

where it went wrong

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where it went wrong

by [RodeRozen](#)

Summary

What kind of idiot killed their own soulmate? Harry is exactly that kind of idiot. Luckily, Hermione has a plan.

The thing is, time-travel isn't reversible.

What kind of lunatic tries to kill a one-year old baby? Tom is, apparently, exactly that kind of lunatic. Or so Harry tells him. Luckily, Tom has a plan. And a way to reverse time-travel.

Or: Harry travels back, and back again. Tom has parental feelings, and Teddy brabbles.

28th December 1988

“Suscipe me in initio,
et revertetur ad me,
in quo abiit iniuriam,
sic fiat semper.”

Harry could feel the magic building as he chanted. Well outside the circle of salt, his resigned family and friends looked at him.

Hermione’s eyes were filled with tears as she clutched at Ron’s hand. Ginny whispered something to Draco, who looked at her, eyes filled with unspoken emotions.

They were lucky, yet he didn’t begrudge them for it. He would find his own luck. He only wished they could join him.

Raising his voice slightly, he started the chant again.

“Suscipe me in initio,
et revertetur ad me,
in quo abiit iniuriam
sic fiat semper.”

Then he knew no more.

--

Translation:

*(Take me back to the past,
let me return,
to where it went wrong,
so mote it be.)*

--

21st December 1944

Tom grit his teeth against the pounding in his head, attempting to focus on his homework and not the bullies taunting him.

“Oi, freak!” one of his roommates called out.

The quill in his hand snapped. He took a deep breath and tried to remain calm, even as his first reaction was to snarl at the impudent boy.

“Didn’t you hear me?” the same boy taunted.

Muscles trembling with barely restrained fury, Tom started gathering up his homework. He’d severely underestimated NEWT year, thinking it would be a breeze, much like his OWL year had been.

Unfortunately, he couldn’t seem to focus for more than ten minutes at a time.

Maybe it was just nerves. The Revealing Ceremony was tomorrow, after all.

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The first thing Harry saw when he came back to consciousness was the pristine white ceiling of the hospital wing. He groaned softly, causing the matron to bustle over to him.

“Good Merlin, you’re awake!” she softly exclaimed. She looked to be in her late fifties, with white hair in a bun at the back of her head and gentle grey eyes.

“I feel like I was trampled by a herd of Hippogriffs,” Harry moaned.

“Well, I would imagine so! Your magical core was severely depleted. You were lucky it was even large enough for a time-travel chant,” she admonished. “Oh, don’t look so surprised. It happens occasionally, people who miss their soulmate and travel back in time. What time are you from, dear?”

“Um, 1988, ma’am.”

“Goodness! As far as I know, no one’s ever travelled back further than a couple of years, a decade at the most. But then, you probably already knew that.”

“No, ma’am. Nearly all records of time-travel have been destroyed in my future. It was pure luck I managed to find one of the few remaining ones.”

She clucked.

“Well, no matter. I’ll do my very best to have you out of here by the Revealing Ceremony tomorrow.”

The door opened, and someone all too familiar entered. Harry had seen that face only a week ago, during his own Revealing Ceremony. His breath caught in his chest as he took in the bloodied nose and bruised face. Tom Riddle limped into the infirmary, catching himself on the nearest bedpost as he stumbled.

“Madam Primrose?” he softly called out. The matron turned around from Harry’s bed, eyes widening at the damage that had been done to Tom.

“Oh, my! Sit down, Mr Riddle.” She quickly went over to him and cast a privacy ward.

Disappointed, Harry laid back down. He wasn’t going to hear or see anything now.

But how amazing it had been, to see his soulmate! His actual soulmate, not the shell of him that was left after over half a century alone.

--

Tom frowned. He shifted nervously, but winced at the pain that shot through him. Right, no moving. He felt strangely...settled. Content, even, like something inside him had calmed.

It scared him. He hadn’t felt quite right for a while now. Restless, easily angered. He’d put it down to the Revealing Ceremony being tomorrow, though he only half-believed that himself.

He wondered what would happen, who would be his soulmate.

If he even had one. He’d held out on his plan to secure immortality until he’d discussed it with his soulmate, since even he didn’t dare mutilate a split soul without both parties agreeing. The consequences would be unheard of.

But should he not have a soulmate, he wouldn’t have to worry about that. He reminded himself there was only a very small chance he had a full soul already. It did happen occasionally, babies born with a whole soul instead of a half.

They were lucky. They only needed themselves, wouldn’t have trouble surviving without a soulmate, because they had their whole soul.

Most people, however, had a split soul, meaning that one soul was shared between two people, and they were effectively dependent on the other to survive. You couldn’t walk around alone with a split soul for too long, or there would be consequences.

