

The time that is given us

How love can change lives

Von Gepo

Kapitel 11: Eleventh chapter

Dear Albus,

thank you very much for your help so far. I found out what I could about Tom's history and by explaining it to him, he gained some perspective that will hopefully keep him from ever starting a war in the future. I am actually hoping he might do the opposite and go into politics. He is an extremely bright boy, talented and magically powerful. Now that he is learning morally upright behavior, I see a lot of potential. As you have a rather intimate view on slightly psychopathic youngsters planning to change the world, would you indulge me a bit by telling me what Grindelwald and you came up with in your youth and where you diverged? Also, what are your current thoughts on the ideas and solutions you came up with in your youth? What goals do you still seek and how do you go about it now? As I only know the you sixty years from now, I'd really like to gain some perspective. As war-comrades, I know a lot about you in terms of warfare, but not in terms of political machinations apart from war. I hope I am not overstepping boundaries with my question, seeing as you never even met me in this timeline.

Yours truly, Grenmore

Dear Grenmore,

it is always a pleasure to hear from you and I have to admit that I feel rather trusting whenever I am writing to you. But you are asking for sensitive information and I am uncomfortable sending it to you in writing. On the other hand, a lot of it is emotionally taxing and I cannot say that I am over everything that happened, so talking about it is even harder. The last few days, I argued with myself over how I should respond to your letter and decided that I will write down some bits and see how it goes from there. So I am honest in telling you that I am withholding information while writing this.

Gellert and I met in the summer of 1910 in Godric's Hollow. He had come to live with his aunt after being thrown out of Durmstrang for practicing magic too dark even for them. I did not know that at that time, I just saw an immensely attractive young man walking around in town, charming everyone he met – me included. We started talking which turned into youthful transgressions in a matter of days. Please imagine that state of mind before judging me. I was rather taken with him and not exactly thinking straight as a hormonal teenager.

He told me that he wanted to change the world because he had ventured into the Muggle world and learned about their progress with technology. He feared that Muggles would be able to overpower wizards soon enough. As you are now living in a Muggle body, I am sure you can relate to that fear. So he wanted a world where wizards did not have to hide, he wanted us to rule humanity before Muggles would one day rule us after finding out about us. He showed me books about the witchhunt and historical documents about how often we had come close to extinction. Also, we studied family trees and found out that the progress of Muggle technology seemed to be in direct correlation to loss of magical power. Whenever Muggles invented a lot, the birth rate of magical children decreased. Whenever Muggles were thrown back, technology destroyed or wisdom forgotten, the birthrate of magical children would increase. Actual magical power seemed to have something to do with the belief of people in magic rather than technology. So I understood why Gellert was in favor of destroying technology before Muggles could rise. For a hundred years, Muggles had made leaps in science and the magical population was dwindling. He wanted to save magic.

I disagreed with him. While I do not like the thought of magical extinction, killing about 98% of the world's population, just so magic would survive, seemed too excessive for me. I tried to dissuade him from his course and he promised me that he would simply publish his theory, bring it before the Wizengamot and have it discussed. He wanted me to oppose him and have this decided by the whole magical population rather than just us. I relented but soon found out that it had been the worst idea I ever had. Most people are rather shortsighted, so our findings were used to fan the hatred and persecution of Muggles and Muggleborns even more, separated the population and lay the groundwork for the following war.

I was devastated that my actions had led to this. I could not stand myself, I was angry and hurt. We fought and in that fight, the unthinkable happened. After that fight, I was ready to end my life to atone for my sins but something held me back. I knew that killing myself was paramount to running away from my problems. My pride would not let me. My actions had led to this, so I swore to myself that I would solve this. I told Gellert that I wanted to break up with him and that I did not want to see him ever again. He told me that he was sorry and that he would respect my wishes. He proposed that we could do a blood-pact not to fight one another again, so that we would never hurt innocents again. I relented again – my second mistake. I thought I was doing good but I never expected him to start a war. I was still too much in love to see him clearly for who he was.

