

Following a nice, relatively light Christmas dinner consisting of mostly leftovers with you parents and the twins, followed by a couple of board games which you lose spectacularly at and which Apollo does surprisingly well in, the three of you manage to make quick work of the dishes while mom and dad retire to the TV room. Arty and Apollo make good on the promise to help once more, which you are grateful for. "Light" is a relative term in the Hallaster household and without them, the clean-up for even the *remains* of the feast you and your mother prepared the previous day would have been a real slog.

After the three of you finish drying the last pan and putting the last plate into the dishwasher, you and the pair of Hufflepuffs leave the kitchen to join your parents, just as dad manages to stoke the flame in the fire place to a reasonable level.

You are proud to say there was only one near miss with a dropped bowl tonight. Apollo was certainly learning.

It is a bit of a tight fit to get everyone seated but the three of you manage to squeeze onto the couch while your parents take up the recliner, in your mom's case, and a stool next to the bar in dad's.

What follows is perhaps an hour of idle chatter, filled with plenty of compliments on the food from your dad and even Apollo directed toward you, mom, as well as Arty who had lent a hand with the simpler tasks; the TV was showing an old movie about a boy and his quest to convince Santa to gift him a certain brand of BB gun.

While you had watched this film probably 100 times over the years and knew the plot by heart, Arty and her brother were still entranced by muggle television and the background noise filled any gaps in the conversation. Arty smiled brilliantly and Apollo managed a happy grin during the final few minutes of the movie before your mom spoke up as credits began to roll.

"Such a nice show. You know, Elliot made us put this on every year when he was younger. Would throw a fit if it wasn't on when we celebrated. Feel free to use that against him by the way. But I do think that is my cue to head to bed; I wanted to read for a bit and then tomorrow I want to get the most out of the holidays while I am still off. Kendrick, don't keep them up *too* long? Okay?"

From his chair dad waved her off assuring Helen that he would be good and make sure to come to bed soon as well. He wasn't quite tired yet, he said, and wanted to chat a bit more but would make sure everyone tucked in at a reasonable hour.

With a slight sigh, she just walked over and pecked him on the cheek, then gave you a hug before ascending the stairs.

As soon as the sound the door to your parent's room closing echoed into the den, you dad sat up and turned towards the cabinet behind the chair he had been occupying. Within a few moments that were accompanied with the soft click of glass against glass, he gave a soft cry,

“Ah ha!”, and turned with a smile then brandishes a bottle of light amber liquid two thirds of the way empty.

“Say Elliot, shall we continue our little tradition with you friends?”, he says with a slight grin.

The previous Christmas, once your mom had gone to bed, he had broken out a nice, unopened bottle of whiskey from some place called “Bimber Distillery” and invited you to have a couple of glasses with him and tell him about your time at Hogwarts; when you had returned for summer break the pair of you talked and laughed over the same bottle.

“Yeah, of course, Dad. I wouldn't miss it. But I don't know if...”, you begin before Apollo interrupts you.

“I'll drink. It is rude to refuse something your host offers to you. I know that much. Last night- Sorry... again. But I am fine. I'm having fun.”

His delivery is in typical Apollo deadpan but you think you can hear a touch of excitement in his voice behind the slight regret of making a minor scene the previous night. Perhaps he was glad at being included in this secret little ritual. Maybe he just needed a nip to calm himself. It had been a hectic day

after all and Apollo ended up talking more than you had ever heard him before in such a short span of time.

"I... I don't mind. Miss Hannah has had all the waitresses try a sip of the different Firewhisky she stocks so we can give recommendations to customers. And the wine last night was better than I thought, after the first drink or two. As long as it is alright with you, sir. I *am* a bit younger and smaller than Apollo and Elliot so..."

"Of course, Arty; you don't have to drink more than you want. And Elliot and I just started this tradition last year, when he was still your age Arty. But I prefer Kendrick; not 'sir' or 'Mr. Hallaster' or 'Elliot's dad!'"

"Oh yeah, I'm sorry si..Kendrick. Old habits.", Arty says with a tiny, beautiful, and bell like giggle. She continues after turning towards her brother,

"Just be careful Apollo. Remember when I had to recruit three of the other boys to carry you out of the common room?"

"I'll be fine. I know my limits now. But thanks."

As your dad sets the bottle down and pulls out a set of nice drinking glasses, he tells Apollo to feel free to take the recliner now that it was free since the three of you were squeezed in a bit tight on the couch. It gives you and Arty a bit of space to readjust and get more comfortable; dad was the other half of why you were sorted into Slytherin after all. *Clever.*

Part of that readjustment involves your arm across her shoulders and her snuggling closer to you. This earned you a look from her brother as he took his seat, though it had softened much from when you had escorted her to the Slug Club a few days before. Progress. More than worth it, you say internally as her small, warm body presses closer against you.

After returning from the kitchen with a small bucket of large ice cubes, the short, slightly plump host of this “event” sets to the task of putting a cube in each glass and then doling out the alcohol, about two fingers for each person.

After a quick swirl, your dad raises his glass into the air with a soft cry of, “Cheers!” which you and Arty return immediately, followed a couple of seconds by Apollo. You and your adorable girlfriend are the only ones close enough to actually clink glasses together. Regardless, the four of you quickly down a mouthful of the stinging, smoky drink.

Your dad, as always, seems to mistake the 80-ish proof alcohol for water; Arty does almost as well, only scrunching her nose up a touch. Meanwhile your whole body tightens and while Apollo doesn't begin coughing, it does take him a moment to force the mouthful of liquid fire down. As you lower your glasses, Arty is the first to speak,

“That...that’s really good! The stuff Miss Hannah keeps is way rougher than that! How much does a bottle of this cost?”, she exclaims.

“Not too much. Not what you would have for an evening nip all the time but... maybe £200?” he says, clearly pleased at least one of you has appreciation for good booze.

“Is that a lot, Elliot? I'm still not that good with muggle money. I wonder if Miss Hannah might want to start stocking some things like this?”, the tiny auburn-haired girl leaning against you absent-mindedly asks, as much to you as herself. You respond after a moment to appreciate both the warmth moving into your stomach from the drink and the warmth of your girlfriend's body pressing against your right side.

“Its a bit expensive... I think making minimum wage as a muggle, you would need to work two-ish days for a bottle? But dad has a couple worth way more; he said he is saving those for a really, really special day, whatever that means. So, a couple galleons?”, you softly say, looking into the small girl's big blue eyes.

“Oh...OH! Are sure it’s okay for me and Apollo to have this, s-Kendrick? I can pay you-”, she begins

with a small start.

“Oh, course it is, Arty. You two are helping to keep Elliot out of trouble, right? And you are guests here. What is ours, is yours. Besides, unless I get rid of at least one of these bottles, my amazing wife isn't going to let me get a new one; there is a local distillery I have been meaning to try. So just enjoy!”, he says with a hearty chuckle and another pull from his own glass.

What follows is light and fun conversation between the four of you lasting the round; Arty curls a bit closer against you and your dad and Apollo ended up in a fairly energetic conversation about the differences between magical history and muggle history with a bit of slurring on Apollo's part. While he is no luminary on the subject, when it comes to academics, he is like a sponge. You shudder a touch at him ending up as Head Boy next year. As your dad tops everyone off with another pour and an ice cube, the topic turns to something you had fought hard, and failed the previous night, to avoid.

“So Professor, ah Potter or Pewter, began some new Classes this year? An elective? Go ahead and put one more log on the fire, Apollo.”, he asks with a mischievous glint in his eye.

As the tall Hufflepuff boy adds to the tiny fire still going, wobbling a touch, you try to quickly cover for Potter's Battle class.

“Yeah, yeah, it's not anything too special. You know, competitions between 4 groups each year, 16 people from every house with one... captain. Yeah. Arty was one of the 5th year leaders and Apollo and I lead an ar... team each. Basically, tests of spell work, coordination, knowledge, strategy, resour-”, you begin before Apollo interjects, having finished with the fire to his standards and was once again sitting.

“They are battles. Four armies. Different situations, different ways to win but normally, last ones standing win.” he says, completely non-plussed. Arty extracts herself from your arm in a flash, whispering in something close to a hiss,

“Apollo! We talked about this!” she says, glaring at her brother.

“He asked? And besides, both of you won. I don't get it. Mr. Kendrick, Elliot is a good fighter. He did better than me all but once. Even if he is wea-”.

