

# The time that is given us

## How love can change lives

Von Gepo

### Kapitel 27: Twenty-seventh chapter

Tom explained the current situation to Edgar and Jonathan while Harry drew Brea aside. The others took the study, so that both of them sat in the library. Her pinched face showed clearly that she knew that something serious was going on.

"How can I help?"

Merlin, he wished he could actually appreciate her for the great woman she had become. He regarded her for a moment before answering: "I need to tell you a few secrets that will most likely shock you."

"You are a high-ranking military man and we secretly hide homosexuals, what exactly should shock me at this point?"

"Magic."

She simply raised her eye-brows. "Magic?"

"Yes, magic is real."

"Alright." She wore her corset, so it was impossible to lean back into the chair. Instead, she leaned sideways to make herself more comfortable. "So you can use magic?"

"No, I can't. Albus, Jonathan and Tom can."

"That makes a lot of sense."

"It does?" Harry blinked.

"Well, Albus never arrives with a car but he let it slip that he came down from Scotland."

"He ... could have taken a bus?"

"For a day trip without luggage?"

"Well, I see your point. His means of travel were suspicious." Why had he never thought about that? "So, there is this whole magical community that hides from non-magical people which are called Muggles."

"Are we the Muggles or are they called Muggles?"

"We are the Muggles, they call themselves witches and wizards. Well ... how to tell you about a whole society? So, basically they work very similar to us. They have reporters and policemen and schools and so on. Albus is the headmaster of their main school. Jonathan is not a chemist but a potioneer."

"So they are important?"

"Albus is, Jonathan not so much. But they also have something like aristocracy and both are members of that. So, in a way, both are important. A reporter came to this house today and surprised Helen. It's why the magical police – they are called Aurors – came and magicked her memory about it away."

"She does not remember?"

"No." He saw how that finally shocked Brea. Magic was all fun until you realized how dangerous it could be. "In the course of that, they attacked me and nearly killed me twice."

"Why?" She balled her fists.

"Basically because they were lax in their procedures. I am about to go to their ministry and log a formal complaint."

"Oh." She let go of her breath. "That's possible?"

"Yes. Jonathan will come with me for security reasons."

"Good." A smile rose to her lips. "I hate thinking that we aren't safe."

"Mister Dodge, the older man just now, will stay here and look after everyone."

Her smile turned sad. "We ... aren't safe, are we?"

"For the foreseeable future, I'd like Jonathan to live with us again. He is very capable."

"Am I to manage this household in your stead?" She drew in her shoulders. "What about Edgar?"

"Edgar will stay here. I'd like you to come with me."

"To the magical world?"

"Yes." After just telling her how dangerous that could be? Smart move, Harry. He was an idiot sometimes. "I don't think that it will be dangerous. But Albus and Jonathan just got outed, so I need a female divergence."

"Oh, I see. Same old problem?"

"Same old, yes. Tom is my son by adoption and every wizard could take him away, claiming that wizards should not be raised by Muggles. I'd be powerless. So we need to present a united front, a strong, intelligent father and a beautiful, loving mother."

"You need me to claim that we raise Tom together?"

"It's more like smiling, nodding along and being pretty."

"So the usual ruse." She nodded and sighed. "Only a different audience this time. Do they know about Edgar?"

"No. If his name comes up, he is a friend in charge of our factory. Just like Albus and me are old friends, you don't know where from."

"I do not need to know my husband's business, I am only a woman after all. The world of politics is for men to enjoy."

"Women can vote, you know?"

"A good woman never would, she stays with the tasks she is entrusted with. A good home and happy children." She would also have to wait another five years to even be allowed to vote. One could marry at sixteen but decide about their government only at twenty-one and above.

"You sound like I mail-ordered a wife."

"For the sake of your reputation, it's easier if I am dumb. A good lay with a pretty face."

"I am both proud and appalled how perfect you play that role."

She simply shrugged her shoulders in a very unladylike manner. "It's easier to cover up inconsistencies that way."

"You also need to be a bit shy this time."

"Shy?" She scrutinized him.

"Some wizards are able to read your mind. When they do, they stare into your eyes deeply. So when someone stares, lower your gaze and act coy."

