

Інформація

Адреса змісту:[https://www.fanfiction.net/s/13893841/153/A-Magical-](https://www.fanfiction.net/s/13893841/153/A-Magical-Journey)

Journey

Книги

>

Гарри Поттер

Волшебное путешествие

Автор:

FictionOnlyReader

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...

[Реинкарнация] [SI OC] [Поздний роман]

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356. Chapter 356: Recalling Past

Events

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Dumbledore stared at the gold and green locket sitting on his table. A beautiful ruby snake was inlaid on the top cover, with its serpentine body forming a red 'S' over the surface.

He picked it up, and his fingers fiddled with it distractedly. He knew it was fake— a 'letter of UNauthetication' came with it to prove that it was a replica. Dumbledore wasn't happy to find a replica when he went had set out to find the original— he had bled for it, drank poison for it, fought Inferi while suffering from a cursed poison for it, and then had to face a disgruntled student out to kill him, had to come to a hard realization that he had lost a close friend and a closer confidant. . . and the aftermath that followed was something he would've like to deal with a clear and not tired mind.

And the worst part of it, it was only after everything that he had only found that the locket was a fake.

All of his effort for naught. . . bar one single thing. One thing that he had been able to get out of the entire debacle. He had found a clue to the real Horcrux. . . Voldemort's Horcrux.

RAB. Regulus Arcturus Black. Scion to the prestigious House of Black. Voldemort's loyal Death Eater. . . or it had seemed so as Regulus Black had betrayed Voldemort and had switched the locket when he had realized what it actually was.

Meaning, while the Horcrux was still there, it was out of Voldemort's reach, and he had no idea that the piece of his soul wasn't the place he

had left, under the protection of the various protective and lethal magic. It gave him a chance. As the situation stood now, neither party knew the location, but that was more of a disadvantage to Voldemort as the Horcrux user didn't know if his soul container was still active— if he would still depend on it for keeping himself alive. And if he could find it before Voldemort, it would be a strain on Voldemort's heart.

Fortunately for him, he had a clue, while Voldemort didn't.

Unfortunately, Dumbledore had followed the clue that came in the form of a letter of powerful spite but wasn't able to find any locket in places where one could find Regulus Black would go. . . sadly, the looking had turned out to be a dead-end as every place he went, he got opposite to what she accepted.

"Where did you hide it, Regulus?" Dumbledore muttered. He had to try to put himself in Regulus' mind but hadn't gotten much from it.

The problem with Regulus Black was that there weren't left who knew the man. His own brother, Sirius, didn't know much about him because of the differences in childhood. Those who knew Regulus, and were still alive, wouldn't talk to Dumbledore.

"This isn't getting anywhere," he sighed and pushed the locket away. He popped his favorite lemon pop into his mouth, feeling the pleasant sourness that let the made way for sweetness.

He leaned into his chair with thoughts about Horcruxes pouring into his mind. Seven. The number which held power with magic and something Dumbledore suspected Voldemort to aim for his Horcruxes.

'He's going to aim for six pieces. . . with the seventh being himself,' he thought. 'But. . . he doesn't know that the number he's going to have seven Horcruxes.'

He got up and walked to a portrait and pulled for the frame to open up

like a door on its hinges. Dumbledore tapped his wand against the wall, and a portion vanished as if it was never there, leaving behind a square cavity in it. He stared at the black diary— half-melted, half-burnt, with a stabbing hole in the middle. He picked it up and brought it to his table. Tom Riddle's Diary, what Dumbledore considered to be the first Horcrux. It was the only. . . one of the two Horcruxes he had within his grasp, and as far as he knew, the only Horcrux that he knew to be destroyed. He sank into his mindscape and went back to the memory of the Potter Twins and Hermione Granger telling him about the Chamber of Secret incident. He recalled them telling him about the Basilisk and how a young Tom Riddle had appeared by using the diary as the medium. But as he recalled the memory, a frown appeared between his brow. He remembered how Harry recalled that the diary had been stabbed with the Basilisk fang when he woke up.

"Epsy!" A house-elf popped up in the office and stared at Dumbledore with her doe eyes. He wrote something on a parchment slip and gave it to Epsy. "Please give this to Professor McGonagall and tell her to bring them now."

Epsy popped away with the slip and left Dumbledore staring at the burnt diary with a hole in the middle.

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"Why did you want to see us, Headmaster?" asked Ivy as she took a seat in the Headmaster's Office. She had been playing cards with some of the fifth years when McGonagall came in to tell them that Dumbledore wanted her, Harry, Hermione, and Ron in his office. Harry and Hermione hadn't been pleased to have their snogging session interrupted. On the

way, they picked up her mother.

Dumbledore retrieved a diary that was well familiar to her and placed it on the table. "About this," he said.

Ivy stared at Tom Riddle's diary. . . or Voldemort's diary. Her pupil shrunk when she recalled the memories of that day inside the Chamber of Secrets.

"What about it?" asked Harry with an edge in his voice.

"Harry, you told me when you woke up, you found this diary stabbed with the Basilisk fang. . . and it wasn't you who stabbed the diary," said Dumbledore. "I was wondering if you could think back to that day and try to see if there was something else that you might've missed." He turned to Ivy and Hermione, "You two as well. Please try to recall if you remember something from that day before you got petrified."

Ivy nodded and tried to remember that day, starting from the morning, but she couldn't find anything odd other than the horrifying yellow eyes. Then her mind wandered to what Harry had told her happened in the Chamber of Secrets.

Her body tensed.

It wasn't what Harry had told her that tensed her, but what she had done to find the truth. Ivy closed her eyes and pretended to use Occlumency as if she was going through her memories. She didn't want to match eyes with Dumbledore, and neither did she want to open her mouth— it was better if she kept her mouth shut.

"I. . . I think I know who stabbed the diary," came a voice from beside her.

Ivy's eyes flew open in shock. She turned to Hermione, who had just spoken. Ivy bit the inside of her cheek— it had slipped her mind that Hermione was there with her when she had asked.

Hermione glanced at Ivy, who couldn't give her a look to stop. Any attempt to stop Hermione would be caught by Dumbledore, and over that, her mother was in the same room.

"That year, Ivy and I were trying to find the identity of the Slytherin's monster, but we weren't able to find the identity. . . so we decided to seek some help. . . ."

"Help?" said Lily, confused. Not only her but all others than Hermione and Ivy looked confused.

"We went to AID to see if we could find an answer there."

Dumbledore leaned forward, "AID. . . you mean Quinn West?"

Hermione nodded, "We asked Quinn if he knew about the Slytherin's monster, and he knew who the monster was."

"He knew!" McGonagall exclaimed.

"He pointed out the facts surrounding all the petrifications that had happened throughout the year, and the only magical beast he could equate all of them to was the Basilisk. He pointed us to a book in the library and sent us away. . . ."

Ivy began praying that Hermione would stop, that she wouldn't continue, but it seemed that luck wasn't with Ivy today.

". . . but before we could leave, Ivy asked another question," Hermione glanced at Ivy as she continued. "She asked Quinn if he knew where the opening to the Chamber of Secrets was?"

Lily gasped, "He knew?"

"Yes, he knew. Or at least, at that time, we thought he had a guess where it was. He told us the entrance was in the Moaning Myrtle's lavatory. . . but as you know, we both never made it there. Because of Quinn, we weren't dead and only petrified— he had pointed out the presence of reflective surface near every petrification victim."

Both of them had been caught by the Basilisk's glare through their mirrors, turning their body to stone. . . the next thing they remembered was waking up in the Hospital room with aching and sore bodies.

"But how does that make Mr. West the one who stabbed the diary?" asked Dumbledore.

"We asked him if he was the one who did it."

"He admitted it?" asked Dumbledore with surprise.

Hermione shook her head, "No, he denied it outright. But he had let it slip in his wording that he had been inside the Chamber of Secrets."

Hermione then explained how when Quinn had asked them what happened in the Chamber of Secrets, he had used the wording 'down' as if he knew the chamber was somewhere beneath. "And in his own wording, Quinn had said that he never saw the opening, only that he knew it existed there."

"Ms. Granger. Just this. . . just the wording isn't enough to say that Mr. West was the one inside the Chamber of Secrets," said Dumbledore, but his tone and eyes were one of thought and contemplation. "But it does make him one of the most likely suspects. . . . If we could only have someone who could have witnessed what had happened."

"Fawkes!" suddenly Harry yelled. "Fawkes was there. We should ask him if Fawkes was there."

The Phoenix had been the main reason why the Basilisk was slain with such less effort. The immortal bird has plucked the deadly eyes of the Basilisk, ridding him of its most lethal weapon.

"Unfortunately for us, Harry, we can't ask Fawkes," said Dumbledore.

"Eh, why?!"

"I have communicated with Fawkes about it, and from what I gathered, he didn't know what had happened because of the sudden burning day,

which reverted him back to his chick form."

Harry's shoulder slumped. "Then we don't have anyone who could answer our question."

Ivy internally sighed with relief. She was petrified, Harry was knocked out, the Basilisk was dead, Teen-Voldemort was purged, Hermione wasn't inside, Ron was far away from the actual chamber. . . making no one who could confirm if Quinn was inside. Even she herself couldn't as she hadn't had that conversation with Quinn yet.

But then. . .

"Ahem, perhaps I could help you all with this problem."

All eyes, even the ones on the Headmaster/mistress' portraits, turned to the speaker.

Ivy blinked in surprise as she looked at the speaker. At first, she was confused, but then Harry's recollection of events started to ring inside her head. She realized what she and everyone had missed.

Two people, one Phoenix, one Basilisk, and one ghost.

That's who everyone thought was inside the Chamber of Secrets that day.

. . . but all were wrong.

There had been another.

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Quinn West - MC - Hmm, strange. . . lately, it feels like I'm not getting appropriate screentime.

Ivy Potter - Wants to keep secrets - Stunned.

Albus Dumbledore - Headmaster - As stunned as the one above him.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - You guys can either think/find out who's the unknown speaker at the end— it's not going to be challenging to find it all my fanfiction, the books, or the movies. Or you can shut your brain down and wait for the next chapter.

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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!

357. Chapter 357: Everyone Lies

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Quinn stared at the letter in his hand with furrowed brows.

The paper used was high-grade stationery; even the ink used seemed to be of a specific shade of blue that he hadn't seen yet. But most importantly, the letter had come with a flash of fire while he was shopping for potion herbs— a severe fire hazard. Seeing a Phoenix arrive from the fire with the letter clutched in its beak while it stared at him with its molten red eyes, which he was sure were studying him, was the last thing he was expecting to happen.

"You're cordially invited to visit Hogwarts for an important discussion regarding the security of Hogwarts. . . should I call my lawyer. . . do I even have a lawyer?"

But jokes aside, Quinn wondered what this was about. The letter was signed by the Dumbledore himself— the fourth time he had seen this signature— the first time had been on his OWL certificate, then on his NEWT certificate, and then on his graduate degree. But this was the first time he had Dumbledore write personally to him.

"What does he want?" Quinn stared at the letter, thinking if he should go.

The letter mentioned Hogwarts' security; what could that be about? Did Dumbledore want to consult him about all the hidden passageways in and out of Hogwarts? Quinn was under no delusion that Dumbledore had stopped thinking that he wasn't going out of the castle because he had been caught out of the castle. Or maybe this was just a ploy to bring him to Hogwarts, and the real reason was something entirely else, like wanting to convince him into joining the Order of Phoenix.

Quinn had no fear about going to Hogwarts. There was no benefit for Dumbledore to harm him, and the Headmaster wasn't going to pull a stupid abduction attempt. The only thing that he felt unsure about was the motive of the meeting.

As Quinn was thinking about it, a chime rang in his room. He raised his hand, and the two-way mirror flew into his hands. He accepted the connection and smiled as his girlfriend came into the frame.

"Hey, how are. . . what happened?"

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Quinn apparated outside the Hogwarts boundary. He rolled his shoulders and pulled on the hems of his tan suit jacket. He gazed up at the castle; after graduating, he had only been in the vicinity a couple of times, primarily visiting Scrivenshaft for the design of his new personal cards—after working with the shop that understood his tastes and preferences for so many years, he wasn't going to change his printing service and stationery provider.

He stepped through the castle ground boundary and took a sharp breath when he felt the magic wash over him. It felt different. Hogwarts didn't consider him a student anymore; now, he was but an outside visitor.

Quinn stopped and felt around the wards— they had changed— the ward scheme was more coherent and cohesive now than on his last day at Hogwarts.

'Is it because of Bill Weasley. . . or did Dumbledore decide to sort the clutter?'

The ward scheme around Hogwarts was a curious case study in the field of warding. Every time Hogwarts changed Headmasters, the new one would add their own wards to the warding scheme, which was good from an updatation point of view, but the problem with Hogwarts was that none of the Headmasters ever coordinated with their predecessor. Every time a new Headmaster took their seat, they would simply dump new wards on the Hogwarts ward stone, and because the site was the marvel of magic, Hogwarts castle, the wards would be accepted without any problems on the compatibility and load side of things. No matter how many wards were thrown on the castle, it would supply them with ample power. And because Hogwarts could accommodate, no one bothered to sort the mess. It was natural that as the number of wards increased, the overall integrity of the defense would increase as well. But at the same time, there were too many redundant wards. Quinn himself had once found four anti-apparition wards overlayed upon each other in the same place. While that made it nigh-impossible to apparate inside Hogwarts, it also created friction between individual wards. . . which in theory could be exploited. Exploited by someone knowledgeable as Voldemort.

But now, Quinn could feel that the wards were much more sorted. 'This still needs work, but it is a start,' he thought. It wasn't possible to solve centuries' worth of mess in such a short time.

He walked on the path that connected Hogsmeade and the Entrance Hall's gate. The course was the same as always, and it felt like he hadn't

ever left. As he arrived near the castle, he saw the gate open a crack, and two professors walked out.

"Professor Flitwick and McGonagall," Quinn smiled. "How nice of you to receive me, but you didn't have to do this— I believe I know my way around the castle."

"If we didn't come, Mr. West, the castle wouldn't have allowed you entry." Quinn's smile widened in response.

McGonagall sighed, and Flitwick chuckled at his expression.

"You were our Headboy last year, Mr. West," said McGonagall.

"And I have to thank you for that honor."

Flitwick again laughed with McGonagall sighing the second time in under a minute.

"Let's go, Mr. West; the Headmaster is waiting for you," said McGonagall, a strange peering expression on her face.

Quinn's smile withdrew a fraction as he nodded. He turned to Flitwick and asked, "Will you also be joining us, Professor Flitwick?"

"No, I won't be. I came to tell you that come to my office after you're done with your meeting. Let's sit down and catch up over some tea," said Flitwick.

"Of course, of course, I'll be there, so open that secret jar of jam. Today, I'll be lathering my scones with that sweet goodness," said Quinn grinning.

"I should've never revealed it to you."

"Too late to regret, professor," Quinn laughed.

Flitwick left, and Quinn followed McGonagall through the hallways, passing by students who would look curiously at Quinn, who would wave back at the one he recognized. Everyone recognized him beside the new first years, so he had pass-by one-line conversations with multiple people.

But as they approached the Headmaster's Office, the people thinned out.

It was then that Quinn initiated a conversation with McGonagall.

"Something interesting happened recently, Professor. Would you like to know?"

McGonagall quirked her thin brow before humming positively.

"I had an interesting talk with a gentleman named Saul Croaker."

McGonagall's impeccable gait and stride faltered as she heard the name.

Quinn continued, "He was friendly enough, which I would say half-surprised me, but then, I had an elitist image of Unspeakables— but Croaker seemed like a pleasant fellow." He eyed McGonagall with a fun and mischief in his eyes, "Never expected you to have a connection with the Department of Mysteries, Professor. By any chance did they approach for the position of an Unspeakable?"

McGonagall came to a slow stop, making Quinn stop as well and turn back to look at her.

"He told you," she asked.

"Of course not. He would never do that. He neither confirmed nor denied — essentially, refused to comment. Had a perfectly calm expression and everything. I was sure it was you, and now you confirmed it."

"You can't tell anyone."

"I don't want to tell anyone. It does me no good to displease the Unspeakables by taking away their Hogwarts recruiter. Why ruin a perfectly good secret, a useful secret."

"Then don't bring it up. . . we have reached the office."

Quinn turned to the front to look at the gargoyle-guarded gates.

McGonagall walked to the stone gargoyles, and they stepped away when she uttered the password. Quinn fixed his clothes one last time before entering the Headmaster's Office.

The office hadn't changed much since Quinn had last visited years ago. It was still a disorganized clutter, a neat mess, but still a mess— that could only make sense to one who had made the clutter.

"Mr. West, you're finally here," said Dumbledore, sitting behind his desk with a subtle smile on his face.

Quinn didn't greet the Headmaster immediately, instead looked at the other people who were present in the room. First, there were the people who belonged at Hogwarts— McGonagall, who had come with him; Lily Potter, who sat alongside her twins and Hermione Granger. But then some didn't belong at Hogwarts— Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody and James Potter.

"Hmm. . . I know the letter said this was about Hogwarts security; I wasn't expecting Aurors to be present," Quinn stepped towards Dumbledore's table. "You don't usually like outsiders interfering with Hogwarts matters."

"It's a pleasure to see you again as well, Mr. West," smiled Dumbledore.

"As for Alastor and James— they have my complete trust."

Quinn unbuttoned the front button of his suit as a comfy chair materialized behind him. He sat down, made himself comfortable, and said, "Yes, but I don't. . . no offense, gentlemen. . . and I don't feel comfortable with them being here when I don't know what this meeting is about."

"This meeting is about why you have lied to everyone, boy," said Moody.

Quinn didn't reply to Moody; he didn't even look at the battered man.

Dumbledore spoke, "It as Alastor says. This meeting is because of your lie."

"I've lied a lot, Headmaster. You'll have to be more specific about which one we are talking about."

"You admit to lying?" Moody spoke up again.

But Quinn remained silent.

". . . Are you not going to answer Alastor's questions, Mr. West?" asked Dumbledore.

"This is not a formal investigation. I don't have to answer any of the questions I don't want to."

Dumbledore exchanged glances with Alastor, who didn't look happy but calmed down at Dumbledore's quiet nudging. "We are here to talk about the Chamber of Secrets, Mr. West. It's come to our attention that you know about Chamber of Secrets, about the Slytherin's monster. . . and more importantly, you went inside the Chamber of Secrets."

"I have no idea what you're talking about," said Quinn.

"You just said that you lie."

"So what?" said Quinn. "Even if I lie, I'm not going to accept when I lie.

As for this situation," he turned to Hermione, "I didn't go inside the Chamber of Secrets."

"You didn't refuse to know about the Chamber of Secrets or about the Slytherin's monster."

"I know about them now. The Basilisk was pretty much known to everyone who was paying attention."

". . . We have proof that you were inside, Mr. West," said Dumbledore, cutting all the chatter.

"Oh, and what proof that might be?" asked Quinn, but he already knew the proof, and it stung that he had missed it.

It was as if everyone had rehearsed for this moment. All eyes in the room turned to one of the shelves upon which a hat. It was battered and ancient; it was patched, frayed, and extremely dirty. In order to speak and sing, a tear along the brim opened like a mouth.

As if it could feel all the eyes, the hat spoke up,

"Ah, Quinn West. . . I remember your sorting. It was truly what is known as a hat stall. . . in the end, you went where you wanted to go. But I think you would have done better in Slytherin."

Quinn stared at the Sorting hat, his expression turning from clueless to a blank face. He opened his mouth and said to the hat, "A true Slytherin would never join Slytherin and declare themselves to be cunning and ambitious. . . wouldn't it be better for others to bear the eyes while the one outside roamed free without the attached stigma?"

He turned towards Dumbledore.

"Alright, I admit, I was there. What's next?"

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Quinn West - MC - It's tedious to pretend not to know when you know.

Albus Dumbledore - Headmaster - Recognized the attempt to derail the conversation.

Alastor Moody - Mad-Eye - Ignored.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - HIGHLY RECOMMENDED to go read

CHAPTER 63: Into The Chamber Of Secrets. Read it carefully to truly understand what happened down there.

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358. Chapter 358: Back-And-Forth

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"Alright, I admit, I was there. What's next?"

Quinn heavily leaned into his chair and crossed his legs with his hands firmly resting on the armrest. If not for his clothes, it'd look like he was in his home, getting comfortable for a night of relaxation in front of a fireplace.

"Why did you hide it?" asked James.

Quinn looked at James, contemplating if he should put him in the answerable bucket or dump him with Moody and ignore the Auror. After a second of thought, he decided to answer the man,

"I hid it because I thought no one knew about it." He gazed at the Sorting hat, which again had gone to looking like a dilapidated hat. "But it seems I was wrong. . . . I feel ashamed I forgot about the hat which brought in the Gryffindor's sword used to stab and end the Basilisk. . . . I was particularly distracted that day," that day he was just at the edge of the first bout of Sin curse taking over.

He remembered how he had met with Lockhart shortly after, and the greedy, pompous bastard had triggered his emotions enough to let the Sin curse take over. Soon after, he had almost tortured two girls, and things had come this close to going down terribly wrong.

Every pair of eyes— even the one with the artificial eye— stared at Quinn. Their eyes were full of shocked curiosity and various other varying emotions.

". . . Why did you stab the diary with the Basilisk fang, Mr. West? How did you know that the spirit was attached to the diary?"

Quinn shrugged, "I observed, listened, and applied my brain to deduce that the suspicious leather diary laying on the ground of the previously

deserted Chamber of Secrets would probably have something to do with spirit spouting maniacal ambitions would be connected."

He stared directly at Dumbledore as he said those words. Not for a second did he break away from eye contact with the blue eyes.

When Quinn got a call from Ivy about the situation, he had scoured the memory of the day with a fine-toothed comb. He had increased the immersion on the memory book to the max— and could live in the memory as if he was experiencing it firsthand. He noticed all the little things he had not thought about in-depth— the actions he had taken, the magic he had cast, and, more importantly, the words he had spoken.

According to Ivy, the Sorting hat provided them a gist of the situation and his(Quinn) involvement, but the hat hadn't provided the specifics; at least, not to everyone in the room. . . but the same couldn't be said about Dumbledore. The hat had been in Dumbledore's company ever since; who knew how much in detail the hat might have retold the incident.

'Expect and prepare for the worst,' Quinn thought. 'And it's not like it matters, does it.'

"The Sorting hat tells me that you took away the Basilisk's fangs and its venom. May I know what you did with them, Mr. West?" asked Dumbledore.

Quinn could feel the eyes on him. Basilisk fang and venom— two priceless commodities that couldn't be procured by usual means, only available through highly illegal means in exotic black markets, but here he was in possession of invaluable materials.

"It's ironic," said Quinn instead of answering the question, "a man produced a feat of magic, created to protect his life at all costs, but then he created a second one, something amazing, fascinating. . . he had created a new life— but that new life somehow threatened his own— I'm

not sure if the man knew. . . but I do. . . I have seen it in action after all."

Quinn turned his eye to the Sword of Gryffindor encased inside a glass showcase, enhancing the aesthetic of the office by displaying the glory of Gryffindor. It was goblin-made metal which had been dipped inside the Basilisk venom and magically took on the properties, henceforth becoming a more valuable asset.

"Ironic isn't it, Headmaster," said Quinn.

He had spent seven years walking around on eggshells because Dumbledore had substantial authority over and it didn't seem wise to be at loggerheads with the person who ran the place where he had to spend seven years of his life. But now, he had graduated, and he was out of Dumbledore's umbrella, free to do things he couldn't do before. . . and it felt great to act out so boldly.

Dumbledore showed no reaction. He stared at Quinn in silence while others seemed confused about what Quinn was talking about.

Quinn enjoyed seeing Dumbledore so restrained. It was clear that he hadn't told anyone about the existence of Horcruxes. He was still trying to keep the cards so close to his chest.

". . . Everyone, please give Mr. West and me some time alone; it'd be much be appreciated," said Dumbledore.

Before anyone from Dumbledore's said could even raise a single word of objection, Quinn spoke up,

"It's okay; they can stay. I'm not going to say that I'd want to hide."

"So you wouldn't be saying things to you want to hide," Dumbledore sighed before saying. "Nevertheless, I would prefer if we could have a talk privately."

"I would like for everyone to stay."

"Mr. West—"

"I insist, Headmaster," Quinn said flat-out.

If he was asked to choose a side between Voldemort and Dumbledore—not the Light and Dark side, but who he would follow between the two leaders—he would go with Voldemort. From what Quinn perceived, the violent megalomaniac seemed easier to work with than the smiling manipulator. At least with Voldemort, he would know when the man was angry and happy, but with Dumbledore, Quinn wasn't sure what the man was thinking at any point. That wasn't to say that Voldemort didn't use manipulation—the Dark Lord had fooled a society of high-class pureblood supremacists into following him, and one young Tom Riddle was particularly charming and persuasive—but to Quinn, that couldn't be compared with Dumbledore who had built a reputation in an entire country's heart's, which only seemed to grow stronger after every adversary and obstacle.

Quinn looked to the people around the country. Especially to the parents of the Boy-Who-Lived. Lily and James Potter had no idea what Dumbledore was hiding from them. Quinn had tried to put himself in their positions and had imagined what it would feel like if something so big would be hidden from him. . . that imagination didn't feel pleasant at all.

So he decided. If nothing else, he was going to break Dumbledore's grasp on information that the Potter family and even those who fought for Dumbledore deserved to know.

"I was shocked when I realized what the Dark Lord had done," said Quinn spinning a small narrative for himself. "No, shocked wouldn't be the right word. . . I was repulsed when I found out. To soil the sanctity of something so pure. A dirty stain on the name of magic. It was fortunate that I did what I did, or who knows what would've happened. It wasn't

after some years that I realized what I had destroyed that say when I stabbed the diary. I felt elated— I had destroyed the Dark Lord's twisted safeguard. . . but then"— Quinn stared at Dumbledore with a face without warmth— "after several years, when I had progressed further in my studies of magic. . . I found myself staring at another one of those twisted things, and never in my life I expected it to see in such a form." Quinn kept his eye on the Dumbledore, but he could that Dumbledore knew precisely what he was talking about.

"What are you talking about?" asked Lily.

"Dumbledore will tell you afterward," said Quinn, not looking at her. "If he doesn't come to me and I will tell you. . . you know what, even if he does tell, come to me, in case he forgets to tell you something. I'll fill those gaps in."

". . . Mr. West, why you're doing this?"

"Because I want the Dark Lord gone, and unfortunately, you're the best chance anyone has of doing that," said Quinn. "And if you keep things as I'm assuming you are, so hidden, it will come back to bite you and everyone in the ass."

"There's a reason why I have kept things as they are, Mr. West."

"Headmaster, believe me when I say that I'm an avid believer of the following: A secret is the strongest when only one person knows about it — but this is not one of those things— this is not something you have the right to keep to yourself."

Dumbledore's eyebrows crinkled, "You say such things, then why haven't you told them. After all, it seems you've known about it for a considerable amount of time."

Quinn laughed inside; Dumbledore was cunning. He had flipped the question away from him towards Quinn. And it wasn't like it was

unsightly— Quinn has indeed kept it hidden. . . but Quinn wasn't born yesterday.

"Tell me, Headmaster. How long would it take you to destroy the entirety of London?" asked Quinn abruptly.

". . . Pardon?" Dumbledore seemed stumped.

"What kind of question is this, boy!" Moody grunted.

"In 1927, the recently dead Dark Lord Gellert Grindelwald unleashed a terrible towards the city of Paris after a rally. . . and according to those present there, the spell held enough power to raze the entire capital city to the ground. . . so my question is to the man who defeated Gellert Grindelwald— How long would it take you to destroy London?"

Dumbledore remained silent, his eyes studying Quinn and his intention.

Quinn turned to Hermione and asked her the same question.

"Err. . . I-I couldn't," Hermione fumbled. "He couldn't?"

"Oh no, he could definitely; there's no doubt about it," Quinn shook his head.

He turned to James and yet again asked him the same question. The Auror didn't fumble like Hermione and actually looked like he thought it through before answering: "A month?"

Gasps sounded across the room. A month. One month to destroy an entire city. A shocking value when put into the context they talked about.

However. . .

"Wrong, that isn't close to the real value," he turned to Dumbledore.

"Come one, Headmaster. Hazard a guess; there's no harm in it."

After some silent deliberation, Dumbledore sighed and gave his answer,

"Less than a week."

It was as if someone had dropped a silencing spell on everyone in the room as all went silent with surprise and shock overflowing on their

faces. Even Moody's both eyes stared at Dumbledore with rare utter shock.

"London is 6.6 percent larger than Paris. Gellert Grindelwald and Albus Dumbledore stand on the same level of destructive power," said Quinn with a bitter smile.

