

Chapter 36

The week following the attack on the Potters was busy for everyone. Charlus spent hours every day at the Ministry, dealing with the Wizengamot. Not only was he pushing for the Ministry to declare war on the Death Eaters, but he had made it his personal mission to destroy Crouch. There was a single day that had gone by without his picture being plastered all over the Daily Prophet, decrying his mistakes and mismanagement of the Aurors. The public's opinion of Crouch was rapidly beginning to shift, and he was scheduled to be summoned before the Wizengamot to testify about some of his more recent decisions.

Meanwhile, Harry was hard at work at the Wolf's Den. Now that the cure had been demonstrated without any ill effects, the Healers that had been constantly milling about for the past month had finally gone back to their home countries. With them out of the way, Harry made the investment to build as many gold mesh cages as possible. The basement was magically expanded, and by the time he was done, they had nearly two dozen, along with two dozen dialysis machines.

The plan was to cure as many of the Werewolves that had attacked the Wolf's Den as quickly as possible. Harry wanted to remove them permanently from Voldemort's forces. Whether they would be imprisoned for the attempted attack at the Wolf's Den or released to rejoin Voldemort as regular Death Eaters was yet to be decided by the Wizengamot. However, Harry would ensure their time of terrorizing magical Britain as Werewolves was at an end.

While that was being worked on gradually in the background, his most pressing goal was to get his mirrors on the market as quickly as possible. Their use at the Potters during the attack and some help from Charlus and the rest of his allies in the Wizengamot had cut a lot of the red tape. Now, he just had to finish production.

Harry had called in every qualified enchanter he could find to produce them as fast as possible—so many, in fact, that he was burning through gold at an alarming rate. Narcissa tried to get him to cut costs, but it couldn't be helped. Those mirrors needed to get on the market, and the sooner, the better. Harry was convinced that they would sell quickly enough to more than make up for the significant dent he was putting in his vault.

And after a week of working day and night, he finally had enough to open his shop.

On a warm, balmy Monday morning, Harry stood in his newly rented storefront located near Gringotts in Diagon Alley. Quite honestly, he felt a bit lost on what to do, but fortunately, Narcissa and Lily quickly got things organized. Marlene, Dorcas, Mary, and Alice raced around under their direction, getting everything ready for opening. They'd need to find a regular manager and employees before they returned to Hogwarts, but for now, Harry was glad to have some familiar faces around him.

"Merlin," Bellatrix gasped, looking out of the window. "There's a line halfway down the alley."

"Get ready to unlock the door," Narcissa told her in a no-nonsense tone. "We're almost done. Marlene, can you make sure there's nothing blocking the demonstrator?"

"Sure," Marlene nodded.

"And remind everyone in the shop not to move it!" Lily called from the other end of the store.

"I will!" Marlene yelled back.

Walking over the Any Mirror they were using as a demonstration, she pressed the tip of her wand to the glass and called out for the Wolf's Den. The image shimmered for a moment before it settled, and Marlene stepped through to the other side.

"Lily!" Dorcas called. "Do we have more receipts? This may not be enough."

"There's a full box under the register," Lily replied.

Harry sighed and ran a hand through his hair nervously.

“Do you girls need anything?” he asked.

“We’re fine, Harry,” Lily smiled.

Harry sighed again. He wished she would just give him something to do. A moment later, Marlene stepped back through the mirror and walked straight over to Lily.

“The path is clear,” she told her. “Richard has it set up near the production line so you can see the new mirrors being made. Oh, and he said if you remind him not to move it again, he’s going to put it on the roof.”

“Alright,” Lily sighed, raising her hands in surrender. “I think that’s everything. Are you ready, Narcissa?”

“We’re ready,” Narcissa said, smoothing out her robes.

Bellatrix turned the lock, and Mirror Image was officially open for business. Customers streamed into the store, and Harry quickly found himself with plenty to do. They quickly started gathering people into groups to talk about the mirrors and demonstrate the features. Sylvia, who was at the Wolf’s Den, was getting a call on the mirror every few minutes. After a while of watching shyly from the side, Amanda grew comfortable enough to wave back at the people watching her curiously.

Despite having so many people in the shop, Harry didn’t relax. It was one thing to generate curiosity; it was entirely another to generate sales. So, it was a great relief when the first customers started making purchases. He didn’t have too much time to celebrate, however, because as soon as one customer left, another took their place. Harry thought the line would slow down by lunchtime, but it didn’t. They had to eat one at a time, and quickly, in the back room before getting straight back to work.