The last bit is cut off by Arty's huff of indignation and her brother looks almost like he had been elbowed in the gut from a half dozen paces away. He corrects himself,

“I mean, even if I am stronger. He still won. So did Arty.”, he says, softly. You can't tell if it is the conversation or the alcohol making his cheeks a touch red.

You were worried about what you parents would say about competing in a relatively dangerous competition like the battles but all you get from your dad is a hearty, slightly too loud chuckle.

“Well, I can't say I am not happy. Turns out my son is really good at tossing people around or turning them into newts or however you magical people fight! Don't worry, Elliot. I'll talk to Helen. She just worries for you. But maybe we don't tell her the finer details? You made some great friends with this right? You came back with both hands still attached, right? And an adorable girlfriend on top of it! In my book, that is good enough!”

A touch embarrassed, you give a quite affirmation chased with another sip of the amber drink in your glass, which the tiny girl wrapped across you mirrors. Apollo seems to have adapted to the taste and burn, finishing his glass and looking absently into the crackling fire.

You spent the next bit giving the grinning blond man a quick recounting, a highlight roll of the greater victories or plays each of you had made over the semester. You managed to get a few laughs out of him, mostly about your tactics which would be considered war crimes in most cultures, as well as those from Arty and Apollo's stories. Especially Arty putting a boy in the nurse's office by aging him up to win and Apollo just asking people to join his army to seize victory.

Before long, dad refilled the cups one more time and the four of you maintained a light conversation as they emptied, interrupted by all of you focusing on the TV at times as a certain bald man crawled

through vents and saved Christmas from a terrorist plot. Second best holiday movie ever.

Once your cups had emptied again, you dad slowly rose up from the chair.

“Ahhhh. I do think I should probably head upstairs, make sure Helen doesn’t think I went AWOL or some such. Damn shame the bottle is empty, I would have loved to learn a bit more about this impossible wizard stuff.”, he says, walking to the kitchen to wash out his glass.

“But, Mr... Kendrick, there's still a good amount left in the-”, Arty begins, before your dad interrupts.

“Yes, a damn shame it is empty, with nothing else left in it at all. Oh well finishing this one means the wife will let me pick a new one up. Had to make space after all!” he says from the kitchen. When he turns toward you all, there is a very not subtle wink.

“Yeah, dad. Such a shame. Thanks. Merry Christmas.”

“Merry Christmas, Elliot. Love you, son.”

As he starts up the stairs, Arty seems to get 'it', and lets out a quite “Ohhhhh...”, before she extracts herself from you and puts the final pieces of ice from the bucket into your glasses.

“Your dad is a really nice person, Elliot. He is really great... I see a lot of him in you, you know.”, she says with a slightly knowing giggle.

When she makes it to Apollo who is lounging in the recliner, she stops, waving her hand in front of his face a bit.

“And he is out. Wish I could do that. So, boyfriend, think the two of us can handle the rest?” Arty says,

shaking the bottle gently.

"I think so, girlfriend. We are going to have to be up pretty early, but... sure. Let's do it."

Arty tops yours and her glasses off just a bit with Apollo's portion and what was left in the bottle, then comes back down beside you on the couch, a little closer than when Apollo and your dad had been around.

As you sip the admittedly very good whisky and begin to finish up the movie which you had turned on halfway through while Apollo snores very lightly, Arty snuggled her head against your chest after setting her now far less full glass down on the coffee table and whispers,

"Do you think... do you think we can go up to your room to finish these? It's almost midnight and I had another present I wanted to give you before Christmas is over, since you did give me two counting the dress..."

"Uh, yeah that should be fine, Arty. If you want. What about your brother? Is he going to be okay?" you say, only stumbling on your words a touch; you blame the strong alcohol and the tiny, very beautiful Hufflepuff pressing against you for your words not working completely correctly.

"He will be fine. Let me toss a blanket over him, but you have no idea how many times I have come down to find him sleeping straight up in a chair in the common room, heh." she says, her laugh like small silver bells.

"Why don't you take the drinks up and put on something comfortable? I'll get him a blanket and change, then meet you?", Arty offers, followed by her locking her lips with yours for several long seconds. Even if there was some objection you had planned to mount, feeling her mouth against your own, feeling her tongue meeting yours had quickly silenced them.

Up the stairs and into your room, you quickly set the glasses on the nightstand and changed into a pair

of long, warm pajama pants and a dark tee-shirt. You could hear your girlfriend ascend the flight of steps, and then the door to her and Apollo's room shut as you sat on the edge of your bed. Shortly after, you heard something else, not from the outside, but from the inside; the slightly slurred voice of Helga Hufflepuff cut through the light fog of alcohol and excitement currently swirling in your head.

"You know, she loves you, right? Hehe heh. Hic~"

"Yeah, yeah. I know."

"Good. Don't break her heart... It sucks. I know. I think, at least. But she is also going to try and have sex with you, Elliot."

"Wh-what? We aren't ready for that! I...", you sputter out, almost choking on a sip of your drink.

"Hahaha, it's kind of cute how dense you can be. Not very Slytherin at all, if I do say so. But maybe that is for the better.", she says, cutting you off.

"You know about her... problem. That she might not have as much time as she should have gotten. And she is head over heels for you... and a bit drunk. Me too. The-the drunk part. Ha...ha... Getting two ladies drunk on Christmas oh my!"

"What should I do? I don't want to take advantage of her, I really like her. I love her..."

"Heh, don't ask me. It's your body after all and I've had a 1000 year long dry spell besides. Unless you want me to "guide your wand"! J-just a joke, a joke. Do what you think is right. But I don't think you are all that opposed to the idea. Though it would be *hard* to say why I feel that way." Helga says with a snicker.

"Hey! It's not my fault she is so pretty, warm, kind... that she smells so nice. If that does happen

though, do you think you can, I don't know, kinda turn the other direction?" you explain, crossing your legs in their pajama pants somewhat awkwardly.

"I get lonely sometimes but I'm not a peeping Tom, Elliot. Some of the things you see or think seep through regardless but I shall endeavor to not pay attention. And, just if you were wondering, I think that girl will be more than happy with you; the first time we really met, neither of us had clothes on if you recall!!".

"Helga!"

"It's not my fault that you are so fun to tease, Elliot." the warm, soft voice in your mind says.

You have had a bit more to drink than you might have normally had, but with Helga's word seeming slurred, you have to ask a quick question.

"Hey... you seem a bit more than buzzed. What is up with that? I feel pretty good right now but..."

"Ah, you noticed. I may or may not have been trying to recreate that fizzy beer you modern people enjoy. I may or may not have had to dispose of the failures. *Manually.*" she says with a chuckle.

"How many failures."

"Remind me what the number after 9 is again." she responds, still laughing.

You quietly sigh.

"Probably too many. Amazing. I have a drunk, perverted ghost of one of the greatest witches in history in my head."

"Flattery will get you everywhere. Though I am by no means a pervert, thank you very much, Mr. Hallaster."

"Difficult to believe that last part, given what you did in my head before and how much you focused on Arty's gift to me just recently, Miss Huff-le-puff.", you silently counter with.

"Slander! I can appreciate a fair maiden, solely for her maidenly fairness mind you, and you are one to talk in regards to "taking care" of yourself! I have, to my great distress, seen the things you have imagined involving that sweet girl, and on occasion a few of the other girls at Hogwarts... sometimes at the same time.", she says in mock outrage, shifting to a teasing tone you swear at the end you can hear the sound of an empty glass clacking against a wooden table, accompanied by a sigh.

"I...I am a Slytherin you know! House of the ambitious! Sometimes you must dream bigger!" You didn't know you could actually stutter when talking in your head. Truly an unexpected gift.

"Hahahaha! Its fine. You may be Slytherin but you would have been a credit to my own house with how loyal I believe you to be in regards to Arty. I know you would never hurt that girl like that. Unless she is into it? But Arty is... She is sweet, kind, clever, brave... and hurt. Deeply, deeply hurt, Elliot.", she says begins, her kind and jolly voice becoming somber.

"Yeah. Yeah, she is. Her brother is too. When she told me what happened to her, when Apollo was crying in the middle of the road... Crucio seems like it might hurt less, knowing what they went through. Seeing what it did to them. I want to help, if I can. And I know I probably can't..."