“Who was responsible for this, Mr Riddle?” Madam Primrose asked, breaking the silence.

Tom shook his head, pressing his lips together. The matron sighed, but didn't insist. He hadn't given away names of bullies since he was five. It only made their harassment worse.

He'd learned that the hard way.

He felt the various bruises and other injuries fade away as Madam Primrose waved her wand over his body.

"There, that should be it. Just a couple potions left," she said, bustling away. Tom groaned. 'A couple potions' meant he'd be chugging back potions until he felt his stomach would explode.

He could see the only other patient through the privacy bubble. Since the visibility was one-way, he made use of the opportunity to study him. It was a boy, looking to be about his age. He was short, but had a lean, agile build. The mop of black hair on his head looked like it may very well have eaten the last comb that came near it. He had his eyes closed, so Tom couldn't see what color they were, but there was a distinctive lightning-bolt shaped scar in the middle of his forehead.

He wore dark blue, slightly worn trousers in a thick, textured fabric, with an unevenly cable-knit bottle-green jumper over it. The clothes looked well loved, but by no means shabby or threadbare. Like his own, Tom thought with faint embarrassment. He wondered where the boy came from, though. He clearly wasn't a Hogwarts student – he didn't wear the uniform, and Tom had never seen him before.

Just then, Madam Primrose came back with a tray filled with much more potions than he would have preferred.

--

Something touched his shoulder.

In a single fluid movement, Harry had grabbed his wand, spun out of his attacker's hold, gotten behind them and pointed his wand at their throat. As the world swam into focus, he felt his legs shake with the effort of holding him up.

He looked at his attacker. It was a woman, but he didn't recognize her.

"Who are you?" he snarled at her.

"Please, sir! You're in the infirmary, you should be in bed!"

Harry blinked, and blinked again.

Of course. He'd travelled back in time.

The woman in his grasp was the current matron, Madam...Primrose? Right. He'd come back for...Tom. Tom Riddle.

Harry stepped back, keeping a firm grip on his wand as he assessed the situation. Tom laid in the hospital bed opposite him, looking very much like a deer caught in headlights. Madam Primrose seemed annoyed but not surprised.

Right, side-effects of the chant. Hermione had warned him.

Hermione.

He'd never see her again.

Weakly, Harry went to sit on the bed.

"I'm sorry," he murmured. "I forgot where...when I was."

Madam Primrose sighed.

"It's a common side-effect. Still, that's no reason to-"

"You'll have to understand," Harry said, looking up with hard eyes, "I've just spent over a year fighting not only for my life, but thousands of others. Back home...it was war. Kill or be killed."

The matron pursed her lips.

"While understandable, I would recommend a mind healer."

Harry smiled a humorless smile.

"I'll take it under advisement. Now, how much damage did I do in getting up?"

Madam Primrose clucked, waving her wand to begin the diagnostic scans again.

"The damage is minimal, but I want you in that bed until tomorrow, young man! Now, I'm going to go fetch the Headmaster to deal with this. What did you say your name was?"

"Harry. Harry Potter."

As she turned away, Harry had a sudden thought.

"Request that Professor Dumbledore accompanies Professor Dippet, please. I have vital information for him."

The matron nodded briskly and went on her way.

Harry laid back down, wondering what he was supposed to do now. How much could he reveal, if anything? He couldn't ever go back to the future, that much he knew. Sighing, he thought of all the faces he'd never see again, both dead and alive. Hermione. Ron. Teddy.

Ginny and even Draco. Remus and Sirius. Hagrid. Hedwig. His mum and dad. Snape. Dumbledore.

He'd never see them again, not as he had known them. A sob caught in his throat, but he refused to let it out. Why did he have to be born half a century apart from his soulmate? It wasn't fair.

But it was the way things were. Harry took a deep breath, gathering himself. He could do this. He'd make a better life for all of them. And if that meant giving up his own happiness... there were worse sacrifices.

He was jerked out of his reverie when Madam Primrose entered the infirmary, Dumbledore right behind her. Absently, he noted Dippet had entered too.

Harry sat up straight.

"Professor Dumbledore. Thank you for coming. Headmaster." He gave a cordial nod to Dippet before returning his focus to the real headmaster.

"You seem to know our names already, but we have yet to learn yours, Mr...?" Dumbledore asked.

"Potter, sir. Harry James Potter."

"Dorea Black and Charlus Potter are to be married this spring," Dippet said. "You're their son, I suppose?"

Harry took out his wand. Ignoring the alarmed looks, he quickly raised a privacy ward.

"No. I'm their grandson. I come from December 1988."

Dumbledore raised his eyebrows.

"That's quite a while. If I may ask, how old are you?"