But it wasn't over yet.

"You know the best part?" continued Quinn. "All it would take for him," he pointed at Dumbledore, "is three meals a day, a good night of sleep after every day of destruction and great health. . . that's all it would take to bring a great city to the ground."

Unknowingly, Quinn had started tapping his foot on the floor as he stared at Dumbledore. It wasn't a face of triumph or even satisfaction. It was a bitter face of unwillingness through and through.

"How am I supposed to oppose that?"

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Quinn West - MC - I love derailing conversations.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Any tips to increase focus and concentration. And those who are currently working corporate jobs, I want to write more while in the office so I don't have to stay late in the night, any tips regarding that will be appreciated.

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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!

359. Chapter 359: Leaving Rest To

Dumbledore

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](#)

"How am I supposed to oppose that?" said Quinn, looking at everyone. "I can't decimate Paris in a day with a single spell or bring London to its knees in a week. . . the latter one, I think, is Dumbledore still understating his destructive capabilities— or maybe you've genuinely gotten weaker with your age— I don't know. But the fact remains that people like the Headmaster and Grindelwald have enough power to disregard the norms and rules. . ." He paused, and it seemed like someone had sucked all sound from the room. ". . . and the same goes for the Dark Lord," what had started as a conscious effort had now become a habit.

"The thing I care the most for in this world is my family and friends. Grindelwald is dead, and Headmaster isn't going to attack my loved ones — at least, I hope not— but that can't be said for the Dark Lord."

Quinn straight out rudely pointed at Dumbledore. "People like him and the Dark Lord can stroll into our homes, rip the ward apart, and do whatever they like without care—"

"I would never do such things, Mr. West," said Dumbledore, his eyes earnest.

"— it doesn't matter if you would or not, but the Dark Lord definitely would. He will come to my house, threaten my family, and if we are not careful, we will be lying dead on the floor: maybe battered beyond recognition or simply perhaps granted a peaceful death by a shot of the Killing Curse. Even if somehow are able to escape death, I'm sure we're going to end up as puppets."

"Do you think your family will face such a fate?" asked James, sounding

doubtful. The West family was the strongest in the country; they could surely hire security.

Quinn shook his head. "The normal person doesn't understand what an Auror, or more importantly, what a Hit Wizard is truly capable of." He jutted his chin to James and Moody. "These two are essentially living weapons. They're trained with magic that was solely created to take down people. An Auror can wreak havoc that would seem horrifying to normal folk. . . but even then, someone like James Potter has this blatant misunderstanding."

He turned to Dumbledore and asked, "Tell them, Headmaster. Would you be concerned about facing a coordinated team of Aurors? A team of highly coordinated Aurors, launching an operation to take you down, for which they had prepared. Be honest. None of your diplomatic, evasive answers."

Dumbledore pursed his lips, making his beard cover his lips. He didn't vocalize his thoughts and simply gave a shake of his head as a response. Making some people in the room blink in surprise.

"What that meant was that if he desired, Headmaster could wipe a couple of Auror teams without breaking a sweat," Quinn said bluntly, which Dumbledore wasn't willing to put into words.

Moody and James didn't look they agreed; maybe it was their pride, or they genuinely believed that they could take Dumbledore out.

"As for what I believe? Is that even a question? The people who have reached the two Dark Lords and Dumbledore levels of magic can be counted on your fingers. And when you take into factor that Headmaster was born in the eighties and the Dark Lord in the nineties. . . puts the rarity of such people into context," said Quinn. "Even among those people, not all are battle oriented. . . . My teacher, Alan D. Baddeley; pit

him against the Headmaster and Dark Lord together in a battle of the minds, he'd rip their minds into shreds as if he was tearing bread at the dinner table, then turn these powerful men into doing his bidding— but if you put him in a duel against them, he'd be destroyed.

How many of those rare individuals do you think will come to risk facing someone as ruthless as the Dark Lord. Without fail, all of them are accomplished in their lives; they won't come to defend my family for money— they will have plenty of it. Why would they protect my family for something they already have and can earn more by doing much simpler and safer work. All my family can do is make preparations to delay the Dark Lord reaching them so they could escape. . . . Why else do you think did my grandfather flee the country during the war?

So yes, to answer that question, I do love my family," said Quinn sarcastically. "But now this is out, my family is at risk if it reaches the ears of the Dark Lord," he stared at everyone in the office. "I would be very displeased if this somehow got out. . . I prefer not to have a conversation with my grandfather that we need to leave the country because I put my nose where it doesn't belong."

That was a conversation that would come inevitably, but he preferred it to be as late as possible. After all, he knew exactly what his grandfather would ask him the moment he broke the conversation. He was explicitly told to stay away, and it wouldn't matter to George that it was much before they had the 'stay away' conversation. He'd move in and use the chips he held over Quinn.

Quinn was done. He leaned comfortably into his chair and looked ahead with a bland expression as if waiting for them to say something or end this meeting. He was done with speaking and answering questions. The way the conversation had went, he had done enough damage that the

moment he stepped out, the people would jump Dumbledore with their questions.

"Nevertheless, you could've said something," spoke Dumbledore.

"So could have you," Quinn shrugged, "to all these people and so many more."

It seemed that everyone had become fed up with Quinn and Dumbledore's conversation where they couldn't understand what they were talking about.

"Would one you tell us what the hell are you talking about?!" Harry put everyone's thoughts into loud words.

Quinn got up from his chair and buttoned up his suit. "I'll leave that to the Headmaster. I'm done here for today. As for Hogwarts security, for which I was called here, there's no reason to be concerned about me compromising it— the most I will be doing is visiting Hogsmeade."

He faced McGonagall, "I'll be sitting down with Professor Flitwick as he asked me to, but I'll be visiting the AID office before that. I hope that's not a problem."

McGonagall had no opposition. She was too interested in what Dumbledore was going to tell them. She allowed Quinn to visit AID. He immediately exited the tense place that was the Headmaster's Office.

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Quinn knocked on the door of the Arithmancy classroom.

The knock made everyone in the classroom turn towards the door.

"Mr. West!" Septima Vector, the Arithmancy professor, exclaimed. "What are you doing here?"

"Good afternoon, Professor," smiled Quinn. "Looks like you're still

stringing beautiful magic with numbers. I was visiting Hogwarts on some business with the Headmaster. As for your classroom, I'm here to ask if I could borrow one of your students."

Vector's smile seemed to indicate that she knew precisely who Quinn was talking about. "Of course, you can—"

Before she could even complete the sentence, a blonde bullet walked past her with the elegance of a floating cloud and arrived beside Quinn, grabbing onto his arm.

"— take her," Vector chuckled and shook her head. "Please return her before her next class."

"Will do," Quinn turned to the girl beside him and smiled, "Shall we?"

Luna Lovegood nodded with her eyes staring at Quinn.

"You didn't tell me you were coming," she said.

"It was a last-minute thing, and I thought I'd give you a surprise. How's sixth-year treating you?"

"It's the same as fifth-year, which was same as fourth-year, same as third-year. . ."

"Really? I thought with me gone, Hogwarts would be less fun. I was the life of the party after all."

Luna tilted her head cutely and muttered: "Party?"

Quinn chuckled before asking in a softer tone, "Has anyone tried to act stupid with you? Tell me, and I'll whip up something in the workshop you can throw at them to make the rest of their years absolutely miserable."

"It's okay. I can do it on my own."

"Yes, you can," Quinn grinned and side hugged the shorter girl. "How's AID going? Is Astoria handling the office well? Any clients she had to turn away for any reason?"

"We completed the request of every person who came in. Everyone's happy. . . and have their names added into the debt ledger."

"Good, good, that's the most important part. Any projects that you two are doing?"

"Un, we're in the middle of updating your first-year notes."

"My notes? Are you adding something?"

"Not like that. We're trying to rearrange how the information is presented. As Astoria said: we're making it more digestible. We even did the research for it."

"Oh, what did you do?"

"Last year, we took one chapter from every notebook of every subject from the first year and made different mockups, each with a different design. We showed them to a lot of different first-year and second-year people for feedback. By the end of the year, we had decided upon the final version of the design.

Then through the summer break, we slowly worked through all the chapters in all the notebooks for the first year. We're going to review the design one last time, and by the end of the week, we're going to send the new designs to Scrivenshaft for printing."

"Are you going to expand to the other years?" asked Quinn. He hadn't taught Astoria, so he didn't know if the younger Greengrass could handle the educational content from higher years, but he knew Luna, and she could gulp everything taught in the Hogwarts classroom like a thirsty traveler in the desert.

"If this is a success, we're going to repeat the process for the second and third-year notes and complete the process in the next year. If the updated notes fail, we're going to put the project on long-term development to see what went wrong."

Quinn was impressed. He had told both of them that they needed to do something other than solving the clients' problems isn't going to get work out as that got boring quickly, and doing personal projects was the best way to utilize AID— which was also what he had done.

"We are trying to do something."

Quinn asked what it was.

"We're going to start a monthly newspaper. Everything from what happened in Hogwarts to what is happening outside, from magic to history. Everything is going to be in one place. It's going to be both new and familiar. Plus, we have decided to involve the AID cards. We haven't decided where we're going to use them."

"Maybe you could use them to access the paper."

"Nuh-uh, that's too easy. That idea was rejected was the one we rejected first."

"Ouch, that hurt. Well, whatever you do, send me one of those newspapers if it is built to be taken out of Hogwarts."

Quinn smiled as Luna's eyes shined. He had dropped a little hint, and as he had expected, Luna had taken inspiration from it.

"Where are we going?" asked Luna.

"To bust Astoria out of her class, wherever that is," Quinn sighed. "Why do these halls feels so foreign without Recon. How am I going to find where she is?"

"You can ask me," she said. "I know."

"You're smart."

"I know. You're smart too."

"Thank you."

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Quinn West - MC - From focused to random.

Albus Dumbledore - Headmaster - Trapped in his office with questions.

Luna Lovegood - Best Friend - Still the same, but also smarter.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Three works done.

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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!

360. Chapter 360: Tough

Conversation

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Link in the Bio/Profile

Scrivenshaft's Quill Shop. Providing meeting rooms for the West family and associated since 1991. And today as well, the shop was hosting another meeting.

However, today, if the tense atmosphere inside the room on the first floor above the store was believed, the meeting didn't look to be a happy one.

Two people sat in the room, opposite each other, staring at each other from across the table.

"You knew," said Ivy, her voice dripping with hurt and accusation.

Quinn pursed his lips into a thin white line. He couldn't even look Ivy in the eye even though he knew this conversation was coming the moment he had decided to accept Dumbledore's invitation. His knowledge wasn't a complete boon; it could also be a curse. As it was right at the moment.

"You knew what was inside Harry's scar," she said; her cheeks were

flushed as she spoke with emotion. "You knew. . . but you didn't say anything. You—! Why didn't you say anything!"

"I. . . I couldn't say. I had to be sure about if it—"

"Horcrux."

". . . yes, a Horcrux. I had to be sure that there was a Horcrux in his scar. . . and with magic so ancient, there isn't much about them out there. Even though I had suspicions, I couldn't grab your brother to confirm, and even that wouldn't have made any difference. . . ."

Two days ago, he had the meeting with Dumbledore, and today, after total silence from Ivy, he had received a short MagiFax wanting to meet him. It was clear that Dumbledore had fessed up everything he knew to at least the Potter family. The well-kept secret about Harry's scar storing a Horcrux had finally been open to people other than Dumbledore. And Ivy, who had listened to Quinn and Dumbledore's conversation, had realized that it was not only Dumbledore who had kept a secret.

"You seem pretty sure when you were talking with Dumbledore," she spat.

Quinn reacted to Ivy speaking Dumbledore's name instead of his title. Ivy, like him, preferred to use the faculty's correct title— except for Snape— she would call everyone with the Professor attached to their name— both in front of them and behind their back. Seeing her use Dumbledore's name showed that Ivy and maybe even the Potter weren't happy with Dumbledore.

". . . I was putting a firm front. I had to speak as if I was sure.

Dumbledore's response confirmed that I was unfortunately right," he didn't want to lie— but for his past knowledge, he would continue to spin a web of lies until the day he died. Another curse that he had to keep with himself.

"So you're saying you did nothing wrong?"

"Not at all. I am as bad as Dumbledore, if not worse. I accused him of hiding things, but didn't I do the same. "

"You don't feel regret about it, do you. . ."

Quinn shook his head without a single moment of thought. His relationship with Ivy was one of blunt truth— she had clearly told him she'd prefer hard honesty rather than comforting lies. And he tried to follow that as much as he could.

"Did you also know about the other thing?" she asked.

"The other thing?" he asked. "What other thing?"

Ivy narrowed her eyes, searching his expression. "Can't tell you," she said bluntly.

"Fair enough." Quinn thought about what it might be and realized that it was probably about the Prophecy. It made him think if maybe Dumbledore had been completely transparent about it.

"I'm tired," she sighed, slumping in her chair. She covered her eyes with her arm. "Harry has a piece of Voldemort stuck to him. Dumbledore doesn't know how to remove it, and without it, Voldemort isn't going to —."

She stopped mid-sentence and started to breathe heavily as if she was about to break down.

Quinn got up, walked to Ivy, and hugged her from behind. "Everything will be fine. Harry will be fine. It's magic; we are going to find a way to get that piece of the Dark Lord's soul out of his scar."

"We?"

"I've been looking into Horcruxes. Ever since I realized what they were, I've been diving deep into the magic, soul magic, trying to see how it works. . . it's coming along, I'm making progress with the magic"— he

saw expectations rising in her eyes— "stop-stop-stop. . . don't look at me like that. Don't keep any expectations; there's no telling how things will turn out."

"I-I. . . yeah," she sighed. "I just feel useless."

"You probably are the least useless person in the current situation."

"I appreciate that, but I can't do anything useful right now."

"That's your misconception. Harry has spent his entire life being looked at differently by everyone because of his Boy-Who-Lived situation. His only solace has been the people close to him. But now, those same people have been told something quite unnerving. It's inevitable that people will look at him differently, and maybe for the first time, he will feel foreign among those he's supposed to feel safe. And if you, his twin sister, who has been with him since he was born, act differently, who else can he expect to feel normal with? You need to treat him as if nothing is different.

Also, nothing is other, actually. It's not like the Horcrux popped up when Dumbledore spoke about it; the soul was always there; it's just now you know about it. You need to be normal with him. That's what Harry needs the most."

Mentality was going to be crucial for Harry. There was a connection between Harry and Voldemort, and if Harry began feeling distressed, the Dark Lord would be able to sense it, and he wasn't going to let such an open opportunity pass by. Even if Harry was militant with his Occlumency, his mental status would still be affected, and a slight weakness was all the Dark Lord needed. This was why it was important that Harry felt as comfortable as one could be after knowing that they had their nemesis' soul stuck to their forehead.

It was crucial that Harry Potter wasn't harmed. The Boy-Who-Lived was a

beacon of hope in the hearts of the people. There was already a turmoil that Dark Lord was already back, and if something happened to that figurehead of hope, things would turn ugly and depressing really quickly.

"He needs you and his friends the most," said Quinn comfortingly.

Ivy sighed and leaned back into Quinn. "I'm still furious at you for not telling me about Harry."

"Would that have brought anything other than worry? Having no knowledge is better than half-knowledge, which brings nothing but problems. I won't lie to you by saying that I was thinking about you when I decided to hide it, but the fact stands that it would've changed much."

"I don't want to believe that," said Ivy bluntly. "I'm sure we would've some progress. If you had told us, we could've brought it up with Dumbledore sooner, and with more people looking into it, we could've at least found—" Ivy held her tongue— "never mind. . . if you had told us earlier, some progress would definitely have been made."

"Same thing as before?" asked Quinn, questioning what Ivy had clearly held back.

"Can't. Mum, Dad, and Dumbledore made everyone promise to not divulge anything that Dumbledore told us," she said.

Quinn sighed, "A promise is a promise. Feel no pressure from my side," he knew it was most probably about the multiple Horcrux problem— if he didn't have the inside knowledge, he would've at least tried to press or scope for an answer.

"And here I was thinking my seventh year would be carefree."

Quinn chuckled.

"It's not a laughing matter."

"I know, I know, but I don't associate Hogwarts with carefree," he said.

Right from his second year, Quinn had never been carefree inside

Hogwarts. Every year had been a race against time with strict deadlines and deliverable pressures. The Vaults kept him busy that he had to meticulously plan his days and the hours within them.

"I feel like I have gotten lazier since I have left Hogwarts. I need some external pressure," said Quinn, switching the topic of conversation. He sat back down, placing his cheek on his knuckles. "I didn't even release a project this summer. . . after so many years, it was an utter disappointment."

"Project? What do you mean?"

Quinn tapped his fingers on the table for a bit before starting, "Time to reveal a secret about myself. . ."

Ivy leaned forward, her eyes showing expectations.

". . . Starting from MagiFax to Aegis, a number of West products launched in the past few years are my brainchildren. I created them, perfected them, still develop them to this day, and of course, I own them," said Quinn. While the products/services he had released were only a small portion of the entire West business, they had been without a doubt the most profitable— they had grown so quick that every new subsidiary created had gone from loss generating to profit racking companies.

"You made MagiFax?!" Ivy gasped. "But if that. . . how old were you?!"

"Hmm? I was eleven when I was developing it; I pitched it when I was almost twelve; I was thirteen when the product was released to the mainstream," Quinn shrugged. "MagiFax was my first pitch ever.

Coincidentally, it is the product over which I have the least control: I'm only involved in its development. . . . Maybe I will go take a look at the development offices."

Ivy, on the other hand, still had her eyes widened. She opened her mouth a couple times before finally uttering, "Y-You were eleven when you

created MagiFax. . . how. . . I-I mean. . . how?"

"The first model wasn't that hard to create," he still remembered how MagiFax hadn't used a single new piece of innovation in its creation. "I just needed the spark of inspiration, which I, fortunately, had gotten from the non-magical world. Believe me, when I say this, the non-magical world is a huge source of inspiration; they're much larger than our world, and with so many people, it is almost inevitable they would end up thinking different and more things than us."

"You created MagiFax at eleven. . ."

"You're still on that?" Quinn smiled. "It shouldn't be that surprising. Mozart composed his first piece when he was five, you know. It's no different from that if you think about it. I think mine is a little less impressive; five years old are really dumb."

"Aegis is from you as well," Ivy was gaping.

". . . I have lost you, haven't I?"

Aegis itself had become a big deal in a short amount of time. The product had been launched at an opportunistic moment. Anytime news about Death Eaters would pop up in the media, the sales for the cheaper, alternative option to the Goblin wardings would jump up like crazy. Aegis was spreading so fast that Quinn's personal net worth inflated like a balloon.

'I wonder how would she react if I told her I was behind Labyrinth,' thought Quinn.

Like Aegis, Labyrinth also grew at an accelerated rate, and while it didn't sell as much as the wards, the door network had been growing at a rate higher than the predictions. Quinn, himself, had created so many Labyrinth doors that some parts of the country had begun looking as if they were the Abate network in Italy.

But he could feel that chaos was about to break into the country.

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Quinn West - MC - Hard conversations are my specialty if I must say so myself.

Ivy Potter - A muddle of emotions - In the Heart Of The Situation.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - I think I'm going to break the war soon.

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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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361. Chapter 361: Explosive

Greetings

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Link in the Bio/Profile

It was sudden.

The day had started as normal with the morning rush of people going on with their lives. Adults rushed to their work, and children made noise on their way to school with many shops and stores already up and running for the day.

Boom!

A whip-like shock wave jolted everything in its path, followed by the sound of the blast. There was a burst of fire, followed by a plume of smoke rising up in the sky from an old, dilapidated building that looked as if it had been abandoned for ages.

Eyes turned to the building with people halting in their ways to look at the accident that seemed to turn more horrible by the second. The fires grew higher and hotter, and the building began to crumble brick by brick. The sound of harsh but familiar sounds of sirens followed after. The firetrucks had arrived to extinguish the fire before it spread to the neighboring buildings.

"It's not going down!" yelled a firefighter from behind his face shield. "We need more people and trucks down here!"

"They're on their way!" barked back another firefighter. The burly man turned towards the building when he thought he heard cars backfiring.

"Did you hear that?"

"What?"

"The pops."

"No—! Look! The fire's going down!"

The fire that didn't seem to want to go down suddenly looked like it couldn't wait to be extinguished as if it was working on unpaid overtime and wanted to leave work as soon as possible. In mere minutes, the fire died down, leaving behind a badly burnt building. The firefighters entered the building to sift through the debris to find the cause behind the fire and what they found horrified many of the brave men inside. Slumped against a wall sat a burnt to the crisp body. The body had sustained so much burnt damage that, except for the humanoid shape, one couldn't tell that the figure was once a person.

"Squatter or an arson for murder?"

". . . That would be revealed through the post-mortem, but if this is a murder—." The firefighters' eyes blurred and out of focus. Everyone in the room stared blankly, unmoving.

Two Aurors people suddenly became visible in the room. They exchanged

looks briefly and immediately got to work. One of them carefully laid the burnt body into a body bag that stiffened after a wand wave. The other Auror waved his wand on the wall that the body was leaning against, and the part had remained relatively unharmed because of the body acting as the cover burned to match the rest of the surroundings. The Aurors then wiped the memories of the firefighters and modified them so that they won't remember seeing the body.

"I am done," an Auror said.

The other Auror looked around the burnt room, then at the body, before nodding. "Everything's here is done as well. Let's leave."

Both turned invisible at the exact moment, and after a clapping sound, the firefighters awakened as if a paused video had been resumed with the two men going around the room, sifting through debris to find clues behind the fire.

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"So, what is the decision?" asked Shackbolt as he entered the cold morgue below the Auror's Office. "Who is our dear fellow, and how did he die?"

A medi-healer with sunken cheeks turned away from the burnt body and turned toward Kingsley and the two more Aurors who came with him.

Kingsley, who had met more than his share of medi-healer who worked in the morgue, furrowed his brows. Most of them were pale and looked as if they hadn't seen a single ray of light and seemed as if they were made from slabs of stones— but this one somehow seemed like a dead body had come to life.

"You won't like this," said the mortician. "I was fixing the body to answer

the first question. . . but ended up finding out the second one as well."

He stepped aside and motioned for the Aurors to step closer.

Kingsley looked down at the body, which was lying on its back. He sucked in a cold breath when he realized what he was looking at. Etched on the man's back which had been fixed, was a large Dark Mark in the darkest of the blood reds.

"Oscar Willow's the name," said the mortician.

"Willow!" Kingsley gasped. "Wasn't he a part of the Improper Use of Magic Office? I heard he was up and coming in the Ministry."

One of the Aurors behind Kingsley spoke, "He was about to become the next head of his department."

"How do you know that?" asked Shacklebolt.

"My wife works there."

"Oh yeah, I forgot about that."

The mortician cleared his throat to gain the Auror's straying attention.

"Before he was burnt to death, the victim had gone through various physical and magical injuries."

"Burnt to death?" asked Kingsley. "He was alive when he was burnt?"

"Yes, the cause of death was immolation."

"Poor man. Those bloody Death Eaters," Kingsley sighed. "Anything else?"

"Nothing for now. I'll have to do some more investigation to find additional clues. But there's something—"

The mortician couldn't complete his sentence. The Dark Mark on the corpse's back began to glow in an ominous red, and a red liquid that looked like blood began to leak out of the corpse onto the cold slab.

"What is this?" Kingsley's eyes darted around the body with his hand on his wand.

"I-I don't know," said the mortician.

Suddenly, a hiss sounded out from the body with the blood pooling around the body platform, and with the rate at which it dripped, it looked like it would flood the morgue.

"Evacuate and seal the morgue," Kingsley issued an order.

Looking at the scene, none complained. They backed away and had just turned to run away when the Dark Mark flooded the morgue with a blood red light. . . and then with a blast.

Boom!

An explosion burst in the heart of the Ministry. Moreover, it was below the Auror's Office, the place with security only next to the Department of Mysteries. The entire Auror's Office block walls were thickened and reinforced for protection, but even the explosion ripped through those thick walls and spread through the basement like water out of a dam. The structural walls were cracked, and the tremors that originated in the base traveled up to the central Ministry building and even up to the above-ground non-magical Whitehall buildings.

When the dust settled, the basement was decimated with destruction everywhere, and in the middle of that chaos, a glowing orb of blue became visible.

Shacklebolt dropped the shield and immediately whipped his head around while calling out, "Rory! Brynn! Tegan!" He jerkily stepped around, almost stumbling to the ripped-up ground. In the moment's action, he had pulled up a shield, but in that rush, he hadn't had the time to cover the others.

'Rory and Brynn would be alright— but Tegan. . .'

But then Kingsley's foot caught in something, and he fell forward onto the ground.

"Wha—!"

Kingsley felt his stomach come up. He had tripped on a body. . . and when he saw the torn and muddy Auror robes, he knew who it was— at least one of the two who it was. Then it hit him that he hadn't heard anyone call out to him or even a single groan of pain. He crawled to the body and shortly waved his wand, only for the spell to give no response — there was no life in it.

Kingsley shot up and waved his wand in a flurry. All the rubble in his view rose and was strongly pushed towards the walls, leaving behind a navigatable space. But it also made him what he was hoping not to see. Just a few steps away, there laid two bodies. Kingsley's breathing grew labored when he saw that there weren't two bodies. . . he could only see one and a half bodies— the half body being the lower part.

"No, no, no, no. . ."

He began muttering as he rushed to the complete body, which he could identify as the mortician from the clothes. He tested for life, but again, it came out as negative.

Kingsley collapsed on the floor with his ears ringing and eyes swarming, but it was only for a second as instinct took over, making him stand up. His Auror ways etched into the bones commanded his body as he moved towards where the exit was when.

The steel gate that had become mangled and twisted was knocked open before Kingsley could get to it. Aurors came running in and almost invaded like an army.

"Shacklebolt!" Robards shouted when he saw his haggard subordinate and friend.

"Rory and Brynn," came out of Kingsley's mouth. "Brynn's body wasn't even—." Shacklebolt's body slumped against Robards as he muttered with labored breath.

Robards supported Kingsley, and while the man didn't seem like he wanted to ask, the question came out of his mouth, "What happened here, Kingsley."

"Dead body from arson had a Dark Mark on the back. It was some sort of explosion. Took out everything. . . everything. . ." Kingsley's eyes widened as he stood straight and stared at Robards. ". . . Basement. What happened outside of the morgue?"

"We don't know yet," Robards pursed his lips. "But it doesn't look good. The blast spread out of the morgue— coming down here, the picture was similar. . . the possibility of casualties is large."

Kingsley closed his eyes shut to hide his pain.

"It was a trap," he said with anguish. "The Death Eaters set a trap. They. . ." he couldn't speak up as the effects of blocking the blast had sucked a lot of magic out of him in a very short time.

"I understand; no need to speak anymore; rest up," said Robards. The Head Auror carefully shifted Kingsley's to other Aurors who led him out. He turned, and naturally, with Kingsley's clean-up, he saw the three bodies lying on the ground. Robard closed his pain-filled eyes for a moment, and when he opened them, there was hard steel reflecting them.

"Singh!" he commanded, and a Senior Auror stepped up. "I want every part of the bobby trapped body gathered and bagged up. . . . Then I need the mortician's, Rory's, Brynn's bodies handled carefully with the utmost respect." He turned to another Senior Auror, "Give me a statistic of the casualties, injured, and damages— I need to be updated regularly."

Another order came up to another Senior Auror, "Get the Juniors ready. We're going to patch the damage by ourselves without any external help. I want everything cleaned and repaired as soon as possible."

Finally, he turned to the team presents and declared,

"I don't care what Scrimgeour says. I don't care if Bones comes down against us. From today, this moment onwards, the Auror's Office is at war with the Dark Lord and the Death Eaters. They took two of our people today. I'm going to drag every single one of those fucking degenerates out in the open and have them answer with blood."

The Aurors present were stunned for a moment when they heard the always-stern, by-the-book Head Auror Gawain Robards speak so vehemently with such burning anger. But when they saw the bodies, something inside them screamed out in the agreement.

They clenched their fist and stared at Robards with matching emotions.

It was final. . . the Auror's Office was at war.

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Kingsley Shacklebolt - Captain Auror - Bed rest for a week.

Gawain Robards - Head Auror - I'm going to make them pay.

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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!

362. Chapter 362: Gather Info,

Part Beetle

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

Quinn closed the newspaper with a severe expression on his face.

Explosion in the heart of the Ministry. An attack on the Auror Office, a

place that most terrorists wouldn't even dream about attacking, but here it was in the paper— the Death Eaters had blown up the bomb inside Ministry.

"How they did do it?"