Thankfully, nearly everyone who came into the shop bought something. The communication mirrors, which were their cheapest item, also turned out to be the most popular. Transportation

Mirrors were then the next best seller, to the point that Harry had to make a trip over to the Wolf's Den to get more. Only a few of the wealthy families, like the Abbots and Longbottoms, bought Any Mirrors. Considering the price, that wasn't much of a surprise. What was, however, was the number of people who told him they intended to save up for one soon.

By the end of the day, they'd sold more than they expected. The register was so full of gold that it took three bags to transfer it all over to Gringotts. Fortunately, it was a short walk to the bank. It would still take time to refill his vault, but it was a promising start.

Making his way back to the shop to help the girls close up for the night, Harry spotted Mary and Dorcas with their heads crowded together around a stack of parchment. Curious, he walked over and looked over their shoulders. On the top parchment was a drawing of a mirror frame designed to look like a picture frame drawn in color-changing ink.

"What that?" Harry asked curiously.

"We were just thinking about designs for mirror frames," Dorcas replied. "The mirrors are great, but they're not very comfortable to hold."

"Neat," Harry smiled. "Mind if I take a look?"

Mary shrugged, and the two of them moved out of the way so he could look through the stack of parchment. There were dozens of drawings. Some were for ornate and decorative frames, while others looked like they were designed with more of a function in mind. One had a leather strap across the back for the hand to slip through, there was one designed to look like a book cover, and another that was shrunken down and fitted into a clamshell case, much like a Muggle compact.

"These are great," Harry grinned. "Are you going to make them?"

"We were going to show some of them to Richard once things slowed down at the shop," Dorcas said, pushing a lock of her dark brown hair behind her ear.

“That might take a while,” Harry warned. “You know, you could make these at school and sell them through owl order forms. Earn a bit of money before you graduate.”

“You wouldn’t mind us selling these?” Mary asked, surprised.

“Of course not,” Harry said. “Why would I? It’s your idea.”

“I don’t know,” Dorcas said, worrying her bottom lip. “We have NEWTs this year.”

“Yeah, but we could afford a flat right out of school,” Mary said excitedly. “If it gets in the way, we could give the idea to Harry like we were going to.”

“I’m sure we can work something out,” Harry smiled.

“Alright,” Dorcas nodded. “I suppose it’s worth a try.”

“Great,” Harry grinned. “Tell you what. Girls, I’m taking everyone out to dinner tonight, my treat.”

The girls all cheered and started moving faster as they talked excitedly about where they wanted to eat.

“Let me just give Sylvia a call and see if she wants to join us,” he chuckled.

Walking over to the Any Mirror they used as a demonstrator, he pressed the tip of his wand to it and called out the address.

“Thirty-two Godric Lane,” he said.

The mage shimmered, and a moment later, he was greeted by Sylvia and Amanda's smiling faces.

"Hey, how did the first day go?" Sylvia asked.

"Good, but tiring," Harry said.

"Good?" Narcissa scoffed. "It was better than I ever imagined."

"That's great," Sylvia smiled. "Are you coming home soon?"

"Actually, I told the girls I'd take them out to dinner," Harry told her. "They earned it after how hard they worked. Do you and Amanda want to come with us?"

"What do you think, sweetheart?" Sylvia asked, looking down at Amanda.

Amanda nodded her head eagerly.

"Okay," Sylvia chuckled. "Go get changed into one of your dresses. We'll be there in a few minutes."

"See you soon," Harry smiled.

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Unfortunately, Harry didn't get to go straight home after dinner. He'd gotten a call from Kingsley asking him to come over for a visit. He didn't say it out loud, but Harry knew it had something to do with the Death Eaters from the attack on the Potters.

While he had spent the last week getting his business running and dealing with the aftermath of the Werewolf attack, Kingsley and the other Aurors had been pulling information and gathering surveillance on their next targets.

Apparating just outside a home in the Muggle suburb of Morningside in Edinburgh, Harry glanced around to make sure he hadn't been spotted before walking up to the door and knocking.

"Harry!" Elizabeth greeted him with a warm smile and a hug. "Come on in. I was going to stop by the shop earlier today, but there was a line around the corner."

"Yeah, it was a bit mad," Harry smiled. "Hopefully, it won't be quite so busy tomorrow."

"Hello, Harry," Kingsley said, shaking his hand. "You're just in time. Everyone else just arrived."