"I'll turn nineteen this summer," Harry answered, "but I'm in my eight year at Hogwarts. There was a war last year. My friends and I were hunted. Almost our whole year had to come back for their seventh year, hence why they called it eighth year. I took Defence Against the Dark Arts, Charms, Transfiguration, Potions and Herbology."

Nobody seemed to know what to say.

Eventually Dippet cleared his throat.

"Do you have written proof of your OWL results?"

Harry handed him an envelope.

"Ah, let's see... Outstanding in Defence Against the Dark Arts, and Exceeds Expectations in the other classes you took in the future. There shouldn't be any problem, then, assuming the

scores for your sixth year were along the same lines?” Dippet asked.

“They were, sir,” Harry confirmed. “So it would be possible for me to continue my education here?”

“Of course, of course! We will have to get you sorted. I shall fetch the hat.” Dippet left the privacy bubble.

“Professor Dumbledore,” said Harry, taking a deep breath as he turned to face the future headmaster. “Thank you for coming to see me.”

“Certainly, my boy,” replied a somewhat bemused Dumbledore. “May I enquire why you requested my presence?”

Harry took a moment to check the privacy bubble was secure before replying:

“I already said there’s a war in the future. I was...I was the one who ended it. The one who started it is my soulmate. I- I killed him. I had to kill him. He was gone, his mind was gone. He needed to be put down, before he destroyed even more lives. Later, I discovered he was my soulmate.” A single, traitorous tear rolled down his cheek. “I wouldn’t have done anything different, even if I knew.”

He paused for a moment.

“I wished things could have been different. I knew without him I’d lose my mind too. Then I found out things could be different. All time-travel devices, even all records of them, had been destroyed, but I found a chant that would take me back to where I needed to be. According to Madam Primrose, I’m lucky I’m alive after performing it.”

Harry sat back against his pillows. He’d said all he wanted to.

“What an incredible tale,” Dumbledore softly said. “Should you ever be in need of something, my door is always open to you.”

“Thank you, sir. That means a lot.”

Just then, Dippet returned with the Sorting Hat in his hands. He entered the privacy bubble and deposited the Hat on Harry’s head.

Hm, what have we here? Oh, my! You have been through quite a lot. I see my future self has Sorted you into the house of the lions...do you wish to return there?

No, Harry thought. I wouldn’t fit there. Not anymore.

Very well, my snake, then you shall go to SLYTHERIN!

The Hat boomed the last word for anyone to hear. Out of the corner of his eye, Harry fearfully observed Madam Primrose approaching. He quickly took the privacy ward down.

“Professor, Headmaster! You are to let my patient rest *at once*! You’ve had more than enough time!” The matron then chased both men out of the Hospital wing like errant schoolchildren. Harry cowered as she turned her gaze to him.

“You are to stay right there, understood?”

“I’ll be bored,” he whined.

“You can’t be bored while you’re sleeping,” Madam Primrose huffed at him, sweeping away.

Grumpily, Harry crossed his arms over his chest. He closed his eyes, staunchly refusing to look at the boy in front of him.

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Nervously, Tom waited in line behind the new boy. Harry Potter, that was his name. He’d overheard it yesterday in the hospital wing. He still looked a bit shaky on his legs. Well, that would be solved if he’d just lean on the cane Madam Primrose had kindly provided. From the looks of it, though, Harry intended on doing no such thing.

From what he’d been able to gather yesterday, he was from another time. He’d probably travelled back for his soulmate, Tom thought. He wondered if he should try to strike up a conversation.

As “McGonagall, Minerva!” was called, his heart started to beat a little faster.

All seventh year students stood in an alphabetical line. They were in the dungeons, in a one-end corridor. Every so often, the dead end would shimmer softly, and the name of the next student would be called. There must be another exit, because none of the students came back.

The Revealing Ceremony was a well-kept secret; practically no one who hadn’t gone through it knew what it consisted of.

By now, the line had progressed enough that only Harry stood before Tom.

“Potter, Harry!” Professor Dumbledore called out.

It seemed like an eternity before the dead end shimmered again.

“Riddle, Tom!”

Heart fluttering wildly in his chest, Tom stepped through the dead end. He then found himself in a...dressing room?

On the wall hung a plaque instructing him to strip down. Apprehensively, he removed his clothes and boxers. The plaque shimmered for a moment. A tub appeared, filled with a

blindingly white liquid of some kind. The plaque shimmered again, instructing him to briefly submerge himself in the tub.

As soon as his foot touched the water, pins and needles shot through it. Gritting his teeth, Tom soldiered on, dunking his head in the liquid.

He panicked as he noticed that he couldn't hold his breath; the liquid seemed determined to get into his lungs.

Every inch of his body hurt, like needles were being stabbed into it over and over. He wanted to scream, but couldn't.