The article didn't speak much about what exactly had happened inside the Ministry. The entire front page, which was covered in the blast incident, was filled with 'expert' speculations of what could've happened inside the Ministry building. His eyes wandered to the article's byline, where Rita Skeeter was written in the place of the journalist's name. That shocked him more— the water beetle, who wrote really concise articles (even though they were mostly bogus), had written such a vague story— which meant that the Aurors had locked the premises and information so tightly that the master in the business couldn't get a peep out.

"What happened inside," Quinn started to tap on the armrest. The Auror Office was strict in their information flow to the media and public, but this level of lockdown on such a public incident was unprecedented in Quinn's experience in this country.

But one thing was clear. The fragile calmness that had been at the risk of exploding had finally blown up. The Death Eaters had attacked something that shouldn't have been targeted— if it was the canon timeline with weak leadership, Quinn wouldn't have batted an eye, but the current administration was what Quinn considered formidable. Gawain Robards was a strict man who ruled the Auror Office with respect and strong ethics. The man was from a magical household without any affluent influence in the family; he had gone through the standard Auror pipeline from the academy to every level of the Auror hierarchy with utter hardworking excellence. When the leadership was as

militant as Robards, it was bound to bleed down to the grassroots of the department. It was inevitable that Aurors Office would pivot towards a culture that would benefit from Robards' influence.

Then there was the man who ran the entire Department of Magical Law Enforcement, Rufus Scrimgeour was a veteran in both the field and politics— the lion-like man understood how the internals of his department worked and knew how to play the external politics to get his way. Quinn hadn't personally witnessed how Bartemius Crouch Senior ran DMLE, but from what he had heard, it seemed the ex-DMLE head's work was similar to how Rufus Scrimgeour handled business.

Then there was Minister Amelia Bones. In comparison to someone like Rufus Scrimgeour, she seemed tame, but that was when someone from the outside looked at it. Amelia Bones had started her career as an entry-level clerk in the Ministry in DMLE and had risen up to the Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement without being either an Auror or a Hit Wizard— but had somehow managed to keep all the ambitious ones like Rufus Scrimgeour under her heel for a long and successful career before ascending to her current position.

All three of the most influential people in the Ministry originated from DMLE, and that origin base of theirs had been attacked. In no way were these bigwigs going to twiddle their thumbs and do nothing at such disrespectful discretion against them.

They were going to retaliate.

And Quinn needed to be on top of those things to ensure he knew things as they happened to get the most out of them. He had to know what had happened inside and what was the vibe inside DMLE to understand how to map his next moves.

He got up from his chair and shouted that he wasn't going to have lunch

before leaving West Manor to get some answers.

...

Rita Skeeter had just entered her go-to diner/cafe for lunch when she heard a voice call out to her.

"Ms. Skeeter."

Skeeter paused in her heels. Took a shallow breath, put on her best smile, and turned towards the source, thinking it was a fan who wanted her autograph, but inside she was already cursing the person who she hadn't even seen yet— the reason she chose to eat this place was that she could eat in peace without getting noticed by pesky dung flies.

But when the 'dung fly' entered her vision, her plastic smile froze on her face. Sitting in front of her was one of the people she disliked most in her life.

". . . Quinn West," she all but whispered.

Quinn raised his glass of rose soda sherbet towards Skeeter with a smile, and even though he didn't ask her to join, she walked to Quinn's table and sat down opposite him.

Quinn waited till the waitress took Skeeter's order before snapping his finger and isolating every single vibration of sound from going outside.

"What a coincidence, Ms. Skeeter," smiled Quinn. "Who knew I would end up running into you at the quaint little cafe I decided to try out today. It was as if we were supposed to meet today."

Skeeter fake-polite-chuckled, "I never thought you'd believe in such things, Quinn."

"What can I say? They can be fun at times," said Quinn. He sipped his refreshing drink before asking, "I have to say, I was surprised reading your article today, Ms. Skeeter. It's much different from what you usually write."

". . . You read my articles, Quinn? I was under the assumption that you weren't interested in such things."

"Rubbish. Why wouldn't I be interested in the news? It's critical to be aware of what's happening in the world, and Daily Prophet's good writers and editors do an excellent job of telling a side of the story, Quinn laughed. "Speaking of, I am genuinely interested in the piece you published today, and I have a few questions about it."

Skeeter's smile faltered for a split moment before coming back full force. She 'ho-ho-ho' laughed with her hand covering her lips. "I'm glad you liked my work, but unfortunately, because of the sensitivity of the situation, I can't talk about it outside of work— moreover, everything I know is already in the article, there's no need for you to talk to me."

"Surely you must be jesting, Ms. Skeeter. The written word is my favorite, and I don't believe that you don't have something other than what was written on it. Come on, Ms. Skeeter. . . there must be something in there that you couldn't fit inside the packaged article that you posted, the other things that were left on the planning board— tell me things you couldn't put out for everyone to read."

Skeeter narrowed her eyes a fraction as she stared at Quinn. She knew this was coming. There was no way this was a coincidence— she would retire and put her pen down for good if someone could prove it wasn't planned— that she ended up meeting Quinn during lunch. His asking about the article so bluntly made everything clear behind the question of why Quinn had interjected her here today.

Additionally, she noticed how Quinn hadn't said a single word of compliment in the form of a 'please.' He wanted her to answer the questions, and from what Skeeter knew, he wasn't the type to take a refusal especially with their particular past.

". . . It all started with a fire in the muggle world," she said. "There must've been some news about there being magic involved because the Aurors were sent out to the scene. They must've brought something back from the arson because something exploded down there, and I suspect it was something that they had brought in."

Quinn leaned forward. "It wasn't an infiltration?" he asked.

"Doesn't seem like it. The Auror Office would've said something if there had been an arrest. They would've tried to push the faulty security measures to another department. But the entire DMLE has been abnormally quieter as if everything knows something others don't— and no one wants to open their mouth."

Quinn leaned back, and his thoughts began churning. The Death Eaters had sneaked a bomb into the building, right under everyone's nose, sneaked in an object. If it wasn't a Death Eater suicide bomber, then how did it happen?

"Who might know this, Ms. Skeeter," he asked.

"Someone high enough in the hierarchy, but none of those people I tried to talk to would even meet me. . ."

". . . and you couldn't use your usual methods, why?."

"They're persistent," Skeeter spat. "The entire department doesn't look like they have the key to the fountain of youth."

". . . I see," Quinn hummed before asking, "What's about the Minister's reaction on this, anything on that front?"

Skeeter shook her head.

Quinn sighed and settled down. The information was truly short. Even Skeeter only knew so little. . . . But he had found something new, and it was time to take that small lead and try to find more.

Quinn got up from his chair and spoke, "That'd be all for now, Ms.

Skeeter. It was intriguing to talk to you about this, but now I must leave."

He unceremoniously got up with no words of warning— Skeeter knew what would happen if she tried to use their meeting to spin another story. And was about to step away when he stopped and faced Skeeter.

"I'll be keeping in touch, Ms. Skeeter. Who knows when someone might find some interesting facts. . . and who better but you to write about them."

- (Scene Break) -

Sirius Black exited a floo and stepped onto the Vertic Alley. It was already evening, and his workday was over, and with the blast, everything had been a heavy rush of things stampeding over him— and that beating made him want to have a drink, so after a hectic day, he ventured towards his favorite bar in the country.

He walked in the empty street without fear. It looked like the perfect place to get mugged, but Sirius walked confidently without care— would some petty mugger dare to even breathe in front of him.

As he was thinking about his day and all the heaviness that was floating above the office, a distorted voice called,

"Sirius Black."

He looked back, and if yesterday had been a surprise, this was another version of it. It was not because of the distorted voice— sure, it played a bit part— but what shocked every other thought from his mind was the figure covering him from head to toe, staring at him with deep violet eyes.

It was the Invisible Vigilante

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Quinn West - MC - Information is very important.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Sorry for the slightly shorter chapter, but

this seemed like the perfect spot.

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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363. Chapter 363: Peace, Not For

Long

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Link in the Bio/Profile

Sirius stood staring at the figure donned in black for a moment. His wand was already in his hand by instinct, ready for action, but it took him a beat to register what was in front of him.

". . . Are you mad?" Sirius pointed his glowing wand towards Quinn. "Or are you looking to surrender? If it is the latter, then I'll gladly take you in right here, right now. What do you say, want to come in? We're renovating right now, so it'll be a little rough, but I assure you, I'll put you in the best one we have."

Quinn would've good-heartedly laughed if he wasn't under his mask. But Noir wouldn't laugh in any situation, so he went straight to the point, "About the attack in the Ministry, what is the Auror Office's stand on it? How will you and your people handle the Death Eaters now?"

Sirius scoffed, taking one step closer to Quinn. "What are you, a journalist? Why would I tell you a single thing to a criminal like you?"

"I want to know the Ministry's stance on- criminals- like Death Eaters. Is

the Auror Office going to stay still like cowards after the Death Eaters came into your house and bombed it? If so, I will lose all the respect I have for your occupation."

". . . Cowards?" Sirius' voice went as cold as a grave. "You're calling us cowards when you're then one who hides behind that mask? How dare you say that you fucking nobody. Unlike the rest of my peers back in the office, I respected you for rescuing Amelia from Voldemort— but to think I was giving respect to someone who doesn't respect it."

Quinn narrowed his eye behind his mask.

"I could not care less what you think of me, Sirius Black," said Quinn.

"Get to the point. What is the Auror's stance on the Death Eaters? If you do not want to tell me, then say so, and I will leave."

"Do you think I'll let you walk away just like this?" Sirius, his wand taking on an angry glow.

Quinn didn't believe words were an appropriate response. So he turned to what he considered an appropriate response and flared up his market.

The doors and windows of solitary street rattled, and even the dust on the ground floated to rise up.

"I am not a pushover," said Quinn. "I did not want this conversation to go this way. But if you want to go down this path, I will very willingly follow through with it."

"You didn't want to go this way? What did you expect would happen between an Auror and a wanted murderer?" said Sirius.

"A cultured conversation."

"Cultured conversation with a bloke who has taken body parts out of people? Yeah, right! Have some self-consciousness."

Quinn could tell this conversation was going nowhere. He wanted to get some information, but it didn't look like Sirius was going to give it to him

willingly. He could take it out of the Senior Auror's mind against his consent, but that was something he was looking to avoid because of how messy it could get and become a rolling snowball. Right now, he was more willing to take a risk on a Junior Auror, who might or might not have the crucial information he was looking for.

"This was a waste of time," said Quinn and started to back away while keeping an eye on Sirius.

A wise decision as Sirius immediately shot a spell towards Quinn, who blocked it with a shield and returned with a magic-heavy spell. Sirius moved to block it with his shield and was sent back flying as the spell made contact with a shield.

"Oof!"

A blue glow appeared around Sirius, and all the momentum was killed, bringing him to a halt. The Senior Auror landed on the ground skillfully as if he had practiced a hundred times. But as Sirius regained his footing, another spell appeared in his peripheral. He raised his wand, and a hasty shield spell blocked the attack, but Sirius was sent flying once again. The same blue glow of Arresto Momentum cut Sirius' momentum and brought him to a halt, with Sirius physically maneuvering himself to land on the ground.

Pop!

Sirius looked up just to see the sole of a black combat boot smash into his shoulder and slam him to the ground, rattling his entire body.

"Gah!"

Even in this situation, Sirius' mind worked with perfect calmness and awareness of his situation. He channeled his magic through his wand, a dome manifested above him. Crack! But the next second, the dome was broken by a heavy blunt attack. Then Sirius saw the black sole come

down, and this time instead of landing on his shoulder, it squarely pressed into his chest and rammed into the ground.

"Think about it before calling me a good-for-nothing, Sirius Black," said Quinn. He extended his gloved hand, and Sirius' wand went flying to the side of the street, in a shady corner, making it difficult to be seen. "I do not wish harm upon those who do not deserve it. You do not deserve to face the harm I inflict upon the deserve. I still respect the Aurors, and the country can not lose any more Auros, so I'm going to leave you, so make sure you lie here like a good boy."

Quinn passed a light vibration spell through Sirius' body which did not hurt him, but it didn't hurt but did heavily disorient him. When Sirius recovered from the spell that shook every part of his body, Quinn turned away and was already turning the corner of the street.

"War."

Quinn stopped and turned towards Sirius.

"The Aurors are at war with the Death Eaters."

'War. Now that is something,' thought Quinn. He didn't know what war meant in the context of the Aurors; they could be simply starting an arrest hunt for the Death Eaters, or maybe it was more along the lines of avenging their fallen ones. But whatever it was, Quinn knew that this was the advent of what was called in the canon as the Second Wizarding War.

"Take care of yourself, Sirius Black," said Quinn. "Wars do nothing but damage to everything involved. Stay alive; the world needs more people like you in it."

After throwing some pleasant words, he turned the corner and apparated out, leaving behind a relatively unharmed Sirius Black.

...

Quinn dropped the Noir patch on his bed and plopped down beside it flat

on his back.

"War, he says," muttered Quinn.

He was expecting some big news today, and what he heard was right up the alley he was expecting. And it did bring him some nervousness and a little bit of anxiety. As he had said to Sirius, wars brought good to no one involved. There was destruction, loss of life, and distress on the entire spectrum of emotions.

"War," Quinn muttered again.

It was already here. Quinn knew that it would come sooner or later, but now that it was here, it seemed that there wasn't enough time to prepare. There had been things he had been preparing for a very long time, and they still weren't complete.

'Especially, the main part on which everything depends upon.' His hand went to the chain around his neck where the Resurrection Stone lay. He hadn't had enough time to work on it and desperately wished he had gotten his hands on it sooner.

But there was no use complaining. All he could do was move his plans faster and hope that they had progressed enough to work.

Quinn stood up from his bed. Picked up the Noir patch and walked down the stairs of his suitcase.

If he wanted to make his plans move faster, he needed to put in the work to make that happen.

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The door opened, and Sirius entered the room as silently as possible.

"You're late, Auror Black."

Sirius looked a bit embarrassed as he looked at the table of important

people sitting at the same table— the Minister of Magic, Amelia Bones. . .
Head of DMLE, Rufus Scrimgeour. . . Head Auror, Gawain Robards. . .
Head Hit Wizard, Cillian Parry, among many other important personnel
from the DMLE.

And Sirius was late to that meeting.

"I'm sorry," Sirius said to Scrimgeour. "I encountered two drunken parties
fighting each other in the street about Quidditch, creating problems for
everyone. There was no Junior in the area, so I had to take care of it."

He sat down in a seat near the walls of the room.

"Welcome to the meeting," James Potter whispered as he leaned toward
Sirius.

"Don't start," Sirius sighed.

"Did you really find people on the street?"

"No, I met the Invisible Vigilante," said Sirius. "He beat me to the ground.
I got late because of that."

James tried to hold back his laugh, but it leaked out, gathering eyes from
everywhere in the room.

"Is there something you find funny, Auror Potter?" asked Amelia.

"No, nothing Minister," James said hurriedly with a serious face. After he
was sure no one was looking at him, he whispered to Sirius, "Seriously,
what happened?"

"I met the Invisible Vigilante."

"Did you meet a girl and lose track of time."

"I met the Invisible Vigilante. He asked me what had happened. We got
into a fight. He barely beat me to the ground, barely. We agreed that I
could've won if he didn't get a drop of me and then parted ways like civil
gentlemen."

James wanted to scoff, but it died in his throat when he looked at Sirius.

The smile drained from his face, and he grabbed Sirius' arm, "Did you really? How did that happen? What happened?!"

Sirius nodded.

"You are fine, right?" asked James.

"Yeah, I'm fine," sighed Sirius. There was a silence before he said, "He was strong."

"What?"

"He was strong. I made sure to charge up my shield plenty, but I was still blown away. And you know what? He blew me away twice at that. I couldn't adapt the second time as well. It was like there was a gulf of power that I couldn't cover."

"What did you say to him?"

"Nothing much, but then he didn't kill me. . . so I just said that we were going at war."

"You did what?! That's not supposed to go out! What happens if Scrimgeour and Bones shut down Robards proposal?"

"Like that's going to stop him."

"I know it won't, and that's why we have to keep it under wraps. You shouldn't have told him even if this goes through."

The two stopped talking when Amelia got up along with the other bigwigs.

"I have listened to what DMLE Head Scrimgeour and Head Auror Robards had to say. . . and given the circumstances, I have come to a decision,"

Amelia looked around the room and spoke after a pause,

"We are going at war with the Death Eaters. This is going to be a covert operation, so whatever we discuss here moving forward is not to be talked about outside."

Sirius looked at James, "Well, there you have it. It's not as bad as before,

is it?"

James opened and closed his mouth before shutting it and looked ahead, his expression covered in shock.

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Quinn West - MC - Just a few days, I was talking about getting lazy. . .

Sirius Black - Senior Auror - I did nothing wrong, per se.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - I'm back. So, an update. I twisted my ankle a couple days back. Not a fracture, but serious ligament damage(tore 'em up pretty badly.) 5 days of bed-rest. After that, if the swelling and pain have improved, I can commute carefully with a support splint without worsening the injury. Then with care and DIY physiotherapy for 1-2 months, I will be able to regain full mobility. As a lot of you might know, I'm in another city for an internship. I was going to go home if the injury was serious; not going home now, at least not as of now; let's see how I'm doing on Monday.

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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!

364. Chapter 364: Ten Galleon Bet

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Link in the Bio/Profile

If there was one thing that brought joy to the magical community of the British Isles, it would be the magical sport of Quidditch. If someone went

out looking, they would find a Quidditch fan before they exited their home street. The singular sport had grown the level of religion in the lives of people who loved to play, talk, and watch the sport with more passion than any other thing in their lives.

The sport was almost like a drug. People couldn't get enough of high-speed flying, high chances of collisions, and the guaranteed promise of thrill and excitement. International matches with national teams were events that the people were extremely attached to and felt a lot about—but they weren't enough; people wanted more Quidditch.

To remedy that almost insatiable demand, regional Quidditch leagues were started— not only giving the people a chance to enjoy more Quidditch but also allowing more players a chance to play and make a living out of it. And such a pressing need was met, it was bound to make money, and when things made money, people who owned them wanted to make money. So, the business of regional leagues and sports teams grew to the point that they became household names.

People would gather up in the stadium every game to support their teams and have an evening of Quidditch fun full of screaming, shouting, booze, and stadium food. Even in Hogwarts, people would follow the game through commentary on the magical radio— every game night, people would gather in the common room to tune in and have a jolly communal time.

And today, Quinn had come to one such game. He sat down at his chair in the VIP box situated inside the stadium's prime location with his big glass of iced tea. He was at the optimal height and could see the action without straining his neck.

Unlike most people in this country, Quinn wasn't a big fan of the game. He had only been to a couple games in his life, and while the energy of

the people in the stadium was enjoyable and a unique experience when using Legilimency on the people, the game itself didn't excite Quinn. But today was a special occasion.

Today, at The British and Irish Quidditch League, Puddlemore United vs. Appleby Arrows— Eddie Carmichael was making his professional debut as part of the Puddlemore United, flying since 1163, the oldest club in the existence of English Quidditch.

Quinn couldn't keep the smile off his face. Eddie wasn't supposed to debut today. A young athlete like Eddie, who didn't have any prior professional experience, wouldn't play in the top league; instead, they build up experience in a secondary league playing in a junior team owned by the club; when he showed results, he would be called up to play on the big scene.

But Eddie was Eddie. Quinn didn't know what he did, but Eddie had somehow convinced the management to let him play in a game. In a sport where a team only had seven players, it was a considerable risk to replace one regular out with a fresh-out-of-school rookie. But Eddie had done it.

"Puddlemore must be really desperate to have a kid play. They've been falling the past years today; they're going to be wiped out by the fucking Arrows," said someone sitting beside Quinn in the VIP booth.

Puddlemore United had been a successful franchise for centuries; even now, it was standing at number two in the season rankings.

Unfortunately, the team failed to show results where it mattered the most. The club had entered a long championship drought that didn't look like it wanted to end. The oldest team had already dropped down to number three on the rankings of the most championships won by a club. Because the team was still strong and successful, the loyal long-time fans

supported it wholeheartedly, but it had seen a slight dip in attracting a younger, newer fresh blood who supported the team.

Quinn stared at the old man and raised his index finger, lying flat against the armrest, and silently and sneakily cast a spell. The old man would feel thirsty no matter how much he drank for the next twenty-four hours.

A loud horn marked the entrance of the players. Quinn got up and leaned against the railings to see as Puddlemore United came flying out, dressed in navy blues emblazoned with two crossed golden bulrushes. His smile turned toothy when he spotted Eddie, flying behind everyone else but was applying what he had learned to create a positive first impression.

Or the version of the positive first impression that Eddie believed in. . . as just after the first whistle of the game, he showed another team's Chaser in an attempt to get to the Quaffle.

'Well, that's the image he wants,' smiled Quinn.

Quinn felt someone take a seat beside him. He looked away from the game to glance at the man briefly. For a second, his mind didn't pick up who he was looking at, and he turned back to the game, but then it hit, and he turned to look at the man properly.

The man seemed to notice Quinn's gaze and look at him.

"Good evening," said the man and then introduced himself. "Rufus Scrimgeour, Auror, and an Arrows fan. I think they're going to beat Puddlemore today."

Quinn shook Scrimgeour's hand as he replied, "Quinn West, Puddlemore fan. It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Scrimgeour. I disagree with you; I think Puddlemore will run Arrows down."

". . . Oh? Why is that?"

"Because my friend is playing in the game, and he's very talented."

"Your friend?"

"Eddie Carmichael."

"The young Chaser making his debut? You think a rookie will be good enough to meaningfully contribute to the game?"

"A rookie. . . maybe not. But Eddie is the perfect mixture of talent and hard work. He's special. Give him a couple years, and he would be outscoring every other team in the league and beyond. And today's going to mark the start of it."

"Hmm. . . even if your friend stays in the secondary league for a couple years, he will still need a couple more to come up to speed with the top talent, and if he is what you say he is, it will be a couple more years before he gets to the summit."

"Secondary league?" Quinn smirked. "There's no way Eddie will go down to a secondary league," he pointed at the field, "he is having the taste of what the top professional scene is, and after that taste, he will refuse to have anything inferior. This chance he created for himself, he will grab on to it and never let go."

Above the field, Eddie flew with the ball and threw it past the goalkeeper's fingertips into the goal hoops, marking Eddie's first professional goal.

"So, Mr. West," Scrimgeour continued the conversation, but on a different note. "How are you doing these days? Have you been fine after your abduction event?"

Quinn sipped on his iced tea through the straw before speaking, "Thank you for asking, Mr. Scrimgeour; I'm thankfully fine," there was no use hiding that he didn't know who Scrimgeour was, "I have to thank you for bringing my abductors to justice. Your department did a very swift job handling my case."

"We strive to handle every case with care and urgency. . . I heard your

grandfather is busy these days. How is he doing these days?"

"And I heard that you guys are going to war with the Death Eaters. Why don't you tell me how's the going on?"

Scrimgeour slowly turned to Quinn and gave him a slow stern observing look. "How did you know that?"

"People at my status are privy to some privileges, Mr. Scrimgeour. But I have to say, I'm loving the direction all of you're going. It brings me great confidence in the ability of DMLE to protect us."

Scrimgeour dropped the look and sighed, "It's not complete yet."

"You mean the lethal sanctions?"

"Yes, the lethal sanctions."

The Minister of Magic and DMLE couldn't just sanction lethal actions against a specific group of people. Such measures had to go through Wizengamot for approval. The last time lethal sanctions were ordered, it was on Death Eaters during the previous wars, spearheaded by Barty Crouch Senior.

"Do you think you can replicate what Barty Crouch Senior achieved?" asked Quinn.

"Right now, I wish nothing more than that to happen."

"You will need support for that. The Dark Faction will oppose you. A portion of the Light Faction will oppose you. The Grey Faction may or may not support you. If you want this to happen in the current political landscape, you'll need a lot of support."

"Are you implying something?"

The crowd screamed in cheers, and the two Seekers chased after the snitch. Quinn and Scrimgeour watched the game for a bit before returning to the conversation.

"I might be. I can help you gain the support you need."

"I suppose you can."

"Yes, I can. I can give access to my grandfather, and something tells me that he will be interested in listening to what you have to say."

"Will George West really support our action?"

"That depends on you. If you can keep your point in front of him clearly and convincingly, there's no reason he won't support you. . . but don't expect anything other than political support. If you try overreach for stuff, he will shut you down, so be careful what you ask for."

"I will keep that in mind."

"I'm glad that you understand," said Quinn with his eyes on the game.

"Things will turn much worse from here on out, won't it."

"It will. . . who knows, this might be the last Quidditch game we get to see in person."

Quinn sighed, "Eddie will be pissed if that happens."

". . . That's what you take from that?"

"That's what I take from it. Now, Mr. Scrimgeour, I would love to talk to you, but I would like to watch the game. It's the reason I came here. No small talk from me."

"I would also like that."

"Puddlemore is going to win."

"I bet Arrows are going to win."

"Ten galleons."

"Just ten?" asked the Head of DMLE with the very lucrative pay package.

"I was thinking more like a hundred."

"It's not the money that makes the betting fun. Money will make a difference if the amount makes a difference for us. It's the bragging rights and the satisfaction of living that makes it fun. If you want to bet money, how about we bet a half a year of your salary— that'd be appropriate."

"Bragging rights and satisfaction it will be."

"And ten galleons."

It was Puddlemore who won at the end of the game by the capture of the snitch. . . and by the points scored by the Chasers, including Eddie, who put on impressive numbers for a rookie. After a week, it was announced that Eddie won't be going to the secondary league and would be placed as a reserve for the Puddlemore United to be brought off the bench in the later parts of the game.

Quinn won his ten galleons and the bragging rights of beating the Head of DMLE in a bet. Though Scrimgeour was the one who left with the most gained that day.

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Quinn West - MC - One of the sweetest ten galleons I ever got.

Rufus Scrimgeour - Head of DMLE - Already preparing for the meeting.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - [Written on May 07, 2022] I'm sorry for the typos that have been happening in the past few chapters. It's just that I get sleepy after dinner, but I can't afford to sleep because I have to write — so I end up dozing off while writing, and that's when the typos happen.

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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!

365. Chapter 365: Wizengamot

Shock

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Like many magical household buildings owned by old pureblood families, the Crouch House was situated in the countryside, away from the nearest non-magical villages: built on privately owned vast lands by those families, keeping them away from what they deemed unwanted.

Voldemort stared outside at the property's front yard from one of the windows, which had twin gardens on the sides of a paved footpath that stretched from the manor's doors and the estate's gate. When he had arrived at the estate, the gardens were lush with vibrant flowers and rich grass spread, well-maintained thanks to the house-elf whose name he couldn't bother to ask, but now, the same garden had wilted away after the caretaker's death.

The door behind him creaked open, but he didn't look away from the window. "Is everything ready, Augustus?" he asked.

"Yes, My Lord," said Augustus Rockwood. "The preparations are done; the teams are ready to move at your order."

Voldemort hummed. "Have you prepared well for today, Rockwood? Your role is going to be very important today. You might end up meeting old friends."

"Please be assured. My old friends won't be creating a problem today. Most of them don't know how to wield a wand in a duel. The ones who do know, I'm ready to handle them."

Unspeakables in the Department of Mysteries, to be put crudely, were researchers who spent most of their time in labs, hunched over their research. While the Unspeakables were making substantial discoveries in magic, many of them weren't proficient in dueling. However, there was a

section of Unspeakables that researched dueling arts, and those Unspeakables were one of the real dangers inside the Ministry. After all, Augustus Rockwood was one of the Unspeakables who studied the dueling domain focused on weaponizing magic.

"Did you know I was asked to join the Department of Mysteries when I was young?" said Voldemort. Rockwood wasn't surprised, given he knew how Unspeakables recruited, but he was highly intrigued by the image of the Dark Lord being asked to join the Unspeakables or even possibly working in the gallows of the Department of Mysteries. Voldemort continued, "I refused them that day. I wanted to travel and learn magic instead of being stuck in a cubicle doing mundane tasks so that my supposed superiors could focus on their research, or worse, waste their and, especially my time, doing nothing."

Rockwood knew what Voldemort was talking about. He had done his share of grunt work before being able to focus on his choice of research. And he couldn't even imagine Voldemort doing the same grunt work.

"When does the Wizengamot session start?" asked Voldemort.

"In about an hour, My Lord," replied Rockwood.

"The bill for the usage of lethal action against my Death Eaters," said Voldemort, quoting the topic of the Wizengamot discussion. "I still remember you telling how many problems it had caused our tropes the last time around. I should've killed Bartemius Senior before he caused those pesky problems. I made the mistake of not doing so last time. But this time. . . this time let us make them aware of what they are about to face."

"If I may speak something, My Lord."

Voldemort hummed, which Rockwood took as a signal to continue.

