy-Who-Tired - Damn. . . I workout enough, right?

Ivy Potter - Awaiting to talk - What does she want to talk about you?

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Hmm . . . throw your suggestions at me. I'm going through a thinking phase right now, so be my think tank. [This was written during the Public release and NOT the release.]

.

If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

283. Chapter 283: Laying Subtle

Claim

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a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

[Link in the Bio/Profile](#)

"Can we talk?"

Quinn gazed at Ivy with his peripheral vision on the wall behind which the AID office was. His destination had changed a few feet from workshop to office space.

«Let's read her mind and get it over with.»

Said his voice dripping with lethargy.

«Alone in an office, maybe behind a locked door? Me likey!»

Said another version of his voice, this one hoarse and throaty.

Quinn shivered at the second whisper; he had sounded like the former plenty of times, but the latter one he had never sounded like, yet it sounded so much like him.

". . . Sure, let's go in and have a talk," he said, pushing past the thought.

Ivy nodded.

Quinn unlocked the door and entered the office, which hadn't changed much since Astoria had become part of AID. He felt she was restricting herself by not making changes till he was there even though he had invited her to make changes to the office to make it feel like her space and not his and Luna's.

"So, what do you want to talk about?" asked Quinn after they sat down.

He looked at Ivy, who was shifting in her chair, clutching the bottom edge of her school sweater, and looked like she was making herself smaller. She looked more uncomfortable than he had ever seen her.

"Um. . . about Katie and her curse!" Ivy said, her voice much hurried and louder than usual, but she immediately hushed down to just above a whisper. "I didn't curse her. . . ."

Quinn quirked her brow. 'Where did that come from?' he thought.

"Who said anything about you cursing her?" he asked, confused from the bottom of his mind.

"The Halfblood Prince book. . . it-it was there," she said, her voice gloomy and downtrodden.

Quinn's mind went into his memories of the book. Snape's copy of Advanced Potions had been there for years, collecting dust, and he had only once picked it up to glance through it — his current version of potion recipes was better than teenager Snape's. However, that book was much more than just an improved potions recipe book; it held much more than that in the form of Snape's personal collection of self-made spells.

And that was when it clicked in his mind.

"Ah. . . . was there a spell like there in the book?" he asked.

Ivy nodded, her head down. "It's. . . Levicorpus — it lifts people from their ankle" — Katie had been lifted up in the air by her ankle — "B-BUT, I didn't cause the levitation and the screaming, that wasn't me, I promise!"

She threaded her fingers into her hair, grabbed her head, and hunched down.

The spell became clear in his mind with its use case. It was a spell made by Severus Snape with the motive of making fun of someone (humiliating someone.) Though Quinn could clearly remember from his canon memories that the spell had ended up against Snape. . . and that too by his worse nemesis, James Potter.

"Seeing your reaction, I assume you weren't looking at anywhere but at Katie, were you?" Quinn sighed, feeling for the nervous wreck of a girl.

"Bell's unfortunate situation, fortunately, wasn't caused by you."

His words seemed to be an elixir to Ivy as she at once looked up at Quinn

with a bright, hopeful light in her eyes, and her pale complexion regained some of its previous rosiness.

"R-Really?"

Quinn nodded. "You might have missed it in the rush and suddenness of the situation, but Bell was cursed because of a cursed item she was forced to carry because of the Imperius she was under. Leanne Paige, her friend, was skeptical of the package's nature and how Bell was acting and tried to pry it off her, and in the struggle, the packaging came undone, and Bell ended up touching it, which transferred the curse onto her. . . and you know the rest."

Ivy collapsed into her chair, and the tension seemed to leave her body like a deflated balloon.

"I'm happy that you're responsible and conscious about what you have in the book — benefits and dangers," he said, though he saw the embarrassed expression Ivy gave in response, which told him that she had done things that were not so responsible.

"Thank god," she said with a slow smile. "When I suddenly saw you push past us, I thought you would think that I cursed Katie. . . I am so glad. . . ."

Quinn thinned his lips. He couldn't lie that someone caring for his opinion of them didn't feel good, but especially not with the voice in his head.

«mm-mM-MM! Now, that just made my day! She should definitely get a reward~!»

He flexed the muscles all over his body and kept them flexed to restrain himself from getting up from his spot. His body demanded him to lose control so that he could take over control.

"I hope you're enjoying the Halfblood Prince's copy. It's a great book on

Potions," said Quinn, modulating his voice to sound as normal as he could.

"It's a great book, alright. Even mum's notes didn't have as much detail as crammed into the margins and between the lines of the book. The corrections and additions he has added to the recipes are fascinating, to say the least," Ivy said, her hands expressing her assignments. "Every potion that I make using the modified recipes comes out perfect," she said, putting the P in the perfect and throwing an 'OK' sign.

«Not better than mine, it's not.»

"Did you also use Halfblood Prince's book last year?" she asked.

"I did not. I knew of the copy's existence from a couple years back; I prefer my own methods," Quinn said, feeling the Pride bubble up.

"Do you. . . do you know the Halfblood Prince's identity?" she asked, leaning forward and whispering as if hoping to be let in on a well-hidden secret.

Quinn laughed with his hand on his chest. "No, I don't—."

The door to the office opened up, and Ivy turned when Quinn stopped speaking. . . and laughing.

There stood by the door, Daphne looking at them. After spending so much time with her, Quinn had learned to detect emotion from Daphne's not-so-expressive face, and right now, they were screaming displeasure. Daphne's gaze sharpened like knives when she saw Quinn sitting with. . . Ivy Potter.

She silently closed the door behind her and walked towards them, passing by Ivy without looking at her, and came to a stop beside Quinn, who had to stop himself from flinching when on his shoulder.

"Ivy," Daphne said in her 'public' voice, "what brings you to AID at this time? I remember seeing you exiting the castle to go down to

Hogsmeade. . . yet, you are here."

Ivy removed her eyes from Quinn's shoulder and Daphne's hand. She looked up at Daphne and met her cold-blue eyes with her vivid-iridian ones. "Aren't you asking too much, Daphne? I might have been talking something private before you barged in so rudely."

"I doubt that you had anything 'private' to talk with Quinn. Especially not with how the two were laughing. . . do share with me what's so fun; I would also love to have a laugh on this cold day," Daphne said, and Quinn became hyper-conscious of her nails that he could feel somehow feel through layers of clothing.

"Furthermore," Daphne retrieved an AID card (Quinn-version[black-and-gold]) from her robes, "the card isn't showing that Quinn is in for a consult, so I doubt this is anything formal, and he's very particular about these sorts of things."

"He might have forgotten switching it on," Ivy countered.

"Not likely; he never forgets this. Moreover, Quinn, right about now, should be on Hogsmeade with me." Daphne turned to Quinn to ask, "So Quinn, why are you here and not in the village?"

Quinn looked up at Daphne and touched her hand as he spoke, "Katie Bell got assaulted by a curse from a cursed item. I was fortunately there to stop the curse and had to bring her to the Hospital Wing. She was Imperiused, the poor girl." He made an apologetic expression, "After the incident, I wasn't in the mood to have a day out in Hogsmeade. . . sorry about that."

Daphne grabbed Quinn's hand and side-eyed Ivy. "It's okay; I heard about the incident; Weasley was spouting it in the pub. After an Imperius and a cursed item, I too wouldn't have been in the mood."

"I'll make it up to you somehow," said Quinn. "I promise."

Daphne nodded with a small smile, then turned to Ivy and spoke, "While our date stands cancelled, I would still like to spend some time with my boyfriend, so if you'd excuse us, Ivy, we would like to be alone."

The two girls stared at each other for a few moments before Ivy stood up from her chair and turned to Quinn. "I shall leave you two alone then. . . see you around, Quinn. Thank you for taking action so quickly; we would have been at a loss at what to do if you didn't arrive." And with one last glance to Daphne, Ivy exited the office, leaving Daphne and Quinn behind.

Daphne followed Ivy with her eyes until she left before looking at Quinn, and he could tell that she was still unhappy. "You could've at least sent a message to me; you very well know that I still carry my DA coin at all times," she said.

Quinn could only nod. The DA members still carried the coins with them, and he held one of the few master coins, which could be used to send messages to all subordinate coins or target a single one.

"I am sorry, I was preoccupied with my thoughts about the events," said Quinn, studying Daphne's expressions and responses. He thought she would be much angrier at him— he had ditched on their date before it had even started and was found laughing it up with Ivy, with who she didn't have a cordial relationship with.

Daphne sighed, "And so you came to the office."

Quinn nodded, but then a smile appeared on his face.

"Why are you smiling?" she asked.

"You knew that I would be at the office," said Quinn, feeling a bit giddy.

"You know me well."

A red blush crawled up on Daphne's cheeks, and she looked away from him to avoid his gaze.

"H-How did the things with Marcus go?" she asked.

Quinn grinned at her attempt to change the subject. "Yeah, I dropped him off with grandfather. They're probably talking now at Scrivenshaft.

Ah, before I forgot, I have something that I wanted to give to you."

He got up and walked into the workshop. When he came back, he had a light-tan leather-bound book with him. "Here you go," he said, handing the book to Daphne.

Daphne gazed at the book and read the title—

□West's Take On Modern Potions□

"This. . ." she looked up at Quinn.

"Well, you were really pouty when Ivy beat you to the Felix Felicis."

Quinn tapped his finger on the book, "It took me a while to compile my research on OWL and NEWT level potions— believe me, there was a lot of stuff, in a lot of places. . . I really need to better organize my stuff— Yeah, so I compiled recipes for the standard OWL and NEWT recipes but also went beyond to add what I think should be taught in school along with what's taught around the globe— every country has something unique they do.

This guide will help you crack Slughorn's lessons over their head with absolutely no competition."

Quinn felt that he had to do it because he was partially responsible, given that he was the one who led Ivy to the Halfblood Prince's Advanced Potions copy.

Daphne stared at the book for a couple seconds before she grabbed Quinn's collar and walked into the workshop while pulling Quinn with her, who was both pleasantly surprised and a little worried with the voice in his mind speaking louder than ever.

.

Quinn West - MC - About to have some fun.

Daphne Greengrass - Girlfriend - Ultimately happy with her boyfriend.

Ivy Potter - Holder of Halfblood Prince's Book - Used a spell in the book, which set a loud alarm-like sound that woke up the entire Gryffindor dorm.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - I don't do well with drafts. Can't seem to write when I have a chapter in stack.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

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284. Chapter 284: Council of

Ghosts

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Link in the Bio/Profile

The advent of December shifted the weather from the damp chill that dominated the Hogwarts grounds to a more dry frost that blanketed the Highlands of Scotland. Madam Pomfrey spent her days busy brewing Pepper-up Potion and feeding them to the staff and students with cold, leaving them smoking at ears for several hours afterward. Ron Weasley, who had kicked his blanket off the previous night, was seen with steam pouring from under his vivid hair, giving the impression that his whole head was on fire.

Snowflakes every size imaginable descended upon the grounds, visible

from the castle windows for days on end; the lake's surface froze, only to be cracked by the Kraken, the flower beds turned into muddy streams, and Hagrid's pumpkins swelled to the size of garden sheds. Eddie's enthusiasm, as the Ravenclaw Quidditch Captain, however, was not avalanched by the snow, which was why the Ravenclaw was regularly found flying in low visibility and running through with snow swallowing their ankles.

"Yeah, that must suck," Quinn cackled as he watched the Ravenclaw Quidditch Team firsthand, witnessing an elevated practice program not seen in Hogwarts since the glory day of Gryffindor Taskmaster Oliver Wood.

He turned away and continued along the deserted corridor when he came across somebody who looked as though they didn't have a shred of worry in their life. . . death. . . unlife. Fat Friar, the ghost of Hufflepuff Tower, was staring blankly out of a window with listless eyes with his translucent ghostly body hanging eerily still in the air.

"Hello, Friar," said Quinn.

"Oh, Quinn, hello, hello," said Friar, his body gaining some sense of motion, resuming him from the state of unnatural pause. He wore a plain, darb religious cleric robe with a braided rope going around his waist; he had a wooden mug with two steel bands. Quinn could see right through him to the overcast sky and persistent snowfall outside.

"You look lost in thought, Friar," said Quinn. "The weather is indeed one of intro- and retrospection."