"Y-you are kind, Elliot. Very, very kind. You would try and help them, even you *knew* it would fail; that is who you are. So, thank you very much for being like this. I know it is hard sometimes. But you know, since I founded the whole House, maybe I should name you an honorary Hufflepuff! I think you would look very handsome in yellow and black!" she says, trying to lighten the mood as you take a large sip of your remaining whiskey. It helps, some.

"I'll Huffle your Puffs, Helga! I still have my snake house pride after all."

“Oh, I am sure you are about to do so to certain 'Puff'; but I assure you, if you ever got a chance to Huffle my 'Puffs', you would need to convince the young lady about to open your door to learn to share.”, the voice in your head informs you with a drunken laugh.

“And don't worry, I am sure you will do fine. Though if you need help, you *can* always ask me to 'guide your wand!' Hahaha!”

Before you have a chance to respond you feel Helga's presence leave your mind followed shortly by a soft knock on your door and it opening and shutting quickly.

Your beautiful girlfriend is standing before you in the middle of the room with her hand behind her arched back and her small chest puffed out.

She had changed out of the slightly dressy muggle pants and blouse she had come to dinner with as well as removing the bow from her hair, letting the soft auburn locks fall just against the tops of her shoulders; now she was dressed in a pink and very fuzzy house coat the belt cinched, though not tied, around her waist. Even dressed so simply, Arty looked amazing to you.

“What do you think? Your mom insisted on getting me and my brother some of these muggle house robes, said it might get drafty at night. She wouldn't take no for an answer! Can you believe it? So, I hope it looks okay, heh.” Arty says looking down a bit and seeming embarrassed. As you try to make your brain formulate something that wasn't just primitive grunts, your tiny girlfriend walks forward to her drink and knocks back at least half of it in a single pull.

“I...I really like it Arty. You look great like this... Sorry, I know you don't like receiving stuff you didn't pay for but my mom is a bit pushy. You probably would have ended up with that under the tree, even if you had fought her off in the store.”

She giggles lightly, swaying just a touch as she sets her now mostly empty glass back down.

"Its fine. Your mom, she is so nice. Like you, Elliot. And your dad is so smart and funny, like you... I-I just am having some trouble taking it all in. All these gifts, being away from Hogwarts for this Christmas, seeing Apollo smile this much, getting to be here with MY amazing boyfriend."

"Just don't go sprinting down the road if it is too much. I caught Apollo; I'm sure I could catch you before you made it to the stop sign."

"Hey! Thats mean, I can normally run faster but you fed me so much good food I had a handicap." Arty says with a huff and slight slur, false indignation stretched across her blushing face, features betraying a poorly suppressed grin.

"We all ate the same stuff Arty. You realize that, right? So, I would catch you, hold on tight, kiss you right below your ear to paralyze you, and then carry you back home.", you smugly informer her, taking a pull from you mostly empty glass.

"Is that a promise, Hallaster?"

"It very much os, Pertinger."

Coming to your side, blushing and softly laughing, and joins you on the edge of your old bed before wrapping her small arms around your waist.

"Part of me, I don't know, doesn't think I deserve it. To be this happy.", Arty says, hugging you tightly.

Something in your stomach drops hearing her say this. Arty, she works so hard to just be good enough. She is endlessly optimistic, braver than most Gryffindors, and fiercer than almost any witch you knew. Your body moves on instinct to return her embrace, before your mind can even catch up.

"You *do* deserve it. You deserve this and more, and you are going to have it all. Forever. That's what we said right? We would be by each other's side till the end? I wasn't lying. This... this is only the start Arty. I love you. I love you so much.", you say with a steel like certainty in your voice.

She snuffles some, then looks up, meeting your gaze with those big, impossibly blue eyes.

"I know. I know you do. And I love you back Elliot Hallaster. I truly do. But hey, it's almost midnight, isn't it? I got something else for you, something besides what was wrapped up down stairs. Since you had to go and give me two things... would that be okay? Can I give you something else Elliot?"

"Ye-yeah Arty. Whatever you want to give me, I know I'll love. I'm not opposed to opening something else, when it is just us."

"You had better love it, mister; otherwise, you were lying just a minute ago!", she says laughing a little, her cheerful personality and light teasing over taking her brief melancholy. She raises up from beside you, takes a few steps back towards the middle of your room and turns about to face towards you once more.

"You might want to finish that drink, "Lord Hallaster," she says smiling which you oblige, knocking down the now slightly watered down whisky. You can feel the buzz from it already but it does nothing for the sensation of your heart trying to vacate your chest from seeing Arty sway back and forth in front of you as her hands undo the cloth belt at her waist.

Her cute bubblegum pink robe falls as she shrugs out of it coming to a rest at her feet and you really appreciate her having finished your booze beforehand; you can almost feel your pupils expand and the rapid beat in your chest hitch just for a moment. Arty isn't wearing ridiculous lingerie or something of the sort. Under her robe is just a simple white tee shirt that falls just to the top of her hips with a big yellow bow printed on its front and what you believe are similar white panties, from the small glimpse you catch from between her legs.

Her shirt is tight enough it leaves only a bit to the imagination. It is probably the most well-fitting thing you have ever seen on the tiny Hufflepuff; just tight enough to conform to her small but undoubtedly

feminine curves, tight enough on her petite chest that it is very clear she is not wearing anything under it and so perfectly thin enough you can easily make out the pair erect nipples pressing against the fabric.

“I wanted to make sure I got you something good for our first Christmas, Elliot. I think you liked what was under the tree but, well, I want you to really love your gifts. So just think of that picture as a preview. Or maybe an appetizer?”, she says, giggling and hands behind her back so her chest presses tighter against the shirt.

“I don't think your Mom thought this is why I asked for this specific shirt when she bought clothes for me and Apollo; I might have to apologize to her later.”

Given what your mom had said about condoms and anti-pregnancy potions to you previously, you think she might not be giving credit where it is due.

“Arty, you look... you look amazing. Even in just a tee shirt and underwear.”, you manage to croak out. It feels like the blood supply to your think-y parts has been diverted, worse than even before, to more important organs.

“I'm glad you like it. And I guess it is really more like two presents, Elliot... that means you own me another one later, right?” she says softly, before raising the bottom of the shirt up, fully revealing her panties; they are a simple white with a small yellow and black bow stitched to the front, just above the puffy mounds curving down between her pale, barely freckled thighs.

“Its not quite past midnight yet, if I am reading that silly muggle clock beside your bed right, so we have a bit of time left and people like to play around with their gifts before opening them right? I think some of the girls I know told me that. And this outfit is just some nice wrapping paper...”

Lowering her shirt, Arty walks over to where you are sitting on the edge of the bed with your pants feeling quite too tight and sits on top of your outstretched legs. Weighing next to nothing, she scoots forward and you can feel your hard-on press lightly against her; you aren't sure how much is that and how much is the booze, but you know you are blushing furiously when she takes your wrists into her

soft, delicate hands.

Arty guides your hands up to her chest, setting them over the perky mound, and leans in kissing you deeply; you can't help yourself. Working on some deep-seated instinct you begin gently caressing her breasts, rubbing against her erect nipples as she passionately kisses you, her own hands holding your head in place. You can feel her hips press back and forth slightly against your thighs and the stiff shaft between them; even through the cloth of your sleeping pants, it feels like heaven. Once or twice you almost unconsciously begin to slip a hand underneath her shirt, only to have her gently slap it away.

“You are going to have to wait just a bit longer... part of the fun is enjoying being given the present. Not just what is inside. Even if...even if I really want you to unwrap it.”, she says in a strained, almost breathless tone.

“I can't have Santa giving you coal in your stocking next year for not appreciating what your wonderful girlfriend got you Elliot.”, Arty teasingly admonishes you, giggling.

The two of you stay that way for a time, you glancing again and again at the crimson digits of your old alarm clock as it ticks closer towards midnight. Finally, after a last impassioned kiss from Arty and you taking one back from her, she shifts her soft bottom further onto your lap, then breaks your kiss slightly to whisper in your ear.

“Unless I am wrong, it is 11:50, Elliot. Merry Christmas. Again. Are you ready to unwrap the rest of your gifts? From the look of it I would guess it is a “hard” yes.”, she says, having extracted herself from your embrace and once again standing in front of you.

“I have never been more excited to open one, Arty. Please, let me open them...” you respond with a hint of desperation in your voice; it is getting quite uncomfortable in a very important section of your anatomy.

