

## Efflorescence

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# Efflorescence

by [Nymphadordable](#)

## Summary

There is something different about Dudley Dursley's daughter Daisy. Desperate to protect her and searching for answers, Dudley finds himself on the doorstep of the only person who can provide them, his cousin Harry.

## Notes

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Thank you to my betas Ladygrangerdanger & Keep\_Calm\_And\_Expecto\_Patronum, you guys have gifted me with so much of your time, your input, and and are a constant source of joy. You two are the best.

I also want to thank Allie, Lyndsay, Danny & the Potterotica Podcast for introducing me to the world of Potterotica, and somehow managing to expand my love for the Potterverse.

This is my first story & it is a work in progress. I will release the newer chairchapters as I finish them.

# Prologue: Dudley, Daisy and the Debut

## Chapter Summary

There is something different about Dudley Dursley's daughter Daisy. Desperate to protect her and searching for answers, Dudley finds himself on the doorstep of the only person who can provide them, his cousin Harry.

A warm summer breeze ruffled Dudley's golden hair as he stood beneath the wisteria-draped archway, afraid to walk down the winding stone pathway towards the cozy Tudor cottage, but unable to turn back. He hadn't seen his cousin since Harry and his pretty ginger wife's wedding, and although they'd made amends, guilt still clawed at his chest whenever he attempted to reach out. Looking down into the seafoam eyes of the perfect little girl resting in his arms, he wondered, *How can he ever truly forgive me? How can I? What have I done?*

A tiny pink hand reached up, holding his chin and comforting him. "O'tay, Daddy?" the tiny, tinkling voice asked.

Pride swelled in Dudley's chest; drawing his daughter up, he leaned down to place a tender kiss on her fiery curls, quietly whispering against her forehead, "Daddy's okay, blossom."

Clearing his throat and the worry lodged there, Dudley squared his broad shoulders, and clutching his little girl closer, strode up to the welcoming porch. As soon as he stepped up to it, and before his courage could abandon him, Dudley rapped his knuckles against the red varnished door.

Just as the thought began to chew at the back of his mind that perhaps he should turn around and flee home, the ornate knob turned, and the door swung open to reveal a familiar bespectacled face and mop of inky, disheveled hair.

"Dudley?" Harry asked, a confused look spreading across his face.

"Hey, Harry," Dudley replied with an embarrassed smile. "I'm sorry to come calling so late and without any warning."

Leaning against the door frame, Harry ran a hand through his already mussed locks, and carefully replied, "It's alright, mate. Is everything okay? Has something happened?"

Looking into his cousin's green eyes Dudley sighed, exhausted. Unconsciously stroking his daughter's back he chewed at his lower lip and responded, "Yes. No... Honestly? I don't know." Nervously, he drew the blanket from over his baby girl's head and shoulders, and pleading with his eyes, spoke barely above a whisper, "I have someone I need to introduce you to."

Looking down into pale green eyes that unmistakably looked like his and his mother Lily's, Harry nodded and stepped to the side, murmuring, "You had better come in."

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A confused frown furrowed Dudley's brow as he tried to make sense of what he was seeing before him. Covering the mantle of the fireplace, and the walls to either side and above it, were dozens of picture frames. It wasn't the frames themselves that were perplexing him, or even the subjects of them, which were clearly Harry and his wife Ginny's friends and family; no, what really had thrown him for a loop was that they all seemed to be animated. Moving closer to get a better look, he was quickly able to surmise that these were not the ordinary digital frames you could pick up at any electronics store in London, they seemed to be actual photos that had somehow been brought to life.

The tiny hand of the little girl who'd given him a new perspective on life reached out towards one of the photos on the mantle, drawing his attention to it. The picture was of two handsome ginger fellows, clearly twins, standing side by side with arms hanging over each other's shoulders, standing in what looked to be some kind of sweets shop. The slightly taller of the two was reaching out, extending a lolly with a mischievous grin gracing his face. Dudley was unable to draw his eyes away from the pair, even as he heard the soft footfall of Ginny approaching him from behind, only turning to face her as her hand gently grazed his shoulder.

"Who's this?" the redhead asked with a welcoming smile, her affectionate gaze falling on the wide-eyed toddler in his arms. Harry came to stand beside his bride, wrapping an arm around her waist, his eyes following hers to the little girl being cradled by his cousin. Clearing his throat, Dudley took a steadying breath, looking down at his petal before drawing his eyes back up to the pair before him.

"This is my daughter, Daisy," Dudley replied with a tenderness that Harry had never heard come from his cousin before. "Daisy," he cooed, "Say hi to your cousin Harry."

"Hi Hawwy," the little girl repeated, before looking at Harry's wife and cheerfully confounding the married pair by looking the ginger witch in the eye and addressing her as well, "Hi Ginny."

After sharing a startled look with his wife, Harry looked back at Dudley with a confused expression and asked, "How does she know who Ginny is?"

Crestfallen, Dudley's eyes moved down to his daughter, tears suddenly filling them. "I thought maybe she was like you..." he trailed off, choking back a sob. Looking back up at his cousin, distraught, Dudley began to cry, startling Harry into speechlessness. Ginny moved to reach out to the taller man in order to comfort him, but stopped short when the toddler squirmed in his embrace, and began stroking his face.

"S'okay, Daddy," she soothed him. "They don't undewstan. Hawwy want to help. Ginny want to help. Try 'gain, Daddy."

Holding Daisy tighter, and rocking her back and forth, Dudley dragged a hand across his cheeks, nose and eyes while regaining his composure.

Voice thick with barely controlled panic he looked back to his cousin, "So you can't all read minds then?" he uttered the question that he was most terrified of.

Realization dawned on Harry and Ginny gasped before leaving his side and rushing to Dudley, wrapping both him and his daughter in a protective hug. Dudley froze at her sudden change in demeanor, before months of terror began to drain from his body, and he relaxed into her embrace.

"No, mate," came the cautious reply. "That's an extremely rare skill called Legilimency. Most witches and wizards who practice it spend years learning the ins and outs of the art," Harry told his cousin, grateful when the panic had finally left Dudley's eyes. Ginny ran her fingers through Daisy's hair, looking at the little girl with fascination, before drawing her gaze up to Dudley's. She softly patted his arm, and drew him over to the couch. He nodded to her in thanks, grateful for the opportunity to sit down, as the revelation had weakened his knees.

"Dudley, being born with this gift is incredibly rare. Queenie Kowalski is the only witch or wizard that I know of, that's been born with it in the past two centuries," she gently confided in the big man, sitting down beside him. Looking back over her shoulder, Ginny spoke to her husband, "Only the most powerful witches and wizards are natural born Legilimens. Even then, it has only been a few, not all of them." Harry looked with concern to his cousin and the little girl in his arms.

"She's going to need a lot of guidance, Duds. Bad things happen when a magical child's abilities are repressed," Harry warned. Dudley nodded, looking down at Daisy with reverence.

"Of course," he croaked, lovingly brushing the copper ringlets from her face. "We will do anything, everything that she needs."

Harry nodded, relieved when the argument he'd expected never arrived, and crossed the room to sit beside his cousin. He held out his hand to the lovely child staring inquisitively at him and smiled as she wrapped her little fingers around his thumb. Chuckling he leaned down and kissed the girl's knuckles.

Tossing an arm around Dudley's shoulder, Harry grinned down at the little face smiling up at him, and spoke to her directly, "Hi Daisy, welcome to the family."

# Memories of Times Gone By

## Chapter Summary

Fifteen years have passed since Daisy Dursley was officially accepted into the wizarding community.

Now with the first day of her Seventh Year just around the corner, Daisy gets ready for the Potter's annual Back To School Party; but first, a trip down memory lane is in order.

## Chapter Notes

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## Current Day - Fifteen Years Later

Golden sunlight filtered in through the delicate saffron curtains that Nanna Weasley had crocheted for Daisy last Christmas. The resulting effect was a dazzling display of shadows and light, weaving their way across the plush amber, amethyst, ivory and onyx furnishings of the cozy bohemian paradise that she'd created for herself. Standing in the middle of the room before a gilded full-length mirror, stood Daisy, slowly twirling back and forth as she admired the lemon silk of the peasant dress her father had gifted her for just this occasion.

Her gaze traveled from the flowing bell sleeves, up to her bare sun-kissed shoulders. From there she followed her collarbone down to the gathered bodice of the dress; her breasts had filled out over the summer, and she briefly wondered if she should put on a bra. The thought was fleeting and she quickly decided against it, she was enjoying the sensation of the soft material against her wide-set, newly-full bust. Smoothing her hands over her ribcage she smiled at the way the dress's empire cut accented her petite waist, before flaring out into a breezy skirt that stopped mid-thigh, showcasing her long legs. The wedges that she'd chosen to pair with the dress were a matching yellow, covered in tiny white daisies; all together she

thought it was the perfect outfit for the annual pre-Hogwarts send off party the Potters held every year, which her and Daddy would be leaving for shortly.

Stepping away from the looking-glass she turned on the record player beside her dresser and nodded along to the upbeat tempo of her and Teddy's favorite band, The Naughty Niffles, sitting down at her vanity to find the gold badger print earrings that Teddy had gifted her for her last birthday. They were her favorite piece of jewelry, not only because she revelled at every chance she was given to show off their house pride, but also because he'd remembered her talking about how cute she thought their little paws were, and had then gone out of his way to have them made for her. He was always doing sweet little things like that, and it was one of the many reasons she'd grown to love him so.

As she fastened the cherished trinkets to her earlobes, her eyes glazed over with some of her favorite memories of times that they'd shared.

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Daisy was five, and although Professor McGonagall had become a regular fixture in her life, she was still afraid to be starting lessons so soon. Teddy on the other hand, sharing none of her apprehension, was beside himself with excitement, his hair a riotous rainbow of color as they sat on their parents' laps in the Headmistress's office.

"So I'll be able to hear and talk to Daisy in our heads, like she does to me?" Teddy's question sounded ecstatic.

Daddy stiffened beneath her and she patted the hand he had resting on her tummy. Why would that upset him, she wondered?

"That's right, Mr. Lupin," the older witch replied with a great deal of patience. "But first we will focus on you being able to stop her from accessing your thoughts."

Teddy scoffed, immediately putting an end to the sadness that had begun to tug at Daisy. "Why would I want to do that?" came Teddy's indignant reply. "She's my best friend."

The adults all shared knowing glances, each thinking of different reasons why he might want to. None of the thoughts made sense to her, but she could hear them all the same.

"Uh, hello! I'm right here!" Daisy responded with more sass than she would normally show to one, let alone four, adults.

"Yeah!" Teddy shouted, understanding that she needed a defender without knowing why. "Daisy is right here!"

Later on that night as their parents were discussing transportation plans, Daisy and Teddy lay on their backs, staring up at the ceiling of their makeshift blanket fort. Both were excited to begin their lessons the following Monday, and refusing to listen to their parents earlier protestations, they made a pact. From that day forward, neither would ever blame the other for reaching out and speaking or listening to the other's mind. They could always put up

barriers if they wanted, but they would never shut the door completely. It was a promise they both would keep.

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Three years had passed, and while Teddy had seemed to excel at his lessons in Legilimency and Occlumency, Daisy had hit a wall. She'd mastered the ability to control what she did and did not share with others, but try as she might she could not shut their thoughts out. Professor McGonagall had stepped out to give the pair a break, and with the Headmistress gone Daisy broke down in a fit of tears.

Teddy rushed over and sat down in front of her, reaching out to take her hand in his. "Daisy, what's the matter?"

She shook her head, unable to form a response around the ball of hurt that was lodged in her throat.

He reached out and stroked her arm. "May I?" He asked softly.

She nodded, grateful when she felt the familiar tug between their minds. He closed his eyes, and stilling, he took in her thoughts, worries, and memories.