"If we proceed with this, then wouldn't that sway the vote in favor of the

implementation of lethal action. . . that would create problems, especially with Robards and Scrimgeour leading the current DMLE. Even Bones has her origin in the DMLE; she would be more perceptible to suggestions against us."

"How do you think the vote would go if we don't proceed today?" asked Voldemort.

"According to what Rivers have gathered, the bill is going to pass today," Rockwood said. Rivers Lock, the resident Spymaster, had felt around the Ministry using his network of Novellus Accionites and had concluded that today was going to be passed. ". . . He also said there are rumors of George West endorsing the bill."

"Then you should realize that whatever we do today isn't going to make a difference. And if there isn't going to be any difference, why not make the best out of the situation," Voldemort turned to Rockwood and continued, "Gather everyone; I'll address them before we leave. If everyone else wants war, let us give them one."

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"If everyone could take their seats, we can get started with this meeting," said Dumbledore, the Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot.

He roamed his eye over the circular room, looking at those who had inherited their family seats, those who had been elected, and those who had received them as part of their Ministerial designations. He looked at those people divided into the three major factions— Dark, Light, and Grey— and one minor faction of the Minister's circle.

Dumbledore's eyes stayed with the Minister's circle. It wasn't common in the Wizengamot and the British Isles political scene that the Ministers

had their own faction. Almost every time, the Minister was backed by one or two major factions, representing part of the nation's populace. The last Minister, Cornelius Fudge, was first supported by the Light faction in his first term and the Dark Faction in his second. But Amelia Bones was an outlier in the way that she didn't belong to any of the factions— she had support from parts of both Light and Grey factions but didn't exclusively support either. Her true influence came from her work and tenure in the DMLE. She had been so competent and done such good work during a period when DMLE was having trouble finding applicants who passed the Auror and Hit Wizard standards, keeping the reputations of her department so clean and successful that her approval ratings had been off the roof with the populace even without the explicit support of any political factions.

"Ahem," Dumbledore cleared her throat, "members of Wizengamot, today we have gathered here to discuss a bill proposed by Minister Bones in conjunction with the Department of Magical Law Enforcement. I'm sure all the concerned individuals already have a copy of the draft and have had the time to go through them to gain an understanding of what it entails. Now, I would give the floor to Head of DMLE Rufus Scrimgeour to place the bill in front of the Wizengamot."

Amidst the buzzing chatter, footsteps echoed as Scrimgeour walked to the room's well. All eyes followed the man who looked poised; one look at the man, one could tell that this was what an Auror was supposed to be. Scrimgeour walked to the table in the center and placed some documents in the middle, and the man took his time to set up as if the other didn't exist.

"Members of Wizengamot," he started, "today we have gathered here to discuss a solution to the problem that ails our country and every person

that lives within it," he turned to the Dark faction as he said the last part. "It's not a secret that the Dark Lord," he said, and the people straightened up, "and his Death Eaters have risen again. They have gotten back to their terrorizing ways of the war days. In the past few months, DMLE has apprehended many Death Eaters, who have been sentenced to Azkaban, but not a single time have the Death Eaters not tried to rescue their compatriots— going as far as to attack Auror guards escorting the prisoners. There have been many more incidents in which the DMLE suspects were caused by the Death Eaters. And, just recently, the Death Eaters directly attacked the Ministry itself by sending an explosive to the Ministry that everyone knows caused much damage. In that one incident, they not only threatened everyone's lives in the headquarters and so many important documents but also risked breaking the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy, which would've not only endangered the lives of wizardkind in our country but worldwide."

When the population of one country found out about the magical population, then it was just a matter of time before the other countries would find out about it. It would spread like a pandemic, and the lives of so many people would be risked without them anything. It would bring judgment upon the magicals of the British Isles, and in those times of turmoil, no one would be willing to help them.

"So, on behalf of the Minister's Office and the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, I propose that lethal action be allowed against the Death Eaters. Like the last war, I propose that the Unforgiveables be allowed to be used against the Death Eaters, and if in a situation of concern, Aurors and Hit Wizards be allowed to execute the Death Eaters."

There was a heaviness in the air. A lot of chatter rose up within the room, making people.

Dumbledore raised his wand to the air and shot harmless explosions, making people quiet up. "If anyone wants to question Department Head Scrimgeour, please raise your hand," he said.

It seemed that a lot of people had questions as hands were raised from all the questions.

There was a reason why Dumbledore had stuck to the Chief Warlock position for such a long time without letting anyone have the chance to replace him. Chief Warlock was responsible for facilitating any discussion that happened in Wizengamot, and it was completely up to Dumbledore who he chose to give a chance to speak and in what order. For a big part, he got to decide how the discussion could go.

Right now, if he allowed someone from the Dark Faction first, the tone of the conversation would turn to one of an offensive questioning, trying to undermine the bill with the aim of scrapping the entire thing. But at the same time, if he handed it to the Grey Faction, Dumbledore was sure they would engage in a conversation supporting the bill, as discord at this scale was terrible for business.

And if he was to give a chance to the Light Faction. . . . Dumbledore glanced towards where the Light Faction sat with complicated looks in his eyes. Ever since he had revealed the truth about Harry's situation, he had lost the trust of some influential members of the faction, and with it, a lot of people who didn't know the truth but were followers of said influential people. He wasn't sure what would happen if he gave a chance by the Light Faction.

As he contemplated who to give a chance, a sudden tremor went through the room. It was so violent that many people shifted off their seats, and entire rows of chairs moved by several inches. Even Dumbledore had to grab onto his chair to not fall off because of the violent shaking.

Dumbledore even heard someone, presumably, an Auror, shout, "Again?!"

Dumbledore's eyes went straight to the Dark Faction members, and he started to scour the people looking for people who were acting strange.

He noticed people who were acting strangely calm in this current situation, especially when there had been a similar incident very recently.

He clutched his wand and let the magic flow as the Legilimency mind magic shot through like an arrow from a taut bow, piercing through the embarrassingly weak defense of the people who acted strangely.

Dumbledore started to rife through their memories, and that's when he found the reason behind the sudden shock.

He immediately stood up in shock and at once rushed towards the door out of the Wizengamot room. Before he exited, he spoke in a commanding voice,

"With me."

And even those who were at odds with Dumbledore knew he was serious and not to doubt his orders.

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Quinn West - MC - Me not here. It's been happening a lot.

Albus Dumbledore - Chief Warlock - Likes to be in influential positions.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - We are starting soon.

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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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366. Chapter 366: The Advent of

War

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Dumbledore rushed out of Wizengamot amidst people calling for him—some angry, others concerned, but he ignored those voices and hurried towards where he could hear explosions and shouting.

What he had seen inside the minds was mere a glimpse. Just a little conversation between people talking about the gossip they had heard from their peers in the Death Eater circle, But it was enough to send alarms blaring in his mind, and as the explosions got louder, the heavy feeling in the bottom of his heart started to become heavier by the second.

He could hear the footsteps of multiple people behind him. Among those, James Potter rushed to his side. "Dumbledore! What is happening?!" said the man he had been having a difficult time with.

"Death Eaters are attacking the ministry," said Dumbledore somberly.

"They're doing what?!" came another voice that Dumbledore identified as Sirius Black. "Why would they do that?!"

"Isn't it obvious," James scoffed. "Because of today's bill."

Dumbledore turned to glance back for a moment to glance at the number of people who had followed him out of Wizengamot. Many from the Light Faction, most of them from the Order of Phoenix, had followed him. And hearing the short exchange between them made his thoughts turn momentarily complicated. A substantial part of the Light Faction supported today's bill and wanted lethal action against the Death Eater. He himself didn't oppose such actions knowing it was the necessity of the

war, but he also knew that many were awaiting these sanctions with zealous eyes. That worried him. He could foresee a near future where Aurors and Hit Wizard would actively start searching for encounters with Death Eaters to 'put them down,' and it was inevitable that some people would get injured and, worse, lose their lives in such pursuits. He was hesitant to let the bill pass in its current stage, which lacked some crucial, much-needed restrictions.

He could see the Robards and Scrimgeour tagging along at the back with an ensemble of Aurors following them. That itself worried him. If before, he could influence some restrictions, after this, there would be no chance he could make any suggestions that would protect unnecessary blood from being spilled. Good blood from being spilled.

"Dumbledore." He turned back and saw Scrimgeour had made his way to the front. "If you would be so kind as to share something with this lowly Head of DMLE, I would be eternally grateful to your greater personage."

"There's no need to be like that, Scrimgeour," said Dumbledore. "As you might've already expected, Death Eaters have attacked the Ministry."

"Like before?"

Dumbledore shook his head. "No, not like before. They have come in person this time." While he couldn't see it, Dumbledore knew that Scrimgeour was glaring daggers at him— he wasn't supposed to know anything about the Death Eater bomb incident.

"I hope you've already alerted all the Aurors and the Hit Wizards."

"I have called for backup," said Scrimgeour, but Dumbledore heard Scrimgeour speak something to an Auror beside him, who moved away from the group, ". . . is the situation really that severe?" finished Scrimgeour.

"It is. They're in the main atrium with innocent people in danger. They

might. . . definitely must have taken hostages, so it is imperative that we proceed with caution."

"We will. I'll have a team of Aurors trained in hostage situations ready to be deployed. They'll ensure that the hostages make it out safe without giving the Death Eaters a chance to move a finger—"

"No, I'll handle it. Your people can come in after me."

Scrimgeour's eyes turned cold. "Dumbledore, don't overstep your bounds —"

"If it was any other situation, I would've not suggested something like this, but this is the best course of action in this situation."

"And why is that?"

"Because Voldemort himself out there."

Everyone who was following Dumbledore froze up as if every single one of them had been hit with a Body Bind Spell. All faltered to a pause and fell multiple steps behind Dumbledore, who didn't give them a look back.

"Some of you were there during the last war and know the danger of such situations where life and death are separated by a very fine line— a single mistake and everything could come to an end— but let me warn you. . . Voldemort had never shown his true powers in the last war, so whatever imaginations you have in your mind about his power, throw them out. . . and be ready for anything you think is possible with magic and then go beyond that."

He didn't want to place a fear inside their hearts, but it was necessary they knew what they were going against. It was better if they were cautious(even cowardly) than reckless.

"Let me handle Voldemort, but keep an eye open for stray attacks,"

warned Dumbledore as they reached the atrium. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, arm for your wands and prepare your magic. It's time to show

that justice always prevails."

Dumbledore stepped into the atrium with the Elder Wand laying comfortably in his hand as if he was a part of his arm. He sucked in a short breath and felt thick foreign magic wash over him as if he had been dunked into a deep pool with viscous water. Dumbledore knew what exactly it was. He had been feeling it over ever since he had come into throwing distance of the source.

He looked towards the said source and found the familiar figure standing in black flowing robes. The pale skin, serpentine features, and red eyes were just like the last time he had seen them in the very atrium they stood.

Their eyes met, and two waves of magic erupted, one from each, and crashed into each other, sending tingles down the people's spines as their bodies sensed the dense presence of magic.

Dumbledore wasted no time and scoured the Ministry atrium. As he had expected, there were plenty of hostages within the Death Eater's grasp. Dumbledore, however, was expecting and had thus prepared. A large group of people were on the ground, huddled in groups with terror in their eyes. They had Death Eaters standing around with wands pointed over their heads. He could see men, women, children, and even the elderly in the crowd of frightened people.

Dumbledore raised his wand like an orchestra conductor and released a wide wave of magic that reached every single corner of the atrium. The magic spread fast and affected tens of Death Eaters, making them feel a shiver immediately followed by an intense heat that tortured every cell of their bodies.

"Now!" Dumbledore shouted an order to the people behind him, who had also seemingly frozen-stunned for a second by the showcase of power

from Dumbledore. The Aurors and Order of Phoenix members moved under Dumbledore's command and launched an attack on the lagging Death Eaters.

"Play nice, Dumbledore." The inherently cold voice echoed in the atrium.

"Why would you ignore me to play with others when I'm here?"

Voldemort waved his wand, and the Death Eaters felt the harsh magic drain from their bodies. With nothing holding them back, they started their counter-attack on the Aurors they outnumbered.

Dumbledore didn't speak to Voldemort and again weaved magic. The Elder wand's tip glowed golden as multiple threads of magic flew out towards the groups of people and poured over protective domes to shield them away from becoming a victim of crossfire between the Death Eaters and the Aurors.

Protecting more than a hundred people on his own quickly and effectively was only achievable by another person than Dumbledore, and that person was present in the room and didn't have a single intention to ever raise his wand for the cause of good help.

Voldemort raised his wand towards the hostages nearest to him and shot a charged dark spell towards them with no mercy and did it without a hint of emotion on his face as if this was a norm in life: without a single shred of remorse on his face.

Dumbledore made his move and pumped a burst of magic into the dome that Voldemort targeted.

"Fool," Voldemort scoffed as he suddenly raised his wand towards

Dumbledore and chanted: "Avada Kedavra!" The eerie green zap bolted toward Dumbledore with the only intention of taking away a life.

Dumbledore immediately dropped the other magic; instead, he raised a block of marble from the floor and protected himself against the sure-kill

Killing curs.

Voldemort didn't seem bothered as he lowered his wand and again pointed it at another group of people. Dumbledore again charged the protective dome, and again Voldemort shot a spell when he saw that, and this time, Dumbledore was only able to react at the last second.

"These people here are your weakness, Dumbledore," Voldemort laughed.

"And because they're your weakness, they're my strength."

"Don't be so overconfident, Tom," Dumbledore bit back. "Because from the last time we met, you were forced to leave in a not soon good condition. So be rest assured, it won't be changing from the last time."

Voldemort laughed coldly, and his voice reached everywhere, even above the loud exchange of spells. "Is that so. . . then let's test if that's true."

A dozen muddy dark spheres manifested over in the air, all strategically placed above the hostage groups.

Dumbledore's eyes shrunk when he felt the power behind Voldemort's magic. That was enough to pierce his shield and kill everyone in the vicinity, including Voldemort's own Death Eaters. Dumbledore immediately poured his magic into the protective domes as Voldemort dropped the spheres with a cruel smile on his face.

Dumbledore's entire focus shifted to protection. He could still survive this, but it was clear that if he didn't protect the hostage, there would be no blood spillage as everything would've vaporized.

Boom!

There was a loud explosion.

Everyone stopped and turned as the spheres vanished into nothingness.

Their eyes were staring at Voldemort, who had his head bowed. The spheres didn't cause the explosion, but whatever did cause it had left behind a trail of smoke from Voldemort's defense.

Voldemort slowly turned his head towards his assailant and saw a familiar figure standing in total black from head to toe and had two threatening spells hovering in his eyes.

The Invisible Vigilante had arrived at the scene.

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FictionOnlyReader - Author - Sorry for the shorter chapter, but this was what I could think of for today. I left office at 10:30 PM today, so am really tired and now going to go nighty-night.

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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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367. Chapter 367: Lead Up Travel

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"I will be going to America for a few days," said Quinn as he sat opposite George in the latter's study.

"Why?" asked George, not looking up a letter he was reading.

"I need to meet the Broker regarding my investment. He has been sending me regular reports, and I think it is time that I have a sit down with him to figure out my next moves."

"Why America? Call him to Basel. It would be much easier for you for everyone to keep Helena Berenberg a part of the meeting."

"I will be meeting Broker's team this time. He's in charge of a lot of my

money, so it is only natural that I get to know the people who're handling it. And taking his entire team from America to Switzerland is going to cost a lot of money in Portkey that neither he nor I are willing to pay. It is better that I go to their offices."

George hummed. "When are you going?" he asked.

"As soon as my travel arrangements are made."

"Have you talked to Elliot?"

"I'm going to today."

"How long are you going to stay?"

"Three days."

George nodded and opened another letter. Quinn took the lack of opposition as a sign of affirmation. So he got up and walked outside, leaving George to his work.

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Quinn exited the fabric of space and left behind the strobing rainbow lights to land on his feet, feeling a tad bit dizzy that cleared up almost instantly. He looked around and found himself in a posh, well-decorated room with high-class interiors.

"Welcome, Mr. West," he heard a melodious voice. Quinn turned to face a gorgeous blonde standing by the room's door. "Welcome to the United States of America," she said.

...

On the first day of his stay in America, Quinn immediately went to Abraham's restaurant and had lunch with Lia, who was in the country.

"Why are you here?" asked Lia.

"For work," said Quinn, eating a strange seafood dish. "I have to take care

of my non-magical investments. Meet the Broker and his team." He pointed at the roof, "I also need to catch up with the building manager about the state of the building, the tenants, and their leases. Then there's the warehouse that I bought last time I was here— I need to visit there to take measurements so that I can start planning the development I had in mind."

"Oh my, you're busy," said Lia, enjoying her meal. "Let's go out somewhere today before you get all busy with your work."

"No, you're here to spend time with Abraham. I'm sure you have your own plans; I don't want to ruin them. Moreover, the meeting with the building manager is today, so I have to attend that. I don't know how long I will spend with Broker and his team tomorrow, so I'm going to go visit the warehouse today itself."

"But you're here for three days, correct? What are you going to do on the last day?"

"Enjoy myself in the country of dreams, of course."

...

On the second day of his stay in America, Quinn woke up early and got ready to visit the Broker in his office.

"Quinn!"

He turned to see the loud man. Hair set with wax, a finely groomed beard, a natural tan skin tone, a tailored blue suit on his body, and an expensive watch on his wrist. The man strolled inside the meeting/conference room and gave Quinn a hearty hug.

"Welcome to my office," smiled the Broker, Jerome Walker. "My team and I have been eagerly waiting for you to arrive."

"I'm looking forward to this meeting as well," Quinn smiled similarly.

The Broker led Quinn through his office, which seemed like an office of a

startup. The place didn't give a formal vibe with how it was designed.

There was a turf area in the middle of the office with real grass, and Quinn noticed the picnic blankets on the green grass. There was even a set of wide swings with manilla work folders sitting on them.

"We are a small team, but I handpicked every one of them carefully.

Every single one of them is skilled and competent in what they do and are half the reason behind my success," said the Broker. "You'll like them."

"I hope so," Quinn chuckled. "Who knows, maybe I will poach a couple of them from you."

The Broker laughed, "You can surely try. But I pay them very handsomely for they make me money. The more they make me, the more they get paid. It's a continuous cycle. They were delighted when I got you as our client."

"If they learned from you, I'm sure they'll understand what I can bring them."

The Broker laughed again, seemingly not worried. "We will see about that," he said as they arrived at the meeting room.

He took the handle in his hand and smiled at Quinn, "For now, let's make everyone some money."

...

On the night of the second day of his stay, Quinn packed his suitcase and made his way to a small hill on the city's edge.

He looked around the woods and noticed the absence of any sort of magic in the surroundings. Be it back home or in the States, the cities always had some kind of magical net that encompassed the entire city.

The magical net had functions like facilitating the Trace used to detect underage magic— and in America, the magical city-wide net had another

function of detecting Portkeys.

Which was a problem for Quinn.

He pulled out a tiny steel pyramid from his pocket and felt the weight in his hand. The palm-sized pyramid exuded a gentle wave of magic that tugged on the spatial threads in the surroundings.

It was a Portkey. A very personal and very illegal Portkey.

"Would've loved to try out intercontinental apparition," Quinn muttered as he picked up his suitcase from the ground.

Ever since the last year, when he had picked up spatial magic, his prowess with apparition had jumped up exponentially. He could apparate cross-country without a hitch, and even cross-continental was possible at benchmarked distances. But Quinn hadn't tested intercontinental apparition yet— but he was confident that he could do it if he tried.

But right now wasn't the time to test that out.

He needed to have all his bodily organs intact for what was to come.

"Maybe on the return trip."

Quinn clenched the steel pyramid and triggered the magic that whisked him away across the ocean to the small island nation where he came from.

...

On the early morning of the third day of his supposed stay, Quinn stepped out of his suitcase dressed in all black of the Noir suit from head to toe. He stretched his arms, looking at the sunlight as it filtered through the leaves of the forest canopy. He had woken up from a very pleasant sleep. His mind, body, and soul were in tip-top shape, something he could be needing a lot today.

He took out his pocket watch and checked the time. It was time to go.

He patted the chest portion and the Noir suit, and it turned into a suit

made from a lower-quality material that usually Quinn wouldn't touch, much less put on, but for today he had to put it on.

Because while Quinn wouldn't put it, John wore exactly that kind of suit.

Quinn's muscles all over his body began to twitch and spasm as the bones, muscle structure, the properties of his skin all began to change, and soon, Quinn was gone, and in his place stood someone named John. . . only John.

...

John stood in the line to enter the Ministry atrium. He slowly moved up the queue and finally arrived at the front of the queue. He faced a dotted speaker on the wall with a slot beneath it.

A female monotone greeted him, "Name and purpose of visit."

"John. Inquiry with the Floo Department regarding faulty floo fireplace."

There was a static silence for a moment before the voice responded, "Mr. John visiting the Floo Department." There were multiple clicking noises before a badge fell into the lip of the slot beneath the speaker.

John picked up the 'VISITOR' badge, put it on his lapel, and finally moved inside the Ministry atrium, where he once again had to go through the security desk, who checked his badge and asked for his wand.

"I don't have a wand," said John. "Didn't bring it today. Forgot it."

"Forgot it?" the security guard narrowed his eyes. "Step aside; we would like to check."

John shrugged and submitted to a pat-down and a magical search that came out to be: no wand.

"You can go," said the security guard.

John finally stepped into the main atrium, but instead of going to the Floo Department where he was supposed to go, he moved towards the

part of the atrium that led to the Wizengamot but didn't leave the atrium. He grabbed a corner, and slowly magic turned him invisible to the naked eye.

John closed his eyes and began the waiting game of patience.

After waiting for a good amount of time, John opened his eyes when he felt a swarm of magic that flooded the atrium. The foreign magic flowed, and John could tell what was coming, so he braced himself.

Boom!

It was as if an earthquake had struck the country and the Ministry atrium was the epicenter; if he hadn't braced himself, he would be lying on the ground with his legs trembling like a newborn calf's.

John looked to the source of everything sudden that had happened in the last few seconds and saw the Dark Lord standing in his full glory as his Death Eaters filed in from behind him with their wands shooting stunning spells at the people as they shouted everyone to get on the ground.

One of the Death Eaters shot a Killing Curse in the air, which had a great effect as people dropped to their knees and even laid flat stomach-side down on the marble flooring.

John hid behind a pillar that blocked him from Voldemort's eyes. While still invisible, he slowly moved around Voldemort while keeping a vigilant eye on the Dark Lord. It would be a problem if he got find out now.

"Don't make any sudden moves," said one of the Death Eaters as John reached halfway through, but he was too slow because of the fear of being spotted by Voldemort.

But then help arrived.

Dumbledore and Aurors barged into the scene, with Dumbledore

engaging Voldemort in battle.

John patted his chest, and the cheap suit transformed into the Noir suit with the mask in his hand that he slipped on his face.

With that, John was gone, and Quinn was not coming out; all that was left was Noir.

When spheres of magical doom came down on the victims with Dumbledore trying to stop Voldemort— that was when Quinn decided that it was the best opportunity.

He charged a strong magic, most vile, and the most damaging spell and shot it towards Voldemort's back. Just when Quinn thought that the spell would hit, a shield sprung up and blocked his magic.

Quinn stared at Voldemort's back and the protective shield sizzling because of his 'backstabbing' spell.

'That didn't work very well, now did it?' he thought. The look that Voldemort gave him was not something anyone would be happy about. He had been face-to-face with the Dark Lord before, but this was the first time he had seen him so cold and furious— and all of that was directed at him.

'Oh boy. . .'

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Quinn West - MC - Quinn, Noir, John. . .

FictionOnlyReader - Author - That was what happened for this moment to happen.

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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!

368. Chapter 368: Cursed Fire

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](#)

Having the Dark Lord coldly stare him down after two days of painstaking alibi construction in the States, which involved breaking multiple American Portkey laws and appearing in front of Aurors inside the Ministry who were out to get him for murder charges, wasn't great. It was like the return of all his returns was underwhelming, to say the least. "You. . . you have been an annoyance for some time now," Voldemort's voice seemed colder than his(Quinn's) ice magic. "Stay within your limits — no. . . you have done enough; it's time for you to go."

Quinn shifted his feet and sent body magic to every part of his body, ready to move at a moment's notice. He could feel a pressure emanating from Voldemort that was quite nervewracking— not once in his life had he faced an opponent of this caliber, even his previous encounter with Voldemort couldn't be counted because of the suddenness of the situation.

Voldemort didn't raise his wand; he didn't need to as the wand was a focus, and when appropriately skilled, there was no need to point and shoot.

Quinn heard a crackle. He looked up to find himself staring as a yellow lightning bolt manifested. His eyes blew up behind his mask. The magical lightning jolted down towards Quinn's head as he raised a shield to block it.

"Gah!"

The shield blocked most of the bolt, but some of the lightning ripped through the magical cover and struck Quinn. He felt as if thousands of electric snakes coursed through every muscle fabric in his body.

Everything spasmed out of control. He felt his body heat up several degrees in the short span of seconds. Quinn's breathing hitched as his magic retaliated and purged the foreign magic invading his body. His breathing returned to normal when all of Voldemort's magic was purged. 'Shit!' Quinn cursed inside. The curse was dark magic. If he had let it stay inside his body longer, it would've done damage that'd have taken years of treatment from highest-grade doctors to fix. Even now, he could feel pain throughout his body. 'That was just one spell!'

Quinn turned invisible immediately and started to move slowly. But then he saw Voldemort's eyes following him and his heart skipped a beat.

A dark mass of magic bubbled in front of Voldemort and zapped towards Quinn with a shrill whistling sound. Quinn raised another shield many times stronger than the last time, and it worked. . . partially. The black mass collided with the shield spell and bounced off it into the ground, exploding the floor like a full grenade. Quinn felt an intense explosion of heat as the black mass ballooned from a tennis ball to a gym ball in a blink of an eye. It stopped expanding just before it could touch Quinn's shield and shrunk rapidly. The black mass was the only thing in Quinn's eyes as he saw it turn into an angry red explosion— that sent out a force strong enough to shift his organs and doing it while he was behind a shield.

He was sent back flying from the force. Quinn fought through the disorienting impact and cast Arresto Momentum to cut all of his momenta and smoothly twisted to help him land on the ground battle-ready. As his feet touched the ground, he raised his eyes once again

locked onto Voldemort. . . and there was a green spell of death zipping towards him.

He felt his entire body do one thing. It was instinct. The instinct to move. The instinct to live.

Crackle. Another small explosion burst out. A white plume of smoke/fog spread into the surroundings until it cleared up, leaving behind Quinn with a broke piece of the shield made from a huge block of ice. The room's temperature dropped as a thin sheen of frosty ice grew on every surface of the room. The high roof of the atrium developed stalagmite-like protrusion. Quinn stared at Voldemort with his eyes glowing in purple. His finger twitched, and a couple hundred ice spears manifested in the air. Another twitch and the clear ice gained a green tinge as Quinn applied a curse on every spike. The final twitch and the spikes shot toward Voldemort with the sole aim of piercing through his body.

Voldemort lazily swept his arm across, and all ice spears slowed down. But before they could completely stop, Voldemort's eyes widened as he hastily moved his wand-wrist and conjured a shield behind himself. A huge spray of fire assaulted Voldemort at his back, and the intensity of the flames only seemed to grow stronger.

"Dumbledore!" Voldemort barked, feeling the heat on his back, and the tongues of fire just separated them. He was about to turn towards Dumbledore when he noticed Quinn wasn't there anymore. He immediately sent out probes, and Voldemort looked around to spot Quinn. Voldemort looked up and saw dozens of glowing red rods with electric current dancing around them.

The moment the rods dropped, Voldermot conjured a protective cover above and turned towards Dumbledore. He pulled down the shield that

held back the fire, plunged a sudden and continuous supply of his magic into the flames, and started to fight back.

The rods dropped over his head and tortured the cover over Voldemort's head. It shook and rippled wildly, but not a single rod passed through.

Just when Voldemort thought he could concentrate on Dumbledore's flames, his eye shrunk as Quinn became visible in his peripheral vision.

Quinn raised his leg and front-kicked the Dark Lord's side with an intense quantity of body magic. Quinn followed up by sending out Emyrean chains with blades weaved with curses on end after Voldemort, but the Dark Lord's magic thwarted and crushed the chains before they could reach him. But it wasn't over as Dumbledore shot what seemed like an absurdly charged, modified Reducto— even though it wasn't directed towards Quinn, he felt enough danger that he jumped away from Voldemort.

Voldemort again blocked, but his shield was ripped as if it was paper. But Voldemort wasn't just the Dark Lord in name as he countered Dumbledore's offensive spell with an offensive spell of his own. The explosion was so impactful that it sent waves across the atrium.