Years later, I had to confront him on the battlefield and the rest is something you know. I swore to myself to abstain from politics because obviously, I could not be trusted with them. So I stayed on as a teacher, now a headmaster, to see that children do not learn a biased view on history and society. I do not think that I can teach anyone that dying to save others is something noble but I also do not want kids to grow up thinking only of themselves. I still do not know what the right course of action might be. I hope that in our time together, I had a better grasp on how to realize the greater good. For now, I can just say that teaching children to think of others, to think of the planet and all its lives instead of personal gain, is my political goal. I am making headway with Gryffindors, Hufflepuffs and Ravenclaws, but Slytherins are a mystery to me. I fear that their focus on personal gain is a rather inborn trait, otherwise they would not be Slytherins. I hope your Tom can teach me better.

Yours truly, Albus

Harry had to drink a glass of cognac after reading that letter. Dumbledore's behavior in his time made a lot more sense now. Thinking that destruction of Muggles or magical extinction were the only possible outcomes, no wonder he had been dodgy about "the greater good". Just like he had not told Harry that he had to die until the last possible moment. Dumbledore knew that he himself would have to die for the greater good eventually. He had known for most of his life. He also had not thought that anyone else would ever be as accepting of that fate as him. No wonder that he saw love and sacrifice as the ultimate form of goodness and never trusted in the government again. Simply releasing information like that to the general public would of course result in people screaming for the death of Muggles. With "Save our children" as the leading motto, killing Muggles would have become a necessity rather than a crime.

In their time, Hermione had found those early publications written by Grindelwald. She had cross-referenced all of them and found out that – while a valid theory at the time – he had been wrong. She had republished not only him but other authors in favor of "Muggles are a thread" and countered every argument they had. She had then written her own publications on magical theory which completely changed people's views. Not only were Muggles no thread as long as wizards kept up with technology, partly integrating into Muggle society, they were also indispensable for magical survival. With her Muggle background and understanding of both Muggle and magical science, she had been paramount to the development of magical theory and had used it as a starting point for her political career. Harry had read all those articles, even argued some with her. He needed to get that knowledge to Dumbledore. He may not be magical anymore but maybe the man could extract those memories from him. It wasn't like he could actually remember all she had written.

Still, he waited a night before writing back. He even showed the letter to Edgar and discussed it on an emotional as well as rational level. Dumbledore must have gone through some horrible feelings. He had been eighteen or nineteen when Grindelwald published his theories and brought them before the Wizengamot. It seemed like he had taken on the guilt for the consequences of those publications, just for not dissuading his boyfriend further. It actually seemed a bit over the top, so Harry theorized that there might have been more to it. Maybe Dumbledore helped with the publication. Maybe he actually supported Grindelwald for some time. His guilt seemed rather excessive but maybe further information would make it more understandable. It also explained Dumbledore's obvious disfavor of Slytherins. He seemed to have given up somewhere along the way, simply condemning them all as a necessary evil, learning to play by their rules. Using Slytherins for his gain by playing their self-servicing nature, simply bribing them with what they wanted to get some of them in line. It seemed like his guilt and hurt had translated into a hatred of people similar to Grindelwald. He made enemies of influential and determined people, dividing the wizarding world even further. On the other hand, that was no surprise with the misinformation that he had.

Dear Albus,

thank you for being so honest about your history. While I already knew a lot of it, I never heard it put together like that. It must have been hard to write about something that makes you feel as ashamed and guilty as that. I do not judge you for what happened, though I have to admit that in our shared past and future, I judged you on how you

handled it later on. To me, it seems like you are about to or already gave up on Slytherins. That led to massive hatred. A lot of the pupils you are teaching now or are about to teach later rose to fight a war, tired of your constant humiliation and degradation of them. I don't know if you already started but I know it will happen in thirty years at the latest. As far as I know, you already started though. Thinking that some people are unworthy of any effort on their behalf, that they will turn out bad anyway, it's something I have seen you do again and again. I get the feeling you may have already reached that point here as well. With what you wrote, I understand where you are coming from. Gellert Grindelwald was beyond saving for you. Others are not and I would like to work together on bringing about change.

For that to happen, I would like to give you an update on your findings. Technology is not the link to magical fluctuation, it is genetics. It is a concept that has not been found yet but I would still like to explain it to you. For that, I need the papers that are stored in my head right now. As I can't write them from memory, I would like to give you the memories. Seeing as I am not a wizard anymore, I would love to meet with you, so that you can extract them. What I am offering here is giving you the information to prove Grindelwald wrong and therefore right the damage you have wrought with publishing the thesis you two have worked on. I hope I can trust you to not simply keep the memories because of the change they might bring about. Just because something did not work out well once does not mean it will be a mistake again. But they will be life-changing, have no doubt.