He had no idea how much time had passed before the pain subsided. The liquid disappeared, leaving him naked and shivering in the tub. On shaking legs, he climbed out of it, bracing himself against the wall so he wouldn't topple over.

The plaque shimmered again, now saying he should put on the ritual robe.

Indeed, a white ritual robe had appeared in his arms. Tom pulled it over his head, feeling rather exposed in only that.

A door appeared in the wall opposite him. The plaque and tub disappeared.

Legs shaking so badly it was a wonder he managed it at all, Tom walked through the door, straight into a runic circle, which closed itself upon his arrival.

In a second runic circle, Professor Dumbledore stood, looking relieved.

"Mr Riddle! I was about to send Madam Primrose to check up on you. Are you alright, my boy?"

Tom mutely nodded, even though he wasn't.

Professor Dumbledore didn't look convinced.

"Alright. The procedure is as follows: with the knife, you will make a long, deep cut on your breastbone, in the middle of your chest. You will then let the blood flow into the silver bowl until it is filled to the brim. After the bowl is full, the cut on your chest will heal on its own, slowly forming a scar. The scar will be your soulmate's name in their own handwriting."

Tom looked around, and indeed, on a small altar in front of him, a golden knife and a small silver bowl were laid out.

"The bowl will then show your soulmate. It may show you one or two faces. In that case, you have a split soul, split between two or three people. If it shows you half of a glowing sphere, your soulmate hasn't been born yet. Pay attention to the color of the sphere, for that is the color of their eyes. It may also show you one face and one sphere, in which case one of your soulmates has been born, and one hasn't. Those are the most common ones. More rarely, it may show you a face with spheres instead of eyes. That would mean your soulmate hasn't been born in this time yet, but has travelled back to you. This can also occur in combination

with a second face or sphere. If the blood shows a face in black and white, your soulmate is deceased. The rarest is if the blood shows you nothing at all, but turns the color of your own eyes. That means you have a full soul, and additional testing may be required.”

Tom took a deep breath. This was way more complicated than he had thought!

Hands trembling, he took the knife in his right hand, and the bowl in his left. Holding the bowl near his midriff, he slowly pressed the knife to the top of his breastbone. He pressed on it, sliding downwards until he reached the edge of the bowl, and the end of his breastbone. He lifted the knife, and it shimmered out of view.

Blood gushed out of the deep wound, quickly filling the bowl. Tom peered into the bowl, not sure what he was hoping to see.

The first thing he saw were two emerald green halve spheres. Slowly, a face formed around them. Tom nearly dropped the bowl in shock. That was the face of the new boy! Harry Potter had travelled back in time to find *him*?!

The bowl shimmered out of view. Dumbledore handed him a mirror. Tom held it in front of his chest.

Harry James Potter, the scar on his chest read in a messy scrawl.

--

Harry paced up and down the length of the Entrance Hall, where they had all ended up after the Revealing Ceremony. Some of the other 7th years sat against the walls, alone or together. Others had left immediately.

“Waiting for someone?” a voice suddenly asked behind him.

Harry turned on his heel swiftly, wand pointed at the neck of...Draco Malfoy?

No, this wasn't Draco. This must be his grandfather.

Sheepishly, he put his wand away.

“Sorry about that. My reflexes and I have been through a lot.”

The boy looked at him slightly incredulously, but shook his head.

“I'm not even going to ask. My name is Abraxas Malfoy.”

“I'm Harry Potter, and I'm waiting for my soulmate, but it's taking really long and I'm a bit worried.”

Abraxas patted him on the back. Harry noted he *seemed* a lot nicer than Lucius.

“They’ve probably gotten stuck on Riddle. I’m not sure they’re even going to be *able* to cleanse him.”

Harry coughed somewhat awkwardly.

“Why’s that?” he asked, as neutrally as he could manage.

“It’s common knowledge that he’s dabbled in Dark Magic a fair bit.” Abraxas frowned. “Not that there’s really anything wrong with that, but he’s just...off. Most of the other students are quite nasty to him, but I’ve never seen the need for it myself. He’s not *that* bad.”

Harry could feel his magic trying to escape his iron control. He sneered at Abraxas, something he’d picked up from Draco. The Malfoy family clearly had a long way to go, still.

“I hope he’s alright. But it makes sense that my soulmate would need as extensive a cleansing as I did.”

“He’s your *soulmate*?” Abraxas asked incredulously, face contorted. “Well, good luck with that!”

Harry stared after him as he walked off.

“You shouldn’t have done that,” a quiet voice said behind him. Harry smiled but didn’t turn around.

“I don’t like people who pick on others. And I *especially* don’t like people who pick on my soulmate.”

He turned so he faced Tom, who looked somewhat awestruck. He also looked like he might topple over any second.

“Oh, dear,” Harry said. “I think you need to sit down, and I’d prefer to talk somewhere more private.”