Quinn observed from the side, thinking of his next move, when a spell suddenly came from his side. He looked towards it with furrowed brows as it fizzled away because of his magic. He looked up and saw a Death Eater with his wand raised towards him. Quinn raised his hand, and the Death Eater's leg bones cracked, making him fall in pain.

He returned back to Voldemort. Two fiery orbs of eerie mustard-colored fire sparked above his palms. He pointed them at Voldemort, who battled against Dumbledore. Quinn's eyes flashed purple as hot rows of flame scorched towards Voldemort's back.

The Dark Lord facing fire from both sides, flicked his wrist of the hand

holding his wand, and bought on. . . terror.

Maybe Voldemort had heard of the saying 'fire-with-fire' because, in response, he let out a frightening fire— it looked cold and ghastly, but it was anything but— it was so hot that the marble on the floor melted away into a blob of molten stone.

Quinn's concentration on assaulting Voldemort snapped. He took several steps back away from the fire because he recognized what the fire precisely was. It was not a normal fire; the flames seemed like they were alive, sentient, intent upon killing everything in their path; the fire was mutating, forming a gigantic pack of fiery beasts: Flaming serpents, chimeras, and dragons rose and fell and rose again.

'Fiendfyre! Why the fucking hell would he do that?! We're indoors! Indoors!'

Fiendfyre was one of the magics that Quinn had tread lightly around. There wasn't really a place he could safely practice it without risking the quasi-sentient fire from getting out of control and leaking out to cause a hazard. He only knew one place that could hold the fire from getting out: The Room of Requirements. The room wasn't really on the seventh floor despite the location of its entrance; it was connected to the seventh floor through spatial magic— and just a command of disconnecting the entrance made the room a place perfect for practicing Fiendfyre— bar the fact the caster could die if things got out of control.

And Quinn had at times taken advantage of the fact and practiced Feindfyre. The prevailing supposition around Fiendfyre was that seemingly wild flames could only be hoped to be tamed by the most skilled of practitioners, and not every caster could actually control the spell. But in his experimentation with Fiendfyre, he had found out how the fire could be controlled.

The answer was Legilimency. The mind arts were how Fiendfyre could be bent to one's will.

Quinn, even with his Legilimency skills, could only control the flames shabbily— but. . .

'I can make some of them touch Voldemort. . . gently.'

Quinn gently reached out to the flames; he had to be careful as they could backfire and burn his mindscape. He extended his mind to a wisp of mind, and immediately a connection was made as if the flame was eager for the link.

'Ah, I forget this took magic.' Fiendfyre was incredibly magic extensive, and even with the slightest of the links, it sucked magic like a sponge.

'Let's see if you like the taste of your own medicine.'

Quinn roughly targeted the area near Voldemort and caused an explosion, hoping that would hurt Voldemort as that amount of control was all he was capable of.

The fire snake near Voldemort exploded. Voldemort flicked his wand, and the exploding snake returned to its serpentine form as if time had been reversed. Quinn could see Voldemort turn cautious as the quantity of Feindfyre immediately lessened.

'Shit!' Quinn cursed internally as he dodged a Fiendfyre dragon's breath.

Thankfully, Voldemort seemed to focus on Dumbledore and was only sending stray fire wisps toward Quinn— maybe it was because Voldemort gave Dumbledore priority, or perhaps it was because he could only maintain one target. Whatever it was, it gave Quinn some room to operate. 'Okay, one more time. . . . If I can just get him a little, it would weaken him for long, maybe then. . . .'

Quinn's eyes turned purple. An absurd amount of magic was fed to the flames. Quinn focused on the fire, and everything other than the flames

stopped existing for him. He connected with the Fiendfyre, and he could feel an overwhelming pressure descend on his mind. It was like he was hung upside down, and all the blood was rushing to his head. He could see around the entire body of the fire, but it was so violent that Quinn was scared that any wrong move he made could burn through his mind like a dry pile of leaves waiting to be burned in a forest.

'This is going to work,' he thought and chose an area of the fire.

But as Quinn was about to trigger an explosion near Voldemort, he felt something to his side. He distractedly looked to the side just to have a spell hit him. Quinn felt the magic course through his body and an overwhelming force that blew his body up from the floor into the nearest pillar.

When Quinn slid down the pillar and had left behind a crack in the marble because of the force. For a moment, he couldn't see anything but a swarming mess, and all he could hear was a ringing noise.

When his vision and hearing finally cleared up, he saw the source of the spell staring right at him as he thwarted the onslaught of Fiendfyre.

"What do you think you're doing?"

A voice clearly delivered through magic echoed in his ear. He recognized the voice well. He had heard it for seven years.

Dumbledore had attacked him.

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Quinn West - MC - My back hurts!

FictionOnlyReader - Author - I was in the office till 11AM yesterday, so I didn't have any time to write.

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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!

369. Chapter 369: Eye For An Eye

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Link in the Bio/Profile

"What do you think you're doing?" Dumbledore's voice echoed in Quinn's ear.

Quinn pulled up a shield that blocked a Fiendfyre wolf. The flame apparition tried to claw and bite through the shield, causing burning lacerations with every attack. Quinn's brows wrinkled at the sheer weakness of his shield— Fiendfyre was as tricky as it could get. He grunted in his dull pain as he stood up. He glared at the fire and sent out a burst of Legilimency to the wolf— and made it blow up away from him and kept it there. Any flame that came near him would wither away into middling heat.

Quinn turned towards Dumbledore, who faced much more fire than him, and spoke to him in his Noir voice, sending it directly to his ear, which was difficult as Fiendfyre burned through magic itself. "Is this the right time to try taking me in, Albus Dumbledore? There is clearly a greater evil present, someone all are trying to get rid of. So why in the name of magic would you attack ME!"

Dumbledore swung the Elder wand, and with the one swing, half of Voldemort's Fiendfyre extinguished as if the horrifying fire never existed. A glaring white light shone on Dumbledore's wand as he swung his wand once more to launch a blinding jet of light that cut through Fiendfyre and

toward Voldemort.

"Keep those thoughts of yours to yourself," Dumbledore's voice echoed again as he continued to launch spell after spell toward Voldemort. "I do not care about apprehending you, and I can't let Voldemort catch here without risking the lives of risk of everyone in this room— the lives that you just put at risk and came close to killing everyone."

"What nonsense are you talking—"

"Do you know where you are?" Dumbledore interjected. "Look around and tell me where we are."

'The damned Socratic questioning! Why is he doing that now?!' In the years Quinn had spent near Dumbledore, while he hadn't interacted much with the headmaster, he had seen enough to understand Dumbledore's educational method— the Socratic questioning: the technique that focused on discovering answers by asking questions from his students. Whenever Dumbledore wanted to teach something, he would never offer an answer to the problem directly; instead posed a question that would lead the person to the answer in the form of a realization— which would stick in a person's mind.

It infuriated Quinn that Dumbledore stuck to his practices in the current situation. He was of the mind to ignore Dumbledore but decided to go with it.

'What the hell is he talking—'

Quinn froze for a second as he came to the realization that Dumbledore wanted him to arrive at. He had forgotten where he was in the heat of the moment and under the pressure of facing Voldemort. But the sight of shivering people crouching, laying down, and huddled together under golden protective domes kicked him down to the truth of the harsh reality. If Fiendfyre was dangerous enough for him that he needed to be

on a constant lookout, then for the helpless people who didn't have anywhere near sufficient means to protect themselves, the current situation was nothing less than hell.

Maybe Quinn's body language had given it away, but Dumbledore spoke on cue.

"I don't know about you, but I am not here to defeat Voldemort; right now, all I want is to get him out of here so the people don't lose their lives. If you plan to make difficulties, then I severely suggest that you leave, or I will make you treat you the same as Voldemort."

Dumbledore's magic soared, and the room somehow turned hotter, but the Fiendfyre seemed to retreat towards Voldemort as if the invisible heat was consuming the Fiendfyre as a fuel.

Quinn gritted his teeth. Voldemort wasn't directing as much harm toward his way, and Dumbledore treated him as if he was nothing but a nuisance.

He didn't like that at all.

Everyone with enough skill and prowess felt it. A disgustingly monstrous amount of magic flooded into the room, and for a moment, the chaos of Dumbledore versus Voldemort, along with the side scene of Aurors versus Death Eaters, settled into an unstable calm.

The water in the fountain situated in the middle of the atrium rippled.

The gravity around the fountain seemed to flip as the water rose like a reverse fountain. The fountain seemed to have an endless amount of water because soon, the water bubble in the air was big enough to drench and soak everyone in the atrium.

Dumbledore stared at the floating water with confused eyes.

Quinn's eyes turned purple as the water started to glow in shimmering silver light. He thrust his hand, and the water turned into a pre-historic

dinosaur-bird that flapped its wings, making it drizzle before charging into the bush of Fiendfyre.

A sharp hissing sound echoed in the atrium as the dinosaur and the multitudes of fire creatures went at it against each other, trying to destroy each other. And finally, after such a long period, Voldemort's Fiendfyre looked like it was going to struggle.

Quinn looked away from the water versus fire spectacle and directly focused on what to do next. A lot of water had rained down on the floor, and there was a lot of it on the floor. He took a step forward, and the puddles of water on the floor rose up and froze into ice spikes. Hundreds of ice spikes formed near the ground and shot up towards Voldemort at frightening speeds.

Voldemort, who was trying to fight back the spelled water with Fiendfyre, at once dropped the spell when he sensed the ice spikes coming to skewer him. He swept his wand, and the ice spikes all, at once, changed their trajectory just enough to miss him altogether.

Quinn wasn't disheartened. He had much bigger ammunition to exploit. All the water in the air that was contending with the Fiendfyre was now free, so Quinn put it to work. Under the command of his magic, all the water turned into a fine mist invisible to the naked eye.

And to many, it would've seemed like a move to clear up the battlefield for ease of movement, but to those who could sense magic, it was a completely different feeling. Some could feel a tingle on their skin; to others, it felt as if they had been dunked inside a pot of stick hot honey. Whatever they felt, they could tell that it was something big as the sheer amount of magic that was present inside the atrium was unprecedented to most people.

Voldemort and Dumbledore both stared at Quinn, who stood absolutely

still, not giving away a single clue what he was going to do next. Never let them guess your move. But when he made his move, everyone in the atrium knew it as there was a massive shift and thrum in Quinn's magic. Shing! Voldemort's eyes widened when he saw an ice spear appear right in front of his chest. The sole ice spear melted off before it could reach Voldemort, but Quinn wasn't disappointed.

'That was one. . . but what're you going to do with the rest of them.'

Quinn snapped his fingers, and ten ice spears chilled the air in Voldemort's immediate vicinity. They came from everywhere and targetted every part of his body, from his feet to his neck and head.

Again, the Dark Lord didn't have a problem dissolving every single one of them.

But all that did was to make Quinn remember the Architect's Vault. It only got worse.

Voldemort felt a little chilly on his bald head. He looked up to find himself staring at a colossal ice pillar hovering up his head. Then it dropped down on his head. He raised his wand and launched an explosive spell straight into the base. The ice exploded brutally, but just when it did, the ice puffed into a mist and turned invisible.

Quinn smirked. The Icy Vault's snowflake was incredibly annoying at times.

'Now, let's get real.'

Suddenly, Voldemort found himself facing hundreds of ice spears launched at him. He destroyed them, but those he targetted would disappear at the last movement, and more ice weapons like rods, chakrams, and cannonballs would appear. It was an endless barrage of weaponry. It was as if he facing an army instead of one Quinn.

"Annoying!" Voldemort spelled a wave of heat that burst out, melting all

the ice, and as it disappeared into mist, he pointed his wand at Quinn, and it glowed green. He wanted to get rid of the problem at its root.

Quinn adapted and responded by collecting the water vapor suspended in the air to form a shield around him to get some protection from the clearly obvious Killing curse.

As Voldemort was about to shoot to kill, his eyes shrunk, and he had dropped the Killing curse and replaced it with a shielding screen for the most horrifying seen explosion launched by Dumbledore.

"Injure him," Dumbledore's voice echoed in Quinn's ears. "I will hold him back and cover for you."

Quinn didn't need a second prompt as he began his assault of ice and water and started to mix in spells and charms learned to injure Voldemort.

Quinn began to walk toward Voldemort, and horrifying attacks were made against him today. His heart bounced up in his chest as he approached Voldemort as the Dark Lord struggled with a two-prong attack— with Dumbledore pressuring Voldemort in an intense duel while Quinn continued to pressure with his ice weapon barrage.

A small Empyrean knife appeared in Quinn's hand. He held it by its blade, took aim, chose an opening, and finally threw it.

"AAAH!"

Voldemort screamed in pain as he clutched his face. As one would expect from someone titled Dark Lord, Voldemort didn't falter completely and, despite the seemingly intense pain, he still continued to barely hold back both Dumbledore and Quinn.

Quinn wildly smiled behind his mask.

In the fifth year, during the third task of the Tri-Wizard tournament, he had lost an eye. Voldemort had clearly done something to get rid of his

artificial eye drone and had manipulated his creation to target his real eye.

And today. . . he had taken revenge. Voldemort's hand covered the left side of his face with blood streaming down. The pleasure from that sight was incredible. Moreover, the Emyrean knife had a curse weaved into it, which was going to create problems when healing. But he got sober soon as Voldemort glared daggers at him and immediately shot multiple Killing curses at him.

Quinn immediately brought on the ice from the floating mist and blocked every one of them. But he could feel the force of anger behind every cast. Just as Quinn's magic had flooded the atrium before, Voldemort's magic rampaged out, tainted with fury. It made both Quinn and Dumbledore cautious as it was an indication that Voldemort was about to cast something big.

But then the Ministry building shook once again like it had been doing so many times in the past some time. But unlike the other ones, this one seemed special as Voldemort's magic retreated and the Dark Lord disappeared with his Death Eaters following suit.

Quinn was shocked but pulled himself together quick as he knew that soon all the attention would be upon him. He turned invisible, and as he was about to leave, he looked at Dumbledore, who was staring back at him— but the headmaster didn't make any moves as Quinn went away from the Ministry.

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Quinn West - MC - REVENGE!

Albus Dumbledore - Headmaster - Magic, more magic, more magic.

Voldemort - Dark Lord - Is definitely planning something.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Oh my god, this took too much time.

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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!

370. Chapter 370: Exhausted

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

"Ah, shit! Damn those monsters!"

Quinn stumbled into his hotel room. He dropped the 'John' disguise as the door shut behind him. He groaned his way to the bed; his body hurt inside and out: Voldemort's cursed lightning made his insides feel all types of wrong while Dumbledore's exploding push into the pillar had rattled his bones; moreover, his back was killing.

"The old liar was aiming to kill me!" Quinn groaned as he dropped onto his bed. "I was using body magic for magic's sake!" Now as he thought about Quinn was sure that Dumbledore was trying to injure him to the point he couldn't move. "Not caring about me, my ass. He was trying to have at least one lawbreaker today."

Quinn grunted as he got up and dragged his feet into the hotel suite's bathroom. He stripped down naked and sat himself down in the tub. With one flick, the water tap began to pour into the empty tub. He closed his eyes and felt the water level rising, and as it did, Quinn gently injected magic into every drop. Soon everything below his neck was submerged in shimmering water.

It wasn't as good as the calm water in the last room of the Aquatic vault, but it did help soothe the pain from the beating he had taken. He had gone into the Aquatic vault a fair number of times to fasten the recovery from injuries suffered during experimentation that he couldn't show Madam Pomfrey or when he was feeling particularly fatigued and needed a place to relax. Enjoying the room's healing properties had made Quinn (of course) want to replicate it outside the Aquatic vault. Marking it as one of the long-time projects he had going on. He hadn't been able to make a strong healing room like the Aquatic vault, but he knew enough to create a diluted portable version in any body of water he wanted. As the aching dulled, Quinn thought back to what had happened in the Ministry. All in all, he thought everything had gone well today.

Voldemort and his Death Eater had arrived at the Ministry; they had taken innocent people hostage— but no one had gotten killed despite the more than ample use of Fiendfyre. And most importantly, he had stabbed Voldemort in the eyes.

"Should've thrown it harder; it would've been better if I had gotten his brain along with his eye," Quinn spat in frustration, but he was nevertheless elated about taking Voldemort's eye. He just hoped that the curse weaved into the Emyprean throwing knife had enough time to spread.

Quinn closed his eyes and slipped underneath the water completely. Inside the water, he shut off his mind, pulled down his Occlumency, and simply let the thoughts that came naturally. . . and right now, nothing came to his mind, and he was fine with the emptiness.

He opened his eyes and got himself out of the water with a splash. He exited the bathroom, dried himself, and went to change into a lower-grade suit. After packing up, he checked out of his room, walked out of

the hotel and into a narrow alley while in the disguise of the John persona. Standing in that desolate alley, Quinn stared down at the floor with drooping eyes. He sighed deeply, took out a palm-sized metallic cube, triggered the Portkey charmed into it, and whisked himself across the ocean back to America, with his old plan of trying inter-continent apparition discarded.

. . .

Quinn walked to the study table inside his West-owned suite in America. There sat a small wooden case resting on the table. He waved his hand over it, and the locks on the box glowed blue as the interlocked latches snapped open.

A small wooden, beautifully engraved card rested inside the box with the wording specifying the details of the Potkey home. Quinn picked up his suitcase and grabbed the card before triggering the Portkey weaved in to exit the States and thus end the three-day farce that he had woven for something that had lasted than ten minutes.

. . .

"How was the trip?"

Quinn sat down on the sofa in the West manor's lounge, where George who sat in front of him and asked him a question in greeting.

"It went well," said Quinn at a sedated pace. "Went to the Broker, met Lia, talked about the building repairs with the building manager, and even went to the far countryside away from literally everything to look at a piece of land that I'll be buying soon."

Quinn looked at George. The extensive alibi planning he had done by going to America, somewhere far away from the British Isles, was done in part to keep his identity as the Invisible Vigilante hidden from the prying eyes who were looking for the outlaw. But, as far as he knew, no one was

actually looking for him as a suspect for the Invisible Vigilante. Thus, him going to America and taking the risk of getting caught using illegal Portkey to avoid getting seen as the Invisible Vigilante was massively overdoing it.

The only reason he had done something so extreme was the man sitting in front of him. George was the reason why Quinn had to go to such lengths. He couldn't use his usual excuse of going to the non-magical world and get away with it without gaining suspicion. To ensure that his grandfather, who was already suspicious about him trying to go after Death Eaters, didn't get suspicious, Quinn needed to go the extra mile or the extra thousands that he actually went.

It was tiring.

He had done so many things in the first two days.

He had gone to meet with the Broker to talk about his investments while having Voldemort occupying his brain— he had paid half attention to the people there— who knew if he had paid more attention, he could've formed more substantial connections with the team and the Broker himself. Not only that, because a majority of his wealth was invested in the non-magical world, Broker had deserved and earned his full attention, but Quinn had not given him so. By doing so, he had put his future at risk, as the money he was making now was going to be used to fund his research in the future.

He had spent time with Lia, whom he met so scarcely these days, but again, there was a part of his mind thinking what would happen if Voldemort decided to attack a day earlier. What if he was attacking the Ministry right as he talked to Lia. For Quinn, who set his personal life apart from his professional and secret life, it was a massive violation to be distracted while talking to Lia.

He had to meet the management staff who ran the building, and while he acted polite enough, it would've been better if he had communicated with them better. He had bought a building a costly building in a prime real estate location. While the purchase was emotional, who knew how many years Abraham would keep his restaurant in the building, he needed to get a return on his money. The only way to get returns on that building was the rent he got, and if the building manager didn't work well with tenants, he would be losing money.

For the past one week, his time had gone living with Voldemort in the back and forefront of his head.

"Did you hear about what happened at the Ministry?" asked George.

Quinn pursed his lips, "I heard about it. The Dark Lord and his minions have been getting bold lately. First the blast in the Aurors Office and now this. . . I fear this is a resurgence of the war; what do you think?" He hadn't experienced the war firsthand, but he could imagine that infiltration of the central governing body's headquarters couldn't be anything but a declaration of war.

"It was already a war when they blasted the Aurors Office. The bill supposed to be voted upon today was the declaration of war," said George. "If Bones doesn't declare war on You-Know-Who, then I and everyone would lose faith in the Ministry. Wizengamot will convene again soon for the bill, and it will be passed this time."

". . . Those who will vote against will be voting themselves supporters of the Dark Lord. . . . I can see it, a full vote in favor of the bill."

"Or, people shedding their facades and publicly declaring themselves as supporters."

"Why would they do that?" asked Quinn. "It serves them better to hold on to their positions."

"Yes, it is better, but You-Know-Who might just not care. Last time, he wanted to usurp the Ministry and exert total control over it. If he's going to do that, then the ones in Wizengamot and influential positions right now won't matter. . . . But declaring themselves as Death Eaters or their supporters will be a sufficient proof of loyalty in the eyes of the Dark Lord."

Quinn further slumped into the chair as he hummed in agreement.

". . . You seem tired," asked George. "Did something happen?"

Quinn shook his head and put on a 'fake' smirking smile. "I haven't slept for the past three days. Went out experiencing the nightlife all night long. Let me tell you, drunk American college students say a lot of interesting stuff if you ignore all the stupid gibberish. It is different from the interesting stuff that drunk Oxford and Cambridge guys, though the stupid gibberish is the same."

It wasn't a complete lie. He had gone out at night with Alan the last time he was in America. The mind magic master's idea of fun was running some tests on drunk people, and Quinn, who tagged along, heard a lot of strange things.

"When did you go out at night here?"

". . . You don't need to do that." Quinn stood up, "I wish to sleep now. I bought some gifts for you; I will have Polly send them over. There's some cool non-magical stuff in there; try to figure it out until I wake up."

As Quinn turned away, George called out, "Are you sure you are alright?"

Quinn didn't stop as he replied, "I'm fine. Just dead tired. There were these two old dudes who went hard, and I ended up following them because they were exciting."

The two old dudes— one who tried to kill him while the other tried to break his bones so the Aurors could apprehend him.

"I can't imagine anyone your age who will spend time will do that."

"Yeah, I know. . . others my age would get destroyed by those two old dudes," said Quinn as he exited the lounge with a last whisper: "Damned monsters!"

Quinn walked to his room and changed his clothes to go to sleep.

But as he was about to go to sleep, Quinn felt something, and he looked around with furrowed brows. 'Was that a magical fluctuation?' he wondered, but it was just his usual room. He looked towards his walk-in closet, where his suitcase was stored, and wondered if something had happened there.

After heaving an exasperated sigh, he went inside the suitcase to check if any of his experiments were the source of the fluctuation, but after a search, there was nothing odd.

"I haven't been this tired in such a long time," sighed Quinn as he dropped onto his bed, filling the whole thing as something he imagined. When Quinn slept that day, he didn't wake up until the following day. He slept like a log, finally relieved as he didn't have to worry about a terrorist attack on the Ministry.

But the next morning, he would wake up to something strange, and it would be only a little while after that that he would realize that the weird feeling wasn't his tired-imagination at all.

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Quinn West - MC - Listen. . . I'm not equipped with a foreshadowing detector. I'm looking for that upgrade, but it is like really tough to come by.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - My productivity dips on Saturdays when I know I can stay up all night because it's Sunday tomorrow.

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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!

371. Chapter 371: The No-No

Word

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

Quinn groggily opened his eyes to a glowing orb of light on his side table. It was a magical light orb that produced artificial sunlight that slowly warmed up and turned brighter as the time clicked forward.

He sat up like a broken marionette doll and weakly snapped his finger to shut down the artificial light orb that was created as experimentation with light magic despite him having a gleaming window with a clear view of the sun.

Turning to the side table again, Quinn picked up his trusty ball of lead that had been with him for nearly a decade and slipped it inside his pocket. There were a few things that had stuck with him through his magical journey— his fake wand, his suitcase, Recon— he still carried his fake wand, but he had now begun showcasing his true skills; his suitcase was his trusty as ever; however, Recon, his 'first' creation had already been passed onto Daphne. . . but even among those things, the lead ball was, without doubt, the object credited most for his growth in magic.

The golf-sized ball would stay with him from the moment he got off the bed and stay with him until he returned to bed at night. The ball was

made of lead with strategically added impurities that made it resistant to change with magic. The impurities added to the lead made it such that a larger quantity of magic would be required to successfully perform magic on the impure lead than on pure lead. Quinn had spent more than a decade exhausting his magic every night he was healthy to increase his magical reserves. But there was no quiet way to expend his huge magic reserves every day, and that's where the lead ball came with Quinn operating magic on it, using it to chip away at the reserves.

Quinn walked to his bathroom, and on his way, his magic reached to the lead ball, turning it into a mercury-like consistency. It had become a habit when his groggy senses would start to clear up as his magic touched the lead ball.

And this morning, when Quinn's senses, both physical and magical, began clearing up, they brought to him a feeling that wasn't present yesterday. Quinn stopped with his hand on the bathroom doorknob. He stared at his hand and then around the room— there was something strange in the air, but he couldn't put his finger on it.

He went into the bathroom. . . but when he came out, his demeanor had changed. The moment the door opened, a restless Quinn entered the room with his swarming all around.

"What the hell!" he exclaimed to no one. "What the hell!"

Quinn rubbed his arms, riddled with goosebumps that refused to go down. It was as if something was covering every inch of his body, and no matter what he did, it refused to come off.

He couldn't tell what it was, but it was seriously wrong, whatever it was.

"Okay, okay, calm down, think about this," Quinn vocalized his thoughts to calm down the restlessness he was feeling. "I think I felt this last night. . . meaning that. . . this thing has been here for at least six hours. But

what it—"

Quinn stilled. He stayed perfectly still as if someone had pressed the pause button on him. He raised his arm up, and the space around his hand twisted. Quinn observed the distortion with eyes full of solemn intent.

"Oh shit! Oh shit! Oh shit, he did it!"

Quinn stopped using spatial magic to run the test and began pacing around the room with his hands in his hair. His eyes darted to his room's door, but the moment after, he calmed down.

No one in the family called Voldemort by his name.

Quinn used 'Dark Lord,' George and Elliot used 'You-Know-Who,' Ms. Rosie used 'He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,' and Polly, like him, used 'Dark Lord.'

"They activated the damned Taboo," sighed Quinn, and the inside of his throat seemed scratchy.

The Taboo was a powerful jinx which designated a word as a key to revealing the speaker's location. The magic had been used in the First Wizarding War to target those who dared to say Voldemort's name, and from that day, the practice of using 'You-Know-Who,' 'He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,' and the 'Dark Lord' instead of 'Voldemort' was born. The name had been used as a Taboo and then used to target those who spoke of it until it instilled enough fear that no one dared to speak the 'taboo.' After the war, when the Taboo spell was pulled down, Albus Dumbledore encouraged people to use the proper name Voldemort to not fear the name. But it made little impact as the community continued to use the alternatives. Soon, the youngest generation began calling the Dark Lord by the alternates without knowing why they did so.

And now. . . the second coming of the same magic had returned.

"Alright, time to follow the protocols for the situation," Quinn got up and entered the walk-in closet before coming out to head for the door, "I should've breakfast first. . ."

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Quinn stood in the middle of a forest with his Noir gear on and kicked some fallen leaves near his black boots. He looked around to ensure that he was alone. . . something he had taken into consideration while picking up the place.

He placed his suitcase on the floor. He snapped his fingers and the suitcase opened with stairs going down, but instead of Quinn going down, something came up.

"It happened?" asked portrait Merlin from his frame as he looked around the forest.

"It happened," sighed Quinn.

"You did say it would happen."

"I know it would happen; that's why I talked about it with you." Quinn knew that the Taboo magic would be making a return. But he didn't know how it would return as that piece of knowledge wasn't in the source material in his head. So instead of making plans to stop it, he decided to make the best of it.

"So, how did it happen?" asked Merlin.

Quinn shook his head, "I can not say for sure, but I think I know how it happened."

"Oh?"

"You told me for the Taboo magic to work, it needs a power source to operate. I mean, for magic of this magnitude and scale to work, it must

be drawing on a ward stone—"

"Or this Dark Lord of yours powered it through his own magic. I have heard about him in the past two decades, and from what you have told me, he is powerful enough to power the curse himself— what makes you think he used a magic source?"

"I would've thought the same, but the timing of it is what makes me think he used a magical power source."

"Timing?"

"Yes, timing. You see, yesterday, I sort of. . . why am I being humble. . . I definitely stabbed the Dark Lord in the eye."

"You did? Congratulations! How was it?"

"Thank you. It was fine. Created a knife, threw it well, and landed it right in the eye."

"Oh, stop it. There's no need to be so humble."