I also think we should meet on the topic of Slytherins and politics at a later date. I would like you to meet my good friend Edgar and my son Tom. Edgar is a Muggle but if he weren't he would have been a Slytherin. I think he is a good example to explain why self-serving, cunning and ambitious people are very important, even if they come with a higher danger of becoming evil. Seeing as with your current definition of goodness, you might find your older self evil as well, I think this might be an enlightening talk about morality.

Yours sincerely, Grenmore

Dear Grenmore,

I am disturbed by a lot of what I read in your last letter. I kept myself from asking how I turned out and I may have been happier not knowing. Now that I have some tidbits, I am hooked on wanting more. I would also like to right my mistake. As you seem to have correctly gleaned from my letter, it was not Gellert who wrote the thesis but me. He started a war on things I dug up for him and my protest in front of the Wizengamot was more of a show-act to give his words more power. I seem to have continued to collect mistakes and it sounds like my desperate attempts to right them have not worked out well. So yes, I would very much like to meet with you. Please send me an address I can apparate to, maybe something in London? Weekends work best for me.

Yours truly, Albus

Harry planned a weekend in London and asked everyone who would like to come. Edgar wanted to visit his sister, Brea wanted to visit friends she had not seen for a year, Loretta wanted to visit a sister that had been adopted before her departure. Tom just wanted to see the city but Harry told him he would not have enough time to

tour it with him. So the little imp asked Edgar if he could stay with him instead and the man relented.

On Friday, they took the car to bring all of their current stock of uniforms to London, booked a hotel and then everyone went their own way. Harry had been able to secure a meeting with Dumbledore on Saturday, so he used the Friday evening to tour Diagon Alley. He looked for some of the prominent books from Hermione's papers at Flourish&Blotts. He also got some treats for Phoebus and a magical prank to show to Edgar and Tom. One day we would walk these streets with them, looking at their faces full of wonder. Maybe that day would come sooner than he thought.

He met Dumbledore at the Leaky Cauldron the next morning. They wandered into Diagon Alley and stopped at a tea shop that did not exist anymore in Harry's time. Dumbledore asked them for a private room and ordered some tea before heavily warding the whole room. He continued with pulling out a pensieve and setting it on the table.

It was strange to have a man barely fifty in front of him. Short grey hair, a short beard, a winning smile. They exchanged some pleasantries about the weather, Hogwarts, Harry's family, Harry's trip before Dumbledore asked openly: "How come I can't read your thoughts at all? I thought you were a Muggle."

"This is the body of a Muggle, yes. I myself am magical. I don't know exactly how that works. I can't perform magic, I am not recognized as magical. If you can't read my thoughts, my Occlumency still works. As it is a mind magic, maybe I can still use that. I am no Legilimens though, so I don't have a way of proving it."

"At least that gives me hope that we can actually extract your memories. That does not work with Muggles. You can only Legilimens them and extract the memory from your own head."

"I know. I will consent to that if the other way does not work."

"You are aware then that that would make me aware of the whole future?"
Dumbledore's eyes widened.

"It is a future that will never come to pass anyway. But you are right that in some cases this may not be for the best, so I hope extraction will work."

"Before we begin with that ... would you indulge my curiosity about myself? You said I would turn out evil."

"In your eyes, from what I understood from your letters, yes. I do not see you as evil. You were a friend and mentor to me. A human with flaws, sure, but all in all a good guy. I am not sure you would see yourself as that though."

"What is the worst that I will have done in your future?"

Oh. Oh well. Harry sighed and looked at the ceiling for a moment. He chose his words carefully: "I think it may have been what you did to me."

"I did something to you that is worse than bringing about a war and enabling my boyfriend to become a mass murderer that I later imprisoned for life?" Dumbledore pressed his lips together and sighed. "The more you tell me, the less I understand why you like me."

"Do you really want to know?"

The other man nodded.

"There was a Dark Lord in my time and it was prophesied that I would be his downfall. So he tried killing me when I was one year old. He succeeded in killing my parents but my mother's sacrifice saved me. It made me into a Horcrux though."

Dumbledore looked pained as well as very serious. So he already knew what Horcruxes were.

"You suspected it but you also suspected that I wasn't the only one. So you decided that you needed me easily controllable. You let my godfather be wrongfully imprisoned in Askaban and placed me with some relatives of which you knew would abuse me."

