

The next morning, Harry made his way down from his dorm to the common room bright and early. It'd become the norm for him to be the first one down. But this morning, he was second, not first. Ginny was on the couch seemingly waiting for him. Her legs were up on the couch and her back was against the armrest.

"Alright, Harry?" she asked as he stood at the bottom of the stairs.

"Brilliant, how about you?"

"Good... good," She dropped her feet to the ground and patted the seat next to her. Hopping over the back of the couch, he landed next to her and leaned over to place a kiss on her cheek.

She returned the small, affectionate gesture before she told him, "My parents missed you yesterday, by the way."

"Oh," he hadn't even thought to go visit, and then after he'd been... busy elsewhere, "My fault. How are they?"

"Dad's doing great." She beamed at him, "With Fudge finally out of there, the DMLE is starting to get some proper funding... including his department. He told us that they've finally got a proper office and Amelia is making him hire two more people so he isn't so terribly busy."

"That's brilliant." There were few people Harry had ever met that deserved recognition more than Arthur Weasley. The man worked tirelessly at a thankless job, and now it was finally coming good for him.

"Says he needs to thank you next time he sees you."

"Me? Why?" Harry hadn't done much of anything, so couldn't imagine what Arthur needed to thank him for.

Giving him a fond smile, Ginny shook her head, "If it weren't for you, Fudge would still be Minister of Magic."

"No, that was Dumbledore and Amelia... and Ted Tonks." Harry argued, "Trust me. I was there."

"And none of that would have been possible if it hadn't been for **you** catching Lucius Malfoy in the act." She pointed out, her look brooking no argument, "Just accept it, Harry. And besides," She gave him a wicked little smirk, "it'll do you some good whenever you have to explain our... unique situation to them."

Harry swallowed nervously at that, "Wen I explain it to them." That was one thing that he hadn't given any real thought. Here he was involved with six girls not including his two veela lovers, and all of them no doubt had family's that would want an explanation.

"Of course, I mean I'll be there to, but..." Noticing his worry, she patted his leg comfortingly, "Don't worry. You know they both love you. Can't say that'll be true for everyone if it ever gets there. As long as I'm happy, they won't be to cross. Mum might yell a bit... or a lot... but she'll get over it once she understands."

"Lovely." Harry said deadpan, which only made the redhead laugh at his expense.

“Oh, don’t brood. You’ve barely been doing that at all lately. Don’t want to ruin the streak.” Ginny had a fond smile, “They said they managed to catch one of your rounds. Right impressed by it, too.”

Harry didn’t remember seeing either of the elder Weasleys, “Sorry, I missed them.”

Ginny waved him off, “They understood. You had other things going on at the time after all. And after, you had Remus and Sirius to worry about... among others” She wiggled her eyebrows, “Of course, would’ve put some of mum’s worries at ease if she did talk to you. She spent the entire tournament somewhere between chuffed and panicked and I doubt she slept more than a few hours on Saturday. You know how she is.”

“I may have some inkling,” Harry agreed, “She tried getting me to promise to stay out of trouble this year.”

Ginny breathed out a laugh at that, “She might have mentioned that yeah, and said you were doing a hell of a job of it... joining the dueling team, and the quidditch team... and the main tournament. Almost like you went looking for the trouble for once.” She gave him a conspiratorial smile, “Not to mention your little excursion down to Hogsmeade.”

“She knows about that too, huh?”

“Oh yes, Sirius might’ve mentioned it.”

“Of course, he did.” Harry rolled his eyes, knowing that his godfather would surely be proud not just of the bravery, but the rule-breaking as well, “Good thing I was careful not to make her any promises.”

“Even if you did, she would’ve expected it anyway. I mean, Fred and George used to promise her the same, and she never once thought they’d stick to it... just not in their nature.” That was true, even if they tried, eventually their nature would win out. *Though, they’ve been surprisingly well behaved this year all things considered. Must not want to face McGonagall’s wrath by risking it with our guests.*

“You make it sound like trouble’s in my nature.” Harry’s hand found her thigh of its own accord and he gave her a little squeeze.

“You’re brave, Harry. So yeah, even if you don’t always go looking for it, it’s in your nature.” At his pout, she leaned in to give him a little kiss. Winking at him, she assured him, “Don’t worry though, it’s dead sexy.”

“Well, at least it’s good for something other than getting me into near-death experiences.” Harry chuckled.

“So...” Ginny laced her fingers with his on her own thigh, “did you have ... a good time with Sue Li, yesterday?” There was no jealousy, Ginny had made it abundantly clear that she wouldn’t be, and certainly hadn’t shown any with Orina and Anya, but there was something there.