"The weather is truly one that unearths out the memories," said Friar, raising his mug to take a sip of a ghostly drink. "It also colors them in its melancholy."

In spite of his airy tone, there was a look of great bitterness on his face.

"The month of December does only turn jolly in the week of Christmas," said Quinn, staring intently at Friar.

The bright soul, hiding behind the shield plagued with pulsing veins in the color-tainted white space, thrummed with magic, turning brighter and gaining a shade of golden color. And Quinn's eyes, the window to his soul reflected that golden sheen as he observed the ghost in front of him. It was different, he thought. The comparison between a genuine soul — his own soul — and a ghost was quite different. The ghost's spirit felt faded, incomplete, shallow, worn down, and. . . chained. While he couldn't see it, there was a crystal clear sense of Friar's ethereal spirit being anchored down to the mortal plane — and for once, Quinn could feel emotion from the ghost—

Quinn's eyes widened as his pupils narrowed, his entire body felt a chill different from the winter or the Icy Vault as the previously nowhere to be seen emotion mixed with ghostly magic — influencing it, amplifying it, supporting Friar's existence. There was sorrow, regret, unwillingness, self-hatred, dullness, weariness. . . all hitting him in waves more powerful than even — he hadn't felt emotion this strong. . . ever. Not a single person from whom Quinn had felt emotion from had ever emanated emotion potent than Friar was doing now.

He hadn't even felt emotion this strong while casting his gigantic and potent Patronus or while standing in the Room of Requirement with dozens of people channeling emotion to release dozens of Patronus. But here it was, a single entity with more emotional density and quantity than ever experienced.

A sound in his ears brought Quinn's attention away from Friar. He glanced down at his chest when he could hear the thumping beat of his own heart. He gulped and immediately cut the magic to his soul, and

instantly, the overwhelming wave of negative emotions vanished, lifting the claustrophobic weight of his body. He became conscious of the cold sweat sticking his inner vest to his back.

'That was. . . .' Quinn didn't have a word for his first time looking at a ghost's spirit using soul magic.

But at the same time, it made sense. Ghosts weren't genuine souls but imprints of souls possessing magic. Impressions of people who had refused to peacefully pass away because of unfinished business", whether in the form of fear, guilt, regrets or overt attachment to the material plane, refusing to move on to the next stage. . . continuously not wanting to pass away while sometime later, constantly regretting their decision to return to the mortal plane, to never be able to end their existence.

Friar, a ghost close to a thousand years in age, had spent every second of that harrowing time among the living, seeing them enjoy their lives in the daytime while spending time along during nights without being able to sleep for a single second.

'Accumulated emotions developed over a millennium,' thought Quinn with his imagination not able to capture what must Friar feel at his worst days if it was so horrifying looking from the outside.

"I do look forward to Christmas," said Friar, smiling brightly, showing his ghostly teeth. ". . . Quinn? Are you alright? You look pale."

Quinn took a deep breath and let out a shaky one before speaking. "I am alright, Friar, thank you for asking. . .

It's good that I met you here; I need to have a word with you."

"Oh, what can I do for you?" asked Friar, floating down to Quinn's eye level.

"I think it's time to call the Council of Ghosts for a meeting," said Quinn, a serious glint in his eyes. "We need to talk about the Cursed Vaults."

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The Council of Ghosts was the group of ghosts who led the ghost population in Hogwarts. They were the ones who decided who would haunt what part of the castle, what were the common areas. . . even ghosts demanded some privacy. They were the ones who dealt punishment if a ghost misbehaved, organized deathday parties, among other ghostly organizational duties.

The members of the elite group of Hogwarts ghosts were—

"Why are we called here? If it is nothing of importance, I would like to return to the Ravenclaw Tower," said the beautiful woman with waist-length hair, dressed in a floor-length cloak, carrying herself with pride with a haughty expression — Helena Ravenclaw, the ghost of the Ravenclaw Tower

"Oh, don't be like that, Helena," said the upbeat man with a charming smile. He wore a dashing, plumed hat on his long curly hair and a tunic with a ruff, which concealed the fact that his neck was almost completely severed — Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington, the ghost of the Gryffindor Tower.

". . ." The ghost, paler than the others, didn't say anything, staying silent, looking at the table between them with a dark gaze. He had wide, staring, black eyes and a gaunt face. He dressed in robes covered in silver bloodstains and carried chains in a final act of penitence — Bloody Baron, the murderer of Helena Ravenclaw, and the ghost of the Slytherin Dungeons.

"The meeting is of importance," said the last member of the Council of Ghosts, the ghost with a soft smile, bowl-cut hair, and mild nature — Fat

Friar, the ghost of the Hufflepuff Dungeons. He pointed at Quinn, the only living person around the round table. "Quinn has something of great importance to talk about."

Helena glanced at Quinn before looking without speaking. She, however, didn't leave.

Friar smiled, turned to Quinn, and gestured for him to start.

Quinn nodded. "I would like to thank the Council of Ghosts, all four of you, to gather here on my request. I have called for this meeting so that we can discuss the Cursed Vaults."

The Council of Ghosts was also in charge of deciding the Challenger, the one allowed to challenge the dangerous Cursed Vaults. For centuries they had sent challengers to the vault — not one was able to make it past the first one, the Icy Vault—

Not until Quinn arrived. Not only did he make it past the first one, but he also made it to the last one and walked out with various tantalizing rewards. He had sated their curiosity of the mysterious vaults where they couldn't traverse. Quinn West had crushed every past Challengers' performance by such overwhelming margins that others had lost the right to hold the title.

"First, I would like to ask if all of you would be selecting Challengers after me?" asked Quinna and further explained when he saw their confused expression. "I have told you all about the Cursed Vaults, everything you would like to know, which was your motive behind sending people into the vaults — so I would like to know if you'd continue to issue the Cursed Vaults challenges?"

The ghosts exchanged looks with each other. In their long 'dead' lives, they had learned to space out the interesting discussions. As such, they hadn't breached the topic of Cursed Vaults yet.

"Why does it matter to you?" asked Bloody Baron, his voice the deepest Quinn had ever heard.

"I have no opposition to continuing the Cursed Vault challenges, there's a lot to learn in there, but if you're going to continue, I think it's my responsibility to ensure the safety of the future generations of Challengers," said Quinn.

The dangers involved in the Cursed Vaults were immense. Something Quinn thought would be too much for a student, even if they were as talented as Dumbledore and Voldemort while in school, so it was imperative that some measures be put in place to protect them and at least save their lives.

"And how are you going to do that?" asked Helena, skepticism in her voice. "Challengers come with decades in between them. How are you going to secure their safety?"

"For one, we can alter the order of the Cursed Vaults," said Quinn. "I have experienced every vault, so I first hand know that the order in which I cleared the vaults didn't have an incremental increase in difficulty. Not even close. And I understand why it was so— none of you actually the actual contents of the vaults, so even your most responsible judgment wasn't enough. But now we know the contents of the vaults. . . so we can change the order to make it more balanced."

Quinn had felt more than once the mismatch between the Cursed Vaults. He had faced problems with all of them, but some of the problems were much graver than others.

"What's the order you suggest?" asked Nearly Headless Nick. "Do you have one in mind? We will keep that order in mind the next time we choose the Challenger."

"I have one in mind, and I hope you'd go with this one," Quinn said. "I

would like the Architect's Vault, the current fifth vault, to become the first vault. It's the one with the least amount of danger — only one part of the vault presents a life-threatening danger, which can be prevented with simple observation, planning, and a moderate amount of power." Only the tile grid with projectiles presented a danger. The Ring Finding, Vault Lock room, and the Material Cube rooms were pure-skill-based. "The only other problem with the Architect's Vault is that you can be locked into the vault with no exit in the first room, but I think anyone with a decent amount of skill — who can solve the first set of mechanisms would be able to complete the rest with patience and time," finished Quinn.

"The next one?" asked Friar.

"The second would be the Aquatic Vault," Quinn said without missing a beat. "I would like the Aquatic Vault to be a point at which the Challenger would give up and return to their normal lives. And the Kraken would ensure that — it's powerful, cares about the students, but at the same time won't let someone get into the vault without a fight." He, himself, only had 'semi-tricked' the Kraken to get into the Aquatic Vault. He wasn't the Kraken's match, at least the first time around, and he counted the Kraken's size and strength to dissuade anyone from any further attempt.

"Moreover, the teleportation system in the Aquatic Vault ensures safety, which is why I set it on number two. I was conflicted between the Aquatic Vault and the Architect's Vault order, but decided that the Architect's Vault should be put first because of the educational value of its first two rooms."

The ghosts might not be considering the Challenger's progress, but Quinn cared about it. If a Challenger was to accept, then Quinn wanted them to

at least gain practice of Earth magic and Transmutation before they decide to quit.

"We will keep that mind," said Frair. "What do you suggest be the third in order."

"The Underground Vault. . . I want that to be the third and the Icy Vault to be the fourth in line," said Quinn before nodding — he was happy with his choice.

"Wouldn't the vault with the ice be less dangerous than in the Forbidden Forest?" asked Helena frowning.

"In a way, yes," Quinn nodded, agreeing with Helena. "But, the Forbidden Forest holds a certain image in Hogwarts students' hearts. The true stories of people disappearing into the forest without returning ever are well known. . . so I'm hoping that the Challenger won't go inside.

Furthermore, the Centaurs will know intruders in their territory, and they will also try to stop the Challenger from continuing forward, which, in a way, makes it much safer for the Challenger."

The Darkness of the Forbidden Forest was house to species capable of tearing apart humans without even trying. If it was just a single species, then it wouldn't be a problem, but all of them together, one after another, would make the task exponentially tricky — especially if the Challenger wasn't capable of hiding like Quinn.

"The reason I have put the Icy Vault on fourth is because of the protection magic," Quinn scratched his shoulder with a sigh. "Let's say someone found a way to keep themselves sufficiently warm in the Icy Vault, but that doesn't mean they would completely escape the cold—even know, after so many years, I would feel a cool chill while in there. My problem is that in that cold, the mental capability would deteriorate. . . if that does happen, which I think will happen, as things rarely go

perfectly. When that happens, the control of magic could go astray, and then. . . it would take seconds for a person to die from the sheer cold that leaks out of the defensive containment mechanism that guards the Absolute Zero."

His memory of almost dying inside the Icy Vault was quite fresh. If it wasn't his accidental magic protecting him, he would have been long dead in his second year.

"That leaves what you call the Sin Vault as the last one," said Nearly Headless Nick. "The one that made you lose your magic."

The information about Quinn's struggles was shared between the Council of Ghosts.

"Yes, the Sin Vault is to be placed at the last," Quinn's stern voice surprised the ghosts. "I would say that you remove it from the challenges, but if you don't, then make sure to tell them that it's hazardous, and if they get into the vault, they would be dead, and they won't even know it."

«I HATE THE SIN VAULT!»

"I will make this clear, so there is no confusion. I don't want people going in there. I wish it never existed, I abhor it, and it's the vilest that ever existed!"

Quinn slammed his fist on the table, and it shook, sending an echo throughout the empty dungeon room. For a few moments, only Quinn's labored breathing was audible in the room, with the ghosts watching him in stunned silence.

". . . My apologies. I let my emotions get the best of me," said Quinn, clenching his fists and enabling his Occlumency to dull his emotions a bit, which was another problem to do when the emotions came from the soul side of things.

"Are you alright, Quinn?" asked Friar.

"Yes, sorry for worrying," said Quinn and decided to change the topic.

"I would also like to talk about something else. . ." He smiled, "I would like to"

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Quinn West - MC - Let's switch things up.

Fat Friar - Hufflepuff - Jolly Ambivert

Helena Ravenclaw - Ravenclaw - Haughty Introvert.

Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington - Gryffindor - Upbeat Extrovert.

Bloody Baron - Slytherin - No.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - This won't be continuing in the next chapter. So about the things. . . you know if you know. I would break it later on.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

285. Chapter 285: End Of An Era

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

The sounds drums peaked through the crowd's cheers.

"Morning, people," said Quinn breathing a cold cloud on the mic in front of him. "It's exciting today, isn't it? It's the last game before Christmas, and who better to watch on this occasion than the bitter rivals,

Gryffindor and Slytherin— two houses thirsty for others' blood, willing to gut stomach, break bones, and slit throats to quench that thirst."

