

## Exit: Stage Left Prophecy

***"The Dark Lord will fall in battle this night, and the Chosen One will take the Dark One's power as his own."***

Silence filled the Great Hall as every eye suddenly focused on the third year Hufflepuff who was inexplicably glowing, his eyes wide with only the whites showing. The boy noisily drew a breath and continued.

***"With that power the Chosen One will take his brides and they will be as one."***

Another Prophecy? Harry Potter flinched, almost recoiling from the mere idea. 'Brides'? As in plural? That could not possibly be good.

***"The Witches of the World will Bond With the Chosen One and with No Other, for they will know his true power and will revel in it."***

What? Harry looked about the Great Hall, taking in the expressions of the assembled students and staff. There were buying this? Some magical kid gets all glowy and starts spouting nonsense and everyone believes him? It was only then Harry realized what was being said. 'The Witches of the World'? What the hell did that mean? Surely not... Not **ALL** of them?

"Fake!" a visibly inebriated Sybil Trelawney protested from her place at the staff table, sloshing a goblet of some amber liquid over herself and those sitting on either side of her. "That's not how you do a prophecy, you just don't start spouting nonsense with a definite outcome, you have to shroud it in mumbo jumbo and such. It keeps the punters coming back." The tipsy witch took another deep drink from her goblet, "the glowing thing is a nice touch though."

Somehow the drunken woman's protests didn't make Harry feel any better as the third year continued.

***"The Witches of the World will know the touch of the Chosen One and will find joy such as they have never known."***

It was at this point Harry noticed that all of the girls at the Gryffindor table were inspecting him in a speculative manner. Even, perhaps especially, Hermione. Even Hermione.

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Harry stood in wide-eyed horror as the words of the prophecy echoed in the Great Hall, throughout the student body, and in fact even among the teachers a cheer went up, the time for fear was evidently almost over.

All around him the young men high-fived each other in celebration for the impending end of the Dark Lord, and the girls were similarly excited, with now more than just the Gryffindors eying him expectantly.

But Harry knew better as he eased from his seat, his meal forgotten. He had been Fate's bitch far too long not to recognize the danger. The Wizard raised in the school had not yet seen the problem, but some of the Muggle raised males in the Great Hall were starting to let their common sense overrule their joy at the news that the Dark Lord was doomed. Harry noticed a few eyes narrow as they sought him out, a few hands start their way to their wands.

Harry swallowed and exited the Great Hall as quickly as he could. Racing to his dormitory, Harry threw his things into his trunk, shrinking it as soon as the lid closed. Pocketing the trunk, Harry opened the window and mounted his broom just as the screams of rage started making their way up the stairs from the Gryffindor common room. Harry kicked free of gravity's restraints and rocketed out the window running for his life.

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Harry happened to look down as he was passing over the Forbidden Forest and saw that Voldemort was already in the clearing where they had agreed to meet. Riddle was an hour early, setting up some sort of trap probably. Harry hesitated, the bastard deserved what was coming, but he couldn't do that, not even to Voldemort

"Tom!" Harry called out as he landed.

"Potter?" Voldemort exclaimed, somewhat embarrassed he had been caught, and then realizing how the boy had addressed him, he rose to his full height and proclaimed "I am Lord Voldemort!"



"Hey, I never expected that Harry would run off like that," the Hufflepuff laughed. "I thought he'd just hide out until everyone calmed down. Besides, you were the one who said that only Harry could deal with that Voldemort bloke. All I did was provide enough motivation to get everyone off their duffs and pushed them to deal with the idiot."

Luna shook her head. "I thought surely that if they weren't willing to fight to save their lives..."

"Sex is a major motivator for most lads Luna," Gordon said returning to his breakfast. "My dad works in advertising, and he uses sex to sell almost everything, so when I made the suggestion that if Harry killed Voldemort then he'd get all the women and all the other lads would have to turn to their own hands or each other, the Voldemort was toast."

"But that's not what you said Gordon," Luna corrected him. "You just said that Voldemort would fall in battle, not that Harry was going to kill him. And he did. Since you made your prediction, I've noticed that most if not all of the established couples among the students have broken up, and that all most of the girls are willing to talk about is Harry."

"Really?" The Hufflepuff stopped eating again. "I wonder if enough people believe my little prophecy would provide the magic needed to make it come true. Interesting."

"You had best hope that's not what has happened Gordon," Luna said as she stood from the table. "Because if of the prophecy you made to win our bet ends up forcing me to share Harry Potter with even a single other witch, I'm going to kill you."

Gordon Cooper stared open-mouthed at the young woman as she walked away.