Tom gave him a weak smile.

“Sure. Where did you have in-”

And with that, he fainted. Harry only just managed to catch him in time, scooping him up bridal-style and making his way to the Room of Requirement.

Once there, he walked past the door three times, which opened to reveal a moderately large room, with a queen bed and a green velvet couch with matching side table in it.

Harry entered the room, asking the magic to make sure they weren’t disturbed, before gently laying Tom on the bed.

“*Ennervate*,” he said, waving his wand.

Tom blinked, slowly opening his eyes. A flush colored his cheeks.

“Sorry,” he muttered, trying to push himself up. Harry gently helped him get himself into a sitting position.

“It’s fine. Honestly, I’m surprised you held out this long. A cleansing like that must have taken a lot out of you. Mine did.”

Tom looked surprised.

“Did it...hurt, for you?”

Harry sighed.

“Yes, but the Cruciatus hurts much, much worse.”

“The Cruciatus? Who dared put that on you?” Tom asked, eyes flashing.

“Uh,” Harry eloquently said. Just how was he going to explain this? “It’s a very long story.”

“I’ve got time.”

--

Tom couldn’t believe what he was hearing. With every word that came out of Harry’s mouth, he wove a tale as fantastical as macabre. A tale of friendship, bravery, and of tragedy. A story about loss, and living anyway.

He found himself dreading the end somewhat. Right now, Harry was telling him of finding Severus Snape dying in the Shrieking Shack.

“...so after watching his memories, I realized what needed to happen.” He swallowed heavily, the movement obvious. “*I* was the seventh Horcrux. I was the last one, the one keeping Lord Voldemort alive.”

All through the story, Tom had noticed that any details about the identity of this Lord Voldemort were being kept very, very vague. Harry knew more than he was saying, but Tom would wait for the end of the story before interrupting.

“When Lord Voldemort called for a ceasefire, so that both sides could have a chance to dispose of their dead, and heal their wounded, I walked through the Great Hall. My family laid there. Remus and Tonks, their faces still but hands entwined. The Weasleys, huddled around Fred’s cold body. Colin Creevy, who’d always been kind of annoying, but he was so *young*. And I knew what I had to do, then. I sneaked out of the Great Hall, and I went to the forest.”

Harry paused, hand quickly wiping away his tears.

“I...I spoke to my family. I figured out that the snitch contained the Resurrection Stone, and when I told it I was going to die, they appeared. Remus was there, and Mum, and Dad, and Sirius. I will always remember that. When I was just out of sight of the Death Eaters, I dropped the stone in the forest. It would have been too tempting, would have harmed both me and their spirits. Lord Voldemort’s death Eaters brought me to him. He shot the Killing Curse at me. I didn’t even have my wand raised. I knew I had to die. I was okay with that.”

Tom hung on to Harry’s every word.

“But I didn’t. The Horcrux in me was killed, sure. I got to see Dumbledore, in a sort of in-between. Not Life and not Death. He gave me a choice, and I went back. Voldemort ordered Narcissa Malfoy to check if I was alive. She asked me if Draco was at Hogwarts, and when I said yes, she lied. She looked the Dark Lord in the eye and lied. She was as much a hero as all the others. Voldemort forced Hagrid to carry me back to the Courtyard, where he gloated over my defeat to everyone. I will never, ever, forget the look on their faces when they thought I was gone. I waited for the right moment, and when Neville openly defied Voldemort, I knew it had come. I jumped out of Hagrid’s arms and ducked under my Invisibility Cloak. The fighting started back up, and I helped where I could. Molly Weasley killed Bellatrix Lestrange in the Great Hall, where most of the battles were taking place, and I revealed myself. Voldemort shot a Killing Curse at me, but it backfired. He was using the Elder Wand, which belonged to me. Because when Draco disarmed Dumbledore at the end of my sixth year, he didn’t take his wand. But I disarmed Draco in Malfoy Manor. So even though Voldemort held the wand, it was mine, and it would not kill its master. Voldemort fell. We put his corpse in a separate place. Our dead deserved better than to lie with him.”

“What an amazing tale,” Tom breathed. He opened his mouth, ready to fire thousands of questions.

“It isn’t finished,” Harry said. “We rebuilt all summer. Hogwarts, the Ministry, basically the whole magical world. Many of us had missed parts of our education, and so we went to Hogwarts for a specially designed eight year. The winter solstice was the 21st. I could barely stand upright after my cleansing, having killed a sentient being only months earlier. In the bowl, I saw a face, in black and white. It was the face of Lord Voldemort.”

Tom nearly fainted, implications running through his mind.

With his wand, Harry drew the words ‘I am Lord Voldemort’ in the air. He swished his wand, and they rearranged themselves, now spelling ‘Tom Marvolo Riddle’.

