

Chapter 7 - Revenge

“*Emarcesco!*”

“More pizzazz! *Emarcesco!*”

Fred’s wand swished elegantly and released a white light, which turned the wardrobe they were training on into a crumb-sized wooden box. Following his example, Harry turned his wand towards the next target, a large pile of candy, and repeated the shrinking spell.

“*Emarcesco!*”

This time, the candy slightly dwindled in size. Not nearly enough. Sighing tiredly, Harry gave a cursory look around him, to what used to be the twins’ shop. It was littered with tiny items, be they furniture or stock; but only about half of them had been shrunk by Harry himself. The spell was surprisingly hard to grasp, unlike its counter-spell, “*Altus.*” Around them, George and Sirius busied themselves growing their practice targets back one by one.

“I don’t get why you’re struggling like that...” Fred groaned. “We made up that spell in third year to hide pranks materials from mom.”

“It shouldn’t be hard to master,” George continued as he grew back a whole box of pygmy puffs.

“Especially since you were shrunk by residual magic, it can’t be that hard,” Fred completed.

Harry had gotten the whole story from them after growing back. Apparently, they had shrunk hundreds of fireworks and other mischief-making items so the whole mess that agitated the castle weeks back could be carried inconspicuously in a pocket. One of the fireworks still had a residue of the shrinking spell, which was transferred to Harry. A silly accident...

“Wait, what if the spell specifically works better on humans rather than inanimate objects?” Harry suddenly perked up.

“Perhaps, mate. But you would need to try it on someone,” Fred started.

“And we’re not volunteers!” George completed.

Harry had half a mind to remind them it was their fault he shrank in the first place, but Sirius piped up before he could say anything.

“I am,” he said. Then, upon receiving surprised looks, Sirius clarified. “I am volunteering to be shrunk. I mean, I swallowed Harry, and, er, being that tiny doesn’t sound half bad, and erm...” Sirius’ cheeks had taken a rosy tint and his sentence devolved into incoherent mumbling as he seemed increasingly uncomfortable. The twins exchanged a knowing grin and Fred elbowed Harry discreetly. After a moment, Sirius cleared his throat and restarted with renewed confidence. “Hem hem, I meant that I trust Harry with my life, so I am not afraid. And staying with my godson instead of that stuffy old house? Morgana yeah!”

“Allow me, then,” said Harry with a grateful smile. Pointing his wand at his godfather, Harry said the incantation, and a surge of warmth traveled down his arm to the top of his wand, materializing into a pure white light. An instant later, Sirius had disappeared, and what seemed to be a large bug was standing in his place. Upon closer inspection, Sirius had indeed dwindled in size!

“Good job!” said both twins at the same time. Kneeling near an excited-looking Sirius, Harry addressed thanks to him. Plucking him gently between two fingers, Harry let his tiny godfather fall into his upturned palm, enjoying the feeling of being the BIG ONE for a change.

“If Sirius is to stay with you, you should have that,” George suddenly said, reaching into his pocket and retrieving the bottle-shaped necklace he and Fred used to wear. Seeing his safe place looking so small and frail tugged at Harry’s heartstrings, but he happily accepted the gift—he wanted Sirius to be as comfortable as possible with him.

After a few minutes getting Sirius used to his new size, the tiny man settled into the bottle necklace and Harry put it around his neck, concealing it under his shirt.

“I think I will be going now. I have a few things to do,” Harry finally told the twins. There was a natural understanding between them as to what these things were. A few people direly needed to become acquainted with the business end of Harry’s wand—and the underside of his feet. “But before I leave, I’d need some Amortentia. I can pay.”

Fred winked in understanding and instantly disappeared in the storage room, but George’s face darkened.

“Amortentia’s potency depends on the size of the drinker,” he said in a worried tone. “A single drop for a tiny would make them fall in love for weeks, so a normal-sized portion could...”

“Have permanent effects!” Fred finished as he emerged from the reserve, a large bottle of the love potion in hand; he tossed it to Harry. “I don’t care what you do to the others, but be careful with ickle Ronniekins. It’s fine if he’s got a crush on you for a bit, but I reckon mom would be cross if you end up marrying him.”

“Cross? She would be so enraged she might skin you alive, and that’s not a figure of speech.”