"I can't believe I would do that."

"It was war, Albus. You did what you had to do. You could not have a loose cannon, not for the sake of one boy's happiness. You asked me for forgiveness later on, so I am not mad. The world hailed me as their savior but I never knew. I was starved, I was beaten, I came to Hogwarts as a confused nobody and you were there for me. You were the father I never had. I knew that you manipulated me and I later found out why, but still, you were the most important person to me."

"I was basically your abuser."

"I am aware." Harry nodded. "You tasked me with destroying the Horcruxes and my last task was dying for the greater good. I did."

"I ... I don't know what to say. I am sorry for that. I can't believe I would turn evil."

"You didn't. I know you enough that I know you think you turned evil. But I know you did it for the greater good and what you believed in. I find no fault in that, as long as you regularly question this belief and do not become a fanatic. You are a bit fanatic in some aspects. As long as you use the opportunity to look at those again, I find no fault in you."

"Not even after abusing you and using you as a scapegoat?"

"Not even then, no." Harry sighed. "Though I wished that you had trusted in my integrity. My parents, my godfather, my friends, they all died for me. I would never have walked away from dying for them."

"You are a very exceptional man, Grenmore. I don't think I ever met anyone quite like you."

"I like to think you might see such a man in the mirror, Albus."

"Not at all." Dumbledore shook his head with an exasperated smile. "I don't ... I worry, I scheme, I regret. I sent others to fight my fights for me. I am a coward."

"Phoenixes don't sing for cowards."

The older man looked up, his eyes shining with tears. "You really know me well."

"Fawkes has been my comfort. After your death, he stayed with your successor, a Slytherin by the way. The man died for the cause, then I died shortly after and after my death, Fawkes stayed with me."

"After your death?" Dumbledore's eyes narrowed.

"I was given the choice to go back to war or stay dead. I decided on more fighting. In the end, I killed the Dark Lord. Only the Horcrux died by his Avada."

"So there is an afterlife ... fascinating." Dumbledore leaned back in his seat. "I am not surprised that Fawkes stayed with you."

"Only for a time though. He flew off some years later, once I felt comfortable in my own life. I got a job, I married, I was happy. I guess Fawkes thought I did not need him anymore."

"No wonder he stayed with me for my whole life." The man scoffed.

"It does not have to be that way, Albus. You may start with thinking that people can redeem themselves." Like Severus. Harry was sure that even Dumbledore believed him redeemed in the end. The only one that never thought so was Severus Snape himself. Both men were similar in that regard.

"I really am unsure if you are my salvation or just a great manipulator."

"How about both?" Harry smiled. "You saved me once. You gave me a purpose, you

gave me hope in the darkest of nights. I saw you die for a cause you believed in, a cause I believed in. To me, you were a great man that fought evil at a high cost to himself, sacrificing himself, sacrificing me, so that others could live. I was angry at you and I raged and I cried, but I never gave up, I never strayed and I have you to thank for that. I even named my son after you."

"Really?" Dumbledore's voice wavered.

"Albus Severus. You and your successor."

"A Slytherin?"

"The first one that made you believe in redemption and the honor of being a Slytherin. He was a betrayer, a liar, a manipulator. He was the best at it, so he worked as a spy. He tortured and killed and watched his friends die, some by his own hand, just to bring information back to you and save us all."

Dumbledore just blinked in silent astonishment.

"I believe he was your best friend in the end. He was your most trusted. You asked him to kill you."

"He did what I could not do?" Dumbledore had to breath through his mouth twice to keep his tears from falling.

"Yeah ... he killed his only friend for the greater good, continued his job and finally died a completely senseless death, just to buy me some time to defeat the Dark Lord." Harry took a sip of his tea. "He felt guilty because his mistake got the women he loved killed. You could relate to that."

"So Slytherins can love ... you are right, I started shunning them, thinking them irredeemable. I never thought I would befriend one."

"That divided the world even further. Gryffindor, Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff on your side, Slytherin as the house of evil. It made most Slytherins of three generations stand with the Dark Lord. The worst magical war the world had ever seen. Annihilation of more than a third of Britain's magical population. The overthrown Ministry registering Muggleborns like werewolves, branding them and killing them."

"No wonder you decided on changing history."