"Oh," came his simple reply as he quietly stifled a laugh.

She looked up, shocked that he would find any of this funny.

"No, Daisy, it's not that. You're just so smart and you make everything look so easy, that sometimes I forget you're learning this too." The sincerity in his eyes revealed the truth behind his words and she nodded.

"So you've been looking at this like it's a door you need to close, but it's simpler than that," he continued. "Instead of trying to shut the doors to the Great Hall, just imagine you're lowering the volume on the radio."

Of course. It was so simple. Why hadn't she thought of that?

Eagerly she closed her eyes, and picturing that she was turning down the dial to the record player at home, she slowly began to silence the murmur of his thoughts until finally, for the first time in her life, she sat in perfect silence. The happiness of her success was overwhelming, and surprising them both, she opened her eyes and threw her arms around Teddy in a tight embrace. Teddy chuckled joyously before returning the hug, rocking her back and forth.

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The crowd was thick and bustling in Diagon Alley as families popped in and out of shops, doing last minute shopping for their children before school officially started the next evening. The crush of bodies and new experiences had both Daisy and her Gran Petunia standing firmly in place, overwhelmed by the sights that surrounded them.



Daisy had been to this magical part of London before, hidden from the prying eyes of muggles, but she'd never been here while it was so busy. She was fascinated, longing to explore it all. Her Gran on the other hand was frozen with fear, and for some strange reason, a terrible sense of guilt.

Daisy had just begun to peak into the threads of her mind long enough to see the incredible grief that her Gran felt for her sister, Harry's mum, and the guilt she felt at her unforgivable failure to both Lily and Harry, when Teddy ran up to the pair. Distracted by his sudden arrival she let the threads slip away, giggling as he swept her up into a tight embrace, spun her around, and placed her gently back onto the cobblestone sidewalk.

“Daize! You've gotten here just in time! We're going to get our wands!” He exclaimed with infectious merriment.

Before she could respond, Harry and Ginny had joined them.

“Hi Harry! Hi Ginny! We're getting our very own wands?!” She gushed, looking up to her makeshift aunt and uncle with unrestrained glee. But her joy was quickly quelled as she witnessed the thunderous look that Harry had pinned her Gran with. Rage and betrayal poured off of him, and the trail of memories that were ricocheting through his mind left her feeling sick hearted.

“What are you doing here?” he demanded darkly, his voice deathly quiet. “Where is Dudley?”

“He's parking the car,” came her Gran's soft reply. “I asked if I could come, if I could buy Daisy's... supplies,” she faltered.

Losing his temper he shouted thunderously, “Does Vernon know?!” Ginny reached out then, putting a comforting hand on her husband's shoulder. He shrugged her off, and with green eyes flashing like his lightning scar, he advanced on the silver-tipped blonde. Standing over her he hissed, “Does he?!” His voice broke then, as tears began to stream down his cheeks.

Daisy stood dumbfounded, heart breaking as stress broke down her training, and the memories of both of the hurt grown-ups who she loved so dearly assaulted her. All the years of horrible treatment Harry had suffered. The resentment Petunia felt at being the lesser sister. The longing for love and acceptance Harry had craved. The fear of her husband that Petunia had felt as he unbuckled his belt, warning her not to bring up wizarding school one more time.

It was a war of emotions and secrets, and suddenly it halted as with more command than any eleven-year-old should possess Teddy shouted, “Enough!” Everyone stopped, looking down at the young wizard whose hair and eyes were pulsing a dangerous combination of crimson and black. Clearing his throat he took a calming breath and looked up at the older man.

“I'm sorry, Harry,” he continued, embarrassed. “So is she. She knows how much she hurt you. She's too afraid to ask for forgiveness and doesn't think she deserves it anyway. But, Pa, she's already lost her sister and you; she didn't want to lose Dudley and Daisy too.”

Turning to face Daisy's Gran Petunia, Teddy reached out and took her hand. "The things you did, they were terrible, but no one is beyond redemption. Harry and Ginny always tell us that. Dudley, too." He smiled that brilliant smile of his, and Petunia ran her other hand through his messy hair, her face the picture of amazement. "You should tell him," Teddy urged softly. Squeezing his hand in hers, her gran nodded, looking up to meet Harry's eyes.

"Vernon and I divorced a little less than nine years back," she admitted softly, the pain of the memory still fresh. "His bias... well, both of ours really, it had already cost me a relationship with your mother. I lost her, and then through my own stupid behavior I lost you. I just let you walk through that door that day. You could have died and it would have been my fault. I never even told you that I love you." Her voice cracked.

Harry looked at Petunia, truly looked at her, for the first time in over a decade. Confusion and hurt were clear in his eyes, but somewhere behind them there lay hope. As the two adults slowly came together in a tentative hug, Daisy looked to Teddy and he gave her a tender smile. Her father had joined them then, the reunion awkward, neither Gran or Harry mentioning the scene that had just taken place.

And as the broken but healing family made its way to Ollivander's Wand Shop where an extremely rare golden elder wand with a length of twelve-and-three-quarters inches and a core of thunderbird tail feather would fly straight off of a shelf and into her hand, her mind wandered to Teddy. He'd done it. He'd cast the spell perfectly, breaking his godparents' and the school's rules. He'd cast the spell to be used against not only two adults, but a wizard and a muggle. And he'd cast it for her. He sensed her pain, and not caring about the consequences he'd taken action to stop it, because he could not tolerate her hurting.

It was in that moment that Daisy began to feel the first blossoms of love growing inside her chest.

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The knock on her door pulled Daisy back to reality.

"I'm coming!" she called, running her fingers one last time through her curls, separating them just so. She dabbed a light pink gloss onto her pretty lips, smiling at the lovely girl in the mirror in front of her. Standing, she grabbed Adela, her wand, from where she was perched on the nightstand and opened the door.

Her father stood there smiling and leaned down to place a soft kiss on the crown of her head. "You look beautiful, Petal," he told her; a look of pride painted across his face.

"Thank you, Daddy," she replied with a grin and hugged him tight.

"Trunk is all packed?" he confirmed.

"Yes, Daddy," she nodded.

"Hermes is in his cage?" he asked.

Before she could respond, her handsome black barn owl was rattling his cage in response to his name. She chortled and then clicked her tongue twice, nodding approvingly at her sweet boy as he settled from where he was perched behind her.

“It won't be long, love. We'll be at Teddy's in a jiffy,” she cooed adoringly to him.

“Alright, sweetheart, let's get this all downstairs. The gentleman in question is waiting by the fireplace,” her dad informed her with one last squeeze.

And so it was, with butterflies in her stomach and a song in her heart, she followed her father downstairs to her lifetime best friend, and longtime crush, Edward Remus Lupin.

# The Calm Before...

## Chapter Summary

Friends, family, and a massive crush. Daisy thinks she knows what to expect from the Potter's annual party.

Our young Legilimens is about to find out that sometimes reading minds leads to more questions than answers.

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“Daddy... Do we have to watch it again?! We do this every year!” Daisy whined as she lowered herself down onto the plush rug beside Teddy, a blush spreading across her cheeks as the exposed skin of her thigh grazed against his denim-clad one, temporarily distracting her from her pleas.

Harry chuckled in response, casting a quick glance Dudley's way as the two men placed the large pensieve on the ornate coffee table in the center of the Potters' living room. As soon as the stone basin had been centered, Daisy's father reached down and, softly pulling on one of her dark copper ringlets, placed a tender kiss on the top of her head. She knew what he was thinking before the words even left his mouth, and as his love rolled over her she relaxed.

“I'm just so proud of you, blossom,” Dudley used her pet name. “You know I love watching your sorting ceremony, especially because we don't have a video that I can watch at home. Tomorrow you'll be headed back to school and I won't see you until the Christmas holiday. Can you humor your old dad, just this one time more?” he asked. The full force of his adoration wrapped itself around Daisy, like her favorite black and yellow cashmere jumper.

“Okay, Daddy, just for you,” she murmured, smiling.

With a nod from Harry, Ginny unstopped the vial and began to pour the swirling silver thread of memory into the shimmering liquid below. Beside her, Teddy wrapped his fingers around hers and squeezed Daisy's hand, before giving her his most dashing grin. He was so handsome to look at that it was nearly painful. His eyes were a startling sapphire blue, and today his hair was a shock of midnight waves, falling to the collar of his v-necked black tee. *Godric, he's lovely*, she mused, very nearly forgetting where she was and why until he gave her a lopsided grin and quirked one brow, looking at her curiously before glancing back at the table before them.

Coming back to the moment, she shook herself, squeezing his hand in reply, before turning to face forward once more. Together along with the boy she had secretly grown to love and the rest of her darling family, Daisy leaned down to press her face into the pensieve below and watched the past unfold before her eyes.

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Nerves coiled their way around Daisy's stomach as she sat on the old oak stool before the curious eyes of her soon-to-be classmates in the Great Hall, attempting to take in the new scenery. Smoothing out the new black robes that her Gran Petunia had bought for her, she idly wondered which house she'd be sorted into. Would she be a Gryffindor like Daddy's cousin Harry? If not, what would the sorting hat have in store for her? Taking a deep breath, she turned to the slate-haired headmistress she'd come to know so well over the past eight years of her life, and nodded, raising her chin up defiantly as the hat was lowered onto her head.

"What an old soul," the ancient voice of the pointed leather headpiece rasped into her ears. Daisy smiled and colored prettily. No matter how many times grown-ups said or thought this, she was always a little embarrassed by the implication. The compliment was nearly always tainted by a touch of fear, which saddened her; Daisy didn't want anyone to fear her.

"Kind and generous, but brave too," it continued. "You possess an innate power and talent, the equal of which I have not seen in many, many years." The garment seemed to shrink down on itself, as though attempting to better examine her. She sat completely still, transfixed, and gave her trust completely over to the buttery piece of hide. "But most of all you are loyal, aren't you, young lady? Not one to easily turn your back on those you love. Well, that makes this easy."

The hat drew itself up to its full size, and decreed with a booming shout, "HUFFLEPUFF!!"

The hall exploded with applause, and Daisy's eyes were drawn towards the long table full of yellow, gold, and black clad students screaming, shouting, cheering and clapping at the news. Searching the crowd, her eyes fell on the boy with artfully messy teal hair that was grinning from ear to ear, waving at her and patting a spot at the table beside him; her best friend, Teddy.

"Thank you, sir," Daisy replied cordially to the hat as Professor McGonagall removed it from her head, smiling fondly. She jumped down off of the stool, and with a little skip went bounding to her new house and soon-to-be second family.

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With a gasp Daisy sat upright, unable to keep the wide smile from breaking across her face as she left the memory behind. Looking around the room at her family and friends, she was struck by the joy on their faces and the kindness of their thoughts. Here at home, she didn't have to hide her gifts, nor was she judged for having them.

Her father held his hand down to her so she could stand, and as soon as she was on her feet, he wrapped her in the security of his arms. Dudley held her tight, and she nuzzled her nose into his shirt, breathing in the comforting scent of pipe tobacco and wool that would forever be imprinted onto her mind as his. They stood like that for a few moments, with him stroking her hair and her listening to the soft thumping of his heart. Before long she was distracted by the jumbled mess of his emotions and the thoughts running wild through his mind. It was always like this when she was going back to Hogwarts. He was filled with worry and wonder, happiness and melancholy, pride and love. Focusing all her energy in the simple act, Daisy wrapped her father in comfort, quelling his few negative thoughts and emotions. *I'm going to miss you, blossom*, Dudley thought.