Harry snorted. “Yeah, fat chance I am letting Ron marry me. At best he’ll marry one of my toes,” he said, and he was pleasantly surprised he meant it. All remnants of the love potion he had been made to drink—just one drop, the effects of which still messed with his mind weeks later, as a testament of the potency of potions on shrunken people—had vanished, finally! “Frankly, he’d be lucky if I let him be my friend at all after what he did.”

Harry didn’t take long afterward to get ready to leave. He was itching to try out his new spell and potion, and he needed people small enough to scratch those itches! As he was leaving the shop that had become his home, heading into the bright, wide world, Harry could swear he heard Fred whisper, “Give them hell.”

Oh, he would.

The first minutes of genuine sunshine Harry got in weeks were soon tainted by the furtive looks and hushed conversations blooming everywhere his feet brought him on Diagon Alley. He expected to be recognized but, even to him, that level of public interest was inhabitual. Things became clearer when he came upon an issue of the *Daily Prophet* displayed in the window of Flourish & Blotts. Harry’s own face was plastered on the front page under the headline “WHERE IS HE?!”

The slack-jawed witch inside handed him a newspaper—“It’s free! It’s free! Please, just take it,” she kept repeating when he apologized for not having any money—and he started reading. The article, signed Rita Skeeter—“Ugh...”—was shockingly truthful. Harry had disappeared, after all, and it seemed the wizarding world discovered newfound affection for its Golden Boy, even after he had been accused of lying, when Harry was missing in action. It wasn’t much of a comforting thought for

Harry, but he appreciated the fact Rita Skeeter repeatedly hinted that Voldemort's return was real and to blame for Harry's predicament. He guessed Hermione had something to do with that particular development, but Harry wouldn't look a gifted Hippogriff in the mouth. It meant the Ministry's stance on Voldemort's return had shifted since Harry was shrunk; they wouldn't have allowed that particular article to be published otherwise. There were many things Harry had to discuss with Dumbledore, he realized.

Thankfully, he wasn't alone. He reached under his clothes to wrap his fingers around the bottle necklace there, knowing from experience that the warmth of his fingers would suffuse into Sirius' "room." With his godfather coming everywhere with him, Harry could do anything.

Another article, on page 17 this time, caught Harry's eye as he skimmed the rest of the newspaper. It was a photo of himself, tiny and standing on a piece of old cheese, his fingers doing a victory sign, but his eyes kept darting towards the cameraman with a wary expression.

It was one of the photos Colin Creevey had taken during their first evening together.

The photo was accompanied by a brief piece by the *Prophet's* editor explaining that this photo, which they strongly suspected was fake, had been sent to the newspaper along with a letter. The letter was included, and it was signed by Colin.

Distress and panic were palpable in the boy's words, Harry realized. "I am to blame for Harry Potter's disappearance," the letter started. "I found him by accident and, instead of bringing him to Headmaster Dumbledore, I kept him for myself, and he disappeared." It went on to explain the events of the night—with rose-tinted glasses, but Harry suspected Colin was being truthful and genuinely didn't realize how overbearing and scary he had been—while begging readers to watch their steps and carefully examine every bug they saw in case it might be Harry. "Harry, if you read

this: I am so, so very sorry,” it concluded. Just like that, part of Harry’s anger melted away.

“I think I will remove one name from my list,” Harry whispered to Sirius. “So, I think I know what our next stop is.”

Harry’s return to Hogwarts was kept a quiet affair on his request after a lengthy discussion with Dumbledore. The fantastical tale Harry had weaved to explain away his disappearance wasn’t very believable, and Harry suspected that Dumbledore knew, but he didn’t question it and that was all that mattered. He reached the Gryffindor tower in the middle of classes and retrieved his wand. There, he waited in the common room, wrapped in his invisibility cloak, until the students came back.

Ron made a beeline for the dormitories, to Harry’s surprise, and Hermione shot him a dark look. Whatever happened between the two was a mystery for another day, he decided, as he quietly followed Ron up the stairs. The ginger boy seemed out of it, like devoid of energy in a very un-Ron fashion, which soothed Harry’s heart. Just a tad.

“*Emarcesco*,” he muttered, and a white light instantly indicated his victory. Ron never stood a chance. A second later, on the spot where Ron stood, a tiny little thing was panicking. Harry shed his invisibility cloak, and Ron’s panic seemed even more obvious as he started running in the opposite direction.

With deliberate slowness, Harry kicked off his right shoe then peeled off his sock, sending lint raining down on Ron. One piece fell right in front of the desperate tiny, who ran straight into it and tumbled pathetically on the stone floor.