"But it's not only that one person that became the Dark Lord. If it's not him, there are countless others that could take his place. We need to change society, to stop discrimination before it is too late. The Muggles will have their cleansing war in a few years. Grindelwald was meant to be our cleansing war but it wasn't. People still fear Muggles, shun Muggleborns, think of blood purity as superior. My memories will demolish those patterns. Blood purity is a weakness, cause of magical decline and marriage with Muggleborns is the reason for inclines."

"Blood purity is the cause for squibs?" Dumbledore leaned forwards. "Are you serious?"

"The more intermarriage there is, the more squibs and the more madness. Think of the Black family, purest of them all."

"Mad as hatters."

"Exactly." Harry averted his gaze. "The reason that their family is not overrun by squibs is that they kill their squib children early on."

"No ..."

Harry just looked at Dumbledore for a long moment. This man was still pure in a lot of ways. He hadn't gone through the Black library, had not looked at those many, many burned out faces in the tapestry.

"There is a lot of intermarriage even in my family. Ariana ... I always ..."

"If she had married a Muggleborn, there would have been a high chance of her having

immensely powerful children." It was most likely easier to start off with an explanation instead of the memories. "Had she married another pure-blooded squib, they would most likely have had more squib children. Let's take Tom for an example. You taught Merope Gaunt. You know she was nearly a squib, only excelling in potions."

Dumbledore nodded gravely.

"She fell in love with a Muggle. Tom is therefore a half-blood. Once he is an accomplished wizard, he will be slightly more powerful than you. And at least in my time you were hailed as the most powerful wizard alive."

"He'll be on Gellert's and my level? Even though he is not a pure-blood?"

"Same level as Severus, same level as me. Severus and me were both half-bloods as well." Harry leaned forward as well. "Muggleborn means new blood. They are the most potent carriers for magic in future generations, even if they aren't powerful by themselves. Even marrying a Muggle is better than someone once-removed from you in terms of having powerful children. You will not find a squib or low-level wizard in any old blood-new blood pair. Muggles and muggleborns are our salvation, not a threat."

"And you have the whole evidence for that in your head?"

Harry just nodded and waited for Dumbledore to process the new information.

"This will completely overthrow generations of magical research."

"Do you fear facing the truth?" Harry smirked.

"You know that I don't."

"Do you fear the consequences of bringing the news before the Wizengamot?"

Dumbledore slowly shook his head. "Just ... you know, I sent Gellert to the Wizengamot with what I believed to be true. That ended in bloody mayhem. Now you sent me with what you believe to be true. There is a high chance for bloody mayhem, you know? I'll be your scapegoat."

"If anyone would believe this coming from a Muggle, I would do it myself. But if I tell them, they'll think I just want to save my skin, dismiss the information and obliviate me." Harry shrugged his shoulders. "I need you to do this. But I won't stand idly by. You want me as your co-author, I'll be on those papers with you. I won't hide because this is unsavory information. I just can't protect myself or my family, so I'd rather not. But I won't throw you to the wolves."

"Do you think I might have been able to save Gellert if I presented it with him? If I stood by him instead of playing an enemy I never was?" Dumbledore looked down onto his hands that he had folded on the table.

"I don't know. I only met him once and those were his dying moments. The Dark Lord confronted him about the Elder Wand" - Dumbledore flinched and looked up in shock - "and Grindelwald laughed in his face before telling him it's yours, knowing that you had already died. Then he was killed. He seemed to have lost his will to live with your death. So the only thing I can say for sure is that you are important to him."

"Oh." The man seemed horribly strung-tight. "You know about the wand?"

"It went to me due to various circumstances. I broke it and threw it into the lake."

"Oh." Dumbledore looked at his wand for a long moment. "Do you think I should do that?"

"Who knows?" Harry shrugged again. "It felt right to me. Do whatever you think is best." A rather crooked smile found his way onto his face. "You know, I'm only a guy from the future, not even your own future. I am not almighty."

"You're the most interesting person I met since Gellert though."

"Please don't fall in love with me." He had enough of gay guys falling for him. Dumbledore just chuckled. "Do a lot of guys fall in love with you?"
"More than I ever wanted." He scoffed. "Now, let's try extracting the memories?"
"Let's." The other man grinned in anticipation.

It went well. Dumbledore went into them while Harry prepared more tea, drank a cup, two, prepared more tea ... it took a while. It had already turned dark when Dumbledore finally emerged and drank a cold cup of tea immediately.

"How long was I gone?"