“It was fantastic.” He told her honestly. He doubted that she was looking for him to lie to her.

Ginny got a dreamy smile on her face, “I can imagine. You were making it a right pain to sit there with my parents.” She blushed at the memory, “My knickers were absolutely soaked.”

Furrowing his brow in confusion, he asked, “What?”

"I... got so impossibly horny while you were with them... and not for the first time since we were together." She leaned in even though they were alone, "More than once, when I've been alone in my dorm at night. It just...comes over me."

That sounded terribly familiar, "And this has been happening since we were together the first time?"

Ginny nodded her head quickly, "On Thursday, around about dinner, I had to find a broom cupboard to... take care of it. All I could think of was you... and Orina... and Anya... and the way it felt..." She wiggled her thighs together at the memory, and Harry could only smile at the naughty redhead.

But there were things that he needed to ask her, and he couldn't get distracted, "Have you been sleeping less?"

Surprised by the question, she nodded at him, "A bit yeah, little by little it seems to be more. Think I've just gotten used to the rigors of all the quidditch and dueling." Her amber eyes caught his with innocent interest, "Why?"

Harry shook his head, and gave her a reassuring kiss on the temple, "It's nothing... well nothing bad anyway." *There's another conversation that needs to be had with Iliyana.* If the Matriarch had made any progress on their entwinement, she hadn't shared it, but it was clearly time to revisit it.

Still, it wasn't going to be solved sitting there on the couch. Grabbing her hand, he pulled her up from the couch and headed to the portrait hole.

Not being the center of someone's attention was not something that Fleur was accustomed to. No matter her circumstances, there was always at least one person who struggled with the allure who at the very least would cast furtive glances in her direction when they thought she wasn't looking. *It is better than when they start singing though I suppose.*

But sitting right in the middle row of Professor Mulroney's classroom, not a single eye turned her way. Instead, they were all on the three women at the front of the room. Fleur knew better than anyone that they were veela. Even controlled and tampered by years of experience, among other things, there was still the barest hint of their allure in the room.

But they presented an entirely different problem for Fleur because she recognized the smell of them. It was a sweet, heady perfume that she'd experienced many times now, in far less potent doses... on Harry. *So, these are his two veela lovers then.* Something about seeing them in the flesh had her dripping in her knickers.

The professor had a quiet conversation with the oldest of the three women, and then nodded his head. Moving to the front of the classroom, he clapped his hands to get the student's attention, "Right, class. We have a special treat today. Considering this is meant to be a year of magical sharing and cooperation, Professor Dumbledore contacted one of the Veela Conclaves of Bulgaria so we might get a firsthand lesson on them and their history." He gestured to the regal eldest of the group, and introduced her, "The Matriarch Iliyana, ladies and gents."

From behind her there was a Slytherin girl that scoffed, "Be better off learning about them in Care of Magical Creatures."

Mulroney didn't hear the snide remark, but Fleur certainly did. Turning, she glared at the girl who had the good sense to keep her head down. She'd trounced her the day before in the dueling tournament, and it appeared the Slytherin had no desire for a, far less pleasant, repeat.

"Hello, everyone," Iliyana greeted them from the front of the classroom. Her voice was like music even as the translation stone did its job. Fleur heard flawless French, "As your professor said, I am a Matriarch, one of the eldest of the veela at the conclave in Bulgaria."

"The conclave has existed for nearly a millennium." She gestured to the walls around her, "It is nearly as old as this prestigious school. We have a rich history, filled with love and strife. And today, I will share some of it with you."

"Our kind have made their home in the Balkans for centuries." She explained, "It is where you will find more of us than anywhere else..." Catching Fleur's eye, she added, "Though, there are some who choose to leave the conclaves and make their homes elsewhere."

"The mundane humans consider vila nature spirits, fae-like nymphs of the forest and the water and the sky." She shared a look with the two younger veela, "There is some truth to the last, we do have an affinity for the air, but they missed the mark in the end, I'm afraid." A fire erupted in her hand, white hot. Even a few rows back Fleur could feel the heat of it, "We are creatures of fire, of passion and according to them we are capable of kindness and cruelty in equal measure." She smiled slightly, "They are not entirely wrong."

"Why cruelty?" A Ravenclaw girl asked from the front of the room.

"To protect ourselves, of course. We don't attack those who leave us alone." Iliyana explained, "But our beauty is notorious. Men, wizards and mundane alike, have coveted it. Many desire us, have desired us, but we are not trophies to be won. So, when they come with magic or sword and try to subjugate us to their will, they face our wrath. We must give ourselves freely. They cannot simply take us, and when they've tried, we've fought back."