Before she could stop herself the words were spilling out of her mouth, "Oh, Daddy, I'm going to miss you too!" She clung tighter to him, fighting off tears, and was relieved not to see the hesitation in his face that was so often painted across the faces of others when she slipped up. She didn't mean to access others' thoughts, she just did, she always had, for as long as she could remember. Usually she was at least able not to comment on them. It was exhausting forcing herself not to and she fought headaches regularly at school, where she tried her best to keep her skills in check; the students in the other houses were less understanding than her fellow Hufflepuffs.

Dudley smiled down at her, and pecking her on her forehead, softly reassured her, "I love you, Daisy... Now go on upstairs. I want you to double check that you're all packed and that you've not forgotten anything at home. Then you're to go to bed while I visit with Harry, Ginny and the others. You've got a big day ahead of you tomorrow." Laughing, Daisy rolled her eyes before standing on her tippy-toes to kiss her father's cheek.

"I love you too, Daddy," she said, complying. Stepping back she looked at Harry and Ginny, standing arm and arm, grinning in that annoying way that parents were known to do. Behind them, the sun was barely setting outside.

*Ugh, it's not even that late*, she heard as Teddy directed his thoughts towards her. Glancing over her shoulder she smiled at him, brightening as he smirked and winked in return. Turning back around, she walked up to the older witch and wizard, hugging them each in turn.

"Night, Harry; night, Ginny," she chirped. "Thank you for dinner and the trip down memory lane."

"Of course, dear, you're more than welcome." Ginny beamed as she gave Daisy a gentle squeeze.

"Goodnight, kiddo," Harry replied, kissing her cheek. "You too, boys," he directed to her cousins and Teddy.

Daisy turned and went to her Gran, marveling at how relaxed she looked in comparison to seven years prior, grateful that her and Harry had come to a deserved but comfortable truce.

"I love you, Gran," she whispered as she leaned down to receive her customary kiss on the cheek.

"I love you, Daisy darling," her grandma replied, dabbing the tears in her eyes with a lace kerchief.

"Goodnight, everyone," Daisy said as she waved and smiled to the others in the room. She walked towards Teddy, whose eyes were dancing playfully, with her heart in her stomach, and couldn't help but snicker as Albus and James groaned in unison behind her.

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Turning the corner, Teddy fell into step beside her, and as they climbed the stairs together, she felt the familiar sensation of his hand slipping into hers. As they came to the first floor landing they turned right, walking down the hallway in the same perfect synchronization that they'd always seemed to share. Daisy stopped at the door to her guest room, her eyes cast down, as with a small flair of sadness she moved to free her hand from Teddy's.

Her heart felt as though it had stopped beating when he tightened his grasp around hers, running his thumb back and forth over her knuckles, and pressed his thoughts into her mind. *Not yet. Just a couple more minutes, Daize.* She looked up into his eyes, the same color as the dusk pouring in from beyond the window down the hall.

"Ted?" she asked, her voice coming out breathily at the sight of him. The thin cotton of his shirt stretched taut over his broad shoulders and muscular arms, and she could see the smallest sliver of downy golden hair trailing down past his belt buckle as he drew one arm above his head to lean against the door frame. He pinned her into place with his gaze. She flushed at the sensation of the new emotions that were rolling off of him, caressing her more intimately than any pair of hands ever had. This was a side of him she'd only ever dreamed of, and occasionally had sensed when he had fallen asleep in the Hufflepuff common room and himself was dreaming.

"I've missed you this summer," his deep voice curled around her as he reached his hand out and brushed a stray copper curl behind her ear, stroking her cheek. "Everything has been so dull without you," Teddy continued. The breath hitched in her throat and she trapped her lower lip between her teeth, startled by the images that were running rampant through his mind. Surely, he must know that she could see them. Didn't he?

"I've missed you too, Ted," she replied, confused by why she'd whispered her response.

He smiled and his scorching gaze left chill-bumps across her skin as it roamed freely over her. Every nerve in her body was standing at attention. Leaning down, he murmured against her ear, "Come find me if you need any help with packing or moving your trunk tomorrow morning," before placing a feather-soft kiss on her temple.

She nodded and her large doe-eyes met his in a shocked expression as he straightened and with a wink turned on his heel, retreating to his room.

Daisy could not wait until tomorrow. Year seven was shaping up to be unlike any other!



# Compartments and Confessions

## Chapter Summary

Waking up late and a flirtatious Fifth Year lead to a near disastrous miscommunication. As it turns out, finding the entrance to Platform Nine and Three-Quarters is the least complicated part of Daisy and Teddy's final trip to Hogwarts. Will the two best friends be able to save their lifelong friendship?

## Chapter Notes

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Daisy paced back and forth across the small space of the unfamiliar compartment. She'd felt foolish passing by the coach that she and Teddy had been sharing since their first trip to Hogwarts seven years earlier, but she couldn't bring herself to enter into it after having witnessed the spectacle between him and Victoire Weasley on the platform outside the Hogwarts Express. The thought of the pretty strawberry-blonde Gryffindor and the way her chest had been pressed flush against Teddy's, her hands wrapped around his neck, with a seductive smile gracing her rosy lips as she whispered familiarly into his ear was set on replay in her mind.

She was so confused. Last night she was sure that there had been a spark of something igniting between the two of them, but this morning there he'd been with the partial-veela practically draped around him. It didn't make any sense. She knew she should be happy for him, he was her best friend after all, but he'd never even mentioned being interested in the other girl to Daisy, or even showed a hint of thinking about her in that way. Sorrow clawed its way into her ribcage, and drawing the curtains of the compartment shut, Daisy burst into tears and slumped to the ground, becoming lost in her grief.

Meanwhile, Teddy was in a foul mood of his own. The events of this morning were not how he'd pictured today starting when he'd initially woken up. First he'd overslept, and once he'd rushed through getting dressed and had gotten all his things together, he had come downstairs only to be informed by Harry that Daisy and her dad had already set out to King's Cross.

He'd promised her last night that he would help her and he was kicking himself for not following through. And then there was the Victoire debacle.

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When he'd arrived on Platform Nine and Three-Quarters he checked his trunk in and had asked the conductor if Daisy had already boarded. She hadn't, so he set out to find her. He was leaning against a pillar, scanning the crowd for the familiar head of pumpkin curls, when the Weasley girl had approached him.

"Heya, Teddy," she'd called to him, standing before him with one hip cocked, batting her overly mascara clad eyelashes at him.

"Hey, Vicky. I'm sorry, I don't really have time to talk; I'm waiting on Daize," he responded tersely. "Catch up at school?" he offered before turning his attention back to the crowd, figuring his explanation would be sufficient in warding off the fifth year. He was wrong.

Looking over her shoulder at her two friends and nodding at them in confirmation, Victoire turned back around and quickly advanced on Teddy. He was taken by surprise as she pressed uncomfortably close to him and he'd placed his hands on her waist in an attempt to push some distance between them.

"But Teddy," she simpered, wrapping her arms around him in a too-close embrace, and leaning in to whisper in his ear, "I've missed you!" He knew she'd had a crush on him for the past few years, but between their age difference and the closeness of their two families, he'd always thought of her more as a little sister; this new approach of hers both confounded and annoyed him. More importantly, he didn't have eyes for anyone else but Daisy. Teddy pushed the younger girl away from him with more force than he intended and cursed under his breath.

"Vicky! I. Can't. Do. This. Right. Now." He huffed indignantly, holding her gaze as he enunciated each word. Guilt tugged gently at his chest as she pouted up at him before angrily turning on her heel and returning to her friends who were staring daggers at him, but he had to put an end to this before it got out of hand. He absentmindedly ran a hand through his hair, paling as his eyes caught sight of Daisy, who was hastily retreating onto the train.

"Fuck," Teddy muttered, nearly jumping out of his skin as his godfather clapped him on the back and pulled him into a hug.

"Girl troubles?" Harry asked him, the corners of his eyes crinkling in amusement as the train's whistle sounded a five minute warning whistle.

Teddy heaved a great sigh, and hugging the older man confided, "You have no idea."

"Well, you had better go after her, whoever she is," Harry returned with a wink.

Teddy smiled lacklusterly and waved goodbye to his adoptive parents before turning and bounding onto the train. He missed Harry and Ginny's conspiratorial grins.

“Think they'll tell each other this year?” Ron quipped as he and Hermione joined the other pair.

“Merlin, I hope so,” Ginny teased. “It's taking them even longer than it took you two.” And together the quartet laughed at the shared memory as they watched the red engine pull out of the station in a cloud of steam.

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Confusion set in as Teddy stood in the now empty compartment that he normally shared with Daisy, unable to make sense of her absence. He was sure he'd seen her get on the train this morning. *Where is she?* The young wizard wondered to himself.

Shaking his head, he left the room and began making his way down the train, popping his head in to each compartment that had a familiar face, asking if anyone had seen her. Finally, when he was checking in with a group of players from the Gryffindor quidditch team, he got his first break.

Olivia Wood piped up, “I haven't seen her, but when I was coming back from the lavatory I could have sworn I heard crying coming from a locked compartment two cars down. I figured it was a nervous first year, but nobody replied when I knocked.” A worried crease was knitting the brunette sixth year's brows together. “Want me to come along and check with you?” she asked.

“No, you've been a great help already. I'll figure out what's going on. Thank you, Livs!” Teddy called, before ducking out of the compartment, and dashing down the train. Again, he missed the shared looks of curiosity and amusement as the group of Gryffindors watched him retreat. *Trouble in paradise?* Olivia mouthed, before they all devolved into fits of giggles.

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Teddy slowed as he came to the car in question. It was mostly empty. He stood still, closing his eyes and listening. He heard it then, the muffled sobs coming from the last compartment before the water closet. Teddy quietly walked up to the door and concern swelled in his chest as he realized that he did indeed recognize the voice of the crying girl. He quickly drew his wand, and muttered a quiet, “Alohomora.” Grateful when he heard the telltale click of the door unlocking, he slid the door open and quickly slipped in, before locking it again behind him.

Turning, panic coursed through his chest as his eyes came to rest on the petite redhead sitting in the middle of the floor, knees up to her chest, head bowed and sobbing into her crossed arms.

“Daisy, what happened?!” came Teddy's frantic plea, furious at whoever had caused her such pain. “Who did this?” he demanded. *I'll kill them!* He thought to himself.

At the sound of his voice she began to cry harder, burying her face deeper into the security of her arms. Teddy watched in horror as she drew away from him, and he lowered himself to the floor before the beautiful witch who'd become such a staple in his life. He knelt before her

and untangled the grasp she had on her knees. Winding his arms around her waist, he sat back and easily pulled her onto his lap and into a hug, wiping the tears and strands of stray curls that clung to them from her face. Fear and confusion warred for his attention as she refused to meet his eyes.

“Daize?” he prompted her more gently this time. “What's going on?” She gasped and hiccuped, before finally raising her glistening aquamarine gaze to his.

“Why didn't you tell me that you like her?” came her broken and tortured reply. Teddy looked at her confounded, not understanding what she was talking about, as a new batch of tears spilled over her cheeks. Like who? She wasn't making sense. As he'd done countless times before he closed his eyes, focusing hard at practicing the wandless magic that came so easily to her, silently kicking himself when her thoughts came into view. The fifth year was glued to him, and to a passerby it looked as though his hands were wrapped around her waist in an embrace, not attempting to push her away as they actually had been. He was embarrassed by the intimate implication of the scene. It looked bad, especially after his and Daisy's exchange the night before.

“Oh Daize, no.” His deep voice was quiet in the small space that surrounded them. Pleading. He rested his forehead against hers, and reaching out to the invisible threads that connected them, Ted pressed his thoughts into her mind, replaying the memory from his perspective. Slowly he felt her relax in his arms, her sobs gradually replaced by sniffles. He opened his eyes and held her gaze as he ran one hand soothingly up and down her back, using the other to dry her lovely face once more.

A flush blossomed across the apples of her cheekbones as she lowered her voice, softly asking him, “So, you aren't interested in Victoire?”