". . . Okay. I mean, it was quite fantastic. I was battered and beaten, but you know me— what separates good from the best is performing under pressure, and I perform best when I'm under pressure. The curse I weaved was some of my best work, and I'm not much of a thrower, by that knife-throw was legendary."

"Good, good, I wish I could've seen it."

"If today goes well, I can show my recollection of the event on a light projection."

"Then I certainly hope it does. But back to the original question."

"Ah yes, about that. Because I stabbed the Dark Lord in the eye, I doubt he used the time he could've spent healing on the Taboo magic. And because the curse came alive yesterday, I'm sure it definitely wasn't the Dark Lord and a power source."

"I see. What are you going to do exactly here?"

"I'm going to try out a test. It's early, and I might invite some nasty people, which I'm not sure if I want or not, but whatever be the case, this seems to be a time as good as any."

"You're going to trigger the Taboo magic," Merlin quirked his brow.

"Well, I spent a good amount of time researching it; not triggering it would be a pity. . . . The reason I called you here is for a question."

"What question?"

"Can you charm the Taboo magic to trigger differently based on the term that is spoken?"

"A skillful enough wizard can do so."

Quinn hummed. "Then it is better if I go with the mainstream version.

Going personal might offend the big guy enough." Quinn was sure that speaking Tom Morvallo Riddle instead of Voldemort won't bring the Dark Lord here because of the injury, but he was sure it would alert him if someone could communicate back to their Headquarters was something Quinn didn't want.

"Alright, that was all I wanted to ask," said Quinn. "I'll meet you later."

"Can't I stay?" asked Merlin with his best puppy-dog eye impression.

"Nope, I don't know how things will turn."

Quinn didn't listen to Merlin's counter and directly sent the portrait into the suitcase. He knew how it was going to turn out, but why risk something that could possibly be traced back to him— though he didn't see how that would happen. . . but again, why take the risk.

Quinn put on his mask, and the forest went quiet. The leaves stopped shaking, and the winds came to a halting still. He once again gave the surroundings a look to confirm that he was alone.

He took in a deep breath before a distorted voice emanated from behind the mask,

"Voldemort."

There was a thrum around him, and while it was barely visible to the eye, Quinn could feel the spatial distortions around him.

"This is the first one! The first one! I can't believe we got a fool so quickly!" came a rasping voice through the trees. "How dare you speak the Dark Lord's name. We know you're in there! You've got half a dozen wands pointing at you, and we don't care who we curse!"

He heard footsteps in the fallen leaves, and then they stopped.

Quinn turned towards them and counted the rag-tag group of people; not one with a mask. . . bar one. Quinn tilted his head at the seven people that had heeded his call— six people who were definitely not Death Eaters but only mere associates— while here was only one of them who was garbed in proper Death Eater attire.

"I-Invisible Vigilante!" exclaimed one of the Death Eater associates.

". . . This is what I get," said Quinn, looking the over. "Six ruffians and one Death Eater— and the Death Eater I get only has one arm. I do not even get out of bed for less than a dozen 'whole' Death Eaters."

It seemed that his appearance and voice had their effect on the 'Snatchers' began to back up.

"Now that all of you are here, please do not think of leaving," said Quinn. They didn't seem to stay as every single one of them triggered apparition, but Quinn smirked and snapped his finger, and the spatial ward trapped every single one of them— sending them all straight to the ground.

"Let's get started."

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Quinn West - MC - I shall break the Taboo!

Merlin - Portrait - Aww, shucks! I want to see as well.

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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!

372. Chapter 372: Inside Man

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

Quinn brushed the yellow grass off his jacket and leather gloves.

The five Snatchers and the one Death Eater lay on the forest ground. The five Snatchers had their arms tied up while their leg bones turned to a liquid jelly as they shivered in the aftershock of the magic. The sole Death Eaters, however, laid unharmed other than the 'light' bruising that Death Eaters usually suffered when they came across Quinn in his Invisible Vigilante persona.

"I knew there was a chance that violating the Taboo this early would attract someone higher up the ladder, but never knew it would be someone so high up the ladder."

Lucius Malfoy stared up at Quinn with one of his eyes beaten black-and-blue. The man who was once proud as a peacock shivered on the dirty ground with his hand raised in a desperate appeal to make Quinn stop.

"Why would someone like you, Lucius Malfoy, be part of a field group. . . accompanying these nobodies," he glanced at the ruffians. "I always assumed you were the indoors type, sitting behind your fancy desk, pulling the strings— but here you are," his eyes went to Malfoy's empty sleeve, "and you don't have an arm. . . how did that happen?"

He already knew Lucius Malfoy didn't have an arm. He had seen the thing happen in Barty Crouch Junior's memories— one of the deranged man's most prominent recent memories, making pieces of information he had seen on the Death Eaters. Alas, like Quinn, the Invisible Vigilante wanted to keep the fact he was a Legilimency secret.

"P-Please, s-spare me," said Lucius, his tone knitted with begging, "I-I will give you a-anything."

Quinn's pupil narrowed as he gave Lucius a staredown. "There is nothing precious than your life, Lucius Malfoy, and I would love nothing more than to reap that precious life of yours and rid the Dark Lord of one of his precious assets."

Instead of begging more, Lucius laid flat down on the floor; it was as if all the life and struggle to survive had left him because of Quinn's few words. He let out a weak scoff. "Then off with it. I'm no asset to the Dark Lord," he raised his empty sleeve. "Killing me won't make any difference, so do it and do it quickly."

Quinn narrowed his eyes and readily reached out to Lucius' mind with Legilimency, and he didn't have to go deep to run into a rush of emotions of longing, regret, acceptance, and a myriad of very depressing emotions that even made Quinn's mood drop. He went a little deeper and found the reason behind all the complicated emotions.

". . . I heard that your son abandoned the glorious cause you and your wife left you. That must hurt," Quinn quipped where it hurt. "How did it feel to have your family betray everything you stood for?"

Lucius didn't vocalize his answer, but Quinn didn't need vocalization as he was inside Lucius' mind. The emotions and inner thoughts told him the presence of great initial anger followed by regret and doubt, which preceded a great sense of belief-shattering turmoil with pain and a

resurgence of pain, hatred, and abhorrence.

"Is that how you lost your arm? Punishment for your Malfoy family's betrayal. I guess it was in the Malfoy blood to bite the hand of the one who fed you when the usefulness ends."

Lucius flared up, "Don't you dare! My family is not traitors! I have always supported the just and right cause of the Dark Lord—"

"One person does not equate to the entire family," Quinn interrupted.

"Oh, wait, you are the only one remaining, so it is the entire family."

Quinn's mocking invigorated Lucius by setting a fire of anger inside him.

Quinn internally smiled; he had heated up the iron, and now it was time to strike it with his strongest hammer.

"Just kill me!" Lucius wailed.

"Would you like to meet your family, Lucius?" asked Quinn, not paying attention to the angry appeal. "I can make that happen."

Lucius sprung up to his knees like a man who had found water in a desert and crawled towards Quinn with his hands tied behind his back.

"Y-Y-You can do that?"

"I know where they are, so it is not a stretch to say that I can make it happen."

"Please, p-please, my family— family, I want to meet my family. L-Let me meet them."

Quinn's eyes shined behind his mask. He pushed Lucius away with his leg, making the bruised man fall to the ground. "I can arrange a meeting with your family, but for that to happen, I will need something in return — because taking away your life is still a luxury that I would love to indulge in."

A shine of hope returned to Lucius's eyes as he rapidly nodded. "I will do anything— anything— my family— just my family."

Quinn nodded. Coming to the forest to trigger the Taboo, he hadn't planned for the current situation. He had never thought that he would chance upon a Lucius Malfoy who was angry with Voldemort and his Death Eaters— a man that no longer cared about trying to assert absolute dominance of pureblood over everyone else— a father and husband who longed and cared for his family's wellbeing.

It was a little too easy to turn Lucius, and in any other circumstance, he would doubt the effectiveness of his words, but in this case, he had confirmed that Lucius Malfoy was going to dance to any tune Quinn decided to play.

Could he deliver on his promise?

Could he let Lucius meet Draco and Narcissa Malfoy?

He could do it. . . after all, he knew precisely where the both Malfoys were living in peace with fear always buzzing with worry. It wasn't that difficult when you knew where you were looking at.

"You are going to work in the Death Eater organization as my spy. As you said, even if you have fallen out of favor, the information you have access to is still useful to me— so anything major that happens with the Death Eaters, I want to hear about it. Go it?"

"I-I understand."

"Good," said Quinn, but he noticed that Lucius wanted to say something, so he asked him to speak up.

"What will happen if the Dark Lord knows about it?" asked Lucius.

Quinn's lips rose up slightly behind his mask. "If the Dark Lord knows about this. . . you die, Lucius Malfoy— you die."

Lucius froze like a block of ice. The already pale man looked like he had been converted to a vampire. No matter what anyone said, the thought of death scared all men, and it seemed that Lucius Malfoy, who had been

the dealer of death, was now feeling the fear of being on the side of the wand.

"You're the one to lose the most, Lucius, but at the same time, the one to gain the most. If you chose to refuse, I could kill you know, and everything would be over, but if you comply with this little deal of mine, you can meet your family and take the chance against Voldemort. A piece of advice, Lucius Malfoy, believe it or not, the Dark Lord will be much more lenient to his Death Eaters than I am to them."

There was a turn of silence as Quinn stared at Lucius, who stared down at the ground.

". . . If you can guarantee that I can meet my family. . ."

"You will be able to meet your family. But don't be mistaken; you won't be able to live them— it'll be a meeting for the amount of time I decide. . . and in case they refuse to meet you, it'll be your bad luck."

The last line seemed to strike Lucius like a sledgehammer. It was evident that the man hadn't thought of the possibility of his son and wife refusing to meet him.

"So, I ask you again and for the last time. Make your decision because your life will depend on it, and make it now."

Quinn had said his piece. Make the most of the situation. He had gotten Lucius Malfoy, so he was going to make a man who was once the second-in-command into a spy that would feed him all the stuff he ever needed.

'He has no confidence.' He had studied people and their minds for such a long time that he knew what confidence looked like. He had seen Lucius Malfoy at his best, and now he had seen the same man at his current worse.

Quinn had seen the potential. . . 'Now, I just need to bring it back.' If Lucius Malfoy had become an asset for Voldemort, why couldn't he

become one for him?

Lucius looked up towards Quinn, and with a strong tone that had been lacking before, he spoke, "I will do it. I will become your spy."

". . . Well then, Lucius Malfoy. Look forward to meeting your family because, after that, we have a lot of work to do.

Quinn turned to the Snatchers and finished, "Now, let's change some memories and call it a day."

It was time to start picking the big snake's scales out.

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Quinn West - MC - Having insider information.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - A shorter chapter. Couldn't write more on this scene of the story. This last leg of the story will fluctuate like crazy, so hang on tight and keep reading. Internship fatigue has also started to get to me, it has been forcing my schedule to become irregular.

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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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373. Chapter 373: I'm The One

Who Knocks

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Link in the Bio/Profile

Quinn apparated on the edge of what looked like a normal residential street located in the suburbs outside London in the southeast part of

England.

It was one of those areas with identical houses for streets and blocks built by a single construction firm. Except for the cars in the driveways, the gardens, and occasional houses painted in different colors, the houses looked as if they had been copy-and-pasted from the same mold.

It was as Quinn had imagined: an image of normalcy— but at the same time, it surprised him that this was the place the Order of Phoenix had chosen such a place.

"I guess it is fitting," muttered Quinn.

Quinn snapped his fingers, and his appearance shimmered and twisted until his face had been replaced by someone else. Gone were his black hair had been replaced with brown hair perfectly parted seventy-thirty along, and his stone-grey had been dyed to a hazel color. His height increased by a few inches, and his entire body lost muscle tone until he seemed on the verge of being lanky. He rolled his shoulders, and his emerald green three-piece suit morphed into a salaryman's brown work suit with a thick tie.

The new face put on a smile and clenched his fist around a conjured work suitcase. He walked to a house with a trimmed garden with a bed of weather-appropriate lush flowers— everything in the garden was just good enough that it won't arise complaints from the neighbors but not good enough that they would come looking for tips.

As he stepped on the empty drive, he felt a tingle travel down his back. He took in a shallow but sharp breath as the magic in the ward scanned him. In a fraction of a second, he devised the motive behind the scan— it was looking if he possessed magic. He smiled and countered the ward with countermagic, which made it seem that he didn't possess a drop of magic in his veins.

'Even if they didn't want Goblin wards in here, they should've at least put up Aegis. Well good, less work for me,' he thought, noticing that the warding around the house wasn't from either of the top two best in the business. 'I don't know if I should feel appreciated or insulted at them trying to copy Aegis' quick response alert.' The ward was clearly going to alert people, and they would arrive here to surround him as soon as possible

He kept his eye on the door front door and didn't look at the invisible guard sitting on the yard chair as he stunned him unconscious.

'Idiot sleeping on the job in the middle of the day.'

He knocked on the door and enhanced his hearing, focusing it on hearing what was going on inside the house; he heard two sets of footsteps moving, with one of them moving towards the door.

"Yes?" The door creaked open, and Draco Malfoy peaked out from inside with suspicion and caution clear in his eyes.

"Good morning, dear sir. My name is John, and it must be a lucky day because I'm here with a revolution—"

"Sorry, not interested."

Draco cut him short and began the door closed shut the door, but Quinn put his shoe in between to stop it from closing.

"What're you doing?" Draco exclaimed.

"Sir, respectfully speaking, you are missing a great opportunity right now." Quinn grabbed the door and forcefully pulled it open as he stepped inside.

"What do you think you are doing?!" yelled Draco.

"Nothing, sir; this is for your own good." Quinn closed the door behind him, and the latches clicked into their places.

Hearing all the commotion, the second resident, Narcissa Malfoy, came

out running. She had a worried look on her face and a wand in her as if she was expecting something wrong.

"Who are you?" she yelled, pointing her wand at the unwanted guest.

"John's" smile dimmed. He raised his hand, and the brown suitcase turned into a black mask that he put on his face. The Malfoy's watched as the hazel eyes and brown hair both turned black. As their minds tried to understand what was happening, 'he' gave them a push to make it crystal clear. 'He' patted his suit, and the brown work-suit turned into an outfit that covered head to toe in black.

"Y-You," Draco stepped back as realization dawned on him.

"Good day, Malfoys," said Quinn in his distorted Noir voice. "I have heard a lot about both of you; it's nice to meet you in person."

Narcissa pulled Draco behind her and raised her wand to Quinn. "Why are you here? If it is about the Dark Lord and Death Eaters, we are no longer part of that world. Please leave us alone."

Quinn raised both his hands up, showing that he had no wand, and then flicked his finger slightly, sending Narcissa's wand flying to the ceiling. Quinn lowered his hand and put his right palm side up to have the wand glide to it.

"Now that we have the dangerous out of the way, we can have a civilized talk," Quinn slipped Narcissa's wand into his pocket. "As for you not being part of the world. . . I'm sorry, Madam Malfoy, as long as you have that last name, you'll always be part of that world." He looked to Draco, "Especially with what your son did recently. That is why both of you are here, am I wrong?"

He stepped forward and walked into the house. Behind him, the mother and son tried to open the door to escape, but the door wouldn't budge. Inside, Quinn looked at the decor that was clearly non-magical, but there

had been changes made to make it feel like home to a magical person with the extensive use of transfiguration— which told Quinn that the neighbors weren't visiting and that the residents were feeling out of place but comfortable enough. . . or pretending to be comfortable enough to make changes to the house.

Quinn sat down on the sofa and crossed his feet to make himself comfortable. Boom! Quinn raised his brow and curled his finger in the beckoning gesture. There were two screams as Draco and Narcissa came flying into the lounge, forced to sit down on the sofa in front of him.

"Even though this is not your home, it is not nice to destroy your place of living." Quinn disarmed Draco and confiscated his wand as well. "Now that we are seated let's discuss what I came here to talk about."

"Please leave us alone," Narcissa pleaded. "We were brought here by the Order of Phoenix. You know who they are— Dumbledore's group! They wouldn't bring us here if we were with the Dark Lord."

As Narcissa tried to get Quinn(Invisible Vigilante) to leave, he observed the silent Draco, who sat by her side. Quinn noticed how Draco sat close to his mother, leaning forward toward Quinn, trying to put Narcissa behind him as she had done at the door, trying to shield her from the vigilante with the reputation of ripping up bodies.

Quinn gathered magic in his voice box and exuded it, weaved it in his words. "I would like it very much if both of you could calm down. As long as you cooperate with me here, I have no desire to hurt both of you. So if we can have a calm discussion without raising our voices."

"What do you want?" asked Draco testily.

"I am here on the behalf—"

"Can you remove that from voice," said Draco, even as Narcissa tightly clutched his arm, "it is hard to understand."

Quinn tilted his head as he silently stared at Draco for a second before opening his mouth and the voice that came out of it made the blood drain from the Malfoy's face.

"Would you prefer if I sounded like this?" Voldemort's voice wasn't something both of them had pleasant memories of. "I guessed not." His voice returned to as it was before, "Now, as I was saying, I'm here to talk. I'm here to talk to you regarding Lucius Malfoy—"

"What about him?" this time, it was Narcissa who interrupted.

"He would like to meet both of you."

"What?" Draco narrowed his eyes. "You are working with Death Eaters now?"

"No, but I am looking to form a working relationship with him. But for that to happen, he has put up a condition that he wants to meet you."

"We don't want to meet him!" Draco said without a thought.

Quinn turned to Narcissa, indicating that he was waiting for her response.

". . . What are you going to do with Lucius?" she asked. "From what I have heard, you don't spare Death Eaters when you get a hand on them. Because of you, one of my friend's husband is still in St. Mungos to this day."

"I'm not sorry at all. Your husband was going to end up the same as your friend's husband, but when the man is Lucius Malfoy, even I have to give it a second thought. As for what I'm going to do with him? He's to be my inside informant."

"And he wants to meet us to do it?"

"From what it seems, he hasn't been enjoying the home without both of you there. He misses you two; wants to meet you."

"Oh yeah? He should've thought of that before he recruited his son into

being a Death Eater," spat Draco, his breathing labored.

Narcissa put her hand on Draco's shoulder. She asked Quinn, "What if this turns out to be a ploy to drag us to the Dark Lord for our betrayal. He will turn our lives into hells if he gets his hand on us."

"As I said, I have no desire to harm you," said Quinn. "If the meeting is to be a ploy, then I'll kill everyone who's there to capture you and leave the curse that I have placed in Lucius' body to run its course and make his life, as you put it, a living hell until he dies and goes to hell."

Quinn had decided to strike a deal with Lucius because he knew that the silver-tongued Malfoy wouldn't truly cooperate if he forced the man to work for him. The only way to have a working relationship was if Lucius Malfoy worked with him willingly. But that didn't mean that Quinn trusted Lucius, and thus, he had put in a curse that would eventually kill Lucius if Quinn didn't remove it. Plus, if Lucius Malfoy wasn't going to work with him, what was the use of him living.

"At said meeting, I'll be present to ensure your safety," he finished.

The Malfoy pair looked confused and stunned at the masked individual sitting in front of them. They probably thought that their image of the Invisible Vigilante didn't match what they were seeing now.

"Why are you telling all of this?" asked Narcissa.

"Because it does me no harm. If you accept, I shall take you to meet Lucius. If you refuse, I shall erase your memory and the memory of the guard outside," Malfoys looked aghast, but Quinn continued, "If you accept, just to get me out of the house right now and inform the Order of Phoenix later so that they can change your location— it doesn't matter to me as you have nothing on me that can put me in a disadvantageous situation— but I can always find you again later. . . it was a bit difficult to find both this time, but it won't be so much the next time around."

"We saw your face," said Draco.

"Do you really think that was my real face?" Quinn said without the chuckle he would've usually put in. "There is a reason why I have been able to evade the authorities and the Dark Lord's Death Eaters."

It wasn't difficult to find them at all. They had a Labyrinth door installed in this house, and he had a tendency to go through the purchase details of every door along with the backdoor magic he placed in the doors that told him the location of where the doors had been installed.

And now, he didn't even need that to find them.

Quinn crossed his legs, "Take your time and make a decision. The right decision on your part can be a big blow to the Dark Lord and his Death Eaters."

It took them long to arrive at a decision, but it did put a smile on Quinn's face behind his mask.

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Quinn West - MC - Well. . . I guess the "John" person is tied up with Invisible Vigilante. Damn! I particularly liked that one!

Narcissa Malfoy - Mother - Frightened at what the man in front of her is capable of.

Draco Malfoy - Son - Does not want to appreciate having his residence invaded.

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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!

374. Chapter 374: Bringin The Family Together

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

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"What are you doing?"

Quinn, in his 'John' persona, pressed his hand over the same guard's forehead he had knocked out a few days back during his first visit to the Malfoy safehouse.

"Preparing him for the time we will be outside. You said they check up on you twice a day?" asked Quinn.

"Once in the morning and once before going to bed."

"That's why. . . . Can't keep him unconscious for long. If someone comes to relieve him of his duties and finds him knocked out, it will raise suspicion. And because they don't check on you, nothing will raise the alarms until we return."

"Why do you care if it raises the alarm?" asked Draco.

Quinn glanced at the younger man and wondered where all the intelligence he had shown just the last year had gone; all that planning in Hogwarts, and now he asked questions like this.

Did Quinn answer those questions? No. He was the Invisible Vigilante.

"It is done. He will awake in a couple of minutes," Quinn removed his hand when the guard stirred. He walked to the Malfoy pair and extended a hand each to them. "Give me your hands."

"Why?" asked Draco.

"The wards around this property are monitoring your presence. The moment you step out of the boundary, Order of Pheonix members will be apparating here with their wands blazing. I'm going to make it so that

when you step out, no such thing will happen."

The mother and son exchanged looks, communicating with each other through their eyes.

"Hurry up. I would have delivered you to the Dark Lord or killed you last time I was here. I do not want Lucius Malfoy to flee in doubt because you two got me late."

Though annoyed, both Malfoys hesitantly gave their hands to Quinn.

They felt a soft current course through their body, causing them to jump and shiver.

"I don't feel any different," said Draco.

Quinn left their hands and walked out of the boundary. He turned to them and asked them to cross the boundary.

"What if your magic doesn't work," asked Narcissa.

"I know you are worried. What if my magic does not work and the Order of Pheonix arrives here, and seeing that you tried to go out for an outing, they might rescind their offer of protection. Am I right?" he asked, and Narcissa's silence was the affirmation. "This is your risk to take. You have half a minute to decide if you are in or out. A second late, I will listen to any last words you have for Lucius and be off."

They didn't need any more motivation as they readily stepped outside the boundary while holding their breath. Their worried eyes darted around the house and the street. The lack of apparating people put them to ease with their shoulders sagging in relief.

Quinn extended his hands again and said, "We are leaving."

"You don't want to check for an ambush?"

Quinn rolled his eyes. How many questions were they going to ask? He stepped forward, grabbed their shoulders amidst protest, and forcefully apparated them away along with himself, leaving behind the guard who

groggily cracked his eyes before snapping straight up and pretending to be active as if he had never gone to sleep.

. . .

Quinn apparated into the forest and dropped the lady and the brat on the ground, leaving them rolling in the leaves. And just when he was about to get some peace and quiet with the family reunion.

"Stop! Whoever you are, stop!"

Quinn held back a groan. 'Just a little more,' he thought as he turned to face a cautious Lucius Malfoy. He gathered magic in his voice, "It is me, Malfoy. Put that wand down before I break it. . . . You wouldn't care, would you? It is not yours anyway."

The look on Lucius' face was small happiness for Quinn, but before the man could say something, Quinn moved on— he patted his chest, and he was back in his Noir gear, and with a mask, he was Invisible Vigilante.

"Let's get this over with," said Quinn. "Have the family reunion. But beware— make any wrong moves, and you won't be leaving here the same way you came here. . . that is if you will be leaving at all."

Quinn snapped his fingers, and a ward was erected around the Malfoy family and him. He leaned against a tree and observed from the side as Lucius Malfoy all but leaped his way to his estranged family, who showed no such similar enthusiasm. They remained jaded as Lucius awkwardly yet passionately put forward his account full of apologies and regret.

There was a lot of back and forth, shouting and yelling at both sides, accusations and blame were thrown, and old skeletons were dug out.

Quinn stayed away from the family, standing still to make himself invisible— but his ears remained sharp and recorded every word that came out from a Malfoy mouth.

As the family dispute continued, the tired son broke away from the

argument and unknowingly stumbled toward Quinn.

". . . What are you looking to accomplish doing this?" asked Draco, glaring at Quinn, who quietly ignored him. "Hey! Listen to me! I'm talking to you!"

"I can hear you," said Quinn. "I'm just ignoring you. I have no interest in talking to you, Draco Malfoy."

"You are interfering with my family; you have to talk to me."

"No one asked you to be here."

"You came to us—"

"You and your mother are not a package deal. You could've not come if you didn't want to."

"And let mother come here alone with someone like you!"

"You underestimate the woman named Narcissa Malfoy. That woman is much stronger than you are." A woman who could lie to Voldemort to his face in a situation where if her lie failed, it could mean instant death to her and her family had to have nerves of steel. "If she was in your place in the plan to kill Dumbledore, the old white beard would be dead right now."

"You're putting her in danger," spat Draco, his voice full of spite.

Quinn opened his eyes and gave a Draco a lazy stare, "How long do you think Dumbledore can keep you hidden?"

". . . What?"

"How long do you think before the Dark Lord finds your little hideout. Who except Dumbledore will put their lives on the line for the Malfoys when the Dark Lord is actually in front of them, and they're the only thing that stands between him and you?" Quinn pushed himself off the trunk and stepped towards Draco. "One day, you'll be in that little prison of yours, sharing a meal with your mother— maybe it will be the only

good thing about your stifling days. . . or maybe you'll be sleeping peacefully in your bed. . . and that's when he will come tearing down the roof of that non-magical house you don't like— if you're lucky, he will kill you in one shot with a Killing curse. . . but if you're not lucky, he will torture her in front of you, and her dead face will be the last living memory you will have.

"I'm trying to prevent that from happening, you naive moron. I want to rid the world of a Dark Lord, and your father working for me is going to make that easier."

Quinn backed away to enjoy the startled look on Draco's face. He wished he could've forced the image of his words into Draco's mind using Legilimency to get a more satisfying reaction, but that was just his sadistic speaking out of place.

"So go stand by mommy and daddy as they sort things out. This is not a place for children to interfere. Now bugger off." With that, Quinn closed his hand but kept his sense keen in case Draco tried to do something stupid with his wand.

"I'm not an idiot," said Draco, his tone laced with faint defiance.

"I never said that you were."

"You didn't need to. The way you spoke to me said it all. . . . and you did call me a naive moron."

Quinn leaned against the tree. If he wasn't under the mask, he would've pulled on the empathy card, sympathized with everything Draco was going on, built a rapport, offered some advice, and cemented an image of friendliness in Draco's mind to gain his confidence. Even under his current persona, the cold vigilante could've gotten close to Draco and formed a connection, but right now, the Malfoy son was of no real use; right now, he couldn't even see the worth of building ties with Draco in

case he got helpful in the future.

'Well, at least I personally have some positive ties with Draco.'

"Listen well, Draco Malfoy," said Quinn. "This country is going through a war right now. The sooner it ends, the better it will be for everyone. The truth is that by trying to kill Dumbledore, you are to partly blame for this war. . ."

A guilty look emerged on Draco's face. Quinn took a note of it and continued,

". . . I myself am also to blame, and so is everyone who is in a situation of power. My sole aim is to take the head of the Dark Lord and bring everything to an end. I am playing my part. You are to play your part as well."

"My part?"

"Everyone has a part to play. You might have already played it out or might have something in the future, but that only time will tell." Quinn thought about what would Draco's part be, and all he could think of was that when the war passed, the Malfoys would still hold plenty of wealth and even influence that could be put to good use.

"You think you can kill You-Know-Who?" asked Draco.

"I believe so I can. Just a few moons back, I took his eye." A highlight of his career as the Invisible Vigilante, if he was to say himself. "I had done this mask with that intention, and I will remove it when my motive is achieved."

Quinn closed his eye and ended the conversation. He didn't want to speak to Draco anymore, who himself didn't continue.

. . .

After a while, the Malfoy family conversations ended, and Lucius and Narcissa stepped to Quinn.

"I agree to work with you," said Lucius.

"A good decision," said Quinn solemnly.

"I will provide you with the information on the Dark Lord, but other than that, I don't think I can provide you with much."

"Information is gold, Malfoy. While I have no need of your wand, I do think you'll be able to provide you me with plenty of things," said Quinn, staring at Lucius with gears turning behind his eyes. There were a couple of more things he wanted Lucius to do, which would he thought would prove to be the correct choice.