"So, what exactly attracts a veela then? What would make one of your kind 'give themselves freely'? It was Roger Davies that asked, and he was leering at one of the younger veela in the front in a way that he must have thought was attractive. *Imbecile.*

"Righteousness... bravery... selflessness... kindness... and strength of will." Iliyana explained, pinning the young man to his seat with her hauntingly beautiful eyes. Roger could only nod his head nervously, and lowered his head. It sounded about right to Fleur, and she knew firsthand how attractive the last could be. *Harry has a good bit of all of them though.*

"It is for that reason, that vila found themselves in the Slavic epic poems written from the 14th to the 19th century."

She went on to explain the epics in great detail, regaled them with the story of *Ravijolja*. A vila who aided Prince Marko according to the epic poems, after he captured her with the aid of his steed, Sarac. Though the vila told it differently, for he had no need to capture, at least according to the Matriarch, "No, according to the tales of the matriarchs when I was a little girl, Ravijolja went with him willingly, for he was kind and brave, and offered help to the helpless." She gave a little smirk, "Now whether any of it is true... no one is alive to say."

Though it was certainly true that Prince Marko had been a living breathing man, it was more likely that he'd been put in the place of others in the folk stories that permeated the Slavic nations.

Throughout it all, the two younger women were mostly quiet, only adding little tidbits when the Matriarch asked, but before the class ended the three veela stood in a circle to make one last demonstration, "Veela love nothing more than to dance, you see." Anya told the class, "It is our greatest joy. Not a day goes by where at least one isn't had."

The three moved together, swaying and leaping with all the elegance and grace of the finest ballet dancers. Their magic, so clearly restrained the whole period, exploded around them, and all those in the classroom sat entranced as they moved with ease.

Even Fleur was affected. But while most watched in numb adulation, she wanted nothing more than to get up and join them. To make the circle just one person larger. But there was some magic that restrained them, and Fleur looked over to see the professor had cast a spell to keep everyone in their seats.

As they finished, the magic ebbed away. Iliyana gave each of the younger girls a hug, and looked back to the class, "The circle dance is one of our oldest traditions. In that moment, we allow ourselves freedom, from the restraints of our own allures." She looked each of them in the eye, "But you must know, it is terribly dangerous to approach. Men and women both have lost their lives for disturbing veela in their reverie. Something to remember should you ever find yourselves near one of the conclaves."

Professor Mulroney moved back to the front of the classroom then, "Thank you. That was a truly brilliant lesson. Thank you." He started a round of applause and most of the class joined, some with a frankly disturbing fervency. "Now, as it so happens this isn't the end of this little cultural exchange. Orina and Anya," he gestured to the two younger girls, "will be staying here at Hogwarts for the foreseeable future. Just another chance to expand our international friendships." There was more than one overly eager look on some of the young men's faces, and some of the girls looked sick with worry. *If only they knew there is nothing to worry about.*

Such ridiculous insecurity. Why would you want your boyfriends if they cannot even throw off a little allure. But then they are a bit different anyway, they are spoken for already after all. With that the class was dismissed, but before she could leave, she felt the gentle caress of the allure trying to get her attention. With other veela, it could be used as a way to silently communicate for the most skilled. And clearly the Matriarch was one of them.

Iliyana stood waiting for her at the front of the classroom as the rest of the students filtered out. The woman was hauntingly beautiful in a way that was truly inhuman. It made her think of her own grandmother, "You are French, I hear." There was no heat in the words, "And part-veela."

"Where did you hear that?"

"From Anya and Orina, of course. They hear a great deal from Mr. Potter." Fleur's traitorous cheeks heated up at the thought that Harry was talking about her, "It's funny how often he has that effect."

"My grandmother is veela." Fleur answered her previous question, trying to ignore the comment. She could only smile fondly as she thought of her grandmother. Fleur loved her dearly, the older woman was proud and at times haughty, but kind and she always looked forward to next seeing her.

“What is her name?” Iliyana asked, almost eager.

“Nadia Alarie.”

“Not, Nadia Mileva?”

“Yes...” Fleur told her innocently, “That was her maiden name, why?”

“I haven’t seen her in years. I knew that she moved to France obviously. I remember the screaming when her mother found out.” She shook her head at the memory but frowned, “We lost touch after she left, when she made it clear that she had no intention of coming back.”

“You knew my grandmother?” Fleur remembered something then, an old name that was in so many of her grandmother’s stories, “You must be Yana.”