"Ah!" Brea nodded. "That makes sense. Other than staring at me, is there any way to indicate that someone is using magic?"

"Some people need words or their wand – a wooden stick – to do it, but those aren't the ones I fear. It's those than charm you with a smile and their magic at the same time."

"Sounds like Jonathan."

"He is a master at reading minds and manipulating them. Albus as well. I know none better than them. Looking at me like you adore me to bits is the best way to get through this."

"Oh dear ... can we ask Jonathan to perform some magic first? I don't want to gawk at people and things just because they fly or talk or whatever they do."

That ... was a pretty good idea, yes. Being eleven sounded so far away but he could still remember how strange everything had been. "We'll do that."

"Great." She looked down. "Is this dress okay or should I wear something more pompous?"

"The dark green one that goes well with my eyes. Also, I'll wear a coat over my suit. Wizards normally wear robes."

"Huh ... can we go shopping for clothes afterwards?" Her eyes twinkled with mischief. "It depends on how that complaint goes. But we should take some money just in case."

"Yes!" She stood with a smile. "I'll be back in a quarter."

"I'll be in the study with the others."

Brea had some serious doubts about stepping into a lit fire-place. He could not exactly fault her for that but they had to hurry – so he picked her up and carried her in. Jonathan just grinned in amusement. At the Ministry, Harry carried her away from the fire-places first. Even with a few magic spells to acquaint Brea with the sight, the Ministry lobby was something else. There were people of all colors, all kinds of fashion styles, flying memos, a few house-elves levitating desks and some boy running after a Niffler. It was a daily sight for years of his life and it still overwhelmed him.

"This is amazing," she whispered.

"We should take her to a quidditch match."

"A definite no, Jonathan." Poor girl. At least she grew up in London and was used to human masses. "Mylady, may I have the honor?" Harry offered his arm to her.

"Give me a moment." She let her gaze wander. "This is just ... I have no words." Her eyes sparkled with joy. "Can I become a witch?"

"No, you need to be born that way."

"Darn ... can I marry a wizard?"

"You already married." He knew the expression on her face without even looking.

"And no, the cat is already out of the bag, Jonathan does not need a wife."

Said man only raised a brow.

"Right now, you have a magical son. Enjoy that one after he comes back from school."

"He already goes to a magical school?"

"Nope, eleven to seventeen years of age. It's a secondary school."

"I need to work on my motherly charm." She grinned. "Tom will care for his elderly honorary mom when I am old and grey, right?"

Harry just turned to Jonathan who looked as doubtful as Harry felt.

"You are no fun, you know that?" She rolled her eyes. "Okay, I'll enjoy it now and dream about it later." Her hand was put on his arm. "Lead the way, husband of mine." Jonathan fell into step beside them while Harry went over to the information desk. All of them got badges with their name and purpose before they took an elevator to the

Auror department. Brea told them that she had once seen a pater noster as a child and used it until she had been thrown out. So elevators were not completely foreign but still amazing. She also poked a few of the memos with her finger.

"As soon as we step of, you need to be in control of yourself."

"Yes, sir." She smiled at him. "Do I call you Gren or sir?"

"Gren, please. We are a devoted, loving couple of an older research specialist and his warm-hearted, loving, beautiful, young wife."

"Who is slightly shy due to her age. All of these important people running around her."

"They aren't important to you right now, you are enraged that your husband was attacked."

"A shy, enraged wife?" Her gaze turned pointed. "You are not making this easy."

"You simply stay silent until you can't take it anymore. Whenever something is not in our favor, your emotions gush out."

"I should become an actress." She nodded. "Let's do this."

They reached their floor and stepped of the elevator to a long floor with a lot of doors. For a moment, homesickness grabbed Harry's heart before he noticed how he knew none of the people navigating the corridor. He stopped a young girl with an Auror apprentice batch and asked to be led to the head Auror.

"What do you want with him, sir?" So not completely blue-eyed it seemed.

"I need to log a complaint against Auror Leeves."

"Oh, that one." She rolled her eyes. "I'll take you to his team leader."

"I fear that another slap on his wrist is not enough this time. Please take me to the head Auror."

She scrutinizes me for a moment, not so subtly studying the badge I wear. "You're that Muggle from the news, right?"