". . . Just keep my family out of it."

Quinn nodded. He glanced at the mother-son and speculated if he could make them do something from their safehouse of theirs. They could do something, but that was a thought for another day.

"Well then, Lucius Malfoy, let's bring down the Dark Lord."

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Quinn West - MC - I am a family reunioner.

Draco Malfoy - Naive - Moron.

Lucius Malfoy - Asset - The inside man for the third party in the war.

Narcissa Malfoy - Strong - Might be the strongest in family in many ways.

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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!

375. Chapter 375: Talk About

Taboo

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"I don't like this." Amelia Bones slammed a thick manilla folder on the long conference table. "We had more than a dozen reported cases just this week. Reported cases! We don't even know how many went unreported!" She fixed a look on the people sitting around the table that clearly told them she was greatly displeased. "We have had an explosion in the Aurors Office. Then the Dark Lord dared to barge into the Ministry, took hostages, put lives at risk. . . and it took two outsiders to repel him away — and one of them is a wanted criminal. Does anyone of you realize how that looks to the public? That the Ministry can't do anything without Albus Dumbledore's help. An absolute disgrace!"

Some of the biggest names in the Ministry— Head of DMLE Rufus Scrimgeour, Head Auror Gawain Robards, Head Hit Wizard Cillain Parry, Retired Captain Auror and Defense Consultant Alastor Moody, among many others— listened to the Minister in silence.

She picked up the newspaper and opened it to read the article, "Every Ministry employee ranging from office heads to the Minister of Magic herself have a bounty on their heads that can be collected in the seedy world of Knockturn Alley, dotted with connections to the Death Eaters." Amelia pushed the newspaper away as she dumped herself in the head chair, and with her fingers massaging her temple, she asked, "What is the situation with these Snatchers?"

Robards leaned towards the table and patted a folder in front of him twice but didn't open it. "We have caught seven of them this month. . . . Another seven resisted arrest, and unfortunately, they lost their lives." The new law regarding lethal action against Death Eaters included a

section that allowed an extension against groups like the Snatchers.

"What are the ones in custody saying?" she asked.

"Nothing. . those dimwits know nothing. They're just trying to earn gold by rounding up Muggle-borns and 'blood traitors.' It is a hassle to clean up after them and their mess— some of them made a ruckus right in the middle of a muggle public square— at least the marked Death Eaters are careful about where they let the magic out. How are we supposed to handle the root of the problem if we are busy chasing after the fools?"

"That is your job to figure out," Amelia sighed. She turned to Scrimgeour and spoke, "You're coming with me to the Muggle Prime Minister's office. The Auror in charge of his protection has been sending memos after memos saying he wants to meet. It's on this Friday evening."

Even the ever-serious Rufus Scrimgeour had a twitch when he heard the words 'Friday evening' in the work context.

"Understood," said Scrimgeour. He glanced towards the door once before turning to Amelia. "I still don't think it is good to get outsiders involved. DMLE is more than capable of handling this situation on our own."

"Whether you like it or not, he and his group are a substantial effort against the Dark Lord. In this situation, it is better to coordinate with them for information." Amelia turned to Moody, "Isn't that right, Alastor." Moody grunted, which to those who know him was a grunt of affirmation.

"But, Amelia, you just talked about how you didn't like Dumbledore's involvement in the Dark Lord incident," said Scrimgeour.

"No, I didn't like it," said Amelia bluntly, "but that doesn't mean I didn't appreciate it. If he wasn't there that day, many innocent lives could've been lost. And this time, I'm inviting Dumbledore and his Order of Phoenix upfront and—" she narrowed her eyes "— you can't talk about

outsider involvement after your meeting with George West."

"We need potions and their ingredients at a cheaper rate," defended Scrimgeour. "West can deliver us with that; we can even get Greengrass to sell us at a discount through West."

"I'm not complaining."

Scrimgeour sighed and rested his complaint. He looked at his wristwatch and frowned, "He is late. This is an important meeting. If he expects us to work together, then he must be on time—"

The meeting hall's door opened, and Albus Dumbledore, dressed in his starry-patterned robes, entered the room with a smile beneath his beard and a shine in his eyes as if he was delighted to see everyone in the room.

"My apologies, everyone. I was caught up gazing at a bird I thought I had never seen before. Turns out someone had colored a Magpie in some fascinating shades. I suspect they came from the mind and hands of a brilliant child." Dumbledore sat down on an empty chair right between Rufus Scrimgeour and Cillain Parry, smiling at both heads as if it was a Hogwarts reunion.

"If I missed something, I would request if someone could catch me up quickly," said the Headmaster of Hogwarts.

"You missed nothing," said Amelia and moved forward without wasting any time. "I want an update on the Taboo curse. How could the Dark Lord cast such magic in the country? I thought we had taken away the means he had used to cast the Taboo curse the last time."

All eyes turned to the person sitting on the other head of the table, who hadn't spoken a single word since his arrival.

Saul Croaker, an Unspeakable from the Department of Mysterious, tapped his fingers on the table for a moment before speaking up, "On the day

Voldemort—"

"Are you mad?! Why are you taking his name?!" cried Parry.

Croaker sighed, "Do you think the Snatchers will come barging into the Ministry?"

"He will know someone spoke his name inside the Ministry. Speaking his name carelessly might become your downfall, Unspeakable," scoffed Parry.

"I can say Voldemort," Croaker said, and people in the room frowned, "as many times I want, wherever I want, and the Taboo won't get triggered."

"Unspeakables have a way to evade the Taboo?" asked Amelia.

Croaker nodded.

". . . But it is not something that anyone can use," Amelia threw a guess.

Croaker nodded again, causing Amelia to sigh, "Continue."

"On the day Voldemort and his Death Eater came barging in, there was another party that secretly entered the Ministry, taking advantage of the commotion, and made their way to Level-9 to get something that enabled the Dark Lord to cast a Taboo over the lands of the country."

"What is this something?" asked Dumbledore.

"That is confidential information, not to be shared outside of the Department of Mysteries," Croaker spoke the words as if he had rehearsed them until his throat was raw.

"I, with my authority, as the Minister of Magic, order you to disclose that information, Unspeakable Croaker," Amelia spoke with her tone daring him to defy it.

Croaker shrugged, "You're privy to that information, Madam Minister—but," he pointed to the rest of the people in the room, "they can't know about it."

"What?"

"According to Section 44-DOM of the unnamed code drafted in the unspecified year by unknown parties, the Minister of Magic has access to a certain level of classified information in the Department of Mysteries, but they're not allowed to discuss those facts with anyone outside the Department of Mysteries."

"That is bullshit," the crude language didn't make a single eye twitch.

"There's a sub-section in the law wherewith an internal vote inside the Department of Mysteries can lead the classified status to be revoked, or select people can be given temporary clearance status to the information.

. . but other than that, the Department of Mysteries holds the rights to the information produced by us," Croaker answered with a straight face.

"As for this specific piece of information, there's no need to go through the procedure— it's not something that would make a difference if more people knew it."

". . . I'm shocked how your Department isn't overrun with corruption," Scrimgeour said with derision.

"We have our ways to keep everyone in check," said Croaker, smiling mysteriously. "And who knows, we might be teeming with corruption. . . . Whatever, the works been going on well, so no complaints."

The way he said that was so potentially serious with such a light tone made people stare at him for a good second.

"I am assuming it was Augustus Rockwood who led that other party?" Dumbledore continued the conversation along.

"Yes, Augustus Rockwood, an Ex-Unspeakable," Croaker said that term as if he had tasted something bitter. He looked to Amelia, "You know. . . we don't have that. . . Ex-Unspeakable. We have retired Unspeakables, and they don't have to be oldies who don't work another day in their lives; we have plenty of young guys who leave us to pursue other interests. . . but

not a single Ex-Unspekable— that is, until Augustus Rockwood came along and the Ministry had to make everything a media spectacle. We couldn't deal with Rockwood as we usually do with others in his position. If this time around, we find another Death Eater Unspeakable— we did a thorough check this time, but still, if we do— please make sure that we get to deal with them this time. If we dealt with him back then, we wouldn't have this situation today."

"We will see to that. Let's get back to where we were before."

"In the case of Ministry headquarters being compromised, like it came close becoming, the protocol for the Department of Mysteries is to pack up everything important and leave the premises. Even down at the ninth, people were in a hurry packing their respective inventory— and what was used in the Taboo magic is really specific and not useful for a lot of other magic— so it was down the list of priority packing. . . . It was somewhere in there that Rockwood and his group came in, took the stuff they needed, stunned the poor boy in charge of the area before leaving."

"Stunned. . . not killed?" asked Robards

"Rockwood knew better than to kill an Unspeakable. He might have been one of our more battle-oriented members, but he knows that he wasn't the only one and the trouble it would bring him if he did kill in his old workspace."

The smile on Croaker's face was simple, but at the same time, it lacked the humor it was trying to portray.

"Can you stop the Taboo?" asked Parry.

"We can. Destroy the anchor to which the magic is tied or kill the caster. But I doubt we can either do that easily."

Dumbledore said, "In the last war, Unspeakables were working on another method that would forcefully eradicate the magic. Are you

working on something similar this time?"

". . . You know too much, Dumbledore. We need to do something about that." Croaker stared at Dumbledore in silence for a moment before speaking, "Yes, we are working on something. But because the approach to casting the magic is different than the last time, we are working up from the ground up."

"So, you don't know until when it will be ready?" commented Dumbledore with a twinkle in his eye.

"No, we don't."

"Voldemort will—"

"Unspeakables can speak his name, Dumbledore; that doesn't extend to you," said Croaker.

"I understand it doesn't extend to me. But who said I can't cast something similar on my own."

Croaker's eyes observed Dumbledore. "You have found a way to dodge the Taboo magic?"

"Of course, it was easy enough to figure it out the last time around Voldemort cast it."

Dumbledore smiled and then Croaker smiled. The two smiled at each other like the best of a friend until the door swung open, and a Hit Wizard came barging with a labored breath and hurry in his eyes.

"What is the meaning of this, Rust?" asked Parry.

"S-Sir, a group of Snatchers tied together were suddenly dropped at our backdoor entry. . . and t-their hands sir— their hands are crippled sir."

As soon as everyone in the room heard about crippled hands, they got up as all brains pointed in the same direction.

"It's the Invisible Vigilante, sir!"

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Amelia Bones - Minister of Magic - This job better gets easier.

Gawain Robards - Head Auror - The lethality law is excellent, but they need to reduce the paperwork. . . or at least streamline it.

Rufus Scrimgeour - Head of DMLE - I want a wartime budget.

Saul Croaker - Unspeakable - No comments.

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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!

376. Chapter 376: Taboo Hunting

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Link in the Bio/Profile

For the past week, the smell of leaves and forest had become a mainstay in Quinn's life.

"I should've chosen a beach or something," said Quinn looking around the trees. "Green is overrated anyway," but then he remembered his girlfriend and shelved that thought in the recycle bin.

He canvased the surrounding area for a bit before tapping his chest for the casual clothing to change into the Noir gear, but it was in a forest camouflage shade rather than the usual black.

"Alright, let's do it," Quinn did some stretches, including some vocal warmups. He waved his hand in front of his face for a mask to appear, and then the distorted voice said in a smiling tone,
"Voldemort."

There was a rustle in the leaves as Quinn pulled on his gloves and clenched his fists at the sound of some laughter. He turned as the footsteps halted abruptly, and when he saw the group of people with wands out, their smiles drained as they recognized him.

"Snatchers. . . you have done well to heed my call," he said, "but it is regretful that you did so as this will not be pleasant."

The Snatchers didn't try to raise their wands to him; not a single spell was fired; instead, they immediately tried to apparate away— with the entire area twisting in spatial movement. But the next moment, the spatial fabric of the area froze up, and all the Snatchers were thrown to the ground.

"Please do not be in a rush to leave; you will be leaving, but not now." He had plans for them. The Snatchers pushed themselves away from him, crawling on the ground with their shaking wands pointed at Quinn as he sedately walked towards them.

"S-Stay away-away, you monster!"

"Please-Please, let us leave."

"Sorry, sorry, I'll never do it a-again. I am sorry."

Quinn stared down at the begging and hobbling Snatchers and said, "Too late, let us get started. . . all of us have a long day ahead of us." He raised his hands, and smoke leaked out of his palms. "Time to say farewell to the gift that you never appreciated."

After he was done, Quinn bound up the guys with real ropes boosted with Emyrean jacket covering every individual as a precaution. He dove into their minds and did a cursory read on their activity on what they had done in their time as Snatchers.

"I-I have a wife at home," eeked out one of the Snatchers.

"You should have thought that before you joined hands with the Death

Eater and raised your wands in the name of the Dark Lord," said Quinn, eyeing the binds one last time.

He turned and apparated away, leaving behind a groaning and begging mess.

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In another part of the forest, Quinn greeted another group of Snatchers and watched their excitement and joy drain from their bodies, only to be replaced with a growing sense of despair and panic.

"Welcome, Snatchers. Today is a glorious day in your lives, for you're finally going to be part of something great and meaningful," he said. He raised his arms, and smoke rushed out from beneath the bed of leaves around their feet. "Say your goodbyes; you're going to experience what it feels to be like the Muggles you all hunted. . . for sport."

Again, after he was done taking away the nerve activity in their hands, Quinn bound them up and again apparated to yet another part of the same forest.

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"Speak to me, Snatchers, how much price do your Death Eater lords have put on my head," asked Quinn to the group of prone Snatchers as the haze of soot of Tetani Nervum inched towards them.

He had already done this a few times, and repeating the same operation so many times while listening to the same please of begging had gone boring and irritating.

"W-W-What?"

"Snatchers are rewarded in gold for their captures. The Minister has a bounty, Dumbledore has a bounty, even the Boy-Who-Lived has gotten a bounty. . . . So I wonder, how much gold does the Dark Lord deem my life to be of?"

"I-I don't. . . don't know."

". . . Is that so," Quinn looked at all the Snatchers. A thought formed in his mind. He asked, "Does anyone know the bounty on my head? The one who answers will get a reward.

A reward that every one of you will want," as he spoke, the hazy smoke stopped just before the Snatchers' feet. "Speak to me, Snatchers; who wants the reward. . . . But be cautious. . . tell a lie, and I shall take your legs as well."

In any normal situation, someone would attempt to lie in the desperation situation, but this was out of the norm— none in the country hadn't heard of his work with Death Eaters. But it also meant that the Snatchers were scared to even speak a single word, until. . . .

"I-I know."

Quinn turned to the Snatcher at the very back. He instinctively put on a friendly face behind his mask and asked him to tell.

"T-The reward is y-your weight in gold."

". . . My weight in gold?" Quinn jerked back in surprise. The reason he had asked the question was only partly due to boredom and because his cursory glances had only given him the bounty of people the Snatchers had bothered to look up— Muggle-borns, blood traitors, Ministry officials, famous personalities. . . but no one he had met had bothered to look him up. He hadn't checked this group yet.

"My weight in gold," he made quick calculations in his head, "that will be more than you will get for either the Minister of Magic or Dumbledore.

You had a chance to reap enough reward to have lasted all of you and several of your upcoming generations. . . . But that is a far-off

hypothetical."

He got up from the wood log and said, "You have done well, Snatcher. I

will keep my promise and give you your reward," as he said that, the Snatcher's fearful face gave way to hope. . . which twisted in a showcase of betrayal as Quinn stunned him unconscious.

Quinn turned to the other Snatchers and said, "The reward was mercy. This magic," the smoke of Tentani Nervum inched forward, "is quite painful; at least, now he isn't going to go through it awake. . . . but for you, poor folk, get ready to familiarize yourself with pain. . ."

"N-No!"

"Please! Please!"

"God, help us!"

Quinn shook his head, "God won't be coming today. . . only pain."

He turned to gather rope as the haze overtook the Snatchers to finish the work that had been delayed due to boredom.

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Amelia Bones, surrounded by full protection of Hit Wizards, looked at the group of battered men who looked as if they had been dangled at the edges of hell just to be pulled back just before hell-fire got to them from behind a window.

"What is he muttering about?" she asked Scrimgeour.

The Head of DMLE leaned in to say, "They're repeating to stop it over and over again. . . . Some victims of his magic are known to show such behaviors."

"Because of the pain?"

"That and the feeling of not being able to feel their arms and legs can be quite overwhelming."

Amelia cleared her throat before asking, "Are we sure this is him?"

"Yes, it is him. Everything from the abnormal magic traces that don't match with wands and the magic itself resembles the previous samples we got from his confirmed victims. It is, without a doubt, him."

"Why is he doing this?"

"I don't know—"

The door behind them swung open and slammed into the wall, with a young Auror entering with a huff in his breath. He gulped and straightened when he felt the eyes of his superior's superior's many times superior on him.

"What is it?" asked Scrimgeour.

"S-Sir, more groups of Snatchers have appeared," he said in a rushed panic.

"What?!"

"They're at two of our sub-department back gates, two of the Hit Wizards', general supply gates— they are popping up using Portkeys in key locations in front of people's eyes."

"Get them out of there!"

"We did, sir. . . all of them are being filed into the jails. . . but sir, I'm afraid we have already exceeded capacity."

"How many of them are there?"

"F-Fifty and counting, sir."

Amelia and Scrimgeour exchanged shocked glances. Scrimgeour furrowed his brow as a thought struck him, and he turned to the Junior Auror, "All of them are cursed? Their hands. . ."

The Junior Auror nodded.

Another person entered the room, but unlike the Junior Auror, she entered silently and moved to the corner of the room where Saul Croaker stood in the shadows. She leaned to his ear and whispered something

under everyone's eyes and then stood to the side.

Croaker spoke, "One of the Snatcher groups has been delivered to one of our entrances. . . it was our main entrance," he sighed, "now we will have to change it."

". . . You don't seem worried," Amelia said. "The Invisible Vigilante found something about the Department of Mysteries. . . does that not bother you."

"It bothers me," Croaker nodded, "but there's nothing I can do about what has already happened— we just will have to reaffirm our security. . . .

Now, I would like to take my leave," he said with the young female walked with him.

"I will have someone pick up the Snatchers," said Scrimgeour.

"That won't be needed," Croaker smiled. "Those Snatchers are known under our jurisdiction. Don't worry; we will pass them along to you after we are done with them."

"That's not acceptable. You can't hold them for questioning."

"Yes, we can. As per Section-44AO-DOM of the unspeakable code—"

"Rubbish!"

Amelia saw that the two men were about to go down, so she barked the order to stand down. "Behave like grown men. The Unspeakables will have their time with the Snatchers—"

"But, there's no need for them to do so," Scrimgeour protested. "We can interrogate them and pass along the information. It will be better if a single team interrogates every one of them."

"The Department of Mysteries has our own methods of interrogation—"

Scrimgeour snorted at that.

Amelia sighed, "The Department of Mysteries will get their time, but the second that passes, they will return the Snatchers back to the Aurors

Office."

As she was about to leave, another Auror came running in.

"What now?" this time, Amelia herself exclaimed. "There are more?!"

"Err, yes, ma'am," said the second Junior Auror, "but that isn't why I'm here." He turned to Scrimgeour, "Sir, there's another group, but there's another group, but this time it isn't Snatchers. . . this time it is Death Eater."

Scrimgeour's eyes sharpened. "We are going now," he said.

"But sir, there is more," the Junior Auror gulped. "The Invisible Vigilante himself dropped of them. . . he left behind a message."

Amelia gasped. Scrimgeour turned more severe than anyone thought possible. Saul Croaker, who was about to leave, stopped and looked entirely interested in the conversation.

"What are we waiting for?" said Croaker. "Let's see what the man of the day has to say."

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Quinn West - MC - I sometimes partake in hunting.

Saul Croaker - Unspeakable - Section-44AO-DOM of the unspeakable code. . . is pretty legit.

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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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377. Chapter 377: Pink Chalk

Glows

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"Is that the message?"

Two Aurors with a faint layer of magic surrounding their body carefully approached the group of tied-up people dressed in Death Eater regalia. Those who had seen the previously delivered groups of Snatchers noticed how the Death Eaters had been handled with much less care than the Snatchers— the heavy bruising all over their faces, which made it difficult to identify even a single one made it clear that no love was spared for this particular group of people.

Rufus Scrimgeour narrowed his eyes at the big white envelope stained with mud stuck to the chest of one of the Death Eaters. He spoke to Amelia, "It has your name on it. . . do you perhaps know what it might be about?"

"Of course not. How would I? I have only been face-to-face with the man for mere minutes."

"Anything he said in those minutes?"

"You already know what he said in those minutes. You saw the memories first hand."

"And I can't thank you enough for sharing them with us."

Amelia hummed as she watched the Aurors dislodge the envelope after careful checking and consideration about the dangers it might contain. The Aurors hovered the envelope, each standing at a distance from it. The flap was gently unsealed, with the rest of the glued creases and folds coming undone to form a straight platform for the envelope's content to sit upon.

". . . What is that?" asked Amelia.

"It is not a letter, to say the least," said Scrimgeour in reply, but even the seasoned Auror was confused by what he was seeing.

On the disassembled envelope laid a palm-sized black puck that shined like a polished marble gleaming in the moonlight. The Auror handling the envelope and puck stepped closer and waved his wand over it, but just as the magic touched the puck, it vibrated, causing everyone to take a step back. The next second, the puck gained a life of its own and jumped off the paper onto the ground.

Amelia immediately felt one rough hand each on her shoulder. She jumped in surprise and hurriedly glanced to her side to see her Auror guard detail standing firm and alert.

"Madam Minister, the moment we deem the situation to be dangerous, we will be apparating away along with you. Please don't resist. The apparition location will be a safe house in a discreet location maintained by the DMLE for such situations," said one of the Aurors.

Amelia nodded, recalling the week before she had taken chair as the Minister of Magic, where she had been briefed about all of the security details, and her time as the Head of DMLE, where she had signed over the Minister's protection many a time.

"I understand; do whatever you must," she said.

The black puck thrummed violently before going still silent. The puck's top glowed, and a shimmering image of a man holographed over the puck. The dark silhouette's image broke and flickered before the transparent shape of light stabilized, and the dark shadow lightened to reveal the silhouette's identity.

"Greetings," said the holographic image of the Invisible Vigilante. "If you're seeing this means the carrier had delivered the message and the envelope was opened. I hope that the recipients are those in the Ministry.

This recorded message is taking responsibility for the use of my magic against the Snatchers and Death Eaters. . ."

It confused many about why the Invisible Vigilante would suddenly own up to his crimes. However, to those in the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, it was not unusual for terrorists to claim credit for their misdeeds and acts of terror. But this was unusual to even them. . .

". . . However, the real reason for sending this message is to urge the Department of Magical Law Enforcement to exploit the opportunity in front of you. . . The Taboo cast by the Dark Lord Voldemort—"

Everyone around them gasped, expecting the recording to get interrupted any moment.

"— while a curse can also be a boon if utilized so. . . . The Snatchers and Death Eaters who came joyously to my calls of the Taboo were baited to arrive at the fate of losing their magic and paying for the sins they have committed. Turn the curse into a boon— summon the Snatchers, and once in a while, you will get a Death Eater." The hologram looked around as if he was actually seeing them. "I will keep summoning them, take away their magic and leave them at your doorsteps. I say that the Department of Magical Law Enforcement weed them out until the Snatchers and Death Eaters no longer dare to answer the calls— until Voldemort himself pulls his own magic down.

War is upon this country, and it can not be fought with one side. . . if you do not become the other side, then I will. . . . That is all."

The puck's light flickered, and the holograph was extinguished, leaving behind the circular disk the message from the Invisible Vigilante.

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Back in the same meeting room, the people in the previous meeting sat again to discuss. . . but this time, they had a black puck sitting in the center of the table.

"More than fifty Snatchers and six marked Death Eaters just to send a message," Amelia sighed.

Scrimgeour sneered as he spoke, "He's just an attention seeker, setting a bad example. I expected the bad example, but I thought he would be more discreet," he said while looking at Saul Croaker.

"What does that mean?" asked Croaker.

"Oh, don't act clueless," Scrimgeour scoffed. "He is clearly one of your Unspeakables. . . who knows if he is retired or is still working under your nose."

"Are you mad? What proof do you have?"

"The vigilante called the Dark Lord by his name; clearly he didn't summon any Snatchers or Death Eaters. . . and he had been clearly summoning then left and right today," barked Scrimgeour.

It was then that Dumbledore spoke up to diffuse the situation. "I won't refuse Scrimgeour's theory about the possibility of the Invisible Vigilante being an Unspeakable," he looked to Croaker, "but speaking Voldemort's name isn't something only Unspeakables can do."

Croaker's pupil shrunk as he studied Dumbledore before turning to Scrimgeour. "The Invisible Vigilante is not part of my department. We have checked for that possibility multiple times."

"Or so you say. Who knows what goes down in that department of yours. Maybe lying through your teeth is part of that unnamed code of yours," Scrimgeour spoke in a biting tone.

Dumbledore stood up from his chair, hands raised, "Both of you're wasting your time fighting. Let us all calm down and get on the same

page because we will not get anywhere with all this fighting." He waited for Croaker and Scrimgeour to calm down before continuing, "Now, let us converse like civilized individuals. What did we learn from that message?"

"He apparently wants us to attack Death Eaters and Snatcher," Amelia sighed.

"I see no problems with it," said Scrimgeour. "I have been suggesting that since the day the Taboo went up around the country."

"It is crude, but I see no faults with that plan of action. I don't care for the Snatchers, but every Death Eater can be a valuable source of information," Croaker said and then eyed Scrimgeour. "I know you don't have the permission to get inside," he tapped his temple, "but if you hand them to me and don't ask questions, I can get you valuable information."

"Unspeakable Croaker! That is out of law even for the Department of Mysteries!" Amelia warned.

"It is war, Madam Minister," Croaker shrugged. "We need to employ some extreme measures in drastic situations."

"And create such a dangerous precedent for your department. No," Amelia shook her head. "The mind is out of interrogation boundaries for reasons. It is a right that every wizard and witch have and can't be breached in any circumstances."

Croaker sighed. He looked like he wanted to speak more but chose to stay silent and simply observe.

"What else?" asked Amelia.

Dumbledore replied, "He is going to continue this up. The Taboo will continue to summon Snatchers and Death Eaters. If he continues this, there will come a time when groups of Death Eaters will answer the calls. I'm sure he will be fine; he will even welcome it— but the people who

make mistakes of calling Voldemort's name will suffer— Snatchers might be greedy for rewards, but Death Eaters wouldn't care."

"We need to up the efforts to highlight the Taboo's danger," Amelia said with a serious note. "If he will continue doing this, then I don't see why we should not. Prepare for the Aurors to replicate his work— and keep it clean."

There were connotations in those words made so that it was up to Scrimgeour to interpret what he meant by keeping it clean. It was Amelia's way of saying that the responsibility would lie solely on Scrimgeour's head if things went wrong.

"Understood, Madam Minister," Scrimgeour was happy with that.

As the parties conversed, Dumbledore twitched his finger, and the puck silently slid across the table to him. He held it in his palm and stared with a train of thoughts running through his eyes. Water magic wasn't that uncommon; it might be just a coincidence, thought Dumbledore.

"Is there something wrong with the puck, Dumbledore?" asked Amelia.

Dumbledore shook his head. "I am just observing it. Please continue; I will let you know if I find something."

He silently reached into the oversized sleeves of his robes and pulled out a small vial of reddish-pink chalk. Dumbledore could hear his heartbeat in his ears as he gently and sneakily directed his magic into both the chalk vial and puck. He clutched the vial in his grasp, hiding it within with only the upper part barely visible and only to Dumbledore himself.

He slowly inched his hands closer until his came hand came to a halt.

Dumbledore stared down at his clenched hand, and there, from the top, a reddish glow leaked out.

'Oh no, oh no,' he thought, 'what have you done. . .'

"Dumbledore?" asked Moody.

Albus Dumbledore looked up at his long-time friend, and for a moment, the man who seemingly had answers to every question was speechless.

"Dumbledore?" Moody called again.

". . . Yes, Alastor?"

"Is everything alright?"

"Everything is alright. I was just wondering about his identity," the best way to lie was to tell the truth.

"Oh? Do you think it is an Unspeakable?"

"No. . . I don't think it is an Unspeakable. But he is talented."

Moody grunted in agreement, "He stabbed the Dark Lord in his eye, so I will give it to the lad."

". . . Yes," Dumbledore threw out a distracted reply.

After a moment, he slid the puck back to the table's center and pocketed the small vial of chalk.

"Did you find something of interest, Dumbledore?" asked Croaker curiously. "Maybe something that could lead us to the real Invisible Vigilante."

Dumbledore put on a regretful smile and shook his head, "Nothing I can find right now."