He stifled a relieved laugh. “No, Daize, I'm not,” came his husky response. “There's only one girl that I've ever fancied,” he expanded. His gaze was smoldering as he reached up and drew the tip of a finger over her full, pink pout, mesmerized by how soft and inviting it looked. He brought his lips down close to hers, aching to kiss her, and they softly brushed against her mouth as he finished in a hushed whisper, “I thought I had made that clear last night. I'm sorry if I didn't.”

He pushed it at her then, opening up his mind up to hers, a flood of memories.

Second Year, Hufflepuff Common Room: She'd fallen asleep while studying with her head in his lap; looking down at her he realized how badly he wanted to lay down beside her and fall asleep with her in his arms.

Fourth Year: He'd overheard Marius Carrow joking with some of the other Slytherin boys about how even if Daisy was a freak, she was still totally doable. He'd stormed in and beat the other boy mercilessly, not stopping until he'd split both Carrow's eyebrow and his own knuckles. It was the best thirty points he'd ever lost for Hufflepuff; nobody would disrespect Daisy that way when he was around.

Fifth Year: Daisy and Teddy were helping Professor Longbottom in the Herbology greenhouse when he'd accidentally tickled an adolescent Lady's Slipper, causing it to sneeze

and dust him liberally in bright pink pollen. Daisy had burst into a fit of giggles, and as a grin spread across her face and her eyes sparkled, he'd come to realize that the only thing he really wanted out of life was to always make her as happy as she was in that moment.

He kept on, rolling wave after wave of memories over her, as he watched an expression of wonder slowly spreading across her delicate features. Finally, he slowed his mental onslaught until he was only thinking of one thing: how hurt he'd been by her pain when he'd found her crying only moments before.

"There's never been anyone else, Daize," he confessed. Leaving his mind open for her to find the honesty of his statement on her own, Daisy looked into Teddy's eyes, her own full of wonder at the sincerity in his words. She leaned into him then, closing her eyes as she pressed her forehead against his, and reaching up she threaded her fingers through the silken strands of his hair. His own eyes fluttered shut and he stifled a moan at the longing that the gentle exploration of her hands sparked in him; for years he'd wanted to share this kind of closeness with her. His heart was pounding so hard against his chest that he was sure that they could both hear it in the silent compartment. She sat up and at the sensation of her retreat he opened his eyes and met her curious gaze head on.

"Why didn't you ever tell me?" her trembling voice asked quietly. He unwrapped one arm from where it rested around her waist and slowly he glided fingertips up her ribcage and along the length of her arm until he finally intertwined them with hers. With incredible tenderness he removed her hand from his hair, and raising it to his mouth he gently kissed the inside of her wrist, building up the nerve to respond.

"Same reason as you, I suspect," came his somber reply. Vulnerability was clear in his eyes as he continued, "I've been terrified you don't feel the same way as I do and the only thing that could possibly be worse than losing the hope that someday you might feel this way too, would be losing you as my best friend."

# Hot Under the Collar

## Chapter Notes

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Silence had descended upon the compartment, the only disturbance being the soft white noise of rain drops faintly tapping against the window. As the lush emerald countryside rolled past outside, Teddy's words hung thick in the air between the pair inside. Daisy sat astride his lap, shocked into silence by his admission, while one of his hands traced circles on the small of her back and the other entwined with hers against his chest.

His deep blue eyes were watching her with an intensity that caused her stomach to twist, feeling like it was hosting a disco for cornish pixies. Before Daisy knew what she was doing she slid both of her arms around Teddy's broad shoulders and, closing the few inches between the two of them, she leaned in and tentatively pressed her lips to his, kissing him with a soft sigh. He froze beneath her, stunned, as her lips tenderly brushed against his for the first time. They were even softer than he'd imagined, and tasted of earl grey tea and the lemon curd she must have spread on her breakfast crumpet; the combination left him lightheaded.

Daisy pulled away hesitantly, leaving her slender arms draped about his neck, surprised and slightly embarrassed by her own boldness. She sat there on his lap, a look of longing settling into her eyes as they traveled to his glistening, partially opened mouth. Her expression broke his trance. Teddy cursed under his breath as what he thought had been flawlessly crafted control that he'd spent years building, crumbled away.

Sitting up straighter his hands traveled down her body from where they'd come to rest on the curve of her spine, sliding eagerly over the swell of her perfectly round behind to cup it and hold her in place as he thrust his groin up against hers. He watched her with barely contained need as a blush spread over her cheeks and she gasped, feeling the unyielding evidence of his growing desire pressed intimately against the sheer black lace of her knickers.

Instinctively she shifted her hips, grinding her pelvis down against his. A ragged groan escaped his throat as her deliciously soft body pressed its warmth against his aching hardness through the layers of clothing that separated them. Her scent filled his nose -- a heady mixture of beeswax and vanilla, with an underlying note of something spicier that was all her

own, driving him wild. She smelled like Sunday mass and in that moment all he wanted to do was worship her.

“Fuck, Daize,” he panted.

Wrapping one arm fully around her hips and the other about her tiny waist, he tugged her more securely against his body, leaning in and claiming her mouth once more. His lips were gentle but demanding, and as her mouth parted Teddy ran his tongue over the tender flesh of Daisy's lower lip before he finished sliding it into her mouth, coaxing hers into a new and exciting dance. Lacing her fingers through his hair and deepening their kiss, she moaned throatily as a wonderful ache settled at the apex of her femininity.

“Ted!” She gasped as he pulled up the hem of her mini skirt and squeezed her arse, rocking his hips back and forth beneath her. Untangling her fingers from where they rested in his unruly hair, Daisy tentatively slid her hands down his body and beneath his shirt, tugging it up around his collarbone so she could better explore the smooth expanse of skin covering his perfectly sculpted stomach and chest. Throwing caution to the wind, they allowed themselves to become encased in the moment and each other's embraces.

Lost in their covetous exploration, neither Daisy nor Teddy heard the compartment's latch release or saw as the door slid open to reveal their Potions Master and Slytherin's Head of House, Professor Draco Malfoy, shadowed by none other than the rat-faced Marius Carrow.

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The scene that was unfolding before him was nothing new; he knew from personal experience that it was practically impossible to keep the older students at Hogwarts from finding places to sneak off to in order to traverse each other's bodies. Yet Draco was still surprised to find that the perpetrators who were so brazenly breaking school rules were not only Hufflepuffs, but these Hufflepuffs. The pair were two of the most well-behaved and hardworking students that he had ever taught.

His eyes widened at the sight of the young Dursley girl's skirt hiked up around her waist, exposing a pair of extremely adult black lace knickers that had already failed at holding the hands of the very-nearly-shirtless Lupin boy at bay. Raising an eyebrow and smirking, the older wizard cleared his throat.

The pair stopped their heated snogging session and stilled at the sound of the intruder's voice. Sitting up and pulling both his shirt and her skirt down, Teddy lifted his chin defiantly as he looked over her shoulder to the doorway beyond. A look of panic flitted across Daisy's lovely face and she paled as she watched the shock that slowly spread across her snogging partner's features.

“Professor,” he nodded respectfully.

“Mr. Lupin,” returned the familiar voice of their Potions Master. “Miss Dursley,” he continued, when Daisy turned in Teddy's lap to face him.

Draco was amused by the rosy glow that had burst across her cheeks as her eyes had come to meet his, but he became concerned when her color deepened to scarlet and her look of embarrassment was replaced by one of fear as she looked past him. Turning to follow her gaze, the professor found that Marius had ignored his instructions to stay behind in his own compartment when reporting the suspicious noises he'd heard and instead was standing behind him arms-crossed, with an expression of malicious satisfaction spread across his face.

"Mr. Carrow, did I not make myself clear?" he asked sharply.

"N-no Professor... I mean, yes!" the prefect stammered. "You were clear. Very clear!... I just thought you might need some help." he finished weakly.

"Oh? So this has nothing to do with your long-standing grudge against me?" came Teddy's terse reply from inside the compartment, his voice dripping with venom.

Glancing over his shoulder at the normally affable Hufflepuff, Draco found that both Teddy and Daisy had stood up and rearranged their clothing while his back was turned. The tall Metamorphmagus was standing protectively in front his pretty, petite girlfriend. The seventh year's eyes and hair, most commonly various shades of striking blue, had turned a dangerous shade of black and he wore a murderous expression as he looked past Malfoy to where the Slytherin boy stood. Draco admired the kid's moxy. The professor turned back to Marius.

"Mr. Carrow, if I need assistance I will find another professor to provide me with said assistance, not a student." Draco sneered, pinning the dark haired boy with an icy stare.

"Forty points from Slytherin for spying, tattling, defying my instructions, and most vexing of all, causing a perfectly good pot of Assam to go cold while I'm forced to stand here listening to your bickering. Good luck explaining to your fellow Slytherins why they are starting the year so many points behind the other three houses."

Marius flushed and opened his mouth as though to argue.

"You are dismissed, Mr. Carrow," Draco spat at the surly youth. "I would advise you to forget the events of this morning and not to spread gossip. Unless that is, you would like to have further points stripped from the Slytherin house." Draco raised his eyebrows in a warning.

Snapping his mouth shut, Marius clenched his jaw before shooting a withering stare over the professor's shoulder at the couple in the compartment beyond and, turning on his heel, he stalked back in the same direction from which he'd come. Draco stood in the doorway, watching as the miserable git of a boy disappeared down the train's corridors. As soon as he was satisfied that he wouldn't be interrupted again, he turned slowly back into the compartment, facing the young couple with an annoyed expression.

Tentatively, Daisy moved out from behind Teddy to stand beside him, her heart swelling as he wrapped a shielding arm around her waist. Unable to meet the frigid silver gaze of their Potions Master, she knew the chiding they were about to receive before the words had even left Professor Malfoy's mouth.

"I expected more out of the two of you," he scolded the pair. "You're Head Boy and Head Girl, for Merlin's sake! What do you think Professor Sprout would say if she found out the



manner of extracurricular activities you two have been participating in?!” he demanded.

The hypothetical phrasing of his lashing was not lost on the pair and the young witch reached out and easily pressed the question in his mind: *If Professor Sprout found out? What do you suppose that means, Ted?* she asked him silently.

*No clue*, came Teddy's near instant reply as he squeezed her hand. *I was just wondering the same thing.*

“Enough of that!” their professor barked at them. “Stop conspiring amongst yourselves.”

Unable to stop herself, and true to her Hufflepuff nature, Daisy burst into a fit of giggles. “I'm sorry, Professor,” she mumbled, attempting to control her mirth.

Joy blossomed in Teddy's chest at the familiar tinkling sound, and before he could stop himself, he was chuckling alongside side her.

“We've been doing it for so long, that we often don't realize we are doing it, sir,” he managed, after laboriously calming himself down.

The Potions Master looked back and forth between the pair, confounded by the fact that two of his favorite students had been raised either wholly, or at least in part, by Potter. *Maybe he's not so bad afterall*, he thought to himself for at least the fiftieth time since Daisy and Edward had started in his class their first year. *At least they're not sodding Gryffindors.*

Draco sighed and raked a hand through his hair, mussing the perfectly coiffed platinum locks as he watched the tall chameleon of a boy draw the petite ginger girl closer. It was a protective move, not touched at all by the traces of lust he'd witnessed only a few short moments before. What was more, it was a movement filled both with the innocence of youth and the confidence of a lifetime of shared familiarity and love. It made him miss Astoria all the more.

He watched Daisy as she wrapped her arms tightly around Teddy's waist in response to the embrace and left a chaste kiss on his shoulder, attempting to sooth the young wizard. He wondered if even they had come to realize how in love they were. Furthermore, he wondered if that was the exchange he'd interrupted.