Should he react? Harry knew the way. He could simply go there by himself and leave standing her. He had thought that talking to a recruit would get him in faster but this one was like a terrier. "Yes, madam, I am. My name is Grenmore Horten."

"So this is the infamous Jonathan Bagshot?" She eyes him up and down. It's not exactly clear if it is favorably or not. "I'd understand if you wanted to sue a reporter but why Auror Leeves?"

"Because he tried to kill me twice today."

Her eyes widened comically, a muttered curse leaving her lips before she said lowly: "What was he thinking?"

"That's for your superior to divine. Now would you take us there or shall I have to find the way by myself, telling this to everyone I meet when I ask for directions?"

"No, no, I'll take you there." She held up her hands, a wand in one of them. "Sorry, he's known for behaving rashly but mostly he just pisses people off."

"Speaking of that, I do have to sue some reporters, so maybe we could take some statements after my business with the head Auror is done?"

"Sure thing." She led them down the corridor. "Can I stay for that complaint against Leeves?"

Harry smiled devilishly. "You want to be first for the gossip?"

"Hell yeah." She grinned. "I live for the gossip."

"I did not think that many people would remember my name from that article."

"There was another article explaining the theory further that had your name in it. It was published in Rogue, a pureblood witches' magazine that normally covers fashion or new baby trends. Seeing as it pertained magical births, the magazine deemed it

worthwhile. It had an interview with Leticia Bones who was asked why she let her daughter marry a dark wizard. She explained your theory and quoted you."

"Is there a way for me to get that publication?"

"It's a limited edition, not publically available." There was calculation in her eyes, definitely a Slytherin.

"You get all the details on Leevies and get to squeeze Larrey Barren for a bit."

"Would you be cross with me if your statement never made it to the records?" So she wanted leverage against the reporter.

"Depends on what you use it for? I need a bit of good press on Jonathan and Albus right now. What are your goals?"

"I am not sure about the good press but I could raise a shitstorm against Ruby Sinclair."

Jonathan interrupted for a moment: "That's appreciated."

Harry also acquiesced: "As long as it doesn't hurt Jonathan or Albus, I'm in."

"Perfect." She stopped in front of the head Auror's office. "Right this way, sirs, I'll announce you and see to it that you are seen immediately."

"A pleasure doing business with you." Not exactly what he expected from a rookie though.

Her returning smile screamed the truth about her conniving mind.

The rest went as smooth as warm butter. Brea did not have to intercept once. She only asked afterwards if that move with the Auror rookie wasn't a bit far from his character. Honestly, it was. Bringing down and attacking your enemies was low. Not even the argument that she did it first was enough here, he wasn't a four-year-old fighting over a toy. Her naive question made Harry aware that he had just caused Ruby Sinclair's social death as a means to protect Albus and Jonathan as well as his own interests. Brea was right that this wasn't his style at all.

"I am getting sucked into a world of intrigues." Harry sighed. "All I want is for Dumbledore to keep his position and change history for the better by being a role model for young kids."

"A man in the light needs another to manage his shadow." Jonathan looked at him, no remorse in his face. "That has always been my job. If you had not made that deal, I would have. I know Ruby. She's dangerous. I know that she is already planning her revenge and discrediting her is the only way to remove the threat."

"But to stoop down to her level?" Harry looked at his wife. "Your right, Brea, I am not okay with what I did. I do not like doing things this way. It was a kind of violence and the problem should be solved without it."

Jonathan spoke before she could: "You cannot solve every problem without violence, Gren. How exactly should one have stopped Gellert Grindelwald without violence? Told him that his theory was wrong when not even his own lover turning from him and people out to kill him made him realize that?"

Harry faced him and asked back: "Did the punishment help? Did the imprisonment help?"

"Well ... no."

"Then how did violence help? It only took his means of hurting others but it did not solve the problem. How many people come out of prison and can honestly say that they learned something?"

"Some people cannot be helped", argued Jonathan.

"Don't you think that nearly everyone has said that about Gellert Grindelwald?"

"Well ... violence gives you time to help."

"My move on Ruby Sinclair will not help her, it will only hurt."