“And you know the rest,” Harry quietly said, leaning back against the headboard of the bed and closing his eyes.

Tom didn’t know what to say. He now knew why Harry had withheld all the information about Voldemort. He would become Voldemort. It seemed such a laughable idea, yet hadn’t he been thinking about making Horcruxes only a few days ago?

Harry didn't know how long he had his eyes closed, hearing Tom's shallow breathing next to him. He felt tired, so very tired. Yet, deep inside him something sung. His soul.

And something wasn't right about the past. In the pensieve, it had seemed like the young Voldemort ruled over Hogwarts with an iron fist. But the boy he'd met here was quiet, maybe a tad insecure.

Could Lord Voldemort have altered his past somehow? Erased everyone's memories? Maybe that could be done. Harry didn't know. Perhaps there was a ritual or something somewhere.

He didn't know what he was supposed to do now. Tom still hadn't said anything. He was probably angry with Harry for killing him in the future.

To be honest, Harry was kind of angry with himself too. What kind of idiot killed their own soulmate? But, even now, he didn't see any other path he could have taken. Lord Voldemort was far beyond redemption.

But Tom wasn't.

Reluctantly, Harry opened his eyes. Tom still sat next to him, eyes closed and breath coming fast.

"Tom?" he softly asked. "Are you...are you angry with me?"

Tom lifted his head, a startled look in his eyes.

"Angry with you? Why?"

"Uh...I killed you," Harry pointed out.

Tom made a sound between a sob and a chuckle.

"You killed Lord Voldemort. I refuse to become him. I don't...I wouldn't want to hurt you."

Harry smiled, slowly reaching forward and entangling their hands. They sat in silence for a while.

"You know I don't blame you for becoming him, right? Anyone would have gone a bit wonky after forty-odd years without their soulmate."

"Thank you," Tom quietly said. "I could feel it already, before you came. I couldn't focus for the life of me. I felt myself slipping away."

Harry squeezed his hand. Faces drifted along his thoughts. Hermione, Ron, Draco, Ginny, Mrs. Weasley, Mr. Weasley, Professor McGonagall, Teddy.

Oh gods, Teddy. He'd left his godson behind.

"Is something bothering you?" Tom hesitantly asked.

Harry sighed.

"I miss my friends, my family. It's only been a couple of days, but somehow knowing I'll never see them again makes it so much worse. And Teddy, my godson...I left him behind. After a couple years without you I wouldn't have been able to take care of him anymore anyhow, but...I actually took him to Hogwarts with me for my eight year. His grandmother, Andromeda, wasn't a fit guardian. She was too old, and had lost her husband just weeks prior. Who will take care of him now?"

Something steely entered Tom's eyes.

"We will. I won't let you give up your child for me, Harry. We'll return to the future."

Harry smiled sadly.

"It's a nice thought, but I don't know of any way to travel forward in time."

"I do," Tom said. "I don't have anything keeping me here. No friends, no family. But you do."

Tears in his eyes, Harry launched himself at Tom, hugging him around the neck.

"Thank you thank you thank you!"

They broke apart slightly. Harry's throat felt dry as he looked into Tom's silver eyes. He could taste his breath on his tongue.

Tom pulled back, averting his eyes.

"Together, we should be able to have the ritual prepared by tomorrow."

--

Tom could feel Harry's hand in his as they chanted. There was no one outside the circle of salt. They had told no one of their plan.

"Detrahet me in posterum

Ego iero

Ut, ubi opus ego sum

Sic fiat semper."

Next to him, Harry took over for his part of the chant.

“Revertere mecum, ut in posterum

Ego iero

Et ex quo veni ad

Sic fiat semper!”

It was almost done. They chanted their chants once again, together. Then a bright flash of light, and it went dark.

--

Translation:

(Harry:

Return me to the future

Let me go forward

To where I come from

So mote it be

Tom:

Bring me to the future

Let me go forward

To where I am needed

So mote it be)

--

30th December 1988

Tom groaned. He felt as if all the energy had been sucked out of him. Technically, it had. Blearily, he opened his eyes. Looking around, he appeared to be in the hospital wing. *Again.*

Harry laid in the bed next to him, eyes closed and breathing harsh.

“Hello?” Tom called out, voice hoarse. Immediately, the current matron, who must be Madam Pomfrey, came bustling over to him.

“My goodness, you’re awake quickly! Let me just run a couple of scans.”

She started waving her wand. Something in the results must have startled her, though, because she went deathly pale and ran out the door.

Tom frowned. That couldn’t be good. He stared at the ceiling as he waited for her to return, counting the number of new cracks that had appeared since his time.

As he reached crack number sixty-two, a crowd of people burst through the doors.