Clapping him on the shoulder, he led Harry into the kitchen, where Jenna, Grayson, Moody, and Connie greeted him.

"I'm glad you're all here," Harry smiled. "I have something for you."

Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out a package wrapped in plain brown paper and tied closed with twine. A flick of his wand cut the string, and the paper fell away to reveal six hand mirrors.

"Uh, Harry," Connie said, looking at him amusedly. "You already gave us mirrors, remember?"

"I know," Harry said, handing them out. "These are new. I made a couple of improvements that I'm not going to be selling. Maybe after the war is over, but for now, these are just for us."

“What does it do?” Jenna asked, turning her mirror over in her hands curiously.

Harry smiled and took an identical mirror out of his pocket. Levitating it with his wand, he enlarged it from the size of a hand mirror to the size of a doorway. With a tap of his wand and a muttered name, he reached his hand through Jenna’s mirror and tapped her shoulder. Surprised, she squealed and dropped her mirror on the table. As she stared at his hand in shock, he chuckled and pulled his hand back.

“These can be shrunken and enlarged to pretty much any size you need,” Harry smiled. “If you’re going to be in dangerous situations, I want to make sure you all have a way out.”

“Nice work, lad,” Moody said. “Only problem is, if we have to use it to escape, we’re going to be leaving it behind.”

“I know, but there’s no way to retrieve it,” Harry sighed.

“What about destroying it?” Moody asked.

“That...,” Harry trailed off and blinked several times. “Why didn’t I think of that? Pass them back. This should just take a minute. Everyone pick a word you want to use to destroy it. Something you won’t say during a conversation, obviously, and write it down.”

Elizabeth stood, walked over to the counter, and pulled a sheaf of parchment and a few quills out of one of the drawers. Ripping the parchment into pieces, she passed out the scraps and quills to everyone. Once they’d written a word on the parchment, they handed it back to Harry. In turn, he charmed each of the mirrors before handing them back.

“Any chance I could get some more of these?” Moody asked, stroking his chin thoughtfully.

“Yeah,” Harry shrugged. “I can make a couple of spares if you want to keep them on hand.”

“I was thinking more like thirty,” Moody said.

Harry was so surprised and baffled by the number that he messed up his enchantment and had to start over.

“Thirty?” he asked incredulously.

“I have an idea,” Moody shrugged.

Harry shook his head. Honestly, he was a bit scared to know what Moody had cooked up in his demented mind. The man may not have earned the moniker ‘Mad-Eye’ yet, but he was still mad at heart.

“It’ll take me a few days to make that many,” Harry said.

“That’s fine,” Moody nodded. “I’ll have to rearrange some furniture, anyway.”

“Furniture?” Connie asked, cocking her head to the side curiously. “What are you going to do with them?”

Moody grinned, “You’ll just have to wait and see, lass.”

Finishing the enchantment on the last mirror, Harry handed it back to Elizabeth and took his seat. Across the table, Moody tucked his mirror away in his robes and pulled out a stack of folders.

“While you’ve been busy playing shopkeeper, we’ve been looking for the Death Eaters that escaped Potter Manor,” Moody said, tossing the files on the table. “Avery and Yaxley were easy to find. They both spend a lot of time in Knockturn Alley. Avery runs a high-class prostitution business out of the back of one of the pubs. Greyson spotted a few familiar faces from the

Ministry go in and out of the back room while we were watching the place. I expect she's using the girls to gather information for blackmail and extortion. Yaxley runs a small gang of thugs that will solve your problem for a price. They're not very sophisticated, but they've managed to avoid the Aurors for now."

"Crabbe and Goyle have been harder to find," Connie took over. "We think they're hiding out at their homes, hoping the Ministry doesn't come for them, but we haven't seen them yet."

Jenna snorted derisively, "They probably expect Malfoy to save them."

"That won't be happening," Harry assured her. "If the Ministry doesn't deal with him this time, I'll take care of him myself. What about the other guy, Gibbon?"

Moody grunted and folded his arms over his chest.

"Walter Gibbon," he said, flipping open one of the files. "He's been accused of running magical scams in the Muggle world, but we never got anything to stick. The evidence has gone missing twice. We think he knows someone in the Auror Department, but we don't know who yet. I want to know more before we go after him."

"Alright," Harry nodded. "Who do you want to go after first?"

"Avery," Moody said, opening her file. "If she's as well connected as we think, she's likely to have information on a lot of people at the Ministry. We might be able to use it to try and clean house."

"You know the Ministry would never let that kind of information get out," Jenna scoffed.