"But there was no alternative at this point. Her goal was to hurt and maim and she nearly crippled us. We had no legal way to stop her. What do you do when the law does not protect you?"

"You change it." Harry sighed. "There is no honor in self-justice and that's what I just did." It was followed by an even bigger sigh. "I'll write her a letter of apology. It was a spur of the moment decision and not a good one."

"You are too nice." Jonathan rubbed his head. "People take our power, our jobs and maybe even our lives for how we are born and I should simply accept that?"

"No, you should find a place that accepts you."

"What if there is none?" Pain laced his voice. "Gren, there just is none. Not even here, as nice as you are. You have seen the same things I did. Millions of people are going to be killed for nothing other than prejudice."

"I know." He hung his head. "I wish I knew how to stop that."

"Just how I wish I knew how to stop Muggle killings." Jonathan placed his hands on Harry's shoulders. "Violence is needed to gain time. You don't have to like or support it but sometimes it serves a greater purpose."

"Your rhetoric of a greater purpose or the greater good is exactly what the populists will use to kill people like us, Jonathan. Did you see those words engraved on the plate above the concentration camp entryway in your visions? Don't use the same logic your enemies use, no matter how tempting."

To everyone his own. It were the words on the entryway of the concentration camp Buchenwald. What was once meant as words of acceptance, coming from ancient Rome to gain approval of a social support system, was then used as a way to tell Jews, homosexuals, gypsies and political enemies that they were unwanted elements and only deserved death. It was nearly as bad as telling people that their death and suffering served a greater purpose. Lives lost seldom served any purpose. Some people sacrificed themselves for others, yes, some even heroically. Harry had done that after all. Albus had done it. But it was rare cases where a death was actually a sensible sacrifice.

More often, people decided that others had to be killed for some kind of gain. There was no honor in that. There was no greater purpose. There was only greed, fear and desperation making people prepared to kill. This one time, he had allowed himself to be guided by those emotions and caused harm to someone else when he could have talked to her first. His fear and frustration had gotten the better of him.

Brea said: "I have no idea what you are talking about but if Gren wants to apologize to the woman that harmed you for harming her in return, I can't see a bad outcome. As long as everything still runs as planned, why not?"

"It's a paltry excuse to say you regret doing something but not carry any consequences, Brea. I could warn her of what is coming but that would mean it would not be as effective. Is it worth the risk? I wish I knew. I don't want her to lose face but I also need her to lose face if she does not change her ways."

Jonathan offered: "I could always reveal my other persona, she would immediately be on our side."

"That is never the right way, Jonathan. Scratch that thought from your mind forever. Nothing is worth the consequences of that."

Brea looked at them both for a long moment but seemed to decide to let this slip.

"How about a letter explaining the reasons for doing what you did? It would be an

apology with the possibility of her seeing your way."

"Sounds a lot like justification."

Brea groaned and asked: "Why does explaining yourself always mean that you aren't sorry as well? It's not like misunderstandings are caused by one person alone. You can apologize and explain. Oftentimes the other person needs to apologize as well anyway."

"Angry people think that you aren't sincere when you explain yourself, Brea." Even though she was right that mostly, all people involved were hurt. Only taking an apology and not giving one in return was not exactly nice. "You are right though. In essence, my message is "Please refrain from hurting my friends and family, otherwise I will hurt you further". I will basically just threaten her. I might feel sorry that it has come to this but I can't apologize. I would not be sincere if I said I regretted this. I would like to regret it, but Jonathan is right, I know no other way. I wish I knew another but in our current legal system, there is no other way."

"I am all in for a threatening letter." Jonathan smirked.

"It will be a non-confrontative though." Harry smiled sadly. "I fear her and I shall tell her so. It is most likely not the way you would ever write a letter."

The other man just sighed and asked: "Can I read it at least?"

"Of course." He headed to the study. "For now, let's tell the others that we should be safe again. The only thing that could happen are wizards apparating in but that would be most unusual. Except for the reporter that won't come here again and both Aurors of which one will not come here again, no one knows this place."

"I'll stay and protect you," Jonathan vowed.

Harry just nodded and thanked him. Time to release Elias from his duties.