The air was supercharged with electric tension as the young pair awaited their punishment and, deciding to lean on the gentler demeanor his wife had taught him, the professor cleared his throat.

“We'll be arriving at Hogwarts within the hour,” he spoke tersely. “As Head Boy and Head Girl, you two are expected to help gather the First Years and hand them over to Groundskeeper Hagrid. Best if you get back to your cabin and get changed into your robes. Leave the door to your compartment open.” The last was a warning.

“Yes, sir,” Teddy responded, eyes wide with wonder.

“Th-thank you, sir,” came Daisy's stuttering reply.

Standing to the side, he made room for the young pair to pass him. As the boy squeezed by, Draco placed a hand on his shoulder and leaned in close to quietly whisper a fatherly bit of advice. “I do hope there will not be anymore rule breaking. However, if you were my son I would remind you that silencing charms work wonders in helping to evade wandering ears.”

## A Happy Homecoming

The afternoon and early evening had slipped by in a haze, and Daisy marveled at how many first years she and Teddy had led to Hagrid once the train had arrived at the station. When they had spoken to Professor McGonagall outside the Great Hall, the regal headmistress informed them that this year Hogwarts would have the highest number of new students since 1893. One-hundred-and-eight young witches and wizards would join the ranks of their fellow classmates. Thirty-five of them were now members of the proudest group of Hufflepuffs to grace the halls of Hogwarts since Helga had ruled them herself. Daisy was in a word, thrilled.

She'd known that her and Teddy's year had been one of the largest classes since the rise of Voldemort, at a humbling ninety-two, but the continuing growth of the student body was a testament to the importance of the new Muggle Outreach initiatives that had been put into place by Hermione Granger and Seamus Finnigan at the Ministry. It warmed her heart knowing that there would be so many new Huffs spreading their laughter and joy inside the cozy den they all called home.

Turning her gaze up to the tall boy beside her and tilting her chin up, she beamed at him as they made their way to the kitchen pantry. He grinned down at her in response, giving her a roguish wink before allowing his eyes to make a slow and greedy perusal of her body. He was rewarded with a small gasp, as her head was filled with memories of the last few moments of the steamy encounter that they'd shared earlier as they raced through his mind.

“Have Mr. Lupin and Miss Dursley finally told one another of their mutual affections?” came the bold question from behind them, breaking the heated silence and spurring a rosy glow to burst across Daisy's cheeks.

Teddy cast a shocked glance down at the house elf by his side. Laughing, he nodded in response. “Yes, Abel, we have. Just today in fact,” he replied quietly.

Abel's huge lavender eyes widened, and he nearly dropped the tray of mugs that he was helping them carry to their common room as he twirled in excitement. Luckily he managed to regain his balance before cooing ecstatically up at the pair, “Oh, that's just lovely! Winky will be so pleased!”

Stunned, Daisy nearly tipped over the steaming jugs of hot cocoa and drinking caramel that she held in her own arms. "You knew?" she questioned him, her eyebrows raising as she continued, "But... how?"

"We all know. Everyone in this entire school knows, Red. It's all that Nick and the Friar have been talking about these past three years," said the handsome ghost who appeared as they came to stand before the familiar stack of oversized barrels, the sounds of music and laughter drifting out from the common room beyond.

"Hey, Ced," Teddy nodded with a smile. He briefly looked down at Daisy with amusement dancing in his eyes, before raising them back up to the shimmering specter.

"Sup, Lupes," replied the friendly spirit.

Daisy couldn't believe the casual attitude of the three gentlemen who surrounded her. Steadying her breath, she stared Cedric in the eye and demanded, "Everyone?!"

He chuckled, and nodded. "Everyone but you two," he informed her with a wink.

Daisy stood frozen in front of the entrance to their common room as Teddy pulled out his intricately carved rowan wand and tapped away at the appropriate barrel, beckoning her when the large round door slowly creaked open. As the full force of the jubilation inside reached their ears, she remained anchored to the spot, stunned into speechlessness for the second time in the past twelve hours. She watched Teddy, eyes wide, as she was hit by the realization that if Abel and Cedric had spotted their change in dynamic, everyone else would too. She was mad for him, but she didn't want to pressure the beautiful boy in front of her into anything that he wasn't ready for.

As the terrifying thoughts raced through her mind, Teddy whipped around, and she realized that she'd forgotten to let go of their connection. He closed the few steps between them and, careful not to disturb the delicious-smelling drinks she was holding onto, he wrapped one arm around her waist and brought his free hand up to her cheek. He stroked his thumb softly up and down the smooth skin there, brushing his lips over hers in an achingly tender kiss. *I've never been more ready for anything in all my life, Daize... Be my girl?* he pressed into her mind, the question full of hope. He pulled away from her then, continuing to hold her close as

he brought his curious gaze to hers. She laughed in pure glee, and standing on tiptoes returned his kiss, nodding in giddy delight.

Teddy smiled and, unwinding himself from around her, took one of the heavy carafes from her grasp. As he pressed his shoulder against the door to hold it open for her, he wiggled his brows mischievously and cocked his head towards the babbling laughter inside.

“Come on, love,” he murmured to her delight, and she felt the gentle caress of his fingers come to rest on her spine as they entered the Hufflepuff common room.

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A few hours later Teddy reclined, sprawled across one of the plush golden chairs in front of the large riverstone fireplace. He was tossing a Quaffle into the air and deftly catching it in both hands repeatedly, barely watching what he was doing. Clearly not tracking the heated debate going on between his tight knit group of friends, his eyes danced in the firelight as he watched Daisy across the room.

She had paused in clearing up the sticky cups that the exhausted group of first years had left behind when they'd gone to bed, and was holding a tray of steaming mugs, full to the brim with spiked hot cocoa. She passed the cups out to the group of house elves who she had invited to come join in the homecoming festivities, refusing to allow them to lift a finger. A radiant smile was spread across her beautiful face, and for the thousandth time in his young life, he marveled that he could love her any more than he already had.

“Yo! Earth to Ted,” he heard, as his mate Alfie Macmillan hit him with a black velvet cushion. Snapping out of his trance, Teddy turned to look back into the expectant faces of his group of friends.

“Come again?” he replied with a perplexed expression.

Alfie scowled as uncharacteristically Teddy’s attention was drawn back away from their conversation, following his close friend's gaze. The young wizard's expression softened when he realized who had caught his friend’s attention. With a sigh Alfie shook his head.

“Still mooning over Daisy?” the stocky blonde boy asked. Wincing as the question came out more loudly than intended.

“Not anymore,” Teddy replied, tossing the Quaffle into the air with extra flourish, and grinning as he caught it.

Grace Greengrass, a tall raven haired girl and one of Daisy's closest friends chimed in, “Seriously, Ted? Come on mate, you're not fooling anyone. You should just ask her...” trailing off as she caught sight of Daisy. The ginger girl had hugged her goodbyes to the house elves and was walking over to join the group, her eyes fluttering shut momentarily as she sipped from a bee-shaped mug.

As Daisy approached the group of her friends they all looked away guiltily. Everyone but Teddy, whose eyes were fixed on her, smoldering in the dim light of the fire.

“Hey guys, what did I miss?” she asked, looking around confused as they all avoided eye contact with her. “Okaaay,” she continued, confused by their ongoing silence, and focused her attention on Teddy. With a shy smile she came to stand before him, holding out the mug.

“Taste?” she offered.

Daisy flushed crimson as Teddy’s mind shot back to their heated first kiss and the way he remembered her tasting. Maintaining eye contact, he slowly sat all the way up and took the mug from her hands, reaching out and setting it onto the end table beside his chair. Her heart hammered away inside her chest and everything but Teddy slipped away as he pulled her down into his arms and reclined once more in the oversized chair, cradling her against his toned torso.

Sparkling midnight eyes fell to her lips, and the deep velvet of his voice wrapped around her familiarly as he replied, “I'd love one.” He leaned down then to reclaim her mouth.

The kiss was slow and gentle, with an undercurrent of longing. He tasted of warm caramel and she had to forcibly suppress the moan of pleasure that threatened to claw its way out of her throat at the heady sensation. This earned her a brief smile against the lips and then his mouth was leaving hers. Pulling back to admire her, Teddy lifted a finger to her mouth and gingerly rubbed the pad of it back and forth over her lower lip.

“Hey, you,” he whispered affectionately to her, giving her an easy smile that perfectly showcased his singular dimple.

“Hi,” she breathed out, beaming back at him.

Gradually the room around them came back into focus and, after taking a moment to regain her composure, Daisy realized that the common room had gone completely silent. Still slightly dazed, she turned to survey their surroundings and coloured as she realized that every Hufflepuff who was still awake had stopped what they were doing to stare at her and Teddy; one of the fifth years flinched and, quickly stowed away the cell phone that he'd been recording the amorous exchange with. She could feel more than hear Teddy chuckling beneath her as he tightened his embrace and followed her gaze.

“Yes, yes! Helga yes!” Grace shouted before launching herself at Daisy and Teddy, peppering both their foreheads with kisses.

“‘Bout time, mates,” Alfie chided goodnaturedly, chuckling as he watched Grace nearly squeeze the life out of the happy couple. He stood, gently cuffing Teddy on the shoulder, and leaned down to place a brotherly kiss on the top of Daisy's head.

“Congrats, you two,” he whispered with a smile, before turning back to the rest of the onlookers. “Okay, show's over, you ruddy voyeurs,” he chided the curious crowd, before continuing more amiably, “Give Daize and Lupes some privacy.”

Teddy was thankful to have a friend like Alfie and gave him a nod of acknowledgement, smiling as he watched Grace continue to fawn over his girlfriend. *Wow, girlfriend*, he thought with a rush of glee.

Daisy tilted her head back, resting it on his shoulder, and brought her aquamarine eyes up to meet his. *Lucky me* , she shot back at him as she caught his thoughts.

*Lucky us* , he returned, smirking cheekily at her.

The young pair were quickly surrounded by their closest friends, doing their best to field congratulatory praise and curious questions about how long they'd been dating and why they hadn't said anything. And as Daisy sat curled in Teddy's lap, she was pleasantly surprised by the total acceptance and complete lack of shock that their friends showed at their new relationship status. But wasn't that the way things always were when you were surrounded by the most loving, loyal, and accepting housemates in all the world?



## Late Nights and Love Bites

Word quickly spread around Hogwarts that Daisy and Teddy had **finally** started dating.

Many of the students from the other three houses attempted to make sense of why Mr. Perfect had chosen The Freak. To the other girls, it was confounding. Why her? What could she possibly have to offer? The boys, however, thought they had a pretty good idea. The leggy and now buxom ginger was odd, sure, but they all seemed to agree that she must be killer in the sack.

Confusion at the odd pairing would not last long. Over the next few weeks Daisy dropped all of the barriers that years of bullying and the stress of having to hide her own thoughts had built up inside of her. She'd worked hard at not allowing the thoughts of other non-Hufflepuffs into her mind, not only because of the hurtful things that she would often hear, but also because she'd been terrified that she would unwittingly slip and project her true feelings for Teddy into someone else's mind. None of those obstacles held her back anymore. Teddy was mad for her, so who cared what anyone else thought?

Unfortunately, other students had heard through gossip or the occasional comment from a teacher that she was a natural born Legilimens, which caused a number of hateful rumors to be born. Some students insisted she'd bewitched the professors into passing her. Others maintained that she used her mind-games to trick multiple boys into shagging her under the Quidditch stands. But the nastiest of all was that she must be related to Voldemort. Having little to no understanding of Legilimency and Occlumency, speculation ran wild, including that Daisy had easily mastered both wandless and wordless magic.

Despite the wild rumors, she had always been kind, and it was obvious that the stunning young witch was brilliant, holding higher marks than any other student in Hogwarts, aside from maybe her new beau. Her clear talent and power made her an extremely formidable Prefect, as well as proved that she was a perfect match for her gilded elder wand. But more than anything else, to the outside world she appeared quiet and reserved.