“She mentioned me?” Iliyana was clearly elated at the news, “It’s been so long since we last spoke, I thought she would’ve forgotten me.”

“Many times, yes.” Fleur smiled at the older woman, “I’ll send her a letter and tell her you’re here. She was already meant to come for the tournament, this will only make her that much more excited.”

The hug she was wrapped up in was warm and gentle, her voice was tight with emotion, “Thank you, Fleur. I would appreciate that.”

“My pleasure,” she said, into the older woman’s hair.

With that she was let go and Iliyana turned away as she tried to compose herself. She gave her one last smile before she headed toward the Professor’s office.

It left her alone with the two younger veela. While she was of an age with both, she felt like she was younger by half as Anya grinned at her, “It is nice to finally meet you. Harry tells us good things.”

“I would say he has a thing for blondes if it weren’t for the fact that I’ve met Ginny and Sue, too.” Orina added with a laugh.

“He simply has good taste, regardless.” Anya said and stepped closer to Fleur, “Harry does so love to tell us stories of his friends. Your duels are some of his favorites. Though I hear you have been getting quite frustrated lately.”

“He has been on a good streak, that’s true,” Fleur huffed, and tucked her hair behind her ear, “But I’ll have the upper hand again soon enough.” Just because she fancied the young man didn’t mean that she had any intention of losing to him... At least not again anyway. Or at least not more often than she won. *He’s only one more win away from being tied and that just won’t do. I will not lose my lead altogether.*

In any other circumstance, she would be downright furious to find herself losing to a fourth year. A young man three years her junior, but Harry was singular. He was a natural duelist, and she had little doubt that he would be a match for any of the other upper years as well. *Considering I can beat most of them without any trouble and they can’t even land a hit on me.*

Orina gave her a wolfish grin, “There’s that pridefulness, from your mother and grandmother, I’m sure. But then you are veela, why shouldn’t you be proud.”

It was true, veela were proud and so she half expected them to warn her off of the young wizard, to stake their claim. She knew that veela could share, and that these two obviously did, but she didn't expect them to accept another, foreign quarter-veela, too, "Is there no warning, then?"

"Warning? What possible warning would we give?" Anya raised one eyebrow in surprise.

"About Harry."

They looked at each other before they burst out in melodic laughter. Orina reached out and rubbed her shoulder, her hands were delicate and soft, so very like her own, "We are not petty witches afraid of losing what we have with him, Fleur."

"You're not a threat to his love for us. No more so than the others," Anya wasn't boasting, or even taunting her, just pointing out a fact, "So do what you will, there's enough love in him to go around."

"Oh," Orina gave her a mischievous smirk, "I can think of one warning to give you." She leaned in close, her hot breath against Fleur's ear made her shiver with pleasure, "When you pluck up the courage and you find yourself in his bed... he will ruin you. His cock will reshape your undoubtedly tight, pristine veela pussy just for him. It's euphoric... and life changing..." Fleur felt the gentlest of kisses against her ear, "Just imagine it, poking you sooo... deep, behind your navel. Just try to keep up when it happens... you'll be lucky not to pass out."

Face was a bright red, she could feel liquid heat pooling in her knickers. They were absolutely drenched from the utterly lewd words the veela whispered in her ear, "I'll... I'll keep that in mind."

"Oh... I'm sure you will." Anya gave her a little smirk, "repeatedly."

With that she turned and headed out of the room, their tinkling laughter following her out. It was lunch, but no one saw her in the Great Hall, she was too busy in the carriage.

"Potter!" Roger yelled from behind as he headed down the second floor corridor toward the gargoyle, "How disgustingly brazen of you. Out well over an hour after curfew without a care in the world. Come with me. I'm sure Professor Snape will be more than happy to deal with you."

Harry rolled his eyes and turned toward the shockingly petulant Ravenclaw. *How the hell is he twenty-one?* "Roger, I'm not foolish enough to walk around after curfew for anyone to see." He offered him a scrap of parchment, "The Headmaster requested to see me."

Reading the slip, he shot an angry scowl, "Who's to say this is legitimate?"

"You're welcome to come with me if you like, it won't bother me any... you're such fantastic company after all." The sarcasm dripped from every word, and it only served to infuriate the Ravenclaw further.

"Think you're so clever, don't you?"

"Cleverer than you, which would surely have Rowena spinning in her grave. But then considering the abuse you lot let happen to Luna Lovegood, I imagine that's already happened."

The older man stilled at that and thrust the piece of parchment back at him, and bit out, "Fine, go to your meeting with the Headmaster!" He stomped off, muttering, "Can't imagine what you'll be doing this time of night..."