*Dear Ruby Sinclair,*

*I write in hopes for this not to become a bigger and bigger mess. I do not know if you intended for your words and actions to have the consequences they could have had. They cost Jonathan his job, they might have cost Albus his job. More importantly, it could have ruined both their social standings.*

*Both of them are important to make the wizarding world more open, more accepting for change that is needed to keep it alive. You know of the genetic theory, you also know of the danger of Muggle technology. Keeping the old ways of intermarrying and shunning Muggles is a threat to survival, even though a lot of people cannot see that right now. I fear you are one of them, still believing that enslaving Muggles and killing most of them would somehow save us. It will not. Some people already had that epiphany, maybe Jonathan could explain it to you a bit better than I can. He is aware of and more knowledgeable in your own rhetoric after all.*

*Right now, with the way you are, you are a threat. I hope that this will change in the future, but due to current circumstances, I need to see you in this light. Therefore I made some moves to reign in the threat you pose. I am not proud of them, it is not the way I like work with intelligent creatures. Normally, I talk to them, try to understand them and maybe have them understand me as well. This time, based on the information I have and the pressures of time, I denounced you to the press. I am sorry it came to this, I wish there had been another way. Please let us communicate instead of destroying each other further.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Grenmore Horten*

"Do you think she will write to me?," Jonathan asked.

"You know her better than I do. She seems fascinated with the thought that Grindelwald could still be alive and come back in your body. So I guess she will invite you and then press you for information until she is sure you are really him."

"She was a fervent fan of him."

"I guess that is why Albus feared her so." Harry pointed at the letter. "Is there anything you wish to add or would change?"

"I would take a different tone but I see why you do this. You don't want her to become a cornered rat, you want her to cooperate. By mentioning me, you want to lure her to our side with the possibility of secretly working with Grindelwald again. It's a genius move, seeing as you don't reveal anything. It's subtle. I guess that is how you would want me to play her. Always leaving the question open without ever giving something concrete away."

"Albus would disapprove. He would say that it's too risky."

Jonathan fell silent for a moment before hesitatingly speaking: "I want to say that he underestimates me ... maybe he is right though. She is sharp. One can play her but only at a certain distance. Once she has too much information, she becomes dangerous."

"So we need to keep her at an arm's length."

"Never trust her with anything."

"I know the type." Like Gryphook. Knowing that an ally is only there for their self-interest, nor for the cause itself. One that could always stab you in the back.

"Sometimes I wonder what you have seen." Jonathan looked at him in something like wonder. "Have you been good or evil? Do you have regrets that eat you up? Who have you lost to stand here today?"

"I lost my parents, I lost my mentor, I lost all of my friends, my wife and my three children. I lost my own life twice now and countless people died for me. As far I know, I even lost my whole time-line. Nothing I know will ever come to pass and most likely, I won't ever see my loved ones again, not even in death." Harry scoffed. "It puts misery into perspective."

"And I am telling you about societies that aren't accepting." The other man hung his head. "You are most likely older than me and have seen a lot more."

"I have seen more but I am actually not older than you. You have a few years on me."

Harry took the letter and sealed it. "All of us are shaped by our experiences and some prepare us for things others aren't as well prepared for. We lack in other areas for it."

"What do you lack?"

"Consistency." He had gotten an inkling in his last life. "Trust in the world around me."

"You trust even me by now."

"That's because you talk stuff through before you do it. No more bewitching violent Muggles in secret without telling anyone about it."

"Has Howard's father stopped with the violence?"

"Mostly, yes. His wife works in our factory, she looks after their youngest and Tom looks after Howard and his sister. The man still has work but he is about to lose it



because he drinks his anger away. I hope that one day, his wife will see him for the pathetic waste of space that he is. Or he comes around and changes something about himself, who knows. One of them would be appreciated."

Jonathan nodded slowly. "Do you have any wishes, now that I live here?"

"Apply for a new apprenticeship. Some people love scandal, one might take you in. It can't be worse than your last one."

"Don't you want me here for protection?"

"That's important but the long-time goal is still to have you join politics. I don't want to stand in your way. There are others that can protect us, but there aren't many with your rhetoric skills."

"Thank you." The other man smiled and nodded. "You are right, I'll do that."