“Well, if you are that excited... Go ahead. I know it's not much, but I want you to have it. I wasn't sure what I should give you... so I gave you me.”, Arty says almost in a whisper, kneeling in front of you. Starting with her shirt, you pull it up and over her head gently, Arty helping you a bit. You toss it aside

and Arty shakes her short red-brown hair a touch, stretching out her back some, almost presenting her bare chest to you. It is glorious.

The beautiful girl in front of you is not “well endowed” but she is by no means flat; the two of you had pressed against one another in empty class rooms or hidden spots on the Hogwarts grounds enough times in the past month or two for you to know that much and her gift earlier left little to the imagination. But seeing her right in front of you is like night and day. Her chest rises, in and out, out as you take in the sight of her firm breasts, around the size of halved large oranges with upturned, pink and puffy nipples surrounded by a matching rose circle about the size of a knut. A few freckles dotting her chest down through her small waist, a couple of small dark beauty marks.

You manage to hold in a gasp though not the twitch inside your flannel sleeping pants which suddenly feel all too thin.

“I guess you like it?”, she says in a light teasing tone.

“Ready to unwrap the other one?”

“Oh yes. Yes, Arty I think I am, please. Come a little closer.”

She steps forward, slightly, and with a soft caress along her sides, you hook a couple of fingers on each side of her underwear and slide them down to her ankles. Arty steps out from them and kicks them away, back towards her discarded robe and shirt.

Arty covers her exposed pussy with her hands momentarily, then slowly moves them away cupping them behind her back and allowing you a complete view of her all the way down to her privates. You think the term might be “mounds of Venus” and the comparison to a goddess seems perfectly apt at this moment.

She is completely bald down there, her lips swollen and prominent with a slight pink blush forming on

them as they curve between the small gap between her thighs. Your breath catches for a moment before you manage to speak.

“Arty... you are beautiful. So amazingly sexy. I have never wanted something as bad as you are making me want you right now.”

“That's exactly what you should be saying, Elliot, when your amazing, smart, kind, and horny girlfriend is ready to give herself to you. Good boy. Now lay back some.”

“Should I take off my pants, Arty?”, you ask while shifting so you are in bed with you back propped against the headboard and unconcerned that your erection is in no way hidden from the tiny and nude auburn haired girl who begins to join you in the bed.

“No, I don't think so. Not just yet. You need to play around with your new toy a bit before taking it for a real spin, right. Don't want to break it or get bored with it too fast.”, Arty coos, her tone sultrier than you imagined her capable of, as she sits down in between your spread legs facing the same direction as you are. She is very, very not shy of pressing her bare bottom up against your throbbing cock as she leans against your chest; only a thin layer of cotton separates you from Arty's warm soft pussy at this point.

Almost without thought, your arms wrap around her waist and you feel her back and cute firm ass press harder. Craning your head down, the fruity warm scent of her hair fills your nostrils and your arms and hands pick up on small tremors passing through the girl's body. Before there is time for you to even try and ask Arty why she is shaking, she takes hold of your hands with her own; she leads your scarred left hand upwards to her right breast and guides your free hand downward, across her tight waist and in between her legs.

“Arty, God, Merlin, whoever... you are so warm down there... You really want this, don't you? And here I thought I was dating a nice, proper girl.” you say teasingly while you softly caress her soft, wet mounds. If you cared enough to look over to her discarded panties, you are positive there would be a wet stain in them despite her only having worn them for a dozen minutes at best.

“Wh-what gave it away, Elliot? Ha-haa!” Arty breaths out, her voice breaking a bit at your touch. Her right hand then slides over your own, pressing it harder against her smooth pussy.

“How is it? I-I don't really grow hair down there or some other places so I hope it isn't... weird. One of the few nice things about how I was born; saves time shaving or using the Barber Charm. So I hope its okay... Elliot, your hand feels really good... Have you done this before?”, she asks, turning her head slightly once your hand spreads her soft moist lips and your fingers begin to work against the small nub of her clit.

“N-no. You're my first. Boys talk though and there is a muggle invention called the internet that is *very* informative... just tell me if I am doing something wrong. I don't want to hurt you... and I want this to be special.”

Arty had backed up against you to the point you were basically pressed totally against the headboard of your bed while she breathed heavy and very warmly against your left arm so you slowed the movements of your right hand a bit. Catching her breath, she nuzzled into the crook of the arm wrapped across her chest before speaking again.

“Its fine, boyfriend. Lover... I-ts fine Elliot. You can hurt me... I want you to. Just a bit. So, take your fingers and put them inside. I don't think there shouldn't be any blood. I already dealt with that when a Unicorn let me ride him in third year. I had to go running to Madame Pomfree after I landed bad when he jumped over a fallen tree.”, she assures you with a soft clear voice. Your right-hand stalls for a moment; your lust, the desire to take her becomes tinged with a shade of concern.

“Arty, we don't have to do 'it' right now. I-”, is all you manage to get out before the tiny Hufflepuff bites down on the skin just below your elbow to silence you before raising her head back up.

“No, I want 'it'. Now, here. And I want 'it' to hurt, at least some. Because, as good as you touching me feels, if it hurts, stings... it means I'm not dreaming. That this is real. That you are real, that this is real. It means I am not going to wake up in my bed with most of my friends gone for Christmas and stumble into a cold, empty common room again. So please, do it. Make it real. Please?”

Her teeth are no longer against your arm but you can feel them replaced by something else. A couple of warm, wet drops. Arty shudders some, and her breathing shifts. Her face is hidden but, you understand on an unconscious level, even as her hand tightens against yours, gently coaxing it back into motion and the tips of your middle and ring finger inside her wet and warm cunt.

You discover almost instantly how tight your little Hufflepuff Fury is, and despite her urging, Arty clenches as the first two of your fingers push their way inside her, crying out softly with pain as well as pleasure. You pull them back slightly, and Arty's breath returns, and begin going in and out in, quick but in rhythm. Forcing them back in and out slowly, she begins shifting her hips back and forth in time with your hand and groaning softly as your free hand softly massages her breasts.

"I... don't really put them in when I play with myself... Elliot it feels so, so good. I am really sensitive, but please keep doing it, please... deeper, please, please, please!" Arty says in a low moan which grows in volume.

You can't help yourself after she clamps down once more against your inner arm and begins fingering her warm wet hole as deeply as you can from your position your already painfully hard cock twitching against her ass every time she shudders, when she groans far too loud in both pleasure and pain.

You begin to completely abandon any attempt to be gentle, a darker urge taking hold. A desire to keep her wrapped around you, to make your girlfriend moan, to twitch and force her clit against your palm and your fingers deeper in to her pussy. It is honestly exhilarating to have her wrapped around your literal fingers but ends all too soon.

With a final thrust up to your knuckles, Arty begins grasping and convulsing, her warm hands pushing against the top of your own, pressed between her thighs, forcing your palm harder against her clit, keeping your fingers buried within her.

Not quite screaming, Artemis Pertinger, your first real love starts to come with your fingers held tight inside her for at least a half dozen seconds, writhing in your embrace, forcing your fingers to stay inside. At the end she seems to turn into a wet noodle, panting, though not before you feel a wet gush of her juices against your hand during her final convulsion.

Your tiny auburn haired girlfriend slumps back hard against your chest while you slowly extract your fingers from her and remove your palm, her warm wetness very much covering your hand as well as the portion of bed directly between her legs.

Once she stops gasping and her body is once more in her own control, she turns her head slightly to press it against your own. Cradling your right wrist and lightly holding on to your scared left arm, just below the elbow. In between small greedy breaths, she says.

“That was good... but I think we are going to need more practice. Once a day, at the least when we are back at school. We have the Room of Requirements and there are a couple of secret passageways I know about that are very, very rarely used... now for the rest of this gift, I think you are going to need your pants off. And let me see your hand. Sorry about your sheets, as well...”, she says in a sultry tone.

Arty lifts up and turns herself to face toward you. Your hands are kept loose and at your sides, not wanting to hinder her movements, up until she once again grasps them now below the wrists. She brings your horribly scared left hand gently to one side of her face, pressing it softly to her cheek. To the other, the hand still covered with her juices, she takes it right below her full but delicate lips before speaking, as you are absolutely aware of your cock pressing, almost painfully, against her nude body underneath your pants.

“I'll help you with your sheets later if you want. For now, would you let me just help with your hand. I mean, after all it just did for me, I think it deserves a-a kiss.”