"Mr. West! Mind your language, please. . . !"

The reds-and-golds in the Hogwarts Quidditch Stadium roared to show their support while the opposing green-and-silvers booed in response to their rivals. The energy in the stands seemed to heat the cold stadium up.

"Apologies, professor," said Quinn, smiling. "But it's true that this game is going to be a heated one— the Gryffindor versus Slytherin are always a spectacle and have given Hogwarts a lot of their memorable games. So to commemorate this game and bring some flavor to the commentary side of things, I will be joined by a special guest in the commentary box.

Would you say hello to the spectators and introduce yourself," Quinn looked at his side and asked.

"How's it going, people?" the guest's voice momentarily sent the crowd in silence as their eyes turned to squint at the commentary booth through their omnioculors, where after their eyes widened behind the lenses.

"You probably recognize me as the Captain of the Ravenclaw Quidditch Team, defending champions, and the future champions of this season — for those who have been living under a rock, the name's Eddie Carmichael, position Chaser— the best there is. . . outside the field, I'm an overall outstanding bloke, so yeah. . . happy to be here."

There was a short bout of laughter from the blue-and-bronze before the other three drowned them out with a massive chorus of boos.

"Mr. Carmichael, please restrain from riling up the crowd," said McGonagall.

Eddie turned to face the Deputy Headmistress. "Can I not do that. . . I will go easy on Gryffindor if you just look the away and maybe pretend not to hear me. . . how about it?" he pumped his brows with a charming smile.

McGonagall's face through a journey. "T-That. . . go easy you say— No! Mr. Carmichale, d-don't try to compromise the integrity of the sport! Now, don't deliberately try to provoke the crowd, or I will be forced to kick you out!" She turned to Quinn, "Mr. West, please keep your friend under control!"

"I make no promises, ma'am," Quinn laughed. "The world of sports is a passionate one. Things can go off the rails in the heat of the moment— I apologize in advance for those moments."

"Me too. I apologize if I drop the bitter truth more than a couple times during the game," said Eddie.

McGonagall stared at the two commentators anxiously. She looked like she regretted giving Quinn permission to bring on Eddie as the guest commentator.

"Now then, let's get started," said Quinn and looked up at the blue sky with thin clouds carelessly floating. "Conditions are ideal for a fantastic game. Though that can't be said about the Slytherin team, they aren't looking good going into the game.

Slytherin Chaser Vaisey — he took a Bludger in the head yesterday during their practice, and he's too sore to play. . ."

"Uuuh, that's bad; he's Slytherin's best scorer," said Eddie, rubbing the back of his head. "I once took a Bludger to the back of my head— nasty business, I wasn't able to walk straight for a while even after getting healed by Madam Pomfrey."

"Even Slytherin Chaser Draco Malfoy feeling sick, and thus won't be playing," Quinn rapped his finger on the table. "Well, it seems Slytherin would be playing with two substitutes. . ."

"That's great for Gryffindor, innit," Eddie announced, "they're playing Hachet in Malfoy's place, and I have seen him play— he's an idiot, to put

it mildly."

"Mr. Carmichael!"

Quinn smiled back vaguely.

"Well, the Gryffindor doesn't look that good," Eddie continued. "This year's team is really wet behind their year. The backbone of the team graduated last year, leaving behind big shoes to fill— Demelza and Fey. . . was it those two— the new Chasers, they don't look that durable— I fear they will snap from one hit from the Bludger."

The teams walked onto the pitch to tumultuous roars and boos. One end of the stadium was solid red and gold; the other, a sea of green and silver. Many Hufflepuffs and Ravenclaws had taken sides too: Amidst all the yelling and clapping, the roar of Luna's famous lion-topped headpiece could be heard.

"Ah, the Captains are shaking hands," said Quinn, returning back to Quidditch. "Hmm. . . the new Slytherin Captain, Urquhart, what do you think of him, Eddie?"

"He's one crafty bastard," Eddie said and faced a shout from behind and boos from the front, "he's also built like a fat cow; you can't just tip him over— I tried to crash into him last year, you know to push him away, but the freaking mass of meat wouldn't budge— good thing he's slow on the broom."

The whistle sounded, and the players kicked off hard from the frozen ground and launched into the air.

"Well, there they go, and I think we're all surprised to see the team that Potter's put together this year. Many thought, given Weasley's shit performance as Keeper last year, that he might be off the team, but of course, a close personal friendship with the Captain does help. . . ."

These words were greeted with jeers and applause from the Slytherin end

of the pitch. Even Harry, for a moment, stopped seeking for the Snitch and craned on his broom to give the middle finger to the commentator's podium.

Eddie grabbed the mic and spoke loudly. "Potter, are you giving the finger to your mother? That's terrible manners; you're making your mum ashamed. Ouch! Professor McGonagall— did you just hit me with a pinching hex. . .! AAAah, OkAy, OKAY! I will tone it down!"

Quinn glanced behind towards the Professor's section and saw Lily Potter massaging her forehead.

"Oh, and here comes Slytherin's first attempt on goal, it's Connot streaking down the pitch and —"

Quinn turned back towards Quidditch; at this rate, Eddie was going to take his job.

"— Weasley saves it, well, he's bound to get lucky sometimes, I suppose. . ."

With half an hour of the game gone, Gryffindor led sixty points to zero, Ron made some truly spectacular saves, and Ginny scored four of Gryffindor's six goals. Their performance was great enough for Eddie to get off their back.

"So, how do you think the two newer Weasley doing?" asked Quinn.

Eddie crossed his arms, his eyes following Ginny, studying her moves.

"They are effective. . . not as efficient as the Weasley twins, but they're doing well. . . for now."

"Do you now feel that this Gryffindor is one that will give Ravenclaw challenge for the Quidditch Cup this season? They look pretty good to me," Quinn said, gaining him loud support of the Gryffindor side.

"Pfft! Yeah, right, don't joke with me, mate," Eddie snorted. "The Weasley girl is better suited as a Seeker; her speed would only do her so good as a

Chaser, she would go flying in a Chaser-tussle. As for Weasley, even if he managed to turn himself in a wall from the sieve he was, I would just need to punch new holes into that wall to score."

It seemed as though Gryffindor could do no wrong. Again and again they scored, and again and again, at the other end of the pitch, Ron saved goals with apparent ease. He was actually smiling now, and when the crowd greeted a particularly good save with a rousing chorus of cheers. "And, I think Hatch of Slytherin has seen the Snitch," said Quinn through his mic. "Yes, Slytherin has spotted the Snitch, and. . . Potter is now on Hatch's tail. . . it's confirmed the Snitch has been spotted.

This could be it, people. If Hatch gets the Snitch, he would erase his team's terrible performance and win the game in a swoop, and if he let Potter get, Gryffindor would secure a dominating win, utterly embarrassing Slytherin in doing so."

Harry gained on Hatch, who purposely collided with Harry when he noticed Hooch's turned back (focused on other parts of the game), nearly knocking the Gryffindor Seeker off. The reds in the crowd shouted in anger, but by the time Hooch looked, Hatch had already sped off.

"It seems Slytherin is going to win a great upset!" said Quinn.

Harry accelerated, and at the same time, gained altitude. He arched his shoulder and bent his back forward to achieve maximum speed. Hatch, who was still flying ahead with a substantial lead, was struggling with his hand outstretched, his fingers time and time again missing the agile Snitch.

"Potter's catching up!" he heard Eddie's voice in between the fluttering winds. He turned to look back, and that was his mistake as Harry zoomed past him in his momentary distraction from the Snitch.

"Potter's got it! The Sunuvabitch's got the Snitch! Gryffindor has their

victory! The game's over!"

As the crowd realized what had happened, a great shout went up that almost drowned the sound of the whistle that signaled the end of the game.

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A day after the Quidditch game was the last day of the first term at Hogwarts and the start of the winter break. Students were looking forward to returning to their family for Christmas and New Years, while some would remain in the castle and spend their year-end with other students.

Quinn sat in his office, looking at his desk— it was empty without a single trinket on it. He would clear out his desk. . . his entire office and workshop whenever he went back home for the winter break as he was going to do tomorrow, but today, this time, it was different.

It was his last day at AID.

The door opened, the chime rang, and Astoria came walking into the office.

"You called?" she asked, raising the black leather band with a silver chip on it— the standard-issue communicator for AID members.

Quinn gestured to the seat on the other side of the table, opposite to him.

"Today's the last day here," said Quinn with a small smile. "After today, when you return to Hogwarts after the break, you'll be in charge. I won't be stepping inside this room if not for needing AID's consult."

As per the agreement and arrangement, Quinn was going to officially retire today.

"You can still use the workshop, you know," Astoria said. "You're the one

who uses it the most among the three of us."

Quinn shook his head. He knew if he was inside the workshop, he would end up taking over the office again when someone came in for a consult. And if that happened, AID wouldn't truly be Astoria's. It was better for him to cut the connection clean with a single slash.

"It's fine. . . I have my own personal workshop where I can work in," said Quinn. He had a fully functioning workshop in his briefcase used to work on some of the more. . . sensitive projects.

"Nevertheless, it goes without saying, you can return any time," said Astoria. "Now, you said that you wanted to talk about something important; what is it?"

Quinn opened the drawer and took out a large yellow envelope, and from the looks of the inflation of the envelope, there was a stack of papers inside. He pushed the envelope towards Astoria.

"What's this?" she asked.

"That's the document of a new vault I have opened up in Gringotts," said Quinn. "A vault to be used by AID."

"Eh, why do we need a vault?" Astoria was confused. "We have the safe in the workshop floor, and that's more than enough— why would we need a vault in Gringotts?"

"Yes, that safe is more than enough for our use," Quinn chuckled, remembering how excited he was building that safe. "But this is a different matter. . ."

Running AID is financially tricky, Astoria. You know we don't make much, and for most of the months we are in red, only to break even before the exam season. . . looking at that, I have decided to open a support fund for AID."

"A support fund?"

"Yes, a fund that would be accessible by the proprietor of AID, which is currently you, with gold in there to be used for AID activities— you can use them for consults, replenish the workshop supplies and expansion, for promotion activities, or any other AID related venture you start. . . and more importantly, you can use it to fund your personal projects," said Quinn. "I would replenish it every month with a set amount and ask no questions on how you decide to spend it. I trust that you would use the gold responsibly."

". . . But why? You managed fine enough; I can do the same," Astoria pushed the envelope back towards Quinn, frowning. "I don't need this."

"I understand that," said Quinn, pushing the envelope forward again, "and I'm not saying that you're not capable; it's just an incentive that I have decided to add for the proprietor of AID. If you don't want to use the fund, then I am fine with it. . . every month, the vault would be replenished to have a set amount."

Astoria didn't look satisfied but nodded after a sigh.

"I'll think about it," she said.

"Sure, please do think about it," said Quinn and stood up to finally leave.

"Now, I will take my leave."

Astoria stood up and nodded.

Quinn walked to the coat hanger by the door and pulled his robe off. He turned to look at his office as he put on his robe— the desk he made on his own, the paintings he bought from the non-magical world, the plants he had mutated in his Herbology experiments, the glass wall, the bookshelf with some of the essential books, and the trinkets around the office which he had collected over the years.

"Alright, good luck, Astoria; I hope you'd change AID so that it would become yours," he said. "Don't worry about keeping things the same

because of me and give it your own flavor."

Astoria nodded.

Quinn smiled and walked out of the door.

Outside in the corridor, he closed the door behind him and breathed a sigh. It was over. A chapter of his life was done— a chapter he thought was very significant.

"Hmm?"

He turned and saw Luna leaning against a wall. She looked up, walked over to him, and stared at him.

"What is it?" he asked.

"I want to eat ice cream," she said, "walk with me to the kitchen."

Quinn blinked in surprise before a smile appeared on his face.

"Sure, let's go," he said, "I'm also in the mood of ice cream. . . I wonder what flavors do they have right now."

"I want to eat Eggnog flavor ice cream," she said. "Which one do you want?"

Quinn put an arm around Luna as they start walking. "Hmm. . . I am in the mood for Vanilla, Chocolate, and Butterscotch. . . I am going to take a big scoop of all three."

"Three! That. . . that's so many! Your tummy would hurt!" Luna gasped.

"It's okay; I'm a big boy now. I can handle it," Quinn laughed.