Before the eyes of the entire school, Daisy blossomed into the same bubbly, razor sharp, selfless, teasing and witty girl that only Teddy and her fellow Hufflepuffs had known before. She walked around campus with a dazzling smile permanently etched across her delicate features and her musical laughter became a regular backdrop to conversations in the Great Hall. She went out of her way to note the successes of other students, making a point to use her sway as Head Girl to notify professors when she thought they deserved points added to their House's score, regardless of which house they belonged to.

No longer focused on drawing attention away from herself, she had stopped wearing her hair pulled into a tight bun atop her head and instead let her glittering fiery curls cascade freely down her back and shoulders. Her large seafoam eyes were brighter than most people had realized and, now that she didn't shy away from eye contact, they could see her family resemblance to the famous Harry Potter. She walked around school with an easy confidence that somehow rubbed off on anyone she passed and the sound of her sweet voice singing softly to herself could be heard through the hallways as she performed her designated duties and walked between classes.

Meanwhile, Teddy and Daisy's fellow Hufflepuffs were beside themselves with glee. The seventh-year couple had been a happy combination of something between the house's king and queen mixed together with mum and dad, and it was well past time that they had made it official. It had been clear to all of them that the pair had had it bad for each other for years.

The only time Teddy raised his voice or his fists was in defense of Daisy, and there was a contented gentleness that surrounded him whenever she was around. As for Daisy, she had barely been able to keep her eyes off of him, not to mention that the normally cheerful and sweet girl had dropped into a black and deathly quiet any time another girl or guy made a play for the handsome metamorphmagus. She'd never dared to be so much as unkind to any of them, but her wilting away combined with his complete lack of interest kept most all of the other Huffs who fancied either of them at bay.

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Late one rainy Friday night in mid-October the pyjama-clad couple reclined on the floor in front of a crackling fire. Only a handful of other seventh years were scattered throughout the cozy common room, everyone else having retired to bed within the last hour or two.

Daisy lay partially on her stomach and partially in Teddy's lap as he leaned his back against their favorite chair, sprawled out across a pile of gold and black pillows, her bare feet raised up and kicking playfully back and forth. The comely boy was smiling fondly as he ran his left hand through her silky tresses, watching as she finished painting a clear base coat of nail lacquer on his right hand and with a silent flick of her elegant wand, he felt warmth tingle through his fingers as the drying charm she'd cast did its work. She glanced up at him, from beneath long black lashes, and gave him a sweet smile.

“What colour, handsome? Gold and black?” she asked, head tilted. He had a Quidditch match the next afternoon and she'd offered to paint his nails for luck.

“Hmm?” he murmured, brows scrunching together in mock consideration. “I was actually thinking that I'd prefer more of a green.”

She looked up at him quizzically, lowering her voice. “Slytherin colors?” she asked, arching a brow in confusion.

“No, love,” he replied huskily. Smiling at the way her nose was wrinkled, Teddy continued, “The color of your eyes.”

Gracing him with a wide grin, she turned his hand over to place a kiss on his palm, before tilting her face to nuzzle the warm flesh with her cheek.

“As you wish,” she replied, quoting their favorite muggle movie with dancing eyes. She was met with a delighted laugh and crawled up his body to leave a quick kiss at the corner of his mouth before leaning down and rifling through the small cosmetics bag at her side. Pulling out an emerald green bottle of Pansy's Playful Potions varnish, she slid back down to her boyfriend's lap and set to the careful task of painting Teddy's nails.

It wasn't long before the others headed to bed and, with Egyptian scarab tipped fingers, Teddy lifted Daisy into his arms. Snagging a velvet quilt from one of the chairs, he carried Daisy over to a particularly deep set sofa and set her down gently before covering her with the blanket. She smiled sleepily up at him and pressed back into the plush cushions, patting the space that opened up beside her. More than happy to oblige, Teddy lifted up the quilt and settled in beside her, wrapping her up in a comforting embrace.

She giggled and leaned up to kiss him goodnight. The pair were so exhausted from the long school week behind them that within seconds after Daisy rested her head on his shoulder they slipped into a peaceful slumber.

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The fire had long since died out in the Hufflepuff common room and the only sounds to be heard were a soft chorus of snores filling the space as a number of magical plants, a handful of resident portraits, and two young Hufflepuffs, traversed through various dreamscapes. The sky beyond the high round windows had cleared and silvery blue moonlight streamed into the room, illuminating the handsome couple that slept in one another's arms on the golden sectional.

Daisy shifted as a result of her dream, drawing one leg up and bringing it to rest over Teddy's thighs. Teddy's eyes fluttered open at the movement and, as his tired mind tottered between sleep and consciousness, the lovely witch in his arms emitted a stifled moan. The sensual sound woke him fully, and moments later his eyes widened as his petite girlfriend began to slowly shift her pelvis back and forth against his thigh.

Bringing his wrist up in front of his face he noted the early hour and gently squeezed Daisy closer to his body.

*This is new*, he directed towards her with a grin, not daring to speak lest they awaken the dozing oil version of their house's founder.

Confused by her lack of response, Teddy curiously wandered into Daisy's mind, eyes widening at the images unfolding before him. It was quickly apparent that she was dreaming but he found himself unable to shy away from the scene that was currently playing out.

Steam was curling up in cedar and rose scented clouds from the large marble pool located in the Prefects' bathroom and standing waist deep were Teddy and Daisy's entwined forms, locked in a passionate embrace. Her ample, perky breasts were pressed sensuously against his chest and his hands rested beneath the water, eagerly gripping onto her shapely rear end.

With extreme self-control, Teddy pulled away from the dream, eyes focusing back on the ceiling above. Feeling a twitch against his lower abdomen, he glanced down and discovered that at some point during their slumber Daisy had slid her hand beneath his shirt, bringing it to rest mere inches from his rapidly hardening cock.

Head rocking back, he clenched his jaw and struggled to keep quiet as he fumbled for his wand, grateful when his fingers finally found the smooth expanse of wood peeking out from a special pocket sewn into his trousers. Remembering the advice of their Potions Master, he focused his mind and with a flick of the wrist whispered an incantation. With the charm now covering the pair in a protective bubble, he flexed his hips and let out a shuddering breath as his boxers dragged against his rigid length.

Feeling Teddy shift beneath her, Daisy stirred awake, a slow smile creeping across her face as the image of his strong hands skimming over her body slowly faded. Sleepily, her eyes traveled up the length of his torso, her happy expression disappearing as they came to a rest on his tortured expression. Worry jolted her awake and, ignoring the lingering ache between her thighs, she propped herself up on one elbow, reaching out to caress his jaw.

“Baby, what's wrong?” she whispered, concern evident in her voice. Teddy opened his eyes at the soft brush of her fingers, looking up and meeting her luminescent gaze.

“You were dreaming,” he replied, his expression softening, though now tinged with longing. Realization washed over her as his thoughts crept into her mind. He lay there beside her, perfectly still, and she took in his ardent thoughts. Even though her dream continued repeating in his mind, both their bodies slick with water, skin to skin, her teeth tugging at his earlobe as his hands roamed over her silken skin, he made not a single move to fulfill the shared fantasy.

Where most girls would falter at his lack of action, not a flick of insecurity played at her thoughts. She understood why he lay there, still, heart pounding, longing to reach out and touch her, filled with yearning. Their entire lives Teddy's first concern had been to provide Daisy with safety and protection; he wouldn't take advantage of her naivety while there was still a question of just how awake and willing she was.

Allowing herself to glance down at the evidence of her boyfriend's lust, she crawled over his body and got up, leaving the warmth of his side. He sat up, swinging his legs over the side of the couch and turned to face her, watching Daisy with curiosity.

Stepping forward, she stood between his knees, radiating confidence as she stared him in the eyes. Slowly she pulled the baggy t-shirt over her head and dropped it before hooking her thumbs into the skimpy flannel shorts that hugged her curves. She slipped them off with a wiggle of her hips, revealing the comely and voluptuous form she had hidden beneath.

Teddy sat before her, enchanted. His eyes roamed along her body, which was even more bewitching than he'd dreamed of. Her full, pert breasts rested wide apart, and were slightly upturned, tipped with pillowy pale pink nipples that were slightly raised. His gaze dropped further, skimming over her slender waist which flared out to feminine, shapely hips. Finally his cobalt eyes came to rest on the well-trimmed patch of ceylon curls resting at the junction of her thighs, resulting in an unconscious thrust of his hips as he struggled with the craving to explore the silken depths beneath them.

He leaned forward then and, sitting on the edge of the couch, reached around to slide his hands along the back of her calves. Daisy looked down at Teddy and her breathing became shallow. Never in her life had anyone looked at her the way that he was now and she flushed as she realized that he was doing his best to dedicate every detail of her body to his memory with a sense of amazement, unable to believe that she could possibly be more perfect than he'd imagined.

Slowly he brought his eyes up to meet hers, his hands travelling up the back of her legs and the vulnerable expression of a silent request for permission etched clearly on his striking face.

Sliding her fingers into the messy waves of his hair, she nodded and whispered, "Please?"

Teddy blinked up at her a few times in surprise before moving his hands up to her thighs, gripping just beneath her round bottom, and pulling them apart in order to give himself better access to the still unexplored depths of the paradise that lay in between. Leaning in he spread fervent kisses from one hip bone to the other as he slid a finger across her slick entry. She gasped as he spread her silken petals and ran his tongue over the delicate bud at the apex of her femininity.

Daisy whimpered as a feverish yearning spread throughout her body, her pale green eyes hooded with pleasure as he flicked the tip of his tongue repeatedly over her sweet spot. Gripping the thin straps of his vest she began to lift it over his head, desperate to see and touch his body. Teddy complied, yanking his shirt off and tossing it to the floor before rising to stand before her.

Wrapping her arms around his neck and gazing unflinchingly into his eyes, Daisy wantonly slid her hands down over Teddy's firm chest to the taut muscles of his stomach before finally hooking her fingers beneath the elastic waistband of his joggers. Her eyes never left his as

slowly she sank to her knees and, tugging down roughly, she removed his trousers and boxers in one swift movement.

A new current of electric pleasure coursed between her thighs as she turned her attention to the evidence of his desire. His knob was long, hard and thick. Reaching out tentatively, she curled her hand around his satin length, smiling to herself at the sharp inhalation of breath that escaped his lungs.

Tilting her head up to watch him, she slowly and deliberately ran the end of her tongue across the tip of his cock, licking up the clear bead of liquid that had formed there. Large doe eyes met his as breathily she whispered, "My turn."

## Flowers and Moonlight

Teddy stood perfectly still, blood coursing through his ears and heart pounding as he watched Daisy with a sense of wonder. She knelt before him and he let out a shaky breath as he took in the sight of her experimentally working her hand up and down his silken length. A deep groan clawed its way out of his throat as he saw her eyes widen, dancing with delight at the erotic image produced when she slid her grasp along his uncut rod, exposing the throbbing head. He squirmed as the muscles between his stomach and groin tightened in a pleasurable coiling sensation when leaning in and bringing her gaze up to meet his, Daisy ran her tongue along the underside of his shaft from base to tip.

“Bloody hell, Daize,” he cursed softly, eliciting a elated giggle from her.

“Like that?” she murmured throatily, tilting her head coquettishly to one side. Teddy nodded in response.

“More?” she asked softly.

“More,” he breathed, a look of quiet reverie spreading over his handsome features.

Daisy's hands brushed along his thighs before coming to rest on his muscular backside. Holding him in place as her lips parted, she took him into her mouth, slowly moving her head back and forth. Teddy gasped, a shudder running through his body at the wonderfully wet, warm sensation; struggling with the effort not to thrust deeper. His thoughts raced through her mind and eager to give him everything he wanted, she bobbed her head up and down more quickly, moving a hand between his thighs to lightly cradle his nadders in her palm.