"Ten hours maybe? I didn't think I gave you that much."

"No, I just read it again and again. Do you have the references?"

"I picked some up today. Some others are in Hogwarts, some are deeply hidden in pure-blood libraries and some aren't written yet. I somehow became heir to Black manor, so a lot is from their library. You will need to charm a Black."

"You trust in my single-minded stubbornness?"

"Always, Albus. Always." Harry had to smile at remembering Severus saying those exact words to him. It was bittersweet in a way.

"I'll get those books. Thank you so much. This was an enlightening day."

"Is there a way to copy those memories and give them back to me?"

"Sadly, no. But if you agree to meet me here again tomorrow noon, I'll have written copies of what you showed me."

"Sure. I need to leave after that though, we have to drive back to Bath. It's a long trip."

"Oh! Should we meet at another location next time?"

"You could connect our fireplace to the floo, that would save a lot of time."

"I need to go to your place for that."

"Then we can meet here again next time and you can come back with us. I'll save you a spot in the car. It's full right now, I brought Edgar and the squirt as well as two of my employees who wanted to meet friends and family."

"I am looking forward to meeting your family."

"The new one anyway." Harry sighed sadly. "I wish I could have introduced you to Albus Severus. You would have liked my little genius. He went to Slytherin, by the way."

"You were a Gryffindor, right?"

"Definitely. But I can see a lot of Slytherin traits in me, even though Edgar tells me I am a goody-two-shoes." He grinned. "He says I'm too nice."

"So Edgar ... is he ...?" Dumbledore made a vague hand movement.

"Co-parenting with me, he is Tom's godfather. I have one wife and I am faithful to her, even if I never see her again."

"Admirable." Dumbledore nodded. "It's crazy how your mind gets stuck on one person."

"Well ... we were married for nearly twenty years. I saved her life when I was twelve and she was eleven. She had become possessed by a Horcrux. I battled a basilisk over her nearly dead body. By the way, you have a basilisk living in your school basement."

"That's ... unsavory news."

"Thankfully, it does not kill children if it isn't commanded to do so. The only living parselmouth is Tom, so it should not prove dangerous. Salazar Slytherin kept it as a pet."

"I think I'd still like for it to be removed."

"I can relate to that."

"Any other things I should know about my school?"

"It's a great idea to be more inclusive. You could let in some werewolves ... without telling the Ministry. Safe travel to a nice far-off forest on the full-moon nights. Werewolves don't hurt animagi, did you know? So the animagi on stuff can chaperone the baby wolves."

"Fascinating." Dumbledore's eyes actually seemed to sparkle with mirth.

"Also, you'll soon get a young half-giant called Hagrid as a pupil. He loves magical creatures as much as Newt Scamander does, he just does not exactly grasp the danger some of them pose. He needs a guiding hand in learning that acromantulas make bad pets."

"I shall look out for him."

"We'll meet again on the topic of Slytherins. Please observe your behavior towards them as objectively as possible until then."

"I shall endeavor to do so."

"Well, see you tomorrow."

That went rather well, he guessed. Hopefully, Dumbledore would be there tomorrow, give him back his memories and start digging. If "War Hero Dumbledore" would come out with this information, it would hopefully work as well as with "War Hero Potter" and "War Hero Granger-Weasley". He was unsure about his own part in this but he would make a stand with Dumbledore if he so desired. It would give him a reputation in the wizarding world and Tom would have to live with that but on the other hand, he would not be a nobody by name. It could be positive as well as negative. It would certainly give him an even bumpier start in Slytherin but Harry could tell him his option of persuading the hat to sort him into Ravenclaw. A lot of good politicians came from Ravenclaw. Though Tom Riddle in Ravenclaw sounded as believable as him being a Hufflepuff. No, his son would be a Slytherin. Just like Albus had become one, Harry had seen that one coming for years.

He slept fitfully that night. Dumbledore was his best bet, but what if he decided that the information was false or improvable because some ground work for it hadn't been discovered yet?

What if he decided to develop another fanatic idea? What if people decided to follow and kill for that idea? Harry did not see a possibility how to make hate out of these findings but in his time, most purebloods had been dead. Somehow, he was able to imagine a counter-movement on the lines of discrimination against genetically tainted wizarding blood – which would hit the purebloods this time. It sounded far-fetched to him but killing all Muggles and reigning supreme over them had seemed far-fetched as well. At this point, there were more muggle-borns than purebloods. Discrimination was a possibility.