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Quinn West - MC - "Us old guys must step aside for the young'uns to take over."

Luna Lovegood - AID member - A very cwute and lobely friend.

Eddie Carmichael - Guest Commentator - Zero stage fear.

Astoria Greengrass - AID Proprietor - Start of a New Era.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

286. Chapter 286: Gifts Galore

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

Snow was swirling against the icy windows once more, and Quinn had made himself comfortable in the West manor's lounge, his feet folded up on the sofa with a cup of piping hot chocolate topped with roasted marshmallows on the top.

'Twas going to be a White Christmas.

A book floated in front of him, and when Quinn's eyes would reach the right page's end, the page would flip by the time, and he would continue on his handless reading experience.

"Are you done with your gifts?" asked Ms. Rosey, sitting in front of him with an embroidery hoop with a handkerchief that she was needling a design upon. "I hope you have already owled them to everyone."

"I sent them all the Christmas presents this morning," said Quinn. He glanced at the clock on the wall, "Most of them probably would have reached their recipients by now."

He himself had received multiple presents from his friends; some had either sent their presents through owl, while others had handed them theirs personally as owls were in high demand during the Christmas season, and the possibility of delayed delivery was high and not unusual.

Quinn had sent all of his through owl as he had access to a premium eagle mailing service, much faster than the owl bird.

"What did you get for everyone?" asked Ms. Rosey.

"Let's see. . . I made Marcus a day planner— to-do lists, alerts, alarms, timers, and so much more in one diary-styled notebook; moreover, it's reusable, so at the end of the year, he can wipe everything with one wave, and it would update itself to the next year's template. . . one of my finest works, if I was to say myself."

"This Marcus, he's the one who met with Georgie last month," asked Ms. Rosey.

"Yes, one and the same. Why? Did grandfather say something?" he asked.

"He and Elliot were discussing about that friend of yours a couple weeks back," Ms. Rosey threaded an elegant silver thread through a carmine handkerchief.

Quinn put his feet down on the ground and leaned forward. "What did they talk about?" he asked. Marcus was going to work for the Wests; the question was where he was going to work.

"I do not know," she shook her head and gently pierced the cloth.

Quinn narrowed his eyes and stared at his caretaker. ". . . You know what they talked about. . . you were probably a part of the conversation. You just don't want to tell me, don't you?"

Ms. Rosey plainly nodded, "Yes, your grandfather has made a decision, but he needs more time to think about it before setting it in stone. He will tell you when he feels the time is correct; until then, you're not to ask."

Quinn leaned back and sipped his hot chocolate with a hidden pout. They could just give him the straight answer; it wasn't like he was going to leak it to Marcus, whatever the thing was.

"What about your other friends?" she asked.

"For Eddie, I created a charmed Quidditch pitch miniature equipped with miniature flying Quidditch players, all of the customizable in strength, speed, endurance, catching, hitting, manoeuvrability aspects, so he could do rough play formation, visualization, and testing to see if they work or not. . . again, one of my finest handcrafted items."

Since they had started the year, he had often seen Eddie buried in Quidditch tactics, planning and plotting a playbook for the Ravenclaw. Quinn hoped that giving Eddie something for rough simulation would help his decision-making process.

"For Luna, I created a subsurface detector which detects if there's something buried underground— it detects everything from scrap metal to wooden chests waiting to be unearthed. She can go exploring and dig when something pops up on the detector. . . I can only wonder what sorts of things she would find," said Quinn, satisfied with the blatant rip-off of the metal detector, only his was miles better as it didn't have the restriction of only finding metal.

"What about the Greengrass' eldest daughter? What did you get for her?" asked Ms. Rosey.

"You know you can call her by her name," said Quinn sighing.

"I will do so when I get to know her and decide if she's worthy," said Ms. Rosey with a raised chin.

Quinn sighed. Ms. Rosey's first reaction when he told her that he was dating Daphne was of indifference, which he thought, at that point, was expected of Ms. Rosey, but over time, he noticed she would probe him on how his relationship was going with Daphne, which was also when he noticed she refused to say her name, always referring as Greengrass' eldest daughter.

She wasn't like Lia's boyfriend, Abraham. But it turned out that Lia had been whispering information about Abraham into Ms. Rosey's ear even before she told George about Abraham, so when she finally revealed Abraham to the family, Ms. Rosey had already known much about the man.

'Why didn't I think of that,' he had thought when he had asked Lia for advice, and she had revealed the secret to him. Out of everybody, he wanted Ms. Rosey to like Daphne the most.

There was the option of letting Daphne spend some time with Ms. Rosey, but he wasn't ready to bring his girlfriend home just yet, as to say.

Quinn sighed before moving on from his thoughts, "For Daphne, I grew diamonds in my workshop—"

"You grew a diamond?" Ms. Rosey asked, her hands stopping her embroidery. "People can grow diamonds?"

"Oh yeah, diamonds can be grown— you just follow the same natural process of carbon condensation under heat and pressure, but you just speed up the process by a lot, and voila, you have a man-made diamond."

Ms. Rosey blinked, and Quinn wasn't surprised at the reaction. He was sure that at least in the northern part of the continent, no magical other than him was artificially growing diamonds. He wasn't sure about the rest of the world; there might be someone somewhere who was growing diamonds— the non-magicals, of course, had been doing it for a couple decades.

"Diamonds, yeah, made a batch of them from scratch, different sizes; then charmed them to be able to change color at command. Then I prepared several pairs of earrings from gold, white gold, rose gold, platinum, silver, titanium even— all of them capable of shifting into several shapes. Together with the diamonds, they turn into a set of customizable earrings

with several designs and diamond placements, and. . . and. . . and. . . ."

"What happened?" asked Ms. Rosey.

Quinn looked up at her in panic. "I-I. . . did I overdo it?! I mean, I have given her crystal jewellery before, but I diamond and all that other stuff. . . . argh! What was I thinking?!"

"It's okay, you didn't go overboard; I'm sure she will love it," said Ms. Rosey.

"Really?" he asked with hope.

"Of course, any girl would be happy to get a present from you," said Ms. Rosey and then humphed. "If that girl doesn't appreciate, she doesn't have good eyes."

". . . You're the wrong person to ask this question, aren't you," Quinn sat back on the sofa with a thump.

"I hope you sent something for Abraham," said Ms. Rosey.

"I did," said Quinn. "I don't know what to get him, so I had no idea what to make him, so I just ordered a top-of-the-line whetstone set. I hope that will be enough. I would get him something Quinn-made next time."

"That's more than enough," Ms. Rosey gave her seal of approval. "For Lia?"

"For Lia, I made a wristwatch, but because I know she's mostly in offices with a lot of time spent sitting around, I added additional features into the watch. . . . The watch can monitor her heart rate, keep a record of how many steps she took in a day, how much of sleep she got, track her mood, measure stress levels, and all sort of fitness-related features," said Quinn, once again quite happy with his fitbit rip-off.

He was going to leave it to Lia if she wanted to release the product to the public. It wasn't that difficult to make with magic, so anyone with rudimentary medical knowledge and charms skill could make it.

"As for Uncle Elliot, I brewed him a wide set of alchemic potions that he could use in his personal greenhouse to change the soil into practically every type he could think of and grow any plant he ever wanted to grow but couldn't because of environment restriction," Elliot was an avid home-gardener who would grow all sort of things— fruits, vegetable, potion herbs, as a hobby. He was impressed with Quinn's application of alchemy in Herbology, so Quinn decided to gift him alchemic potions.

"I also shared his personal WMF-id with Madam Pomfrey," said Quinn, "But that's more of a gift for her than him."

"What?"

"For grandfather, I made him a very classy ice cube maker. Capable of making ice cubes of various shapes and sizes— cubes, spheres, diamonds, thin cylinders, and many more. Moreover, there's an option of making clear ice without a blur of cloudiness. He will be able to enjoy his drinks with his choice of ice," said Quinn, knowing how much of a drinks guy his grandfather was. "Also, everything's instant, so yeah, quite bleeding edge, top-of-the-line, state-of-art system. Plus, there's a secret ice-shaving option in there hidden which he would have to explore the appliance to find."

"Hmm. . . good, you did well," Ms. Rosey nodded, satisfied with Quinn's Christmas gifts.

"You don't want to know what I got for you?" he asked.

"I will know when I open mine tomorrow morning. I don't want to know right now," she said.

Quinn shrugged. Her gift was a chair that could change itself according to the user's needs with several features like temperature control, a massage feature, cushion control, memory foam, among many other things, to provide maximum comfort, aiming to get their person addicted

to sitting. . .

"What don't you want to know?"

Quinn and Ms. Rosey looked up to see George walk into the room with a letter in his hand.

"We were talking about Christmas presents," said Quinn. "What did you get me this year?"

"You will know tomorrow," George sat down on a single-seater. "Now, I want to talk to you about something," he raised the letter, "this is an invitation for a New Years gathering—"

"I don't want to go," said Quinn.

"— from Sirius Black. . ."

Quinn focused on George, "Black?"

"Yes, Sirius Black is hosting a gathering on New Year— according to the letter with the invitation, it's not a big party, only a few people."

"Where is it?" Quinn asked nonchalantly.

"At his house, Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place," said George, reading the address off the invitation, "thus the small gathering."

Quinn went silent. Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place, he knew of the address, and not once in the last few years had he forgotten about it, meaning that building never went under the cover of Fidelius Charm, telling that the place wasn't the headquarters of the Order of Pheonix. But that wasn't what he was interested in. . .

"Do you want me to go?" Quinn asked.

"Yes, I want you to go," said George. "It will be a gathering of Light Faction, and meetings like those are difficult to get in— all faction gatherings are exclusive, and seeing that we received an invitation means that they are trying to gain our favor."

"Are you going to involve yourself with them?" Quinn asked, leaning

forward. It was the last thing he wanted.

"No. Is that even a question," George scoffed. "I want you to go there to see what they have they have cooking there. Identify who is attending. If we are invited, some others outside the faction must be as well. So go there and see what's going on within the faction."

Quinn tapped on the armrest for a while before nodding.

"Okay, I will attend," he said with his hand going to his chest.

.

Quinn West - MC - I make my own presents.

Ms. Rosey - Caretaker - Always be fussing.

George West - Grandfather - Go be a spy, son.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - It's subtle.

.

If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

287. Chapter 287: New Years At

Black

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

Quinn flew in the late-evening winter sky with a bed of clouds listlessly floating above him.

He kept his eyes on the streets below, teeming with non-magicals, all oblivious of the fact that there was someone flying over their head.

He narrowed his eyes and suddenly took a nose-dive towards the ground.

He was headed towards the large collection of lights he had seen in his aerial journey yet, a huge, sprawling, crisscrossing mass, glittering in lines and grids, interspersed with patches of deep blacks. Lower and lower, he flew until Quinn could make out individual headlights and streetlamps, chimneys, and television aerials.

A few seconds later, he had landed.

His feet touched down on the patch of unkempt grass in the middle of a small square. Looking around, he found the grimy fronts of the surrounding houses were not welcoming; some of them had broken windows, glimmering dully in the light from the streetlamps, paint was peeling from many of the doors, and heaps of rubbish lay outside several sets of front steps.

The place checked all the boxes for a locality to place a magical home without attracting too much attention.

Quinn looked around and spotted a sign with a range of house numbers with an arrow below them. He turned and walked towards where the arrow commanded him to go. A muffled pounding of a stereo came from an upper window in the nearest house. A pungent smell of rotting rubbish came from the pile of bulging bin-bags just inside the broken gate.

He stopped and looked at the houses again. He looked to the left and saw number eleven; he looked to the right and saw number thirteen; to his front was number twelve.

Quinn walked up the worn stone steps, staring at the door in front of him. Its black paint was shabby and scratched. The door had no keyhole or letterbox. The bronze door knocker was in the form of a roaring lion. He raised his hand and knocked on the door using the knocker and felt a

faint wave of magic behind the door.

Taking a step away from the door, Quinn placed his hands behind his back in wait. Moments later, he heard many loud, metallic clicks and what sounded like the clatter of a chain.

The door swung open.

"? Who—"

Quinn faintly smiled at the man behind the door. He had shoulder-length, glossy black hair framing his aristocratic face and a pair of black eyes with a roguish charm.