Arty giggles a bit, pressing her mouth to your moist hand before licking up and down your palm and fingers. It is an amazing experience, one that gets more than a small reaction out of the bit of anatomy in your sleeping pants, which are now quite stained by Arty pressing herself against their fabric and your cock leaking in desperate desire to thrust into her dripping cunt.

It is more than just the pure physical desire to hold the small girl whose breasts are firmly held against your own chest as she begins sucking your fingers to finish cleaning up.

You had shown Arty parts of you which you hated. Told her as best you could that by simply being

around you, she would put herself in danger. When you had chosen to give her the full truth, about the thing trapped in your soul, about the abomination who killed Taylor, and what he would do to her if he thought it would help achieve his goals, she had not run. Arty had cried, cried very soft tears and renewed her promise to be with you till the end.

From her cheeks, there had been tears of *concern*. Hot little drops that seemed to be half made of *rage*. At what had happened to you, Linda, Taylor. What had happened to Lily again and again, to the point she had broken and been unable to keep the ghost of an insane, twisted old man from using her body like a puppet.

In the Hogwarts Express and at least once more at your parents' house, she shed her tears for what had been done to your arm, something that couldn't be fixed by muggle medicine or healing magic and that Linda could no longer summon her Patronus. Because the boy who was your first true friend would never see the stars again, aside from when you were with him in your dreams.

Helga had been right to say she was proud of her, Arty and her brother both.

They were both kind, in their own ways. Incredibly resilient. Impossibly loyal. Smart and brave. You were quite fond of snakes but you also had access to the internet. You had seen what badgers could do and there was a tiny one who said she would stand with you till the end. One that had also just finished cleaning your hand and fingers for you.

"Elliot, I think I did a pretty good job, but I didn't want to be greedy, so if you want a tas-", she begins, before you cut her off by bringing your hand to your face and tasting what remained on it.

It tasted like Arty, the part you had sampled every time your lips locked before, along with something new and that you quite enjoyed. You unfortunately don't get to savor the slightly salty and sour taste of Arty's pussy juice for long before she spoke up.

"Elliot, take off your pants. And your shirt. Dry your hand if you need. We are going to fuck now. We are going to do so until I say we can stop. And after we are done, you are going to hold me until I fall asleep.", she says while bringing your right hand away from your face and shifting her body off of

yours.

The look in her beautiful blue eyes was hungry, far more than when you had made-out in the empty class rooms of the school or in small clearings in the less Forbidden parts of the Forbidden Forest. Even as you pulled your shirt off and began shuffling your pants off, you felt a touch of concern. Almost like being cornered by a very excited predatory animal.

“Are you okay, Arty? I don't recall you being quite this aggressive before. I know we both have had a few drinks but...”, you say after tossing your pants away from the bed.

“I want you, Elliot. I really want you. But I was a little scared, so I may have knocked down a little bit of a certain tea from a certain shop I stopped by before we left. And now I really, really need you inside me.”

There is a somewhat manic glimmer in her eyes as she rolls back over against your now bare hips and kisses you so quickly and deeply it takes you by surprise; your body responds without prompting to wrap around her in a tight embrace.

Arty's legs are spread to either side of yours with her hovering over your exposed and rock-hard penis just a few inches away from her vagina and you get a good look at the soft bare flesh between her thighs that is dripping clear fluid along the inside of one of her legs; your heart, which you thought was at its limit, increases its pace so it feels like a small engine in your chest.

“Elliot,” Arty says, looking down with one hand reaching to wrap around the base of your shaft as the other presses against your chest to stabilize her, “Its... big. Bigger than I thought it would be. I didn't think it would be small but... I'll fit it all in. I promise. Help me keep it where I need it though.”

It is enough to make you blush a bit, hearing that you might be a bit much for her to take; you were, based on what you had seen in a dorm full of other boys, pretty average or maybe a bit more if you considered you were the shortest guy in your year. Smiling, you reached down to where her hand was on your penis, embracing it and holding it still as Arty slowly lowered herself down until she could rub her sex against your head.

As slick as you imagined, a muffled groan escaped your lips as she rubbed back and forth against the most sensitive portion of your anatomy, moistening it and finding the exact place and angle she needed before her hips pressed down slowly. Her pussy was so incredibly warm, almost hot, as its folds wrapped around your member, down maybe a third of its length initially before she stopped. Now it was Arty's turn to moan, a little loudly.

“Big... it feels bigger than I thought but I like it, I love your cock... just give me a second.”

Her body raises slightly, before coming down once more, taking another third or so into her, and coming back up and then down again. You had both removed your hands, Arty having taken almost all of your cock, making low vocalizations each time she took in more.

“Is... is it all in, Elliot? Please say it is. I don't know how much more will fit.”, Arty barely manages, both of her hands now pressed against your bare chest.

“Almost, that’s almost all of it I think, Arty. I... I know you can take it. You are amazing, so amazing. Please just a bit more?”

“Okay, I c-can for you. For my love, I can. Here, here I go... !” she tells you, and just allows her hips to fall onto your thighs. With a soft cry, the last bit of your penis fills the blushing Hufflepuff completely, to the point you feel a soft springy wall against the tip once it was in.

“Eek! Ahhhhh, god it feels big. Its good Elliot, fuck it hurts but it is soooo good, being connected to you like this is, it is amazing!”, Arty cries out, slowly rocking her hips back and forth, the ups and sown slowly and slightly.

“Arty, fuck, you are tight! It’s like you are gripping it... I would worry about hurting you too much, but this is too good. Keep going, Arty!”, you beg breathlessly as she humps your raging hard-on, slowly at first but quickly increasing in speed.

“Yeah, it hurts but it is worth it. So completely worth it. Now shut up and let me ride you. And you better not come before I do! I won't stop even if you do!”

“Arty, bit softer, my-”, you start her ass pounding against your hips.

“I said b-be quiet, Elliot! Not my fault your cock feels this good!”

Something takes over at seeing the innocent little Hufflepuff acting like such a slut for your dick and your hand moves on its own, firmly slapping her tiny but full ass. Then again and again. Arty gives a short, high pitch squeak each time but tightens up and seems even more desperate for you to be in her. You stop after a few slaps but you can imagine her ass is a beautiful light pink already and she is smiling wide.

For several long minutes Arty rides your shaft up and down its length and there is the feeling like it is almost going to slip out a few times but it remains planted inside her. Occasionally she stops bouncing up and down to just grind down against it, drawing out the experience and making you want to just grab her and force her back into humping up and down. You start feeling like you are about to hit your limit when the tiny auburn-haired girl suddenly speeds up for several seconds, then comes back down a final time and begins softly screaming in high, unintelligible words.

“Oh god, fuck, yes, yes, yes, thank you thank you... Shooooo goood! Ha, ha, ha...Aughhhhh!”

As she comes for several, several long seconds mounted on top of you and her pussy spasms uncontrollably and squirts a small bit, she takes her hands and locks her fingers with your own. At the end she almost all but collapses against your chest, panting rapidly with your penis still half of the way in her.

Letting go of your hands, Arty instead wraps them around your back and whispers in a hoarse voice.

“Just...ah...give me a second, Elliot. I am still horny, I still want more, and you haven't come yet. It's your turn to do me, lover. Lover, heh heh. My very own.”, she says, head pressed against your upper chest close enough you can smell the fruity shampoo your mom had bought for her to use.

After a few seconds, you can't help yourself anymore and bend your knees, propping Arty's small round ass up and shifting her body into a more comfortable position then being thrusting your hips up and backwards, once more pushing your dick into her soft hole. You hadn't really expected the, well, texture inside her cunt before all this but it was amazing against your lower head.

You began slow at first, holding your girlfriend's body close while she did the same with her arms behind you to give her time to adjust to being fuck instead of doing to fucking but before long your pace increased.

If thinking about your mom wouldn't ruin the moment, you would once more thank her for those dance lessons which had taught you very well how to hold and adjust the back and forth of your hips; as Arty squeaks and her nails bite into your back, you think she would thank Helen as well. Soon you settled into a pattern which seemed to get the best response from the tiny girl holding onto you for dear life.

“Yes, yes more please Elliot it ahh feels good. Keep going please, for Merlin's sake don't stop doing whatever you are doing!”, she moans while squirming in your arms.