Running in front were a bushy-haired girl and a lanky redheaded boy. Hermione and Ron, based on Harry’s tale.

“Oh Harry!” Hermione cried, running over to his bed.

“Let him breathe, ‘Mione,” Ron gently said, pulling the girl away from Harry. They turned around, seemingly noticing Tom for the first time.

“Uh. Hi?” he said.

Ron slapped his hand onto his face. Hermione turned back around to the unconscious body in the bed.

“HARRY JAMES POTTER! FOR THE LOVE OF MERLIN, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE NOW?” she shouted.

Tom, deciding these two were not an immediate threat, turned back around to the door. Minerva McGonagall seemed to be in the lead, with behind her a red-headed girl – Ginny Weasley, perhaps? – holding a baby who looked exactly like Harry. Finally, a boy who must be Draco Malfoy brought up the rear.

They all stared at him. Tom wondered what in the world he was supposed to do now.

“Um, is Harry okay?” he carefully asked.

“Mr. Potter,” Madam Pomfrey, who had entered again at some point, “went through a cleansing. Then he performed a time-travel chant. Then he went through another cleansing. And then he performed ANOTHER time-travel chant. Of course he is not okay! His magical core is severely depleted. Currently, he has about 5% of his magic accessible, which is not even enough to Apparate. He won’t be waking up before next Friday!

“Sorry, but what day is it today?” Tom questioned.

“Friday 30th December 1988,” McGonagall curtly informed him. “Now, are you or are you not Tom Marvolo Riddle?”

“I am,” he confirmed.

“And are you or are you not aware of your future self’s...current status?”

Tom sighed.

“If you mean, do I know that I turned into a homicidal lunatic, started a war and got myself killed by my own soulmate?”

Ginny snorted. McGonagall turned an indignant look on her.

“Sorry, but the way he said that...so, Tom, still planning on making seven Horcruxes?”

“NO!” he shouted. “Absolutely not! But should you be speaking of that here?”

Madam Pomfrey frowned at him, but kept silent.

Ginny shrugged, readjusting the baby on her hip.

“We’re all in the know. Well, except Teddy here. Isn’t that true, Teddybear?” she cooed at the child.

“Okay,” Tom said. His eyes closed of their own accord. He just wanted to sleep.

“Now, Mr. Riddle, you’ll have to stay awake just a bit longer,” McGonagall sternly said.

“We’d all like to know why you and Mr. Potter returned to this time.”

“Harry...sacrificed a great deal to return to me. He was under the impression that he couldn’t come back to this time, wouldn’t be able to raise his godson or see his friends. I, however, do know of a way to return a time-traveler to their original time, including extra travelers. I had nothing keeping me in the other time; no family and no friends. We decided to return to this time. I suppose Harry hoped things would have changed around here, but I don’t think that’s possible.”

“It isn’t,” Hermione said, butting into the conversation. “You went back far enough that the future wasn’t changeable anymore. Basically, if you’d stayed there longer the timeline would have branched off, one line leading to this future, and another line leading to the future we don’t know. As it stands now, I suspect a part of you remained behind, without any memory of Harry. That’s the part that will become Lord Voldemort.”

“Oh,” Tom said. His brain was becoming sluggish.

Madam Pomfrey decided to intervene.

“Out, you lot! He needs to rest!” she snapped at the group, shooing them out of the Hospital Wing.

Smiling gratefully at her, Tom let his eyelids rest.

--

6th January 1989

“Yes, you’ll see your godfather soon,” Tom attempted to shush the crying child. “Ginny! What am I supposed to do?!”

Ginny walked in, snorting at him.

“Your guess is as good as mine. He’s been like this since Harry left.”

Tom sighed.

“Let’s hope he wakes up soon, before I turn deaf from the crying.”

Ginny smiled at him sympathetically, patting his shoulder.

“You’re his parent now, Tommy. Better get used to it.”

“Don’t call me that!” he snapped. She just hummed, sitting down at the foot of Harry’s bed.

It had been a week since they returned to the future, and Harry hadn’t woken up yet, though according to Madam Pomfrey, his vitals were steadily improving, and he should open his eyes any moment.

Tom was worried, though. His heart ached, and he knew it wouldn’t stop until he saw for himself that his soulmate was fine.

Maybe that was what Teddy needed too. Since arriving in 1988, Ginny had immediately told him he could start taking care of his future adoptive son. And wasn’t that a strange thought.

In all fairness, she’d tutored him intensively, since he hadn’t so much as held an infant before, never mind taking care of one full time!

He couldn’t wait until Harry woke up.

Bouncing Teddy on his hip as he continued to fuss, Tom walked in loops around the infirmary, eyes never leaving Harry’s face.

“You’re making me nauseous with your pacing,” Ginny sighed.