"Good evening, Auror Black," said Quinn. "I hope I'm not late."

Sirius opened the door fully and revealed the brightly lit hallway with beautiful interiors, mirroring the owner's personality.

"Quinn! So you came from the Wests, excellent-excellent, we needed some youthful energy here with so many hags and old farts," Sirius laughed as he placed his hand on Quinn's shoulder and pulled him into the house. "Though I have to say I wasn't expecting anyone to come through the main door. . . I mean, I haven't used the door for so long I fear that I noticed some rust on the hinges. How did you come? Did you take a car or a carriage?"

Quinn removed his coat and followed the sign next to what looked like a door to a closet: Throw Your Coats Inside! He threw his coat in, and instead of falling on the floor, it flew into the room, disappearing in the racks of other coats, robes, and jackets.

"I flew," said Quinn in answer.

"Oh, a broom. Not my choice in this cold, but young'uns have a different vigor," Sirius led him inside Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place.

The house was filled with festive energy as Quinn could hear the voices and laughter of guests from further inside. The Ebony floor beneath was

sturdy and luxurious, and the bright MLEs were casting their white glow with a tinge of yellow on the vibrant wallpapers and moving paintings of various scenic captures, all speaking a thousand words and then some with their magic.

The inside of Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place, was wildly different from the outside. It was a narrow building from the outside, but inside, it was a wide and spacious place of the size of a large bungalow.

"Now that you're here, enjoy yourself, have fun, and hopefully, this will be an evening to remember," said Sirius as they reached the end of the hall. "Now, let's go in and get a drink in your hand."

They entered through the door and stepped into another much wider lounging hall with a thriving party of people sitting, standing, moving. There were trays with Hors-d'œuvres floating through the lounging hall, continuously feeding the people.

Sirius picked up a shot glass from a passing-by tray and handed it to Quinn, who shook his head. "I don't drink."

"What, really, come on, kid, you're off-age now. Indulge in some of the more fun aspects of life," Sirius down the glass of the blue liquid, and his hair rose with electric sparks. "Yeah, now that hits," he said and shook his head; the currents crackled for a few seconds before Sirius' hair were back on his shoulders, obeying the laws of gravity.

"There's an open bar straight and left," said Sirius, pointing. "You can get the drinks of your choice from there. For now, let's have you introduced to the party."

"That won't be necessary," said Quinn. He looked at Sirius, who was flashing a part surprised part confused expression. "I don't do parties, so it would be better for me to mingle around at my own pace.

I would prefer that."

If Sirius announced that Quinn was here, those who knew about the Wests would surround and hound him, and that would take up his entire evening, ruining the last day of the year.

"Well, if you prefer it like that," Sirius shrugged. "If you need something, come looking for me, and I will sort you out."

Quinn politely nodded and waited until Sirius walked away to put a shroud of magic on himself. It was subtle magic that would keep attention away from him— it wasn't as strong as to make him invisible from others' attention, but enough that if someone wasn't gazing their eyes around, they would glaze over Quinn as if he was part of the background. It was a must-have in Quinn's magical arsenal for gatherings and parties.

He walked around the hall, taking in the people present at the gathering.

Quinn had to say his grandfather was right; the party was Light Faction fest. He could spot people from the higher end of the Faction like Sirius Black and his best mate James Potter to the middle-end like Arthur and Molly Weasley to the lower-end like Hestia Jones and Sturgis Podmore.

Quinn took the opportunity to compile a list of people in the Light Faction, and thus a tentative list of people in Order of Pheonix— the members of the Dumbledore's Order, no matter what their standing in the Faction, held special standing as Order members.

His secondary motive for coming here was to complete George's task of seeing if there were faction-less people or from the Grey Faction (or a rare Dark Faction) who were invited to the party. And while Quinn held no interest in knowing those things, his grandfather could use that information. Those people were the variables that George wanted to know as their addition would strengthen the Light Faction's position.

"Quinn. . . I didn't know you were coming."

Quinn turned towards the voice and saw Remus Lupin, the Werewolf, standing with a beer glass in his hand. He looked comfortable in his skin and clothing, just like the last time he had seen him.

"Ah, Mr. Lupin, I was expecting to see you here today," he said. "It has been a while; how have you been doing for the past years? How has your health been?"

Remus smiled softly, "Fortunately, I have been healthy with only a single hiccup a month. The medicine has been a miracle for my life," he said, deliberately keeping the words out of his speech to not make his condition obvious.

"That's good," Quinn said. "Still working with wood?"

Remus nodded, "Work has been treating me well."

Quinn nodded. Remus' work needed to be good for him to cover Wolfbane's expenses. The revolutionary symptom reliever was an expensive potion and had to be taken in multiple times to work; the accumulated costs weren't something that an unemployed person with no source of income could sustain. Which was why, in the canon timelines, Remus has agreed to join the Hogwarts faculty because Dumbledore had promised him Wolfbane potion during his tenure. The poor Remus, who would suffer every month from the Lycanthropy, had jumped on the offer.

"You have been busy as well," said Remus. "Headboy, top of your class, and the last time I heard that AID of yours was still working.

Not to mention, you really did something incredible last year, that thing with Umbridge; Sirius couldn't stop talking about it for weeks."

Quinn chuckled; the last year had indeed been hectic. Remus didn't mention it, but he also had to teach dozens of students every week as part of DA.

"I have decided to take it easy this year," he said, chuckling. "I am not doing anything grand this year; moreover, I have retired from AID. . . right now, I just want to enjoy my last without any worry."

«Let's kick back, accept the curse, and relax~. I had so much fun when the curse was in full effect. Top of the world. Floating on the clouds. All-powerful. The best version of myself. . . . Ah, I want to feel that again~.»

Quinn chose to put on a relaxed smile.

"Don't say that to others at Hogwarts, okay? They throw their book at you," said Remus.

"Eh, why?" Quinn asked.

"If they heard that someone was planning to take it easy during their NEWT year, especially a Ravenclaw, they would throw their books at you in frustration," Remus laughed loudly.

"I. . . can see that," Quinn chuckled.

After talking to Remus for a while, they parted, and Quinn once again returned to his partial anonymity.

Quinn was looking at the people in the crowd, making notes, when he noticed something on the edge of the hall. His eyes widened for a split second before they went to normal. While keeping an eye on the crowd, he slowly inched towards the tiny shadow in the corner and followed after it through a hall's exit.

When he stepped into the hallway, he was greeted by tennis-ball-sized eyes.

"Why you stare at me?" said the 'creature' in his squeaky, hostile, and slight crazed voice.

It was completely naked except for the filthy rag tied like a loincloth around its middle. It looked ancient. Its skin seemed to be several times too big for it, and though it was bald like all house-elves, there was a

quantity of white hair growing out of its large, batlike ears. Its eyes were a bloodshot and watery gray, and its fleshy nose was large and rather snoutlike.

The elf stared at Quinn, slowly shuffling on his feet with his hand hanging limply, hunchbacked, muttering under its breath, all the while in a hoarse, deep voice like a bullfrog's,

". . . Smells like a drain and a criminal to boot, but she's no better, nasty old blood traitor with her brats messing up my Mistress's house, oh my poor Mistress, if she knew, if she knew the scum they've let in her house, what would she say to old Kreacher, oh the shame of it, Mudbloods and werewolves and traitors and thieves, poor old Kreacher, what can he do . . ."

"Are you Kreacher?" Quinn asked.

The house-elf froze in his tracks, stopped muttering, and then again stared at Quinn intently.

"Who is asking?" said the house-elf.

Quinn elegantly placed on his chest and introduced himself, "I am Quinn from the House of West, the son of Adam West, and grandson of George West."

Kreacher's big eyes narrowed, and the house-elf looked like it was concentrating. "West. . . . Wests are pure of blood. You. . . are you pure of blood?"

"I am. I, my parents, their parents, all of them are purest of blood," said Quinn.

The house-elf studied Quinn with a good hard eye. He then bowed, his long floppy nose touching the floor. "Kreacher did not recognize the esteemed Young Master West. Kreacher punishes himself for his mistake."

"It's okay, house-elf," Quinn said, pulling his best Malfoy. "Now that you

have identified my blood, I ask for your help."

"Kreacher's Mistress has taught Kreacher to serve the pure wizards.

Kreacher shall serve Young Master West," said the Black house-elf.

Quinn smiled regally.

It was time to take care of the primary objective of his visit to Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place.

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Quinn West - MC - I who despise parties shall persevere.

Sirius Black - Host - Having fun is paramount! Drink!

Remus Lupin - Werewolf - Financially stable and intelligent.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - *Wink* *Wink* Cliff's winking at you.

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

288. Chapter 288: The Second

Hunt

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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Link in the Bio/Profile.

"Kreacher's Mistress has taught Kreacher to serve the pure wizards.

Kreacher shall serve Young Master West."

Kreacher's words brought a smile to Quinn's face. His bid had paid off. He didn't know if using his pureblood status would make Kreacher help him, but it was worth a try— a try that he was able to convert into an

opportunity.

"Kreacher, I heard you were an important confidant to the Black heir Regulus Black," said Quinn, choosing and placing words carefully.

Kreacher's old eyes shined a renewed vigor as he creakily nodded his head, his eyes slowly flopping with every nod. "Young Master Regulus was the true heir. Not like the fake Master. . . blood traitor. . . meddling with mudbloods and other blood traitors."

Quinn noticed how, unlike other house-elves in his position, Kreacher made no attempt to punish for bad-mouthing his Master. The relationship was truly broken beyond repair. Quinn sighed. Kreacher was a product of his upbringing and environment— raised in a blood supremacist household to look down on anyone not pureblood.

"I might not have met Regulus Black, but I have heard much about him, especially from the Professors at Hogwarts— they say he was a bright, talented young man," said Quinn, his eyes curved into smiles with his words mixed with admiration.

"Young Master Regulus was a man of different caliber," Kreacher spoke with more enthusiasm than he had expressed in years. "He was a pureblood among purebloods— a true Wizard truly deserving of magick."

"A pity he passed away before his time," said Quinn. "He could've become a fine Head of Noble House Black."

"Yes, yes, yes," said Kreacher, his matchstick body trembling with every word. "He wouldn't have dragged the pure Black through the mud."

"I agree, that's why when I met Sirius Black for the first time, I looked into Blacks and found about Regulus Black; there I found that he was a follower of the Dark Lord, am I right?" Quinn asked.

Kreacher's eyes took on a faraway gaze. Quinn waited for Kreacher to return to the present, but it seems that the house-elf's old age had been

affecting him as even after waiting, Kreacher didn't return from his memory zone out.

"Kreacher?"

". . . Yes," said Kreacher.

Quinn didn't know if Kreacher was answering his previous question or responding to his call, but it didn't matter; it was time to move into the main act.

"Kreacher. . . I know how Regulus really died," he said. "He didn't die as everyone thought he died."

The official story was that Regulus died by Voldemort's hands, or at least by his order. That Regulus had gotten far into the organization, then panicked about what he was being asked to do and tried to back out. However, one couldn't just walk in and hand in their resignation to Voldemort—once marked, a person was Death Eater for life with only one option of escape. . . death.

Kreacher's body trembled at his words. Quinn's pupils narrowed a fraction, his hands behind his back clenched as he felt a flare of magic from the house-elf.

"I do not know what you're talking about," said Kreacher, clutching the front of his pillowcase rag. "Young Master West must not believe in such absurd rumors. . ."

"I understand why you would want to hide the truth, but there's no need when I know it. . . . I know that Regulus died because of stealing from the Dark Lord," said Quinn, revealing about the truth only known to Kreacher. "He died in that cave, where the Dark Lord placed his treasure for safekeeping."

Kreacher looked up at Quinn with shocked eyes. Accompanying the shock was a muddling craze in the background.

'Good, good,' thought Quinn noticing Kreacher's current state. It would be much easier for him to control the house-elf with just the right words if he was slightly unstable.

"H-H-How. . . ?!"

"The question of how is not of importance, Kreacher," he said to Kreacher. "What's important is if that thing that was taken from the cave was destroyed or not. I hope it was disposed of Kreacher; tell me that your Master's sacrifice was not in vain. That the Dark Lord's treasure that he so carefully wanted to be hidden has perished."

However, Quinn knew that 'it' still existed. He wanted to know if it was still in this home.