“I won't Arty, but you can't come yet. No, you have to ask permission, understand? And you have to ask nicely.”

“Okay, I will, I will Elliot, please I promise, I'll be good! I want it, I want your dick, more, more!”

“That's right Arty. Good girl. You can call me 'sir', until we are done. Do you like that?”, you ask and gently run your hand through her hair. It is exhilarating to feel her shudder and press her lips against your collar bone from what you just said.

“Yes-yes sir. I'll be good, I'll be a good little slut for you... just for you, sir. Y-your little slut..”, Arty whispers, before biting down lightly, then firmly just above your collar.

“Thats right you are mine, Arty. My tiny Hufflepuff whore. You really like Slytherin cock so much? Dirty girl, aren't you.”

“Hmmmph... I am dirty, I am terrible... more, more! Please, Elliot!”, Arty responds firmly and loudly, biting down harder on your skin.

You oblige her lustful demands, even if she didn't ask nicely, by picking the pace up and slamming more forcefully into her pussy. You had felt your cock lightly bottoming out before but now you were actively pushing the back of her vagina back every time, slamming into her cervix forcefully enough she cried out again and again and almost struggled in your embrace.

It doesn't take long before you can feel yourself growing close to climax, however Arty beats you to that point; she wasn't lying about being sensitive down there you had learned. Desperately, she says,

“Ell- sir, I I'm going to come, I'm going to come! Please let me do it, please! I'm sorry, please!”

Gently, you cradle her head to your body, your fingers spread through her soft curly locks.

“No, not yet Arty. You can't come just yet. We are going to do it together, so just hold on. Be a good girl, okay, Arty?”

You don't really get a verbal response besides a few desperate grunts along with her fingers driving harder into your back but you don't feel the distinct spasms from before, so you work to finish up yourself. She only has to hang on for a dozen seconds or so but even that is almost too much towards the end. However before she can begin without you, you feel the pressure spike inside your cock so you press as deep and hard as you can into her.

“You can go Arty; come, do it!”, you tell her firmly, straining some to form words. She begins just as you do, her pussy tightening and convulsing just as you feel your own release. Pressed all the way against the back of her, it takes a moment and a slight adjustment of your hips but then you can feel the spasming flow of warm thick liquid begin shooting into your girlfriend. It lasts several seconds, longer than normal and feels so, so much better to the point you moan from the sensation quite deeply.

Arty's petite body is responding in kind, first tensing up several for several seconds, her nails scratching deep enough you are positive there will be a bit of blood, if there wasn't any already, and then going soft and limp save for her pussy which continues to spasm for several more seconds after your own orgasm had finished.

Both of you are breathing in deeply, heavy breaths of post-climax satisfaction and thankfully her fingers relax enough to no longer be clawing into your back; when she raised her face up from your chest, Arty is still quite pink cheeked and has a small stream of drool on her chin from the right corner of her mouth, her pink and full lips parted slightly in a dumb grin. There is a bit of her saliva on your chest and you are positive now some blood on the sheets behind your back and it is... completely perfect.

Words are failing you at the moment due to you brain buzzing in post orgasm bliss and your body from nose to toes is covered in warm feelings that are hard to completely break down so Arty fills in the silence, her gorgeous blue eyes meeting your own, both sets heavily lidded with bliss.

“I want to stay like this just for a bit. Is that okay, sir? I like the way you make me feel when you are inside so very much. Please? And.. I don't think my legs are working quite right at the moment, so... just hold me. Is that okay?”, Arty asks. As if you could say no to those smiling blue orbs, her soft pretty features.

“Hey, of course, Arty. I don't think I can move much right now either right now, unless a Death Eater kicked down the door or something, haha.”

“Don't jinx it, Elliot. I... don't jinx it sir... hehehe. I'll be okay in a second. Should probably go clean up, change into some long PJs, put up the clothes I wore in. Just, lets enjoy this for a minute. You... you like

being in control, don't you? I'm okay with that, sometimes. If its you.", Arty sighs, relaxing some.

After a small few moments, you can feel the stiffness in your cock begin to wane and your breathing returns to close to normal. Arty reluctantly begins lifting herself off your hips and shifting backwards before there is a soft wet sound from her pulling off of you, followed by a much quieter one. You look down slightly surprised as a large dollop of your sperm and her own juices drops from in-between her legs, onto a portion of the sheets above where she had already squirted from your fingers working her sex over previously.

"Oh, oh god... oh Merlin, I am so sorry sir! Elliot! I-I didn't think there would be that much, I-I'll clean it, let me get a wash rag and towel. I ruined your bed... Oh no.", she says quietly but almost in a panic, exiting the bed. She tosses the pink fluffy house robe on rapidly, and collects her discarded shirt and underwear before continuing.

"I'll be right back, I'll bring something to clean up with, just give me a second!"

You sigh and smile a bit, trying to reassure her.

"Its fine Arty. We can clean up some and as long as I get to them before my mom does, no problem. Don't worry. Though wiping up what we can will help, so, just clean up okay? And yeah some pajama's would be good just in case someone decides to check on us."

"Okay! Will you keep yours off till I get back, though? I can clean you up too. And don't worry about a shirt, please? I really like how your chest and stomach look you know...", she says now wrapped loosely in the robe and about to exit the door.

"Yeah, of course Arty. Of course, *lover*.", says softly giggling. Of all the surprises this year, this was one of the good ones. You half-way thought you would remain a virgin long enough to become an online wizard as well as a real one.

She smiles at that and leaves, giving you a few minutes between the bathroom door opening, a toilet flushing, her and Apollo's door opening and closing to think to yourself.

You can't help but, in those moments, think you hear a soft golf clap from the same place Helga's voice comes from in your head, which you dismiss; you really hope the Founder of house Hufflepuff isn't so much of a pervert to watch you and Arty make love for the first time, though there is *some* evidence in the contrary. For now, she is silent, and you are left with yourself, and the warm afterglow of what just happened. You can't help but glance at the last stain Arty had left on your bed, frowning slightly. She said there shouldn't be any blood, which was true enough, though what was there did have a slight pink tint to it. Arty had said she wanted it to hurt some, that she was okay with some pain if it came with pleasure; you just hope it wasn't too much. People say things in the heat of the moment they don't always mean after all.

None the less, that concern was subsumed by a somewhat dark satisfaction of having made Arty your own.

At times, some of your House's darker roots tended to seep through you had discovered.

Your reflections are interrupted when your tiny Hufflepuff lover enters and quickly locks the door behind her.

She is still in her pink house coat, though you notice she now has on a pair of soft sleeping pants and is holding a towel and a few damp rags.

“Will you sit up, Elliot? Ill clean you then try the bed. I brought a towel, so we could put it over them and lay down together, okay?”

Sitting on the edge of your bed, still pants less, you expected her to start with the warm wash cloth, but instead she sets them next to you, bending down to wrap a couple of fingers around the base of your semi-soft penis. Arty then places it softly in her mouth and begins to suck, using her tongue to work up and down the rapidly hardening shaft, looking up at you expectantly. It is almost too much, given how sensitive you are after having been in her for so long just before but you manage with only

a few high-pitched sighs; somewhat thankfully it doesn't last long. Your beautiful girlfriend pulls her head back, popping your cock out of her mouth and licks her lips, then finishes up with a warm damp wash cloth to clean the remained of both of your juices off.

"I'll dab the bed, so you can put your pants on now, sir. Then...will you sleep with me, just for a bit? I'll be good, I promise. Just-just keep your shirt off, okay?", Arty says meekly.

You quickly oblige and start redressing while she does what she can and then puts the towel down. Scanning up towards the head of the bed, Arty's voice interrupts you fighting to don your pants with a soft "Eep!"

"I made you bleed! Oh no, I am so sorry. I am sorry Elliot! Is your back okay? I can clean it to! I didn't mean to hurt you...stupid Arty. Can't even control yourself..."

"Its okay. Its fine Arty. It felt kind of good, knowing you were enjoying it so much... you don't have to keep calling me "sir" you know. We were just having fun doing...that. Part of it. The thing we did. Sex.", you quickly mumble turning around. Arty seems a bit distressed, though your words seem to calm her.

"O-okay. I'm sorry. I am just...I don't want this to be bad. For you. I want it to be good. I love you, I adore you so much, I don't want to ruin it. And I like calling you "sir", Elliot. A bit at least. Maybe sometimes? I know you like it too.", she says sheepishly. Some part of you is screaming that something is wrong, that this isn't the fierce, flirty witch you know. But another part doesn't want to ruin this either.