After that, Dumbledore leaned back into his chair, and for the rest of the meeting, he nodded and responded with half-baked answers. It had been a while since he had found something that had greatly occupied his mind.

The last time he had felt this was when he had found Harry Potter was a Horcrux.

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Invisible Vigilante - Quinn West - That took a couple of takes to record. .

. .

Albus Dumbledore - Headmaster - Like a thunderbolt.

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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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378. Chapter 378: Finally Visible

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Quinn stood inside Flourish and Blotts' inner corner, where all the 'boring' books sat away from the popular products that made the store money. But to Quinn, the newest batch of research journals was why he liked to visit bookstores regularly. As long as he could apperate to it, he wanted to go on his own— be it books or materials— where he couldn't, he had people scouring for the latest.

It was a peaceful time as he slowly flipped through the research paper titles and abstracts. It was the middle of a Tuesday with everyone working their jobs in their place of work. There weren't Hogwarts students plugging up the bookstore as they would before the start of the year. So Quinn could calmly browse the catalog without any unnecessary and unneeded disruption.

"Mr. West. . ."

The edge of the paper slipped from Quinn's hand as he turned his head towards the person who had called his name. He turned back to his book and groaned as he slowly closed the journal and returned it to the shelf.

"This is ridiculous," he said. "It's like every time I go out, one of you people comes finding me when I'm looking to relax." He looked around, "Is there someone following me around? I'm not a media celebrity, you know— I'm not supposed to be recognized in public, neither am I supposed to be followed around. . ."

After he had graduated, he had run into Saul Croaker, Unspeakable from the Department of Mysteries, and Rufus Scrimgeour, the Head of DMLE. He had even met with Amelia Bones, the Minister of Magic, but that was because of his own actions. And now he was meeting Albus Dumbledore, the Head of the Order of Phoenix.

He turned to his ex-Headmaster to ask, "So, what gives, Professor? Should I travel in stealth now? If people want to meet me, they can always set up appointments with my secretary."

"You have a secretary?"

"No, I do not."

"Then. . ."

"Exactly. You get it," Quinn said with a straight face before sighing.

"What is it that I can do for you today, Professor."

"It would be better if we talk in private."

Quinn observed Dumbledore with a critical eye, blatantly not hiding his doubt regarding this private invitation. Dumbledore didn't reveal his intention, silently insisting that it was a matter not to be discussed in public. After a few seconds of staredown, Quinn shrugged and decided to tag along with Dumbledore, who led him to a small tea shop on the secondary street of Vertic Alley.

When they entered, Dumbledore nodded to the man on the counter.

Quinn stopped at the counter, shook the man's hand and asked for his name, and created the man's profile in his mind, adding the 'possible

Order of Phoenix' tag to it.

They sat down on the innermost table in the corner of the petite shop.

After receiving what they had ordered, the two men finally got to talking.

"Can we talk now, Professor?" asked Quinn, sipping on his lemonade.

Dumbledore raised his hand and slowly swiped it in the air for a cover of magic to envelop them. Quinn narrowed his eyes at the magic to find it to be a privacy ward, a strong one at that.

He looked back at Dumbledore with a quirked brow, "Alright, you have colored me curious. What warrants so much cloak-and-dagger?"

Dumbledore reached into his robes and placed a small vial that could be comfortably held between the index finger and thumb on the middle of the table.

"What is that?" asked Quinn, eyeing the reddish-pink substance inside. He was about to crack a joke when he noticed the serious look in

Dumbledore's usually smiling eyes. "What is it?"

"This is the composite used as the catalyst in the ward that surrounded the Goblet of Fire in the Great Hall," the moment the words exited Dumbledore's words, Quinn's Occlumency kicked in as he manually controlled, but he kicked himself in the head as for a split second all emotion drained from his face. "You remember this, correct. We talked about it that year when I was trying to find the caster. . . . I wasn't able to find them back then. . . but I finally found them now. . ."

Quinn silently stared at Dumbledore. He had become excessively cautious for a moment, but as he thought about it, he calmed down. The Tri-wizard tournament was a long time ago, and it wasn't like he had done anything wrong— if protecting his friends was wrong, then he was fine paying for that violation.

"Oh? Who is it? Are they still in Hogwarts? That'd be mighty impressive if

they are."

Dumbledore stared deep into Quinn's eyes as he continued, "I was in the meeting with the Minister of Magic; we were discussing the Invisible Vigilante's latest. . ."

Quinn's heart skipped a beat.

". . . and he had sent the Ministry a message in the form of light and illusion magic spelled into a small black stout cylindrical object. . . and imagine my surprise that when I by chance tried to compare the magical signatures on that and this," he pointed to the vial, "they were a near-perfect match. . . . Invisible Vigilante was the person I had been looking for all these years."

"Oh?"

Dumbledore leaned forward, and the shop went eerily quiet; it was as if the ambient noise had been sucked up, leaving a sound vacuum. "Don't pretend to be clueless. I had long confirmed that this chalk dust was yours; there was no reason for me to bring it up— but I tested the two things for some remote intuition that I wasn't thinking would be true. . . and to my surprise, they matched.

I had found the Invisible Vigilante's hidden identity. . . it was you all along. You, Quinn West, was. . . are the Invisible Vigilante."

Quinn studied Dumbledore's face for a moment before he straightened up, and all fabricated emotion drained from his face. The old Headmaster had made up his mind, and no matter what Quinn said wasn't going to change his mind, so why bother pretending.

"Magical signatures can't be used in the court of law because of the unreliability issues associated with the method," said Quinn in a plain voice. Magical signatures were actively used by DMLE to narrow the list of suspects and focus their efforts in the right direction, but the findings

couldn't be used in front of a judge. . . and a Wizengamot jury.

"Remember who you're talking to, Mr. West," Dumbledore's steady tone had gained a terse quality. "I do not make mistakes. Especially when it comes to this."

"You can't prove it was me, Professor. No one can."

Dumbledore leaned back into his chair, looking at Quinn with still unbelievable eyes. "How could I not see this before. There were a few signs here and there. The advanced water magic that year at the Great Lake and the Invisible Vigilante's penchant to use Ice magic and the aggressive use of water magic in the Ministry against Voldemort. . . they could have been compared. . . and you displayed proficiency in water magic during the second task."

Dumbledore's words left a bitter taste in Quinn's mouth. In the intense situation of facing Voldemort, he had unleashed his water magic capabilities in public under the guise of the Invisible Vigilante.

I knew that day at the Great Lake would come to bite me in the back, thought Quinn.

Dumbledore, oblivious to Quinn's thoughts, pointed to his hands. "No one has ever seen the Invisible Vigilante use a wand. The DMLE and even I thought that he was using some other form of focus, but it turned out he was not using one at all— you showed flashes of wandless magic in Hogwarts, especially near the end. . . and after Hogwarts, I had heard you had rested your wand, I thought you were growing splendidly as you became older and gained more experience— never did I thought that you were holding back since who knows when."

The Headmaster of Hogwarts, the one who had defeated one Dark Lord and had been a thorn in the second one's, seemed tired as he stared at Quinn incredulously. "The Novellus Accionites' attack at Hogsmeade in

1993, that's where you made your public appearance. . . . you were fourteen years old that year. . . a fourteen year old who thrashed grown adults into walls and stabbed them with ice spikes. Was that your first endeavor, or did you start before that with some incident that the DMLE hasn't credited to you?"

While Dumbledore tried to wrap his head around the fact that the Invisible Vigilante could have started as a fourteen-year-old kid behind a mask, Quinn was thinking with his mind running at hyper speeds; what was he going to do now— one of the most influential men in the country was convinced that he was the Invisible Vigilante.

"What is this, Professor?" Quinn shook his head. "Why are you trying to match to unrelated people? How could I be the Invisible Vigilante? I wasn't even in the country during the Dark Lord's attack on the Ministry. I was out in America when all of that happened. There is ample proof in government records, and there were people who saw me there in case you're thinking of going to the DMLE with this ridiculous theory of yours."

"You're right, I'm not going to the Aurors with this," Dumbledore shook his head. "You're very fortunate to be born in the family you were born in, Mr. West. You have access to things people can only dream of. You are right; I don't have any way to legally prove that you're the Invisible Vigilante. Even if I could, your grandfather would prevent you from facing any charges. . . ."

There was something Quinn could finally agree with. If push came to shove and his identity was finally revealed, his grandfather would ensure that he wasn't put into Azkaban for his actions. The Ministry might actively pursue him for his crimes, but he would never be tried if George West had some say in it— and George West usually had a say in

everything.

". . . And because of that, I feel no guilt to use this information for my own purposes."

". . . What?"

"I'm going to go to your grandfather and tell him all about this. I will tell him my findings. . . my theory. . . and I'll show him your reaction today to convince him that you're the Invisible Vigilante. . ."

"Wait—"

". . . I'm going to then put forward a proposition. He provides me all the support I need for the war against Voldemort in exchange for my keeping quiet about the truth."

"Listen here—"

"George will understand the severity of the situation. He will know what this information can do coming from my mouth. He will, on his own, recall how the current leadership of DMLE feels about the Invisible Vigilante and the Ministry's changed stance on the wanted criminal. And to make sure that his grandson's life isn't tainted by such a dark spot, he will cooperate with me and provide—"

"Dumbledore!" Quinn roared as he smashed the side of his fist on the petite table.

The small tea shop shook as if an earthquake was coursing the bricks of the building. The short shopkeeper on the counter stood up with his wand out, but Dumbledore waved him down to ensure everything was fine.

"Don't push it, Dumbledore," Quinn glowered. "If there's one thing I don't like, that's someone trying to take advantage of those close to me."

Dumbledore stood up calmly from his chair and looked down at Quinn,

"You've been blessed with prosperity many couldn't even dream to

imagine, so I say it is time to pay up." His face turned bitter as he continued, "You're a killer, Mr. West. So young but with blood on your hands. You shouldn't have gone through that— and for that, I profusely apologize. But I need your grandfather's help to prevent that from ever happening, and this is the quickest way to accomplish that."

"Oh, don't give me that," scoffed Quinn. "You have blood plenty on your hands, Dumbledore. Don't try to dress all of that in a pretty package and try to guilt-trip me along with all the emotional pointers you just threw." Dumbledore showed a bitter smile. He nodded deeply, "I know, Mr. West. I am well aware of that," he looked down at his hands with a brief haunted look in his eyes.

He didn't say a single more word and turned away to leave.

"What if I tell him myself?" said Quinn immediately.

Dumbledore stopped, turned his head, and shook his head, "It's not going to make a difference. . . . I apologize for doing this. I would've never done this if it wasn't for the current circumstance. . . . It is all for the Greater Good."

Quinn wanted to say so much hearing that, but Dumbledore continued to walk away, and the words died in his mouth as other thoughts took more forceful priority.

He stared at where Dumbledore had placed the chalk vial that he had taken away.

He had to make plans.

And he had to make them quick.

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Quinn West - MC - Oh, shut up!

Albus Dumbledore - Defeater of Dark Lord - It is for the Greater Good.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - A reminder. Read Chapter 155: "As I

Thought" if you're confused and need a short recall.

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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!

379. Chapter 379: Making

Preparations

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 paced in his room with heavy worry echoing in his every step. It felt like his knees were injected with lead, and his saliva had been replaced with something much more viscous. His body felt hot, something his body tended to do when his brain ran under extreme pressure and in uncomfortable situations.

Dumbledore knew his identity as the Invisible Vigilante.

'Shit! Shit! SHIT!' It was a huge problem. The moment his grandfather came to know that he had been hunting down terrorists under a mask, all his freedom would be taken away from him. George 'Head Of The Family' West would do everything in his power to restrict Quinn's movement— it didn't matter Quinn was already of age adult, George was going to do everything he could to make sure Quinn didn't have breathing room.

"Aaah! Why did I lose my control. . ."

The meeting with Dumbledore was a trap that he had walked in on willingly without a single shred of persuasion. If Dumbledore had gone

directly to George, while it would've left Quinn blindsided, he could've talked his way out of it, and even if George didn't believe him and placed people around him, he could've given them the beat. But Dumbledore had sacrificed that advantage to gain another one— in exchange for informing Quinn that he was going to George, he had gained Quinn's reaction.

And he had given precisely the reaction Dumbledore wanted.

He had pulled up Occlumency and had failed to fabricate emotion on his face for discreet purposes. That single fault had made it look like Quinn was hiding— he was either the Invisible Vigilante or knew who the Invisible Vigilante was. The latter had been struck off the board because Dumbledore could prove that Quinn was the Invisible Vigilante— when it came to magic, Dumbledore was an authority whom many people believed. . . and George West was among those people.

There were enough cascading layers of things against Quinn that even if he lied, George wouldn't believe him outright. 'Trust, but not blindly,' was one of George West's favorite mottos, and when he was in doubt, he would do his own digging, and things were bound to seem suspicious with the timing of things, and George didn't need proof admissible by law to form his conclusions.

Even before all that, Quinn couldn't lie to his grandfather. In case he lied and George believed it, and then later it came out that he was indeed the Invisible Vigilante all along. . . that would shatter the trust between grandfather and grandson with cracks and damage spreading to his other relationship as well.

Could he stop the meeting between Dumbledore and George? He could not; stopping Dumbledore physically(magically) wasn't going to work, and he couldn't imagine any other way he could stop either one of them.

Dumbledore wanted the benefits that the West resources could provide him, and George would want to meet Dumbledore so he could keep the news from going out.

Fighting Dumbledore? It could either end badly or make enough ruckus to attract unwanted eyes. The chances of safe victory were not high enough for him to take the path that could backfire on him.

The question that remained was if he should be the one to break the news to George or if he should let Dumbledore do it. George was out of the country for a couple of days, which meant that Dumbledore wouldn't find George until then. . .

'I can't be sure.'

. . . Dumbledore could go abroad just to have the talk faster. It made sense as George would be out of his 'comfort' place and would be more perceptible to Dumbledore's demands.

Quinn sighed. The reason he was even thinking of letting Dumbledore break the news was that it may come to that. He needed some essential time to make some moves because whatever was going to happen, things were going to go downhill for him in various ways, and he had to make the preparation needed to face whatever was to come.

Quinn sat himself on the edge of the bed. . . his eyes heavy with thought and contemplation. The sun in the sky traveled its course as the shadows in the room slowly shifted. It was after an hour since he had gone still and silent that Quinn stood up from his bed, walked to his walk-in closet, and after a while, he came out dressed for going out with his suitcase in hand.

"Polly!"

The West house-elf popped into the room. Her big eyes went to Quinn's suitcase and then to his clothes before she looked at his face. There were

no questions from her, but Quinn knew what she wanted to ask.

"I'm going to a friend's place for a bit," said Quinn, spinning another lie to tell his family. "I will come back in a few days, but if someone in the family asks. . . I'm at Marcus Belby's house. Ms. Rosey already has his address and his MagiFax details. When they return home, please inform them that it was a last-minute decision."

No one was home, making it the perfect point to leave.

Quinn bid farewell to the clueless Polly, who didn't know what was going on inside. It could be that this was one of the final times for a while she would be able to go to Quinn with a single thought.

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Quinn stared at the building in front of him. It was a building entirely opposite to Gringotts; the thought entered his mind just like it had entered the last time he had seen the building. A soul-sucking black without a fleck of dust marring a surface so polished that one could see its reflection.

He walked to the glass doors of the establishment with his eyes glancing at the name written in gold overhead.

□Monolith□

The symbol of terror and reassurance. The bank's policy — don't steal from us, and we will keep your money safe, secured, and growing.

Monolith was a classic private bank that catered to affluent clients with an abundance of wealth like West— and provide them with facilities like essential banking services, brokerage, limited tax advisory, concierge-type services, discretionary asset management, and the vast array of wealth management. They were infamous stating for their secrecy

promises. Once money goes into Monolith, it's difficult for an outsider to get information about who holds what and how much; they promise that your financials are going to be kept under a tight seal; of course, they won't help you break the law — bend around the law, sure — but not breaking the law. And because they only service high-asset clients, who have rock-solid financial stability, it ensures that Monolith won't go bankrupt, thus making it extremely safe for them to hold people's assets. He had made a Portkey of the location he had already seen and triggered it to travel to Basel, Switzerland, where the bank that managed his magical money had been securely stored.

The lobby only had one greeting table, and the lobby somehow didn't look desolate despite the lack of any other furniture. Behind the long white patterned marble table sat three women in the prime of their beauty, dressed in identical attire. As he approached them, the middle woman looked up from her work— there was a brief daze in her eyes before clarity descended in her eyes.

"Welcome, Mr. West," she slightly bowed, "we weren't expecting you today; nevertheless, we at Monolith are ecstatic that you are here visiting."

"Thank you, Amaryl," Quinn greeted the front desk concierge and glanced at her identical sisters— Cheryl and Daffodil. This much hadn't changed ever since his last visit to the bank.

"What brings you here today, Mr. West," Amaryl asked politely.

"I would like to meet Gair."

". . . Mr. Gair might not be able to meet you today, Mr. West," she sounded troubled. "He only meets clients through appointments so that his day is planned out. He might not be willing to meet you right now."

"Tell him it is urgent," said Quinn simply.

Amaryl turned to her workstation, and her hands moved behind the thick table. Quinn couldn't tell what she was doing, but he could sense some magic being operated. In the meantime, Quinn turned to the little stone gremlins perched on the walls and ceiling around the huge room. He watched as one of the gremlins' eyes followed him like a security camera. He stared at the stone gremlins intently and kept his eyes on one of the stone gremlins.

After a minute, Amaryl turned to Quinn with a beautiful smile, "Mr. Gair will meet you, Mr. West. He is getting free within the next hour and has asked that you wait in his personal guest lounge that he uses to entertain his guests."

They walked into the inner part of the bank through an entrance in the inner wall of the lobby and entered a room with a dozen doorways. They stepped into the doorway with the number four in roman numerals etched above. Number four was known as the West gate as through there one can go to the part of the bank that handles the West fortune. They walked through a few corridors, passing by many doors and coming across a few people who would make pleasantries with Amaryl, who didn't seem particularly about most of them.

After they exited the corridors, the interior changed into a classic renaissance design, much different from the rest of the bank. They soon reached a pair of dark wood doors. A pale woman sat outside the door, to a side behind a desk. She wore thin-rimmed circular glass with messy brown curls flowing down her shoulders.

Quinn readily greeted the woman, "Ixquic, it has been a while. . . I hope you're doing well."

Ixquic stared at Quinn with her half-dazed eyes. For a moment, they simply stared before Ixquic's eyes regained focus. She got up and took

over from Amaryl and led him to an ornate lounge to wait.

"How are you, Ixquic? How is the life of a living blood bag," asked Quinn calmly.

"It has been fruitful."

"How is your health. I hope no complications on that front."

"My health has been fine, thank you. My body has adapted itself to it."

Quinn asked a couple more questions, but the answers were all curt bare-minimum words, so after a while, he stopped asking and closed his eyes in waiting, going through his memories. Around an hour later, he was roused up from his memory traversal and said that Gair was ready to meet him.

Ixquic pushed one pane of the double doors open with her entire body.

"Please go in," she gestured to him. Quinn entered the styled office, with Ixquic not going in with him. A wall covered with bookshelves, artwork framed on the others; a sitting area around a table in one part of the room; wooden cabinets fitted with glasses. And the most eye-catching part of the room were animal heads mounted on the upper walls — lion, tiger, wolf, elk, among other non-magical animals but then there were the magical species, and that collection was impressive from every angle — an Egyptian sphinx, a Peruvian Vipertooth dragon, a South American Firedrake, a white-feathered Griffin, and the list went on.

Sitting in the center of the office was a man in his prime, dressed in a simple white shirt and black pants, leaning into his chair behind a simple-yet-ornate four-legged desk.

"Quinn West," said the ancient vampire in his deep voice. "Why are you here without any prior intimation?"

The blood-red eyes stared at Quinn as if trying to peer through all of his secrets.

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Quinn West - MC - I need to literally run now.

Idris Gair - Vampire - Very old; flirty; laid-back; has raised his own blood bank.

Ixquic - Blood bank (Blood Woman) - I don't speak much.

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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!

380. Chapter 380: Funds From

The Vampire

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

Quinn and Gair sat in front of each other in the latter's office.

"I don't like to meet people without appointments, Quinn West. If you didn't know it before, know it now," said Gair. The ancient vampire was as Quinn remembered him last time; he still seemed lazy and looked like he was on the verge of sleeping, but there was a flicker of annoyance in the red eyes. "Even if it is your grandfather, I would take offense if he came here unannounced."

Gair sighed, and if there was a place where a sigh would seem natural, it was on him. "But now that you are here tell me what you're here for. I can't send someone so far away from away."

Quinn was in no mood to exchange quips with Gair, so he got straight to

the point. "I need to withdraw some funds from my account here. I hope you kept some of my wealth in liquid reserve."

"Excluding your emergency fund, I have kept one percent of the gold you initially allocated to me."

". . . One percent!" Quinn furrowed his brow. That was lower than he thought.

"According to the last report I read, the coinage was still at five percent," said Quinn.

"You haven't been keeping up with the reports," Gair quirked his eye.

Quinn's wealth was invested in a wide portfolio; all of it was handled by three firms— The Broker, who managed his non-magical investments. . . the West's Basel Office, which dealt with a large portion of the entire West family's wealth. . . and the Monolith bank which provided the Wests with its financial services.

Quinn had divided his wealth among the three firms to not put all his eggs into one basket; moreover, every one of them had a different skillset and ideology towards investment, which would give Quinn gains(or losses) in diverse areas. Out of all three, he had only asked Monolith and Gair to hold cash reserves, with the other two keeping the entire reserves bound up in investments. He got audited reports on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis on the health of his wealth— but unfortunately, to no fault of anyone else, Quinn had not gotten the time to read the recent reports.

"I admit, I have not been keeping up with them," Quinn sighed. Five percent of a third of his wealth would've barely gotten him through what he was planning, but one percent wasn't something he was not at all comfortable with. "Isn't one percent quite less?" he asked.

Gair sighed, "Including the trust fund made for you by your grandfather,

one percent of what I had was more than enough even for the exorbitant expenses you have. . . You know, I have heard of many young lads who spend left and right without care, but even among them, you're near the top."

Quinn pursed his lips. He spent a lot of money every month on research and development. Magic was a free resource that only took regular meals and good sleep every day to regenerate— but progressing in magic wasn't cheap; at his level, it took a lot of resources to get to the next level.

"I want that one percent and the emergency fund," Quinn asked Gair; still inside, he felt that the funds weren't going to be enough.

The situation was still contained, so he could go to the Basel Office and ask them to liquidate some funds, but that would take time which he didn't have, and the moment situation broke out, the doors to the Basel Office would be closed to him.

'I will have to with this for now,' thought Quinn. It meant that he had to go to The Broker at some point to liquidate his portfolio there— unlike the Basel Office, the Broker was his personal contact.

"Why do you want so much cash?" Gair took out a sheet of paper and a pot of ink. "Are you planning to buy something big?"

Instead of answering the question, Quinn posed one of his own to Gair.

"Are you employed by my grandfather solely. . . or am I also paying you?"

Gair unscrewed the ink bottle and curled his finger up for red ink to float out of the bottle. Quinn blinked at the ink that flowed to the paper and started to form words. Vampires were magical creatures, but they weren't supposed to use them like this.

Then it hit Quinn.

"You use blood in ink," he said, surprise clear on his face. He used blood

magic to confirm his theory.

"I do," said Gair nonchalantly as the blood printed words on the paper like a printer

". . . Is it Ixquic's?"

"Human blood is not suitable for inks. This is a blend of inks from different beasts and creatures— had it custom made by a good friend of mine, Ricci."

"Another vampire?"

"Of course, only a vampire can know blood so well; I haven't seen an ink so good— with or without magic," Gair swiped his hand, and the paper sheet slid to the slide, but then a new sheet of paper slid in front of him.

Quinn's jaw loosened. He had thought that the first sheet moved because of the blood ink, but it seemed that even the sheets even themselves had blood in them.

Quinn looked around the room, wondering what else in the room was infused with blood or blood magic.

"I am employed by the West family business, your grandfather, your sister, and you," answered Gair without looking up.

"What?"

"The answer to your previous question. I treat business and people as separate entities— I handle the business accounts, but I also handle the personal accounts of George, Lia, Elliot, and Rosey—"

"Elliot and Ms. Rosey as well? They qualify as clients for Monolith?" The bank only took customers who could meet their standards of wealth.

"Elliot Dalton and Rosey Vivian are both extremely rich. Years working with your grandfather have its gains. Both of them are prolific investors and have invested in various companies; they might not earn as much as you do, but their portfolio is nothing to sneeze at. Especially, Elliot

Dalton— a majority of his businesses compliment some arm of the West business, so when that subsidiary grew, Elliot's business would grow as well."

That surprised Quinn. But now was not the time to expand on the situation.

"Would you share my information with my grandfather?"

"Why would I do that?" asked Gair, still writing up papers. "I don't have the habit of discussing client information with others."

"Even if it is George West," Quinn used the full name.

"Even if it is, George West."

"He can make problems for you."

"I am well aware. . . he's a big enough client that if he asks, the board will kick me out. . . even though I have a share in the bank. . . why are you asking?"

"He will come looking for me in a few days."

"Why? Are you running away from home?" When Quinn didn't speak, Gair looked up. "Seriously. . . you're too old to run away from home; aren't you an adult now, holy blood, why would you do that?"

"Some stuff, don't worry about it," Quinn waved it off. "Grandfather will come looking, and when he does, don't say anything to him. He will ask for the records of every single purchase I made through my account here, but I don't want you to give him anything."

"Got it."

"This will cause problems for you."

Gair closed the inkpot and leaned back into his chair, looking like he was sitting on a rocking chair by a fireplace. "I have been doing this job for who knows how long and have made some great money doing it— more than I can spend in this century even with all I spend," the pale man

seemed apathetic as he spoke every word. "The only reason I do this job is that I'm good at it. It doesn't matter to me if George gets me fired. I'm a partner in the bank; even if they do kick me out, the money will keep coming in.

I will go find something fun. . . though I will be disappointed in George—and honestly, I do not think he will have me fired— a man should have integrity and me protecting my client shows it," Gair shrugged. "Runaway all you want, Quinn West; I shall keep my tongue to myself— your secrets will stay safe with me."

Gair rang a bell, and Ixquic came in. He handed her the papers, and she took them away.

Quinn studied Gair. He thanked the man but inside, all he could think was what it would be that old. The vampire was the oldest man Quinn had ever met, and it made him curious to think how life changed after one had done one single job longer than most people lived.

'Maybe Mr. Alan would know; he must've lived someone who lived that long,' a stray thought passed his mind that made him smile bitter— having thoughts about magic in such situations showed him something about priorities.

"Thank you, Mr. Gair."

Now that he had the money, he had other preparations to make.

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Quinn had returned home the next day and was walking past the lounge to his room when he heard his name called out. He turned and entered the lounge to find George sitting alone, nursing a drink in his hand. The room was dimly lit by a table-side lamp and the gentle moonlight coming

through the windows.

"It is late, grandfather. You shouldn't be drinking so late in the night," said Quinn sitting down in front of him. It was strange for him to see George drink anywhere outside his cellar— that place specially built for enjoying a drink. . . built for George West to enjoy a drink in peace "I heard you were at Marcus' home," said George. "How's the lad doing? He's going to start his training the next week."

"He told me," said Quinn; he had known that for a while now. "I'm still planning that trip with him. It needs to happen before I go for my apprenticeship and Eddie starts his career in earnest, so I want him to have a good chunk of time off."

"Have a talk with Elliot," said George.

"I will. I will." Quinn studied George, and his grandfather seemed to be distracted and looked like he had a little too much to drink. "Are you alright, grandfather?"

"I'm fine, my child," said George, taking another sip from his glass.

Quinn stood up and walked to George to take the glass. "You should stop drinking. It's already late; go to sleep."

George stood up and looked like he was going to stagger, so Quinn gave him support, but he raised his hand to say he was fine. George patted Quinn on his shoulder before walking away.

Quinn cleaned up the room before walking out himself to find Ms. Rosey standing at the door.

"Do you know why he was like that?" he asked.

". . . It is the day he lost her. . . your grandmother's death anniversary. You were in Hogwarts this time of the year, so you wouldn't know," said Ms. Rosey. She raised her hand to Quinn's cheek and gently caressed it. "He has lost too much already, my dear. You and Lia are all he has left.

Treat him well. . ."

Quinn nodded.

She smiled and walked away into the darkness.

". . . I'm sorry," he muttered alone.

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Quinn West - MC - Time to get that gold.

Idris Gair - Vampire - Yeah. . . I have blood in a lot of my things.

FictionOnlyReader - Author - Next couple of chapters are going to be around the current topic.

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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!

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