Kreacher suddenly crouched down on the floor, curled into a ball, placed his wet face between his knees, and began to rock backward and forward. When he spoke, his voice was muffled but quite distinct in the silent, echoing kitchen.

"Master Sirius ran away, good riddance, for he was a bad boy and broke my Mistress's heart with his lawless ways. But Master Regulus had proper pride; he knew what was due to the name of Black and the dignity of his pureblood. For years he talked of the Dark Lord, who was going to bring the wizards out of hiding to rule the Muggles and the Muggle-borns . . . and when he was sixteen years old, Master Regulus joined the Dark Lord. So proud, so proud, so happy to serve . . .

And one day, a year after he had joined, Master Regulus came down to the kitchen to see Kreacher. Master Regulus always liked Kreacher. And Master Regulus said . . . he said . . ."

The old elf rocked faster than ever.

". . . he said that the Dark Lord required an elf. And Master Regulus had volunteered Kreacher. It was an honor, said Master Regulus, an honor for

him and for Kreacher, who must be sure to do whatever the Dark Lord ordered him to do . . . and then to c-come home."

Kreacher rocked still faster, his breath coming in sobs.

"So Kreacher went to the Dark Lord. The Dark Lord did not tell Kreacher what they were to do, but took Kreacher with him to a cave beside the sea. And beyond the cave, there was a cavern, and in the cavern was a great black lake . . .

. . . There was a boat . . .

. . . There was a b-basin full of potion on the island . . .

The D-Dark Lord made Kreacher drink it. . . ."

The elf quaked from head to foot.

Kreacher drank, and as he drank, he saw terrible things Kreacher's insides burned . . . Kreacher cried for Master Regulus to save him, he cried for his Mistress Black, but the Dark Lord only laughed . . . He made Kreacher drink all the potion . . . He dropped a locket into the empty basin. . . . He filled it with more potion.

And then the Dark Lord sailed away, leaving Kreacher on the island. . . ."

'The locket,' thought Quinn.

"Kreacher needed water, he crawled to the island's edge, and he drank from the black lake . . . and hands, dead hands, came out of the water and dragged Kreacher under the surface. . . ." Then Kreacher's voice turned momentarily hopeful, "Master Regulus told Kreacher to come back. . . ."

'Voldemort's folly,' Quinn scoffed. The Dark Lord didn't take the supposedly lower house-elf species into consideration, allowing them to Apparate out of the cave.

"Master Regulus was very worried, very worried," croaked Kreacher.

"Master Regulus told Kreacher to stay hidden and not to leave the house.

And then . . . it was a little while later . . . Master Regulus came to find Kreacher in his cupboard one night, and Master Regulus was strange, not as he usually was, disturbed in his mind, Kreacher could tell . . . and he asked Kreacher to take him to the cave, the cave where Kreacher had gone with the Dark Lord. . . ."

And so they had set off. Kreacher knew how to open the concealed entrance to the underground cavern, knew how to raise the tiny boat; this time it was Regulus who sailed with him to the island with its basin of poison. . . .

Kreacher shook his head and wept. Quinn sighed: he knew what happened next.

"M-Master Regulus took from his pocket a locket like the one the Dark Lord had," said Kreacher, tears pouring down either side of his snoutlike nose. "And he told Kreacher to take it and, when the basin was empty, to switch the lockets. . . ."

Kreacher's sobs came in great rasps now; Harry had to concentrate hard to understand him.

"And he ordered — Kreacher to leave — without him. And he told Kreacher — to go home — and never to tell my Mistress — what he had done — but to destroy — the first locket. And he drank — all the potion — and Kreacher swapped the lockets — and watched . . . as Master Regulus . . . was dragged beneath the water . . . and . . ."

The elf lay on the floor, panting and shivering, green mucus glistening around his snout, his eyes swollen and bloodshot and swimming in tears. Quinn had never seen anything so pitiful.

"So you brought the locket home," he said, his tone not changing from before. "And you tried to destroy it?"

"Nothing Kreacher did made any mark upon it," moaned the elf.

"Kreacher tried everything, everything he knew, but nothing, nothing would work. . . . So many powerful spells upon the casing, Kreacher was sure the way to destroy it was to get inside it, but it would not open. . . . Kreacher punished himself, he tried again, he punished himself, he tried again. Kreacher failed to obey orders. Kreacher could not destroy the locket! And his Mistress was mad with grief, because Master Regulus had disappeared, and Kreacher could not tell her what had happened, no, because Master Regulus had f-f-forbidden him to tell any of the f-f-family what happened in the c-cave. . . ."

He, however, wasn't family, Quinn thought, as he watched Kreacher sobbing on the floor.

"Kreacher," Quinn said, his voice laced with heavy magic, "please get up and act like a house-elf of Noble House."

Kreacher hiccuped himself into silence. Then he pushed himself into a sitting position again, rubbing his knuckles into his eyes like a small child.

"Now, I'm going to ask you this, Kreacher," said Quinn. He stared into the house-elf's eyes, "I need you to get me that locket; it's of importance that I obtain that locket. . . . for I can make your Master's dying wish come true . . ."

Kreacher matched eyes with Quinn, unblinking, frozen.

". . . I can destroy the locket for you, Kreacher," said Quinn. "It's imperative, and while completing that, I can finish the work Regulus started and ensure that he didn't die in vain . . . Do you think you can do that for me?"

"You. . . you. . . can really destroy the Dark Lord's locket?" Kreacher asked.

"Absolutely," Quinn nodded, exerting confidence through his voice and

magic. "I shall destroy them without fail."

Kreacher nodded and got to his feet. He popped away. When he returned, he had a locket in his hands.

"Here, here, have it," Kreacher said, all but throwing the locket at Quinn. Quinn caught the locket, not thinking Kreacher's behavior as strange. The locket had been nothing but trouble for the house-elf; it was a painful reminder of his failure.

He looked at the serpentine S, inlaid with glittering, green stones. It felt heavy in his hands, the metal feeling cold against his touch. It was Salazar Slytherin's Locket. It was a Horcrux.

"Thank you, Kreacher," said Quinn with a comforting smile. "I will complete what Regulus Black set out to do."

Kreacher bowed heavily, and Quinn could see tears dropping on the floor below Kreacher's head.

Quinn sighed and could only nod with a composed smile when Kreacher raised his head. He raised his hand and pointed it at Kreacher, or rather at the house-elf's head, "Now—"

But before he could proceed, his ears picked up the sound of the door creaking open.

"Quinn, what are you doing here?"

Quinn's lip thinned into a white line. This was Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place, the home of Sirius Black, a part of the Light Faction, so it was obvious that Sirius' favorite family would be here.

He looked at Kreacher and mouthed the words, 'Go,' as the locket flew into his suit's inner breast pocket. Kreacher peeked behind Quinn, scowled, and then popped away with a loud bang.

He turned and greeted,

"Harry, Happy New Year."

.
Quinn West - MC - Got another one.

Kreacher - House-elf - Has some difficult times.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Who thought it was going to be Ivy?

.
If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

289. Chapter 289: Last Day Of The

Year

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

"Quinn, what are you doing here?"

". . . Harry, Happy New Year."

There was a loud crack before Harry saw Quinn turn with a smile on his face. "Was that an Apparition crack I heard?" he asked, peeking behind Quinn. "Was that Kreacher you were talking to?"

"Indeed, that was Kreacher; I was having a little chat with him," Quinn stared into Harry's green eyes before his smile widened.

The Boy-Who-Lived's mental shields were quite decent. It was no wonder he was able to block his connection with Voldemort established through the Horcrux. They weren't strong enough to keep him out, but enough to keep the Dark Lord, who was operating through a connection that he had no knowledge of about its true nature.

"Was he being nasty with you?" Harry frowned. "If he was, don't worry about it; he's like that with everyone. I haven't been able to talk properly to him ever since I was a child . . . He's always calling me blood traitor and mum the m-word," he spat.

"I did get that from the little chat," said Quinn, "but Harry, I am a pureblood; Kreacher was perfectly civil with me."

"Why are you even here?" Harry looked at the hallway. "The Party's out there."

Quinn shrugged, "I saw him standing at the corner of the main hall and got curious— I don't enjoy parties, and he seems like a good conversation.

Come on, let's go out."

Quinn and Harry exited through the hallway door into the hall and greeted the chorus of the party.

"So what did Kreacher tell you?" asked Harry.

"Blood status, pure supremacy, blood traitor, the glory of Blacks," said Quinn, walking towards the bar in the hall. He ordered himself a drink and then turned to Harry, "Nothing special, you know, though it was interesting to see a house-elf who showed visible contempt towards their Master— Black and Kreacher must not really get along."

"No, they don't," Harry scoffed. "Kreacher wasn't kind to Sirius when he was young, and Sirius isn't a fan of Kreacher . . .

Quinn was well aware of the history of the Black.

". . . So who did you come here with today?" asked Harry.

"I came alone," said Quinn, getting his drink from the bartender. "None of them wanted to get out home at New Year; preferred to laze around while leaving the work to the poor old me."

"You sound like you don't want to be here," asked Harry, picking himself

a glass of butterbeer.

Quinn laughed. "Far from that, my dear Boy-Who-Lived. I'm ecstatic about being here, always wanted to see the Black Family's residence," he looked around the hall, "and have to say, he has done a great in the upkeep."

"Actually, mum's the one who a lot of this," said Harry, puffing his chest. "It wasn't like this before, or at least they say so— it was grim and dark, they say — Sirius didn't like it and wanted to do a complete overhaul," he chuckled, "wanting to build his ultimate Bachelor Pad. Sirius wanted to hire someone to do that, but then mum volunteered to do it . . .

. . . Blacks were a Dark Family, you know, so they had a lot of dangerous stuff things lying around in the house— items, books, and who knows what— and mum thought it would be better if she would take care of that stuff, instead of someone whose job was to interior design and not handling Dark magical items. They could get seriously injured or worse. After she was done, mum decided to try her hand at designing, and well, you can see the result."

Quinn nodded. The interior was tasteful, and he could see designs here and there, which he thought looked familiar to Hogwarts— Lily had spent a lot of her time at the castle.

"So . . . what happened to all the books?" he asked.

Harry quirked his brow at Quinn with his butterbeer bottle at his mouth.

"Why?" Harry asked.

"You know . . ."

". . . You sound like Ivy."

"Oh, how?" Quinn asked, curious.

"Ivy asked the same thing—" said Harry.

"I asked what?"

Both boys turned to the voice and saw Ivy standing there gazing at them. She was dressed in a stunning red dress with a little plate of food in her hands.

"Oh, this and that," said Harry. "Talking about Sirius' Bachelor Pad."

"Boys," said Ivy, somehow imitating the 'rolling eyes' with her tone. "So Quinn, I didn't know you were coming here today," she glanced away to where Sirius was standing with a glare, "but glad to see you here— I know you don't like parties."

«Mnmm~ Mnmm~ Mmm~.»

". . . That I don't," said Quinn, looking at the people in the party. He didn't know ninety percent of people here, and even those he knew, he could only bear to talk to a few of them. "So New Year, huh. Any special things both of you want to do this year?"

Quinn looked at both of them and noticed the slight change of expressions on both of their faces, more on Harry's face than Ivy's. He wondered what they were thinking— he could guess . . . he knew what they were thinking.

Before the winter break, Quinn had noticed that Harry's interaction had finally gone way beyond what it was already was. The Headmaster had finally started to reveal things to Harry, and he could tell from Harry's behavior (which Quinn had been observing) that this version of Harry Potter was feeling the pressure.

'The malleable martyr isn't here after all,' he thought.

The upbringing was different. This Harry Potter was able to think about himself, and while Quinn didn't know what exactly he was thinking, from the rolling waves of emotions, he could feel the muddle of contradicting emotions whenever Quinn peeked into Harry's mind.

Duty. Pressure. Reluctance. Willingness. Fear. Courage.

'It's quite ironic, isn't it,' Quinn thought to himself.

He had felt the same emotions from Draco Malfoy this year.

Quinn glanced at the girl twins. He had tried not to peek at her emotions whenever he was near her this year. He had tried, and the feelings that he had felt weren't something he wanted to witness. They just brought out memories that pinged guilt inside of him.

And that was just before he had been plagued with the Sin curse.