"What if we released it to the Prophet before we turn her over?" Harry asked.

“They’d never print it,” Kingsley replied, shaking his head. “They’re too connected to the Ministry.”

“Maybe Harry can start his own paper,” Jenna suggested.

“It’s not a bad idea,” Harry admitted. “But between the shop and the investment I made into curing the Werewolves, I don’t think I have enough to start one right now.”

“What about the mirrors?” Connie asked. “You said you could broadcast something like the Muggle news program.”

“I could, but we haven’t sold that many yet,” Harry sighed. “I don’t think enough people would see it to matter. How soon do you want to go after Avery?”

“This weekend at the latest,” Moody said.

“Alright,” Harry nodded. “Give me a couple of days. I’ll talk to Charlus and see what I can come up with. Worst case, we just hold onto the evidence until we can release it to the public.”

With a grunt, Moody closed Avery’s file and opened Yaxley’s.

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An hour later, Harry finally made his way home. He smiled when he spotted Amanda sound asleep next to Sylvia on the couch, her head resting on top of Alfie, whose tongue lolled out as he lifted his head to look at Harry.

“Shouldn’t she be in bed?” Harry asked.

“She refused to go to bed until you got home,” Sylvia said, gently shaking her daughter.

“Wake up, sweetheart,” she said. “Daddy’s home.”

As Amanda grumbled and rubbed her eyes, Harry smiled, strode over to the couch, and picked her up.

“Come on, time for bed,” he said.

“Okay,” Amanda mumbled, wrapping her arms around his neck and laying her head on his shoulder.

Chuckling, Harry rubbed her back as he carried her up the stairs. With a quiet bark, Alfie jumped off of the couch and followed after him. Harry carried Amanda up to the room that would have been his nursery in another time and laid her down in her bed. As he pulled the covers over her, Alfie jumped up and curled into a ball next to her pillow. Smiling, he stroked her hair gently, gave Alfie a pat on the head, and slipped quietly out of the room.

When he returned downstairs, Narcissa stretched her arms over her head, “Are you ready to go to bed?” she asked. “I’m exhausted.”

“Me too,” Lily yawned.

“I’ll be up in a few minutes,” Harry smiled. “I just need to talk to the House Elves.”

“Don’t take too long,” Bellatrix purred sultrily.

Dragging a finger across his chest, she swayed her hips alluringly on her way to the stairs. Lily blinked and shook her head.

“How do you still have energy?” she asked.

Chuckling to himself, Harry opened the door to the basement and walked down the stairs. Each of the House Elves now had a desk to themselves with a Monitoring Mirror, parchment, and quill. He’d expanded the basement to give them a bit more room and given them the Butterbeer barrels they’d asked for. They now sat stacked against the wall with doors cut into the top so they could sleep inside. It looked a little cramped to Harry, but the House Elves were quite happy with the arrangement.

“Good evening, everyone,” Harry smiled.

“Good evening, Master,” Pudge, his head House Elf and one of the oldest, replied.

“How are the mirrors working?” he asked.

“They is working well, but we’s have not heard any bad words yet,” Pudge said disappointedly.

“That’s to be expected,” Harry assured him. “They’ve only been on sale for a day. Just keep an eye on them and let me know if you hear anything. Oh, and let me know if there aren’t enough of you. I don’t want you to overwork yourselves.”

“Of course, Master,” Pudge said with a bow.

“Master?” another House Elf called.

Harry looked down by his right knee curiously. She looked familiar, but it took him a moment to recognize her as the Black family House Elf.

“Hello, Trilla, how are you?” Harry asked kindly.

"It's doing well, Master," Trilla said, looking down and twisting her pillowcase in her hands nervously. "But Trilla has a request for Master."

"Of course," Harry said gently.

"Trilla would like permission to have a baby," she said softly.

"You need my permission for that?" Harry asked curiously.

Still refusing to meet his eye, Trilla nodded her head.

"Alright," Harry shrugged. "You have my permission."

Looking up sharply, Trilla's eyes swam with unshed tears as she beamed up at him brightly. Suddenly, she lunged forward and hugged his leg tightly.

"Thank you, Master," she said.

With a smile, Harry patted her on the back.

"Does anyone else need anything?" he asked loudly, but there was no reply. "Alright, well, I'm going to bed. Goodnight."

"Goodnight, Master," the House Elves replied in chorus.

"It's Harry," he yelled, waving over his shoulder as he climbed back up the stairs.