People are different. You both had sex for the first time, you can only assume her emotions are swirling as much as your own and you don't want to disappoint *her*. So you move past her, turning off the ceiling light, and lay back against the sheets and towel Arty had laid out over the damp spots in the center of your bed.

"Its fine, Arty. If you like it for now, you can. And don't worry. We are fine. You are fine. This? That? *That* was great. Here. I'll set my alarm for a couple of hours before breakfast. We probably need to get Apollo out of the recliner too. Come by me and lay down.", you say, coaxing her over. She nods softly,

undoes her robe, her breasts still bare and joins you, her head resting on the right side of your chest and arm. You run your hand, the terribly scared one that Arty had still told you she still loved, through her disheveled red-brown hair, scratching her scalp lightly and eliciting a soft giggle before a certain conversation from a few days earlier comes unbidden to your mind.

“Apollo is fine you know. Could sleep on bricks and wake up full of vigor. Well, vigor by Apollo standards. Don't know how many times I have had to drag him to the boy's dorm when he passed out in the common room, heh.”, she says lightly.

As funny as it is that her brother could probably sleep standing up, you should probably ask an awkward question, just to be safe.

“Arty, beautiful, are you on an... anti-pregnancy potion? We, I- we didn't use any muggle protection.”

“Why would I use one of those? I told you I want children. A lot of them. And might as well get started early if I want to see any get diplomas. Have you thought about boys' names and girls?”, she says with a soft trilling laugh.

“Arty! Wh- we're still students!”, you respond slightly alarmed, a cool pit forming in your stomach even as your eyes widen into dinner plates.

“Hahaha! Don't worry, Elliot. I was joking; I want them, a lot and I want you to be the one who gives them to me, but I'm not *that* crazy. I'm only 15 and Apollo would probably kill you, literally, if I got pregnant right now. I've been taking the potions for a couple of weeks now. Just in case. And, you know, with how I am, I don't know if I could live with myself if I knew they were going to have bury me before they even graduated... I don't even know for sure I can have them, with how my body is. If they would be healthy if I could.”, her warm joking tone cools towards the end, becoming meek and she hugs you tighter.

You got it. Dreams that couldn't be. This wonderful girl was probably going to die by the time she was 35. Maybe 40 with luck. Through no fault of her own, from a quirk of being born with a twin, her life would end before a muggle's would have even 200 years before. It was so unfair, so cruel your

stomach had almost turned when she had first told you. The embers had been rekindled; to find places of Ancient Power became a blazing bonfire that night on the 7th floor. You knew Arty didn't need you to protect her, she was strong, and fearless but once more that emotion had come to color your thoughts.

"I am going to fix it. I am going to give you the life you deserve and we are going to live forever. Have as many kids as you want. They are all going to be healthy and live a long, long time, Arty. I never told you exactly what I saw in the Mirror, did I? Along with Taylor being back, with Linda being happy once more? I saw us celebrating our birthdays."

"Our birthdays aren't *that* close together, Elliot..."

"Well after 1000 years 5 days starts to make a lot less difference.", you say rubbing her back gently.

"What! I-"

"That's what I saw. My best friends being hale and healthy. A very, *very* large chocolate cake with four silly muggle candles that spelled out 1000. And yes, the cake had to be quite large due to the few dozen people there with button noses, redish-brown hair, a few freckles... our kids and their kids, and so on. I am pretty sure I saw Apollo looking over them like a hawk, because there are going to be a whole lot of people who look a lot like you before we are done. I do believe there were quite a few people who were tall, had a streak of your brother's blond hair or his eyes around as well. A somewhat salty looking witch who was almost physical attached to Apollo at his side.", you say with a slight smile, holding the small girl close.

Arty looks up, almost wide eyed, before she scrunched the up some.

"I- please don't tell me lies. I want that so bad it hurts, Elliot. To keep being with you... to have that happiness... to meet Taylor again. See Linda smile wide. Have a few nieces and nephews."

"I know you are going to find it, immortality. I never had a single doubt. But if its in 50 years? I-I don't want to hurt you Elliot. Dreams, they are cruel things. Hurting you isn't something I could stand. So, if it doesn't happen, please promise me you will find another. That you won't spend forever alone just because of me, please!"

"Stop it, Arty! I told you, if it is ten years or one hundred or a thousand, I will still want you. So please, stop.", you say, a bit more forcefully than you intended in order to get the word past the tightness in your throat.

"Agh, I didn't mean to make you mad. I'm sorry, I'm really sorry Elliot. Please don't let me go, I won't talk about it anymore, okay? Is that okay?", she says and almost curls in on herself. Afraid. Her movement, the tone of her voice causes you to immediately you turn your bodies so she is facing towards you, head held down so all you can see is the top of her hair while she breaths against your chest. One more, stronger this time, you feel something is *not* right.

"Arty, what is it? Is something wrong? I'm sorry. It's okay, Arty. I didn't hurt you too much or scare you, did I? It wasn't too much at once, was it? Please talk to me, I'm starting to get worried. It's okay I wasn't angry I am just concerned, okay?", you say trying to sooth the small girl.

Curled up, pressed against your chest, Arty says in a soft sad mumble,

"No, no, no! Thats worse. I made him worry! I was bad. He is going to be mad, I made him worry. Dumb Arty, stupid girl, dumb slut, please no..."

She looks up, voice shaking to meet your eyes. Her own seem misty and she has a forced smile on.

"It's okay. Its fine Elliot. You can hurt me if you want, I deserve it. I need it because I am a naughty, filthy, useless girl. I shouldn't have ruined this. You can hurt me, okay? W-was it good? The sex? I'll try and do better next time, I promise.", Arty says before suddenly locking lips with you, desperately pushing them against you, even as you try and pull away, to break the embrace. When you do, she looks hurt and in a panic.

“Do you not want it? I'm sorry I'll do better! You can do what you want, even if I start saying no or struggle some, its fine, I promise. You can take me whenever you want, when I don't want it or when I'm asleep or however. I won't tell anyone. You...you can hit me. Slap me. Anything, just please don't leave bruises, Apollo can't know, okay Elliot? Whatever you want, just don't go. I don't want to be alone again after finding you, I don't want my brother to lose his best friend...”, Arty says desperate in the worst way and with tears flowing from the corners of her eyes. It feels like she is holding on to you for dear life

You feel a small part of your heart break.

You honestly don't know what to do. Arty had gone from flirty and lovey to this in less time than it would take to watch a dumb TV drama. She was brave, kind, clever, all that and more. But she was broken, just as badly as her brother.

Simply because her cracks were hidden better didn't mean they weren't there; she just hid them well. Years of abuse and she still smiled? Maybe you were stupid for thinking of her like you had been. You won't pity her; you won't because you know Arty would hate it if you did. You don't know how to fix this, this episode brought out by her first real consensual sexual experience, alcohol, and dubious aphrodisiac tea. You still try.

“Shh...shh, Arty. Its fine. I love you. I'm not going to...”take” you unless you want it. I'm not going to hit you. I'm not going to leave you. You don't need to do anything to make me *not* leave. I want to be here, as long as you want me here... Just breath for me okay. Just call me Elliot. Can you do that?”, you softly whisper.

“It hurts, Elliot... I'm scared. I-I can't take you leaving. I can't think about dying, about leaving you and you leaving me because...I'm not good enough. I probably can't even give you those children you want! So... you can have whatever else you want... Its fine... I-I,” Arty manages to get out before devolving into quite sobs. You do what you can for a few minutes to just cradle her in your arms, rocking her back and forth softly before speaking.

"I think, I think it would be better for both of us right now to put on the rest of our clothes. I'll get you a shirt of mine so you don't have to go to your room. Just stay there, okay?"

"You aren't leaving, are you? You aren't mad? You promise?"

"I'm not going anywhere. I love you, okay. Just going to my closet to get you something. I promise."

Arty had managed to come to a sitting position and was now curled up in your blankets, smaller looking than she had even seemed even when you found her after the dementor so you hurry, picking a large white tee for her and recovering your own shirt from the floor. After dressing yourself, you come to her shaking form, helping her shivering arms into the tee and pulling over her head. Leaning down you plant a soft kiss, not on her lips but her forehead. You rejoin her in bed and stay silent, waiting for Arty to speak first, holding her as gently as you can as her breathing slows and normalizes.