After that, it didn't matter if he peeked or not; anytime he was near her, his own voice would tempt him in whispers. The voices rose to strengthen to the levels of Greed and Pride— the two voices that bothered him the most.

Greed and Pride.

Both of those voices were strong because they aligned with his untainted thought the most.

He felt greed for knowledge frequently, and with Greed in the back of his mind, every time he would as much as pick up a book, it would rear its ugly head and constantly whisper.

«Learning is easy, but attaining more magic is difficult. . . if I let the curse take over, I would not only gain a singular focus towards knowledge . . . I mean, come on, I have picked up . . . distractions. . . . But I would also gain so much POWER!»

It was just like the last time. Quinn knew what it felt like, making it more challenging to avoid.

Then came Pride.

He didn't know why, but every time he saw anyone doing anything remotely interesting, a twisted sense of Pride would come up, and he would start comparing himself to them.

He hated that feeling so much.

«Look at all these people. Trying so hard to impress people, yet their contributions amount to nothing. Ah, the kids, they don't know the magnanimity of the outside world. Ha! Trying to impress the teachers. Kids do stupid shit and think it's cool . . . so pitiful!»

It wasn't like him, yet it felt so . . . natural.

"Quinn?"

Quinn broke out of his thoughts and looked at the Potter twins.

"My apologies . . . I was thinking about what I wanted to do this year,"

Quinn said.

"And?" asked Ivy.

"Well, there's still something I have to do at Hogwarts before I leave once and for all," said Quinn, thinking of a couple things he had going— one of them was literally ticking in the back of his mind.

"Then I need to finally choose what I'm going to do right after Hogwarts because there are a few things I can do, and believe me, I have no idea which one to choose," he continued.

There was an apprenticeship with Alan, but that would mean that he would be tied up until his 'Master' was satisfied with his progress, which Quinn was sure would happen with the way the old man was.

Then there was the option of not committing himself to a formal apprenticeship and pursuing whatever he wanted on his own, which itself was a problem as then he would have to choose what he wanted to concentrate on— doing tons of things at the same time wasn't going to work at a higher level— a couple of things, sure, he could handle it, but not everything like he was doing right now. He would have to stick to a couple fields for a year or two before and progress before switching.

"Well, whatever I do," said Quinn, shrugging, "I am going to drag Eddie and Marcus along with me to a grand trip for a month! It will be crazy,

yeah."

Lia had done so after her Beauxbatons day— took a trip with her friends.

Quinn wanted to do the same with his.

"Where will you go?" asked Harry.

"No clue," said Quinn. "I'm guessing that I would put a bunch of destination names in a bowl, make someone pick one, and then get a portkey there. The best part? We don't know the place until we get there . . . I mean, just imagine the thrill of dropping into one place without knowing if we would even know the language— it would be so fun!"

"That," Harry started, "sounds terrible."

"Really?" Ivy looked at her brother in surprise, making him look at her surprise. "I mean, a trip without planning. While I wouldn't want to do it every time, doing it once sounds exciting."

Quinn pointed at Ivy, "Harry, I know you have listened to it from Eddie a lot, but I have to say, Girl Potter is the Better Potter."

"I mean, was that ever a point of doubt?" Ivy said, crossing her arms.

"Oh, shut it," said Harry.

Quinn leaned back on the bar counter and raised his glass to take a sip as he watched the twins bicker with each other.

'For the last day of the year, this is half decent,' he thought.

And it would have been perfect if not for the voice in the back of his mind.

Soon after, Quinn thought he had spent enough time at the party, so he went to Sirius and said his goodbyes to the host and left with much time remaining to midnight.

Outside the steps of Number Twelve, Grimmauld Place, he reached into his suit coat pulled out the chain with the Horcrux hanging on it. He stared at it for long in silence with unblinking half-lidded eyes.

'I'm tired,' he thought.

There was another thing he wanted to do this year . . . and that was to finish this so that he could move on.

.

Quinn West - MC - They're getting longer.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Mid-terms are BACK!

.

If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

290. Chapter 290: An Offer To

Help

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

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Link in the Bio/Profile

Under the dictatorship of Madam Irma Pince, silence reigned supreme in the Hogwarts library.

In one of those silent corners, three seventh-year Ravenclaws sat together on a table with books, parchment, paper, ink, quills, and fountain pen on the table.

Eddie's quill scribbled on the parchment rapidly, transferring the words from his brain to the parchment. At the end of a sentence, he placed a period and pressed the nip hard into the parchment; he watched as the point of ink grew into a blot before taking the nip off and pumping his left hand beside himself.

He breathed out as he stared at the lengthy roll of parchment unrolled on the table with the other end flowing off the other end. He looked around before withdrawing his wand. The tip of the blackthorn wand was placed on the parchment, and the next second, the parchment roll split into multiple page-sized sections. He summoned the pages to himself, straightened them out with another swish, marked them with page numbers, and bound them from the top breadth-side to make a flippable thin assignment notebook.

He looked at the assignment, nodded in satisfaction, and flicked it on the table. He leaned (half-slumped) into the chair and gazed at his friends.

Marcus was busying himself with an assignment— Eddie squinted and saw numbers and recognized Arithmancy formulas. He turned to his other friend, and his brows quirked up when he saw empty hands, twiddling thumbs, and a closed book sitting inches away from the hands. Eddie observed Quinn and watched as his eyes followed people walking past their table, the flickering flames of the candles, and for some reason, a lot of squinting at the spines of the books on the shelves at a distance opposite Quinn. Eddie glanced down at Quinn's hands, and the fingers had joined the thumbs in their nervous activity.

Eddie raised his wand and spun out a magic. That got Quinn's attention, and his eyes shifted from the books to Eddie with a question in his eyes.

"I'm done with my assignment," said Eddie.

"Oh, well done," said Quinn.

Eddie once again looked at Quinn's hand, and now they were flat, palm-side down on the table with the fingers silently drumming against the wood.

"I'm done," Eddie said again, "so I will listen to you— what's bothering you?"

"What do you mean?" Quinn furrowed his brows, wondering where did that come from. "There's nothing bothering me."

"I don't buy it," said Eddie, pointing at Quinn's hands. "You don't play with your hands if not for doing the muggle magic tricks, and I can see no cards, coins, or any other weird shit— ergo, something's bothering you. Clearly, something's bothering you. So, be a dear and tell big daddy what's wrong."

"Like I said, nothing's bothering me," said Quinn, waving Eddie off. "I am just relaxing . . . it's one of the things I want to do more this year, you know, a new years resolution . . . I am starting strong."

"He doesn't know what to do," said Marcus without looking up from his parchment. "Usually this time, he's in his office, doing stuff, but now that's out of his routine, this guy doesn't know what to do at this part of the day."

Quinn turned to Marcus. "What are you, my psychiatrist?"

"What's a psychiatrist?" asked Marcus. He scrunched his nose as he stared at his parchment, "Ah crap, I wrote down psychiatrist."

Quinn sighed. His exit from AID was turning out to be more difficult than he thought. He had no idea what to do during the 1-2 hours of the evening as they were usually scheduled for AID, and the sudden absence had thrown a temporary hole in his day, and it was a bit restless for him.

"Then what do you do at this time when you're at home," said Eddie, "just do that while you get used to it."

"By this time, I'm either sitting with Ms. Rosey or down at the muggle world wandering around; can't do any of those here," said Quinn. He could sneak out of Hogwarts and then apparate home, but that would get him a scolding.

"Wanna go play Quidditch?" asked Eddie. "I can put you with the little

ones, and you can mess with them. Or you can go round the castle and dish out detentions . . . yeah I would do that if I was you."

"Maybe I should go around the castle," said Quinn making Marcus finally look up from his assignment.

"You're going to give out detentions?" Marcus asked.

"Huh? No, not that," said Quinn, getting up from his chair. "A little walk would be good for me to clear my mind."

January, the peak of winter, was cold, making the hallways lonely. Quinn walked through the hallways, wondering what he should do— there were apparent options like reading about magic, practicing magic in RoR, workout in RoR.

Then there was the most obvious option of working out a solution for the Sin curse trying to infect his soul. He could feel the pendant's metal against his skin— ever since fashioning it, he had yet to remove it from his around his neck. But he was already putting a big chunk of his time into solving the curse and thought putting in more would be more detrimental.

«Why not just let it slip? Maybe the lack of ego will reveal something. I did accomplish a whole lot the last time around— ah, all of this such a bother, *sigh* . . . Even though there's such an easy way to end it.»

Quinn groaned, with Sloth drawling in his mind.

He had raised his hands to cover his face and rubbed his eyes when Quinn felt someone crash into his body, followed by a thump. Before he could open his eyes, he heard an "Oof!" and the sound of someone falling to the floor.

"Hey, you worthless piece—"

Quinn opened his eyes and saw Draco on the floor, looking up at him.

The Slytherin's expression went from hot anger to a screeching silence.

"Malfoy," Quinn said in greeting.

Draco hurriedly got up from the floor his floor and dusted his clothes without looking at Quinn. Immediately after, he turned and started walking the other way.

"Malfoy," called Quinn, "are you going to ignore my greeting, especially when you walked into me so rudely."

«Little shit! He fucking dares to ignore ME! I should curse him off his magic; that would teach him. I want to see how he would react when I turn him into a non-magical he despises. I can see the headline— Malfoy Heir, SQUIB?!»

Draco stopped, and Quinn could see his fists clenching before facing him.

". . . Sorry about that, I wasn't looking where I was walking," said Draco, his face twitching. "I again apologize, but I am in a hurry . . . I will see you around."

At once, Draco turned away and took steps faster than before.

"Malfoy," Quinn called out again, "did I say you could leave."

Draco came to a halt and turned to him with an irritated face. Quinn noticed that his face was paler than usual, and there were even faint bags beneath his eyes.

"What do you want?" he asked, seemingly trying to keep his voice in check.

"Take a walk with me," said Quinn.

Draco's frown deepened as he looked at Quinn, "Huh, why? Didn't I say I was busy—."

"Because I am saying so," said Quinn, cutting off Draco. "You will give me company, Malfoy; now be sensible, and do as I am asking you."

Draco was about to shout in protest, but his jaw set when he saw Quinn's expression. He couldn't see a smile on his face or even a relaxed expression— the expression screamed that Quinn wasn't going to take no

for an answer.

It wasn't a request It was an order.

Draco stared at Quinn, who had already turned and started walking. He gritted his teeth and followed after, falling in step with him.

The two walked in the hallways among the portraits, who were still coming off their holiday spirit. Draco kept his head down to hide his expression and walked with Quinn in silence. He waited for Quinn to start the conversation. He waited, but Quinn stayed silent.

"What do you want—" Draco asked, his speech fast and irritated.

"You don't look good, Malfoy," said Quinn, again cutting Draco off. "You have done a decent job of hiding it, but I can see it," he looked at Draco, "you're not getting much sleep. . . .

. . . . or maybe you're not able to sleep."

Draco's eyes widened as he stopped himself from breathing faster.

"I-I have been busy," he said. "Assignments and all All Professors, out nowhere, are suddenly assigning them— telling us that we're NEWT students now. I have been staying up late to complete them, that's all."

"I see," Quinn hummed.

Draco suddenly felt his mouth dry up, and he could feel a sweat trickle down his temple. His hand closed is on his side, and his finger twitched, slowly going inside his robe to his side where his holster sat.

But when Draco looked at Quinn, he saw Quinn staring at him. He immediately pulled his hand away.

"So, Malfoy, how are things going at home?" asked Quinn. "Your father must be happy with the Dark Lord back, up and running."

"My father was Imperiused; he was cleared by Wizengamot," said Draco the very next second.

"I never said anything about your father being a Death Eater, though,"

said Quinn with a smile when he saw Draco jolt. He had been hasty in his answer. "Even without that, I'm sure he's happy that the Dark Lord is back— I'm sure the Dark Lord is going to pick up where he left."

"I wouldn't know about that," Draco reached to his collar and loosened his tie slightly as his eyes darted around the hallway.

"It sounds like you don't keep in touch with what's going on with the Dark Lord and his Death Eaters," asked Quinn.

"No, I don't," said Draco. "I have an opinion on Dark Lord's return."

"Oh, really?" said Quinn. "From what I saw and heard in the Prefects compartment back at the start of the new session, you sounded mighty happy with the Dark Lord coming back— laughing about how the Dark Lord's going to kill Potter."