“It’s the only way Teddy will stop screaming my ears off,” Tom bit back. “If you want to take him?”

She chuckled but shook her head.

“He’s your son.”

Ginny had been with him often. Most of the people he'd met that first day still went around him in a wide berth, but she wasn't afraid. He hadn't asked her about it, but he suspected he was probably tame as a puppy compared to the Horcrux that had possessed her. It was a bit insulting.

As Teddy finally fussed himself to sleep, Tom sighed in relief. He gently placed the child down in the cot next to Harry's bed. Luckily, his eyes remained closed, and he started to snuffle a bit, making rather adorable baby noises.

Exhausted, Tom laid down on the camping bed, put there so he could rest.

"If he's this difficult at seven months, I don't even want to know what he was like when Harry first got him."

"Inconsolable," Ginny softly said, voice full of regrets. "He would cry himself to sleep only to jolt awake, throwing up all over anything that was near. Harry had him checked out at St Mungo's."

"And?" Tom asked, heart cramping anxiously.

"Magical children younger than six months still have a connection to their parent's, and especially their mother's, magic. It was severed when they died, and Teddy suffered the backlash. Him sharing his mother's gift didn't help matters any."

"I never asked, but does he have his first father's affliction?" Tom still had his eyes closed, listening to his son's soft breathing.

"Would it matter?" asked Ginny.

"No. But if he does, I need to order a number of books, so I can be there for him. Properly."

Ginny chuckled.

"Flourish and Blott's is safe for now, I should think. No, Teddy isn't infected, though he gets a bit restless on full moon nights."

Tom groaned.

"Even more restless?"

"I'm afraid so," Ginny said, no real sympathy in her voice.

"I'm going to try and get some sleep," he sighed. "Shake me if either of them wakes up."

--

Every inch of his body felt like something held it down, pulled it toward the earth. His thoughts were sluggish, mulling about in circles before arriving at a conclusion.

And something inside of him felt wounded. Like it had drawn itself back to heal.

“Is he waking up?” an anxious voice asked.

Oh Merlin, that was loud!

“I think so. Mr Potter, can you hear me?”

Well, how was he supposed to answer that? Harry tried to open his eyes. He probably succeeded in making his eyelids flutter. Maybe. With a bit more determination, he tried again. His eyes slowly opened, glaring light filling them.

“Ouch,” he rasped, throat dry and sore. He blinked a couple of times, but couldn’t make out more than vague shapes.

“I would imagine so!” Madam Pomfrey snapped at him. At least, it was her voice.

“Here,” a quieter voice said. “Your glasses.” They were gently perched on his nose, and he sighed in relief. Looking around, he made note of his surroundings. Madam Pomfrey hovered over him, busy with what must be diagnostic scans. On his right sat Tom, and Teddy laid in a cot on his left. A couple of meters away, Ginny and Draco were watching him anxiously. Ron and Hermione weren’t there, but he supposed the others would call them soon.

“How long was I out for?” Harry asked hoarsely.

“Over a week,” Tom said, tentatively grasping his hand. “It’s the sixth of January, 1989.”

Harry feebly squeezed Tom’s hand.

“How’s Teddy?”

“Fussy,” Tom said, scowling. “I didn’t get a wink of sleep the past week.”

“You’ve been taking care of him?” Harry said in surprise.

“Um.” Tom’s cheeks colored somewhat. “I thought, since we’ll raise him together...?”

“Thank you,” Harry softly said, cursing his inability to get up and initiate a kiss. “You have no idea how much that means to me.”

Tom smiled a little more freely, his eyes meeting Harry’s, who blushed.

Soft sniffing on his other side made his head turn, tears springing to his eyes as he saw his Godson.

“Teddy,” he breathed. “Tom, would you lay him next to me? Be gentle, he’s easily startled just after he wakes up.”

Tom complied, rubbing Teddy's shoulder before picking him up.

"Teddybear, your Godfather's back. Here's Harry!"

"Hi Teddy, do you remember me?" Harry quietly said. "I'm here, sweetie, and I'm staying here."

Teddy made grabby hands toward him, babbling happily. Tom gently set him down in the crook of Harry's arm, who tremulously stroked Teddy's back. Teddy fell forward onto Harry's shoulder, blinking in disbelief before pinching his Godfather's cheeks.

"Ouch!" he yelped, grabbing Teddy's hands and removing them from his face. "That isn't nice. We don't pinch."

Tom coughed to hide an obvious chuckle. Harry glared at him. He held his hands up.

"He's your Godson."

"No," Harry corrected. "He's our son. That's right Teddybear, you're our son, aren't you?"

Teddy's happy gurgle made him grin, locking eyes with Tom, who grinned back.

Our son, Harry thought, and he'd never been happier.

His family.

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