Harry didn't bother responding to the pillock and instead headed toward the gargoyle. *Though, in all fairness, even I'm a bit confused why he's decided to call me in so late.*

Standing in front of the statue he said, "Ice Mice." The gargoyle leaped out of the way and the spiral staircase ascended.

Knocking, there was a call from within, "Enter." Sitting behind the desk was Dumbledore but at his side was someone he wasn't expecting. Iliyana stood there in an elegant dress. She'd been the talk of the school since she first taught a lesson on Monday. *Well her, Anya, and Orina.* It was Wednesday and he'd yet to have her, but he was expecting good things.

"Professor?"

"Good evening, Harry. I apologize for the late hour, but I'm afraid that the lovely Matriarch was rather insistent." Harry noticed one of the translation stones on the table as he sat down.

"Alright, what's this about?" He could guess but, he didn't see the point when they were bound to tell him anyway.

"These last few days, I've spent plenty of time with Orina and Anya. And I believe that I have some idea of what is happening with your entwinement." Iliyana told him and he found it odd hearing her speak such perfect English, "But I can only speak for their end, I'm not so well versed with your magic and so I asked your headmaster for his aid."

"And? What have you figured out?"

"Of course, the obvious is that your magic is more closely entwined than any veela I've ever encountered before." She wasn't telling him anything he didn't suspect in that case, but it was good to have it confirmed, "But more than that, it appears that you're ... using their magic. The thread of their magic that they gave you in the entwinement is feeding back. It explains why you are so acutely aware of the moments when the two are together carnally and vice-versa and why you have some odd form of the allure." Harry could feel the heat in his cheeks as he looked at Dumbledore, but the man just took it all in stride.

"It is my belief that this has happened because of the horcrux that once resided within you."

Dumbledore added, "For years, it acted as a leech, but one that your magic had grown accustomed to. In place of that parasitic relationship, you now have a symbiotic one, and your magic has made use of it."

"And... it's all safe, right?"

"Perfectly," Iliyana assured him, "But that doesn't change the fact that we should understand it to the best of our ability, lest any problems arise in the future.

"So, if you're ready?" Dumbledore held his wand between his fingers.

"Yes, sir."

"Very good, Harry. This will be similar to our work with Occlumency, though with a different purpose in mind." Dumbledore instructed, "I promise, I won't go looking for anything I'm not supposed to... for both our sakes." He chuckled as Harry nodded a little frantically. He pointed his wand, and silently cast the spell.

Harry didn't even think to fight it, much less follow it. He simply sat there and let the Headmaster pursue whatever he was looking for. The minutes ticked by, and Harry could only glance between the still Headmaster and Iliyana.

Finally, Dumbledore came back to himself with a quick intake of breath, "Well, that was interesting... very interesting indeed."

"What is it, sir?"

"You have a great deal of time to learn such things, so I won't bore you with the intricate details now." Dumbledore's eyes were twinkling brightly, "But suffice to say, our magic is a part of us, inherent in our very souls. It is that which I went in search of."

"And what did you find?"

"A great deal of power, which did not surprise me in the slightest." Dumbledore looked over the top of his half-moon glasses, "But that is not our interest here tonight. What I found is that your magic has... melded tightly to the magic that Orina and Anya gifted you. It heals the very scar that Tom's soul left behind after those many years."

"And?"

"And it's because of that scar that you have this allure. It is your magic, your very soul seeking out balance." He coughed lightly, "And while I won't pry, it explains to some extent why it wasn't just Orina and Anya's magic that was present. There were two more already there, and the... oddest impression that it was expecting more."

"And it's not harming anyone at all?"

"Veela have an innate ability in healing," Iliyana interjected, "Your magic and theirs together, is seeking to heal you. No veela would wish harm on the one whose magic was entwined."

"Certainly not, my boy." Dumbledore assured him, "Your magic melds together with the others because it's compatible on a truly profound level. The number, I would presume, is because it makes for nine. Three threes as it were. Yourself, and eight others. I would imagine it has its benefits for them as well as you."

"What happens... if one of them doesn't wish to have their magic entwined?" It had already happened to Ginny and Sue without their choice in the matter, and he could feel a well of guilt for it. He managed to stamp it down and comfort himself with the fact he would do everything to make it right if they regretted it.

"It is hard to say..." Dumbledore said slowly, "Magic on this level is intricate. But I promise, I will do everything I can to aid you in this if that is what any of you should choose." Iliyana nodded her head as well.

Harry didn't know what else to say. He was happy to have answers, but now there really was nothing for it. He needed to have a long overdue conversation.