"Tha-that . . ."

"It sure sounded like you were in support of the Dark Lord, Malfoy," said Quinn, pressing. "Am I right, Malfoy?"

". . . N-No, as I said, I don't care about the Dark Lord."

"Well, you should— it's sort of a big deal. A megalomaniac mass murderer with devoted followers who will follow his every command is out in the open, so I think you should be somewhat concerned . . . what if he comes after your family?"

Quinn stopped walking when he saw that Draco was no longer beside him and turned to see him standing a few steps away, his head down.

Quinn clenched his hands tight. He closed his eyes for a moment before walking to Draco. He took out a royal blue card with gold lettering.

"Here have this," he said to Draco, handing him the card when he looked up.

". . . What is this?" Draco asked weakly.

The card wasn't an AID card that Quinn handed out to everyone.

"This is my personal card, Malfoy. It has my personal WMF-id on it," said Quinn, staring at Draco. "If you ever need my help, reach out to me." He patted Draco's shoulder and ignored the flinch.

"Now, I'm sure you were busy before I asked for this walk, so I will let you return to whatever you were doing."

Draco looked at Quinn for a second before immediately turning away to walk away with the card in hand.

"Malfoy," Quinn called out.

Draco once again came to a halting stop. He choppily turned to face Quinn.

"I can help you so much, Malfoy," said Quinn, "so, whatever you do, don't screw it up too much."

There were no words exchanged, and the two men parted for their own ways.

Quinn turned the corner, raised his hand, and slammed it sideways hard into the wall.

"Shit!"

.

Quinn West - MC - That was close. That was close. That was close.

Eddie Carmichael - Seventh-Year - In another world, he's the Headboy with the highest detention rate in the history of Hogwarts.

Marcus Belby - Seventh-Year - Multi-tasking is bad.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Can you guess the reason why Quinn is so angry.

Also, CHAPTER 300 is now up on Patréon!

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the

DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the synopsis!

291. Chapter 291: The Tales of

Three Brothers

If you want to read ahead of the posting schedule then head over to my Patreón.

All the chapters would still be posted here, but you can support me with a donation and get chapters earlier than usual as a bonus.

Link in the Bio/Profile

Quinn opened his eyes and stared at the painting of a deer nibbling on lush green grass with stretches of green land in the backdrop.

The deer seemed to notice his gaze; it looked up at it with its doe eyes, staring at him as he gazed at it. The deer dipped its head again to nibble at the grass with its eyes still at Quinn, who cracked his neck; that seemed to scare the deer as it ran away deeper into the painting, eventually taking a turn and disappearing into the frame.

Quinn chuckled. The painting was one of his creations: the only magical painting he had placed in his personal dwellings (dorm, AID office, bedroom at the West manor, and the Headboy Suite.) He had made it one Sunday as a way to spend his afternoon, and ever since fateful day years ago, the "nibbling deer" would run away when he would make any movements.

He took a deep breath and looked down. He was sitting down on his bed, had no shirt on, and could feel the dampness on his skin. He stared at his hands, resting on his crossed legs— and there sat the Ressurrection Stone floating in the space between two hands.

The only root of the Stone's origins was found in the fable of "The Tale of the Three Brothers."

.....

There were once three brothers who were traveling along with a lonely, the winding road at twilight. In time, the brothers reached a river too deep to wade through and too dangerous to swim across. However, these brothers were learned in the magical arts, and so they simply waved their wands and made a bridge appear across the treacherous water.

They were halfway across it when they found their path blocked by a hooded figure 'twas Death itself.

And Death spoke them—

He was angry that he had been cheated out of three new victims, for travelers usually drowned in the river. But Death was cunning. He pretended to congratulate the three brothers upon their magic and said that each had earned a prize for being clever enough to evade him.

So the oldest brother, who was a combative man, asked for a wand more powerful than any in existence: a wand that must always win duels for its owner, a wand worthy of a wizard who had conquered Death! So Death crossed to an elder tree on the banks of the river, fashioned a wand from a branch that hung there, and gave it to the oldest brother.

And so was born the Death Stick, the Elder Wand, the strongest wand known to humanity.

Then the second brother, who was an arrogant man, decided that he wanted to humiliate Death still further and asked for the power to recall others from Death. So Death picked up a stone from the riverbank and gave it to the second brother and told him that the stone would have the power to bring back the dead.

So came into existence the Soul Conduit, the Resurrection Stone, an artifact capable of channeling souls back to the mortal plane.

And then Death asked the third and youngest brother what he would like. The

youngest brother was the humblest and also the wisest of the brothers, and he did not trust Death. So he asked for something that would enable him to go forth from that place without being followed by Death.

And Death, most unwillingly, handed over his own Cloak of Invisibility.

Then Death stood aside and allowed the three brothers to continue on their way, and they did so, talking with wonder of the adventure they had had, and admiring Death's gifts.

In due course, the brothers separated, each for his own destination.

The first brother traveled on for a week or more, and reaching a distant village, sought out a fellow wizard with whom he had a quarrel. Naturally, with the Elder Wand as his weapon, he could not fail to win the duel that followed. Leaving his enemy dead upon the floor, the oldest brother proceeded to an inn, where he boasted loudly of the powerful wand he had snatched from Death himself, and of how it made him invincible.

That very night, another wizard crept upon the oldest brother as he lay, wine-sodden, upon his bed. The thief took the wand and, for good measure, slit the oldest brother's throat.

And so Death took the first brother for his own.

Meanwhile, the second brother journeyed to his own home, where he lived alone. Here he took out the stone that had the power to recall the dead, and turned it thrice in his hand. To his amazement and his delight, the figure of the girl he had once hoped to marry, before her untimely death, appeared at once before him.

Yet she was sad and cold, separated from him as by a veil. Though she had returned to the mortal world, she did not truly belong there and suffered.

Finally, the second brother, driven mad with hopeless longing, killed himself so as truly to join her.

And so Death took the second brother for his own.

But though Death searched for the third brother for many years, he could never find him. It was only when he had attained a great age that the youngest brother finally took off the Cloak of Invisibility and gave it to his son. And then he greeted Death as an old friend and went with him gladly, and, equals, they departed this life.

.....

Quinn had the wording memorized by heart.

He believed the fable to be what it was— a fairytale for children, crafted to be told to children to make them sleep at night, "scaring" them to be up at night.

But . . . where there was smoke, there was a fire.

If the fable was the smoke, then the existence of the three Death Hallows was the fire— a blazing hot fire. The existence of the Elder Wand, Ressurrection Stone, and the Cloak of Invisibility gave the fable a very real origin.

Moreover, the Peverell Brothers were real and had legacies living through the ages to this very day.

Antioch Peverell, the eldest of the three Peverell brothers, the owner of the Elder Wand, had died and had left no children to succeed him. But his brothers, Cadmus, the second brother, and Ignotus, the third brother, did leave children behind, who had children of their own, so on and so on . . .

Cadmus Peverell, the owner of the Ressurrection Stone, left behind his legacy in the form of Gaunts. The Gaunts, through their daughter, Merope Gaunt, brought to life Tom Marvallo Riddle, popularly known as Dark Lord Voldemort.

Ignotus Peverell, the owner of the Cloak of Invisibility, left behind his legacy in the form of the long-living family of Potters with the latest

installment in the form of the twins, Harry and Ivy Potter.

As such, Quinn had come to believe that the three Deathly Hallows were creations of the three exceptionally magically talented Peverell brothers.

He believed that Antioch was a wandmaker, crafting the world's most potent wand-type magical focus.

Ignotus, he(Quinn) believed, was the least talented of the brotherly bunch and created which, in Quinn's eye, was a spectacular piece of magic. It was challenging to craft artifacts that lasted one or two decades, much less centuries, and in the case of Cloak of Invisibility, more than a millennium— which was even more impressive as Cloaks of Invisibilities were always working their magic of invisibility making the wear and tear much worse than artifacts, who didn't see continuous use.

And finally, there was Cadmus, who Quinn believed was the most magically inclined. The man had worked with soul magic and had created an artifact that could call upon the souls of the dead.

But . . .

The Resurrection Stone was strange.

Cadmus had taken his life, driven into insanity. Quinn didn't know the exact reason behind the insanity— it could be because of a mental imbalance from having his wife so close to him, yet out of his reach, suffering by being in the mortal world . . . or it could've been that Cadmus was drawn insane from the use of the Resurrection Stone that accomplished something not natural . . . maybe there was a price for summoning the soul of dead.

For why Cadmus, who loved his wife, would keep her in the mortal world even though he could see her suffering.

Quinn didn't know if this had actually happened or if it was just part of the fable . . . but he couldn't take the risk, especially not with the Sin

curse's grip around his Soul. So he had withheld from summoning a soul and only had studied the magic that had been cast on it, feeling it through his Soul— understanding its intricacies, figuring out the fundamentals behind what made the Ressurrection Stone it was.

"Man, this is tough," he said.

The Ressurrection Stone was a complex artifact. From the time he had obtained it to when he had arrived at Hogwarts, he hadn't been able to sense any openings that would tell him how it was made— only that thing he could feel was that a bit of magic and some imagination of the dead person would summon the soul. It was only after hours on end, day after day of strenuous work with the Stone, that he was finally able to sense something of use.

His reaction? "Souls are interesting things." And yet it was so intricate that every step he made needed to be taken with precaution. Every time he implemented something he learned, he had to question his decision to the point of paranoia.

His soul had gotten stronger than before, it wasn't much, but he could feel that his connection to magic had improved. It felt more smidge reactive to his wishes.

However, to this day, he had no idea how to get rid of the curse . . . but that didn't mean he had no progress.

«Of course, I am the bes—»

Quinn smiled.

He had found a way to snuff the voice out.

After the Draco Malfoy incident, he had started to put his time into the Ressurrection Stone and figuring out soul magic— which had

frighteningly low magic books— he could only get his hands on TWO!

And he had tons of books on every subject. The two books he had weren't

that useful and were full of vague stuff, spiritual bullshit, and religious jargon, trying to get him to adopt their ways.

The only option he had left was to pioneer his way into soul magic, and the Ressurrection Stone was a valuable yet potentially risky asset.

Quinn cupped his hands, and the cold Ressurrection Stone fell into his hands. He took the Deathly Hallow pendant piece in one hand and touched the Stone to the pendant for it to disappear.

He got up from his bed, and the sheen of sweat over his body vanished like a puddle of water under the summer sun. Soul magic, for some reason, was tough on the body— he felt tired.

"Well, Uglymort turned progressively ugly when he messed with his soul," he chuckled.

«He must know a lot about soul magic. I wonder if I let the curs—»

Quinn pulled a black shirt from the hanger and buttoned himself up.

"I'm hungry. . . yeah, yeah, I know, hungry, Gluttony. . . shush!" Quinn snapped his finger, and the voices quieted down. He looked at the clock, it was almost dinnertime soon, so there was no need to go poaching in the Kitchen.

"I wonder what Marcus has in his stash," he muttered and was about to leave when something caught his eyes.

". . . Is that a man?" he moved to the "nibbling deer" portrait, and his doubtful surprise turned into a smile when he carefully observed the painting. "Oh my, got bored with the grass, huh."

It wasn't a man, but the deer standing on its hind legs with his forelegs on the trunk of a small tree reaching for a low-hanging lush red apple, trying to crunch on its with its exposed bite.

"You got it, come on, get the apple," said Quinn in anticipation. "It's quite tasty, so don't give up."

The deer jumped and successfully snatched the apple.

"YES! Well, done!" Quinn clapped once, ecstatic. "Now, enjoy the fruit of your labor and indulge in something of the next level."

He watched with a grin as the deer hungrily chomped down the apple in two bites.

"Oh boy! Now, I'm getting hungrier," he turned, picked up his outer robe, and walked out of the room.

The deer's eyes turned to gaze "outside" the frame before it looked away and went prancing across the painted lands.

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Quinn West - MC - Looking forward to some chomping himself.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Let's show the Sin curse, mrwhosetheboss(lol), shall we?

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If you have any ideas regarding the magic you want to see in this fiction or want to offer some ideas regarding the progression. Move onto the DISCORD Server and blast those ideas.

The link is in the bio!

Внимание! Этот перевод, возможно, ещё не готов.

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