Ecstasy began to build within him, causing Teddy to close his eyes and furrow his brow, exhaling repeatedly in quick bursts. Glancing up, Daisy marveled at how perfect he was. He stood before her in the middle of a beam of moonlight, the soft blue glow highlighting his beautiful face and perfectly muscled body; from narrow hips up to toned chest, broad shoulders, and square jaw. As she watched him covetously, he reached up with one hand and ran fingers through his tousled violet locks, letting out a breathy groan. A soft moan escaped her throat at the sensuous gesture, and his eyes snapped open at the sound.



She met his gaze as his eyes lingered on her and she parted her thighs, reaching down between them and slowly beginning to rub the tender nub that rested there. Before he could react, Daisy slid Teddy's length deep into her mouth until it pressed down into her throat.

“Fuck, Daisy!” Teddy cried out with a gasp. The tightening sensation in his groin was pure bliss, and it was with great effort that he withdrew from her mouth with a jerk of the hips. Her large doe-eyes looked up at him, confusion and worry painted across her face and racing through her mind. He couldn't help but smile and leaning down he pulled her up to her feet, wrapping his arms around her waist.

“Too good,” he murmured, leaning down and placing a kiss to the tiny crease that had formed between her brows before pressing his lips to hers in a heated kiss. Moaning, she stood on her tiptoes to better wrap her arms around his neck, flushing scarlet at the feeling of his rigid manhood pressed against her stomach. She opened her eyes as he pulled his mouth away from hers abruptly, smiling at the subtle way he drew the right side of his lower lip in, biting down softly on it the way he always did when he'd made a decision. She quirked a brow at him curiously.

“No more hiding?” he asked her softly.

“Never,” she replied earnestly, her expression softening.

Teddy nodded and pressed his forehead to hers as he dropped the defenses that years of training had taught him, giving her free range of his mind. *What do you want, Daize?* he pressed into her. She slid her arms from around his neck, allowing her hands to skim down his shoulders to his chest, leaving one in place to run a finger in circles around his nipple, while the other slid lower. Daisy's gaze was unfaltering as she palmed his aching rod in her hand, and running her thumb over the head, she pressed the image of his hips thrusting between her thighs into his mind. Teddy groaned, instinctively drawing her closer.

Stroking his length more eagerly, she leaned in and pressed her cheek to his collarbone, her breath tickling his chest as she whispered shyly, “I want to know what you feel like... inside of me.”

The words had barely left her mouth before, with a muffled cry, Teddy was pulling Daisy's arms up to rest on his shoulders. Leaning down to move himself between her legs and hook his arms beneath her knees and thighs, he effortlessly scooped her up. Grinning cheekily he leaned in, pressing his lips to hers and smothering her squeak of surprise with a tender kiss as he backed up to the couch and sat down with her straddling his thighs. He drank in the sight of her greedily as she sat perched on his lap. Her pale green eyes, framed by long black lashes, were shining as she ran the tip of her tongue over her kiss-swollen pout. Burnished copper curls fell in waves over her back and shoulders, and his eyes were drawn to the end of one stray lock circling around the puckered tip of a rosy nipple, coaxing him to lean in and wrap it in the warmth of his mouth. His gaze traveled further down, along the dip of her petite waist to the flair of her full hips; finally coming to rest on the sight of his hard, thick prick resting against the soft curve of her stomach. Mentally shaking himself, Teddy leaned over and grabbed his wand from where it rested on the couch beside them.

“You're sure?” he asked, peeking up at her, suddenly nervous.

“Positive.” Daisy nodded in reply, stroking his cheek and leaning forward to press a tender kiss to his lips.

Cupping the back of her neck, Teddy deepened their kiss as he brought the tip of his wand up to rest just below her belly button. Pulling back only slightly, he flourished it and murmured an incantation against her lips, “Copulus Obstrucio.”

Daisy gasped at the warm, slightly tickling sensation that spread from her lower stomach to between her thighs before slowly fading away, as the contraceptive charm took effect. Glancing down at her stomach, a slow blush began to spread over her cheeks at the sight of his hard rod resting between the junction of her thighs. Raising her hips up and reaching down, she curled her fingers around the base of his shaft, sliding his tip back and forth against her slick entrance.

Teddy's head rocked back momentarily and he panted with pleasure. Casting his wand aside, he brought his hands up to rest on her hips, gently stroking her sides with his thumbs in a soothing gesture. Daisy slid her hands up to his chest and leaned in to capture his mouth beneath hers, kissing him hotly, as his knob pressed against her center. Breathing in deeply, she gathered up her courage and slowly pressed her hips down, gasping and stilling at the sharp pain that was produced.

“Daisy?” Teddy whispered, his voice laced with worry. “Baby we don't have to do this,” his rich baritone wrapped around her; a strange brew of concern, panic and pleasure settling over the features of his handsome face.

“No. I want to,” she replied breathily, nuzzling his jaw lightly before continuing, “Together?”

Teddy nodded, and looking at her with a sense of wonder he tightened his grasp on her hips, helping her guide them down as he thrust his own up, filling her with his thick length. Daisy tensed above him, and guilt tore through him at the pained expression painted across her face. He'd never wanted to hurt her, and he was ashamed by how good he felt as her tight heat wrapped around him, while she suffered.

Slowly he began to press his weight down into the cushions beneath them in an attempt to withdraw from her; surprised as Daisy shook her head, and moaning softly ground her pelvis down, pressing him back into her. Slipping an arm around her waist, he leaned in and tenderly captured her mouth against his, reaching between their bodies with his other hand to gently run his thumb up and down against the small bead of nerves at the apex of her sex, grateful when he felt the tension begin to drain from her body.

Moving his lips from hers, he placed gentle kisses along her jaw, whispering against her skin, “You're so fearless, Daize.” Smiling as he felt the shiver that ran through her body, beginning to flick his thumb more quickly against the pink bud between her thighs.

After trailing his lips over her neck, he brought them up to her ear and murmured huskily, “So selfless and giving. What did I ever do to deserve you?” She fidgeted, mewling and gently grinding her hips against his at the sensual sensations his touch and words sparked within her.

*How on earth did I get so lucky?* Daisy mused as the pain which had been so sharp only moments before turned into a quickly building pleasure under Teddy's cautious ministrations. She turned her head in search of his lips, finding them and coaxing them into an intimate kiss. Her fingers tangled in the wild hyacinth locks brushing against Teddy's strong shoulders, her thighs pressing tighter around his as she began to roll her hips to a demanding beat.

He panted and pulled back from her delectable mouth, admiring the intoxicating sight before him. He'd been mad for her for years, but even in his wildest dreams he had never pictured how stirring the image of Daisy writhing in ecstasy would be. As he slid in and out of her and her satin warmth wrapped and molded around his length, he suddenly understood why it was that muggles worshipped deities. She kneeled astride him with metallic curls untamed, framing her ethereal features like a molten halo. A shimmering layer of sweat having formed across her perfect breasts and stomach, glittering in the moonlight. Pale viridian eyes glowing like will-o'-wisps, conveying a silent promise of the bliss yet to come. Cherry blossom lips glistening and beckoning him, tasting of honeyed ambrosia. She was a goddess, come to deliver him to Elysium, and there was nothing he would rather do than follow her to the ends of the earth.

The feeling of her sliding up and down his rod, tight, warm, and wet all at once, was heavenly. Slipping his hands onto her rounded tush, he held her in place, pumping his hips from beneath her and quickening the pace of their lovemaking.

A rough groan escaped his throat as Daisy's mental barriers dropped completely, and her natural state took over, cloaking him in the emotions and sensations rolling through her body. Her pleasure swelled with each thrust, and his movements became frantic as their ecstasy intermingled. Leaning in, Teddy ran his tongue around one of her nipples, flicking it lightly, before finally wrapping his mouth around the tight pink tip and sucking. Daisy cried out, body trembling as the coupling of teasing sensations triggered her climax, pulling her over the edge without warning. Wave after wave of dizzying euphoria crashed over the young pair, and Teddy tightened his grasp on Daisy, feverishly thrusting in and out of her silken paradise. Unable to hold back any longer, he succumbed to his own release with a heady moan, arms encircling her waist as, jerking his hips, he spilled inside of her.

His heart pounded against his chest as their rapture ebbed, hands lightly skimming over her body while gently he placed a kiss on each of her nipples, nuzzling the hollow of her neck before bringing amethyst eyes up to meet her aquamarine ones. Butterflies filled her stomach at the easy smile he graced her with, the expression so purely Teddy that she couldn't help but lean in to brush her lips over his; naive to the fact that that specific lopsided grin was reserved for her, and her alone.

Pressing her close, Teddy shifted his body and laid back on the couch, pulling her down beside him effortlessly. Daisy smiled, curling up against him and throwing a slender leg over his, replicating the position that they'd woken up in. He chuckled happily as she rested her head on his shoulder, wrapping an arm around her with a contented sigh. Stroking her hair, he looked down into her luminous gaze.

“I love you, Daize,” he quietly murmured, mind and heart open, sincerity written clearly across his face.

“Ted...,” she murmured softly, a pretty pink blush spreading over her cheeks in response to the spoken admission. Leaning in and stroking his cheek, she propped herself up and replied quietly, “I love you too.”

“I know,” he responded cheekily, tapping a finger to his temple with a wink, while grinning from ear to ear. Daisy burst into a fit of vexed giggles, leaning down to kiss him roughly and tugging on his lower lip with her teeth as she pulled away. Settling in beside him once more, she waited until he closed his eyes before reaching out and connecting their minds.

*I do too.*

## Beaters, Chasers and Keepers

Saturdays had always been Cedric's favorite day. When he'd been alive, they were a happy respite from his busy school schedule; a time to prepare for and attend Quidditch matches, as well as a time to hangout with his mates. However, after he'd died, his fellow Hufflepuffs turned Saturdays into a day to celebrate life and the friendships that stretched beyond the constraints of mortality. The tradition had intensified after The Battle of Hogwarts, and had carried on for the past two decades.

Today was going to be an especially lively Saturday. Hufflepuff's team was leading in Quidditch this year, not having lost a single match this season, and this afternoon they played their greatest Quidditch competitor: Slytherin. But this wasn't just any rival team; Salazar's team was debuting a new seeker, Vladimir Krum. In an attempt to help prepare his fellow badgers, Cedric had spoken to the portrait of Trevor Scamander, the greatest seeker to ever play for Hufflepuff. Trevor who had gone on to play professionally, winning five Quidditch world cups, had generously agreed to meet with Cedric and the Hufflepuff team to go over a few strategies for the day. Knowing their team's captain would be waking up shortly, he glided into the common room to wait, needing to talk to Teddy about gathering up the rest of the team.

A smile graced his lips as he came to a stop, enjoying the relative silence of the cozy den, just beginning to brighten as soft pink light filtered into the room: a result of the rising sun. Turning to survey the surroundings that had become his permanent home, his eyes fell on a large golden sectional positioned before the massive stone fireplace, as well as the very nude couple who dozed atop it. Shocked, he slowly made his way to the pair, studying the portraits that lined the walls as he went; grateful to discover that they were all still asleep.

He nodded his approval as he stepped into the protective barrier that had been quieting the soft sounds of his dozing friends, doing his best to avert his gaze from the stunning sight of a completely bare Daisy, sprawled atop an equally bare Teddy. At least they'd attempted not to be totally obvious in their late night sexcapades... kind of.

Reaching the good-looking metamorphmagus, Cedric leaned down and whispered into his ear, "Yo! Lupes! Wake up, man."