“Wow, I really was small, no wonder everyone treated me like crap. When I see you like that, even I want to step on you~” Harry grinned down at his old friend before

raising his bare foot. Lining up his foot juuust right, Harry slowly let it descend on Ron. The tiny did try to run, but the size disparity was just too vast for his efforts to amount to anything at all—Harry knew from experience. His foot fell flat on the floor in such a manner that Ron ended up in the gap between the first and second toe. Harry could see Ron’s small form frozen, probably in fear or disbelief that he didn’t actually end up smothered under the giant sole.

“Don’t worry, Ron. Unlike *some people*, I am not evil enough to just step on you,” Harry poked fun at him, taking great pleasure in looking down at the small being trapped between his toes. “Not unless you ask me to, of course. Thankfully, you WILL ask me. Beg me, even!”

“*Locomotor.*” The locomotion charm made Ron’s tiny form shoot up in the air, and Harry spent a few seconds making him zoom back and forth like Ron had done to him so long ago. Eventually, he grew tired of it and levitated Ron near his face. From up close, Harry could barely make out his facial expression which seemed a mix of fear and sadness. The tiny teen was clearly screaming something at Harry, but no matter how much strain he put on his vocal chords, Ron was just too small to be heard. Not even a high-pitched squeak made it to Harry’s ears.

“Don’t worry, you will be feeling much better very soon, Ron,” said Harry in a singsong tone.

With that, he opened the bottle of Amortentia, unleashing a bouquet of treacle tart and broomstick handles, and dropped Ron inside before putting the cork back on. To seal the deal, he shook the bottle energetically.

Getting to Malfoy alone proved to be harder, but two strategically placed muffins soaked with sleeping potion—graciously provided by an overjoyed, crying Dobby—had put the blonde’s goons to sleep as they were walking, just the three of them, in a

corridor adjacent Snape's classroom. Harry's shrinking spell hit Malfoy before Crabbe and Goyle did the floor.

This time, Harry's goodwill was running even thinner than with Ron, given Malfoy's obvious glee at the idea Harry was shrunk, lost and possibly dead. Harry had had to follow them for several minutes before setting up his trap, and he was treated to Malfoy's bombastic boasting about "being the man who stepped on Harry Potter." Happy to finally shut the blonde git up, Harry brought his finger to his lips, sliding his tongue out. After licking his fingertip, Harry pressed his finger on a desperately running Malfoy, gluing the tiny boy to his skin easily.

"What was the thing you said when I was in your place, Malfoy? 'Squirm under me, that's where you belong,' was it?" Harry offered the blonde git a toothy grin before sitting on the floor, kicking off shoe and sock, and bringing his bare foot on his knee, sole up. "Squirm for me, then~" With that, he pressed his finger against the ball of his foot, forcing Malfoy's entire front body to sink into the plump flesh.

Surprisingly, Harry could actually feel each and every movement Malfoy made as he helplessly wriggled. His skin picked up quite a few details, down to Malfoy's mouth opening and closing as he tried to scream—and insult Harry, most likely.

"Merlin. Now I get why you guys were so obsessed with getting your feet pampered. This feels GREAT!" He chuckled and slowly moved his finger all the way to his heel, then back up to the ball of the foot, dragging Malfoy along for the ride. He continued to torment the tiny boy, making him intimately familiar with his sole, for another few minutes. The action inadvertently brought a red tint to Harry's cheeks. For good measure, the dark-haired boy rubbed his fingertip between his first and second toes, scrubbing the area methodically with his rival's puny body, before bringing Malfoy up to his face. The blonde boy was impossible to recognize, disheveled and sobbing.

"Come on! Turn that frown upside down," Harry said, enjoying the situation a tad too much.

At last, he opened the bottle of potion and positioned his finger over the opening. He scraped Malfoy off his skin with his thumb's fingernail—everything Malfoy had picked up on Harry's foot seemingly acted as glue and kept Malfoy in place, but Harry liked to think it was a deliberate attempt by the tiny to escape his fate. 'But there is no escaping this,' Harry thought as Malfoy plopped into the pearly potion next to Ron's equally tiny form. Harry gave the potion another vigorous shake before getting up and on his way.

He would go to the seventh floor, he decided, before opening the bottle. Things had to be perfect.

Harry's joyful whistling and the tremors of his steps were Ron and Malfoy's only companions in the confines of the bottle, as they swallowed mouthful after mouthful of the love potion.