It was no use crying over spilt milk. He had given his knowledge to Dumbledore, so it was mostly out of his hands. Grounded in that conclusion, he waited at the cafe the next day. He still let out a relieved sigh when he saw the old man entering and heading towards him with a smile.

"Were you able to copy everything?"

"It was a lot but thankfully, I have a sharp memory." The older man sat and ordered tea for himself. Harry was just happy to have a place with fine coffee. He always took a pack back home but it wasn't the same as having freshly ground beans. "So would you place back my memories?"

"Of course." Dumbledore got out the bottles filled with memories and started putting them back one by one. "I am happy this worked."

"It is a new situation, having a trained wizard in a Muggle body. I just don't want to end up as a test subject to the Department of Mysteries."

"Your secret is safe with me. Actually, how did you enter this part of town?"

"I met with the Department of Mysteries, explained my situation and asked for help. I have an amulet that gives me a magical aura."

"They let you go again?" Dumbledore raised an eyebrow.

"There are some decent people working there. I spoke to someone whose name was familiar. There are certain people that have a sense of honor I can trust."

"Am I someone that you trust?"

"You are the one I gave these memories too. You also know a lot about the future now and I trust you with the knowledge of my son. Right now, you are the wizard I trust most."

"Were you trained in political talk or is that your natural speak?"

"I think that when it comes to making ambiguous sentences with double meanings, I still haven't reached your level." In thought, he added that he also never wanted to reach that level.

"Would you tell me where you find me untrustworthy?"

Harry leaned back and crossed his arms. Of course Dumbledore would pick up on the things he left out. So he was cautious when he answered: "You care for the greater good. You sacrificed for the greater good. I am okay with informed choices, even if they mean death. Grindelwald knew what he was getting himself into. I knew from the time I was fifteen that fighting with you would mean death somewhere along the way. Not only for myself but for everyone I loved as well. I am alright with all of that. But honestly, I don't trust you around my son. In the life I came from, he tried to do the right thing again and again and you rejected him at every turn because you feared the darkness in him. You basically left him no choice but to go bad. Instead of support, you gave him disdain. Would it have turned out different if you had acted differently? I do not know that. But I know that you certainly didn't help. So I have some reservations about you meeting my son."

The older man nodded sagely and finally averted his gaze. I took him a moment to gather his thoughts before he said: "I see."

"Just so you know, I like this version of you much better than the one I met in my time." Harry smiled at him. "You carry guilt but it hasn't hardened you. Your older self would have said something like 'Oh, don't you worry, my boy, don't you worry'. You were very set in your ways. Some of them good, some not so much. You never showed your doubt, you never questioned yourself or sought counsel. It was quite impossible to discuss something with you. Even your mistakes were something you took as a given, something one had to forgive you for because there was no other way, no other choice."

"I seem to have thought myself infallible."

"I fear it was more along the lines of being unable to change guilt into remorse. So you made a world where you never had to carry guilt."

"Are there mistakes in your life that you just cannot forgive yourself for?"

"Plenty. People needlessly dying, people I could have saved. One brother losing an ear for me, one dying. My own wife, it took me nearly a year to figure out that she was possessed and dying. But worst of all, I regret how I treated my son. My youngest, the Slytherin. The older he got, the more he scared me. I had tried to deny my Slytherin

nature, fearing those parts of me. So when my son reflected my own self back at me, at first I shunned him. I thought there was something wrong with him when actually, it was just something I did not like about myself. My wife confronted me about that, so I had to confront myself. I finally came around and returned to loving my son, but it had been two or three years in which I had been cold to him. It is the thing I regret most in life."

"You made it right."

Harry just nodded. "It is what gave me the ability to forgive myself. I made it right, I made it better. People make mistakes. I was able to right mine."

"I am not sure I can ever make up this mistake."

"You saved the world from your crazed ex-lover. You are now releasing counter-information to make up for the misinformation before. You help to bring up children with love and acceptance instead of hate and discrimination. Or at least you work on that one."

"One after the other. I will need to work myself into the graces of some purebloods for some of those references anyway. I will reflect on my behavior towards them and Slytherins in general. Next time we'll meet, let us work on that."

"I will let you meet my son then. You have my full trust that you are able to overcome those last hurdles."

"Thank you, Grenmore."

"All the best, Albus."