Teddy's blue eyes blinked open blearily and he smiled sleepily, nodding at Cedric's glowing form, before his eyes widened and darted protectively down to his girlfriend's sleeping form.

Making sure not to look down at the pretty ginger, Cedric held a finger up to his lips in a silent shushing motion, and then pointed first towards the windows and then the teak grandfather clock by the common room entrance. Teddy's eyes followed Cedric's gaze, before looking back at his longtime friend.

"Thanks, mate," he murmured, grateful when Cedric nodded and retreated down the hallway to the boys dormitories, affording him and Daisy some privacy.

Resting his gaze lovingly on the beautiful witch in his arms, Teddy greedily spent precious seconds memorizing the sight of her laying on top of him, skin to skin, in the early morning light. Unfortunately the moment couldn't last, and understanding the urgency of the situation, he gently squeezed Daisy in an attempt to wake her. Luckily she was a light sleeper and the tactic paid off. Lashes fluttering against her cheeks she blinked the sleep from her eyes, yawning and stretching against him, unwittingly causing an instant reaction. He stifled a groan as her pelvis grazed his hardening length, and she tilted her chin up, smiling sleepily as her lips found his in a good-morning kiss.

Suppressing the urge to rotate their position and sink deep inside of her, Teddy softly murmured against her lips, "Good morning, beautiful. Time to get up."

Daisy giggled and moved her hips back and forth against his, and running her tongue against his upper lip, she playfully replied, "You're already up, aren't you love?" Moving her lips to explore his jaw and neck, she continued, "I want you."

Memories of the night before ran through his mind. *Fuck!* He thought, before stroking her hair and more diplomatically responding, "Mmmm, there is nothing I want more right now... but not with an audience," causing her to pause and look up at him curiously. "Ced is in the hall, and everyone else is going to be waking up soon," he continued.

"C-Cedric? In the hall?" she stuttered, biting her lip and furrowing her brow before continuing, "He saw us...?"

Teddy chuckled and reaching down he squeezed one of her round arse cheeks, leaning in to answer huskily, "Completely starkers." Daisy flamed crimson at the admission, pausing in thought for a few moments before sitting up on his lap, her eyes dancing.

“Pity,” she murmured as she shifted her hips, causing his aching prick to slide back and forth against her slick entrance, still tender from the night before. Teddy groaned, gripping onto her thighs and bucking up against her with an animalistic growl. Grinning, she leaned down and whispered against his ear, “I suppose you're right, though. It's probably best that we get dressed. “

She had to suppress a laugh at the bemused look that settled over his features as she slid off of his lap and turned in search of their discarded clothing. Finding his joggers and vest, she turned back to toss them to him, nearly dropping the articles at the sight before her. He was lying prone, the lines of his muscular physique taut, lapis eyes practically fucking her as he slowly tugged his thick, hooded rod up and down. Merlin, he was sexy.

Grinning at clearly having derailed her, Teddy sat up and took the garments from Daisy's hands, setting them beside him on the sofa. “Minx,” he accused as he leaned in and pressed a kiss to the tidy mound of curls that rested between her thighs. “But, yes,” he conceded, “We best.”

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It was an unseasonably sunny afternoon, much to the delight of the staff and students that filled the stands ringing Hogwarts' Quidditch pitch. The roar of the crowd was carried along by a soft breeze that was blowing off of the Black Lake, and there was hardly a cloud in the powder blue sky. Even so, Alfie had picked up on Teddy's extraordinarily good mood, and at the start of the game he had hoped whatever had their captain so pleased would be a source of focus for him, not one of distraction.

As luck would have it, he didn't have any need to worry. Cedric, Trevor, and Teddy had expertly re-worked the Hufflepuff playbook, and their fellow teammates had done a truly amazing job of following the new guidelines. The Slytherin team had only managed to sneak six goals past Hufflepuff's keeper, Bronwen Westbrook, a shockingly small number in comparison to their usual prowess. All the while Alfie and their fellow beater Orlando Lockhart had done an incredible job of dividing and conquering, with Lando making trouble for Krum at every possible turn, and Alfie doggedly sending his bludger after any Slytherin who dared attempt an attack on his teammates.



And then there were their chasers. Watching Esme Loveridge, Julian Kowalski, and Teddy soaring across the field, sinking goal after goal, you would think the trio had poured Felix Felicis in their morning tea. Teddy was one of the most talented chasers to play for Hufflepuff since before the war, earning his position as captain in their fourth year, but Alfie had never seen him play like this before. In a matter of a couple hours he'd racked up twelve goals, and much to the chagrined exhaustion of Slytherin's keeper Nathaniel Nott, he showed no signs of slowing. Even the ferocity of Marius Carrow's dedication in sending as many bludgers Teddy's way as possible, was having only minimal effect.

Suddenly Hufflepuff seeker Delilah Avery was racing towards the Ravenclaw section of the stands, followed closely by Vladimir Krum, both of their houses erupting into a delighted frenzy. The two streaked across the pitch, laying low on their brooms, arms outstretched; but years of training by a father who was a world renown seeker won out, and Vlad narrowly beat out Delilah, snatching the tiny flying ball. The Slytherin crowd, a few Ravenclaws and Gryffindors, as well as one lone Hufflepuff burst into riotous applause. All but one of their jubilations would be short lived.

Daisy's friends and classmates looked on with a sense of horror and perplexion as the Head Girl came unglued. The petite redhead was leaning over the railing and waving their yellow and black crest victoriously, laughing and shouting out congratulations to Teddy and the other Hufflepuffs, a dazzling smile plastered across her face. It was their Head of House, Professor Sprout, who was the first to follow the young witch's gaze to the enchanted scoreboard. It hadn't mattered that Krum had caught the golden snitch.

As the crowd died down Maeve McCormack, Ravenclaw and daughter of keeper for the Pride of Portree Meaghan McCormack, called out the final scores. As the other players, students, and professors had been following the neck-and-neck race to capture the tiny winged sphere Teddy, Esme and Julian had masterfully pulled off the Scamander Scorcher, a play in which, through carefully planned out zigzags and passes, all three had managed to secure a final goal, leaving them with two hundred and thirty points: twenty points higher than the Slytherin team's final score, even after catching the snitch. A collective gasp spread across the stands, followed promptly by incensed jeering from the crowd of Slytherins. Hufflepuff had won.

Daisy and Teddy's housemates were a different story entirely. Professor Sprout took up to chanting "Hufflepride!" repeatedly, and the house's students, along with her fellow teachers, had quickly picked up the cry, growing to a resounding roar. Clapping his teammates on the back in congratulations, Teddy grinned and zipped over to the stands where Daisy awaited him, practically vibrating with excitement.

He drank her in as he approached, unable to stop himself from admiring the sight before him. She was gorgeous, her pale green eyes sparkling, full lips tilted up in a smile as tiny golden badger paws peeked out from her long curly hair while it danced in the wind. Sporting their house colors, she was wearing a cropped leather jacket with black shearling collar, opened to expose a v-neck jumper which she had tucked into a goldenrod tartan mini skirt, leading down to her long legs, clad in onyx stockings which were covered by golden fishnets. Reaching her he winked, and distracted by the prospect of leaning in to steal a celebratory kiss, he missed the imminent danger that was flying his way.

Marius was mutinous. He'd had enough of Edward Lupin stealing his spotlight, and, convinced the other captain's team had cheated somehow, he intercepted a bludger. Cracking his bat against the angry sphere, he sent it careening towards the unsuspecting Hufflepuff. With hate roiling in his dark eyes, he sat and waited for Golden Boy to get his just deserts.

Alfie watched in horror as the iron ball sailed straight towards his best mate, screaming at the top of his lungs, "LUPES! BLUDGER!!" The panicked cry got through to both Teddy and Daisy, but it was too late for the older boy to defend himself. Seconds later the enchanted orb smacked into Teddy with a sickening thud, knocking him off his broom to plummet towards the ground below.

As the crowd around her broke into a chorus of shrieks, cries and gasps, Daisy calmly stepped to the edge of the stands, her wand Adela already poised for action in her hand. Mustering every last bit of resolve she had in order to quell the terror gripping around her heart, she directed her wand in Teddy's direction.

"Arresto Momentum!" Daisy commanded, and rising to match her in power, Adela delivered; halting Teddy's free fall roughly four meters from the ground. Madam Hooch was beside Teddy in a heartbeat, guiding both broomstick and herself to be in a position to catch him as soon as Daisy released the charm. When she was certain that he was safely in their professor's arms, she released the effect.

Tearing through professors and peers alike, she ignored their stunned expressions and impressed thoughts, bounding down the stairs toward the manicured lawn below. Grace as well as their mates Felicity Fawley and Ollie Payne, shared a concerned glance and went racing after her, but she took no notice. The only thing that mattered to her was Teddy's safety.

Making quick work of the wooden staircase, Daisy sprinted out onto the field a short time later, racing over to where Alfie was having to physically restrain her seething boyfriend from attacking a dark haired Slytherin.

“He tried to kill me! He was actually trying to kill me!” Teddy was shouting darkly at their tensed flying coach, pointing angrily at the shorter boy in emerald Quidditch robes who was surrounded by three other Slytherin players, all of whom had their backs turned to where Daisy approached from. Alfie noticeably relaxed when he caught sight of her, squeezing his best friend's shoulder, and calmly murmuring, “Daize,” as he pointed to her with his chin. Teddy's entire posture changed as she broke through the group, quickly catching her in his arms as she launched herself towards him, tears streaking down her face.

“Ted!” Daisy sobbed, clinging to him as she buried her face in his shoulder. “I thought... I thought that... I was so afraid...,” she couldn't bring herself to finish the sentence as she imagined what could have happened if her charm casting had failed, the image of him falling and crumpling on the ground filling her mind.

“Shhh, love. Deep breaths,” he whispered against her cheek as he tightened his embrace, rocking her back and forth in trembling arms. To everyone else he had appeared incensed, but Daisy could feel the fear pouring off of him in waves. “You saved me,” he breathed. He looked down at her wearing an expression of wonder, before his lips came crashing down on hers in a bruising kiss, not giving a thought to their current company. The comfort of their embrace was broken, as Marius's slimy voice broke in, causing Teddy to set Daisy softly back onto the grass; holding her hand as the pair turned to face him.

“You can't seriously be entertaining Lupin's paranoid delusions, can you Madam Hooch? It was an honest mistake,” Carrow said dismissively.

“Honest mistake?” Alfie spat, rounding on the Slytherin beater. “That's rich, coming from Death Eater spawn like yourself! I watched you target Teddy and send that bludger his way. While his back was turned, no less!” the blonde boy raged on.

Marius curled his lip and sneered. “Prove it,” he taunted.

Hatred filled Daisy, and before anyone could stop her she broke free of Teddy's grasp, storming toward the murine captain. He smirked as she came to a furious stop before him, his

gaze perversely traveling across her body, vile images of the things he wanted to do to her filling her mind.

“Finally decided you want to give things a go with a real man, Freak Show?” He asked her with a wink, sharing a chuckle with his teammates. All of them were caught off guard as she drew back her hand and savagely brought it crashing back down; slapping him hard across the face with a crack that echoed across the pitch.

“How fucking dare you?!” Daisy hissed dangerously, spitting in his shocked face. Allowing all her disdain and disgust to roll over him, she leaned in close and quietly continued, “The next time you want to kill someone who's standing in between you and your pathetic goals, take a long hard look in the mirror and aim true.”

Without a backwards glance she turned on her heel, strutting up to Teddy and taking his hand. With a nod to their stoney-faced friends, Daisy jerked her chin towards the castle, and she and Teddy led them away. One by one, in an act of complete solidarity, the black and yellow clad students stood and filed out of the stands. There was no longer any question why Helga Hufflepuff had chosen the small but mighty badger as the symbol to represent her house.

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