"When, me and Apollo were young. It was bad, Elliot. Really bad. Apollo says it was okay for a while, but the first things I remember... there was yelling. Things breaking. Apollo getting hit. Me crying. Things just got worse. Getting hurt, going hungry. Being shouted at, told how horrible we were. Looking at my brother and seeing bruises, seeing him go further into his shell to stop the pain. Then, then when I was bigger, getting touched. Having to change in front of him. Sleeping in the same bed. I tried not to cry. I really did but I couldn't help it sometimes. And I was told, if I didn't stop it, if I said anything we would be kicked out. When Apollo caught him, it wasn't the first time. I never told him. I am scared. I don't want to go back; I don't want you to leave. Please -", Arty softly croaks out before you interrupt.

"No. Do not say you are sorry. It wasn't your fault, yours or Apollo's. It was a horrible, awful person who did that to you. He took something from you and you can't help that. Life took something it shouldn't have. You had a terrible situation... I am so, so sorry. But I will never ever abandon you. You or Apollo. I'll never let it happen to you again. Okay? You are safe. You don't have to do a thing other than be you if you want me here. If you ever need a place to stay, you can always come to my parent's house. And if you ever don't want me around, all you have to do is say it. I hope you don't but if you do, I am not going to hurt or manipulate you to make you stay. I am sorry; do you need me to stop touching you? Do you just want to sleep up here and I will take the couch? The door locks and we lost

the key years ago. I can go grab your wand to. I love you, Arty. You love me too, right? ”

“I- yes. I really do, Elliot.”, she says with a snuffle.

“Then trust me. You are perfect. I want you, but I won't take you like that, not without your consent. I will only hurt you as much as you want, if we are playing around in bed, want to try something different. I will be there if you need me. Now and a hundred years from then. And when you want to talk, if you want to talk, about what happened, I *will* listen.”

“Thank, thank you. I love you. Thank you so, so much... There is something wrong with me... I know there is. But, can we? Do you think we can sleep a bit? Together? I feel really, exceptionally tired right now. Thank you, thank you, thank you...” she says with a slight sob.

You agree, turning off the light on the nightstand and holding each other in the soft stillness of the snowy winter night.

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The soft ring of your mostly silenced alarm clock greets you far, far too soon. Arty had fallen asleep quite fast being seemingly drained by her brief panic attack, but you had been unable to rest for quite some time. Thoughts of how to help her, how to put the broken parts back into place raced through your head even as your beautiful girlfriend softly snored on your chest. You couldn't come up with much, to your great frustration. Counselling, for her and Apollo were at the top of the list. If they were ever in the system, they had to have NHS numbers. If they were not, well, your mom knew a few private, cash only therapists. And worst case, you are positive Potter has a few fake Ids hidden in his closet for undercover operations. Besides that, just being there. Maybe some light roleplay in the future could help; you had vaguely heard of exposure therapy but not much. Maybe Linda would know more.

Regardless that was a problem for another day. Right now, you needed to start getting someone who was from everything you had seen not a morning person up so you could get her and her brother back to their room before your parents got up. Gently you shake Arty's shoulder, harder and harder while whispering in her ear until she shows signs of life again.

“Huh, huh? What time ish it? On no! Am I going to be late for Charms again! Ugh... Eeeep!”

She slowly comes to mumbling before suddenly trying to bolt out of the bed. You end up holding her back by her chest and thigh until she turns enough to look at you.

“Oh...Elliot. What are you doing in my dorm?”, Arty slurs out, wiping a bit of drool from her chin.

“We aren't at Hogwarts, Arty. Remember? We are at my parents' house. My bedroom. And we have about an hour and 45 minutes to get you and Apollo into your room before my mom wakes up, alright.”, you say slowly.

“Oh. OH! Yeah, no I'm sorry just... not used to being somewhere else. Other night I walked into a wall because that was where the door to our lavatory is in my dorm. Okay, I'm good. Let's drag my brother up to our room.”

She seemed to perk up a bit quicker than you had seen before, at least.

“Really quick, Arty. Do you, would... you like to talk about last night. It kind of scared me to see you like that. It was a bit fun at first while we were having sex but then it scared me, how you were after. I've never seen you act that way.”, is all you manage to get out, softly.

Arty's tired smile drops at that and she begins to look almost guilty. Head down she comes in and wraps her arms around your waist in a very non-sensual embrace.

“I'm sorry. Really sorry. It's embarrassing. I know some was the alcohol and *other* things but still... that's part of me. I think... I think something is broken inside me and I can't even tell what. And I am terrified to lose you, for you to leave. Of a lot of things, really. Thank you for calming me down. For not doing something when I was like that. I would have let you. Do what you wanted. I don't think...that I deserve you. To be happy. Elliot...”

Her breathing isn't rapid and irregular like before, thankfully, but there is a deep pain in her voice. You wrap your own arms softly behind her and begin.

"Arty, we are all broken. And *you* do not run from that fear or pain. Sometimes it will win out but... I know you are not the kind of person to give in. It's okay. And I don't want to leave, you are beautiful and amazing and-", is all you get before she cuts you off.

"Amalia is prettier than me and smarter. She has such gorgeous hair too. You've known Linda for years; she is so confident, strong, gorgeous. She knows you so much better than I do. Even Riley, she is adventurous, brave, driven. You know her mom was voted best looking in Hogwarts 2 years in a row? And they have some money, at least. Half the 5th year Hufflepuff girls have a picture from your 1st battle in their bunks, from right after you beat the last of my brother's soldiers, fire rising behind you, those wonderful eyes of yours looking like steel. I, just don't feel like I am enough sometimes... so I feel like I am going to lose you. That I deserve to. That the clock is going to strike midnight and this will end; my dress will disappear and there won't be a glass slipper left behind. That you shouldn't even want to track down who left it, all that is left is a dumb shoe. Elliot... I don't want it to end.", Arty, says sniffing some.

"I would track you down even if there wasn't a glass shoe for me to work from. Again and again."

"Please don't make me cry again Elliot... the worst part is I believe you."

"Arty... I don't care about the other Hufflepuffs and some crushes; you are the only one I want. The others? They are my friends, that is it. And Linda... it is going to be a long time before she can even move past Taylor. I promise, pinky swear; I am not going anywhere. I love *you*. You and you alone with this type of love. So let's go get your brother packed up before trying to get a couple more hours of rest."

"Okay. And, not now, but I do want to talk about... stuff, if that's alright. Not now but sometime. Thanks. My love. *My Lord Hallaster*, heh." she says, wiping her eyes and perking up.

"Your Lord Hallaster forever, Arty."

The two of you head down stairs into the TV room to find Apollo still sleeping like the dead, a small lamp still on and a few coals still crackling in the fireplace. Covered in a blanket up to his chin and with his chest barely rising, he truly looks like he might have gone onto next great adventure, until Arty lightly shoves his shoulder and says his name. The change is immediate.

Apollo sits straight up, eyes fully open, almost scanning for threats.

"Arty. Is something wrong? Wait, where am I? Oh, Elliot. Hi.", he says in a deadpan.

"No, you big dolt, everything is fine. You fell asleep downstairs. Elliot got me up to help get you to bed. Breakfast is in a few hours so come on. Go get changed and I will be in there in a minute. Just going to say good, well, morning to Elliot before I lay back down.", Arty says with practiced command of her brother.

"Oh. Sure. Wondered why I was dreaming it was cold. Thanks Arty. Thank you...Elliot.", he says before folding the quilt he was under up and softly ascending the stairs.

You and Arty trail behind him some but stop at the stairs. She comes in and plants a full, deep kiss on your lips, standing on her tip toes and pulling you down a touch by the neck and holds it for several seconds.

"Thank you. Thank you for the wonderful Christmas. For helping Apollo out the other day. For putting up with your crazy, fucked up girlfriend. I have the best man in the world as my lover. I really couldn't ask for more. Now get some sleep okay?"

"Yeah, Arty, I will. And thank you. For being more than I could have ever asked for. Good night."

And with that, you both return to your respective rooms to try and squeeze a bit more rest from the night.

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You are the first to get back up, your mom rapping against your door and asking for your help to start fixing breakfast, which you reluctantly agree to. You toss the towel you had slept over deeper into the covers and cover your stained sheets with the duvet; hopefully you would get a chance to wash them and change them out when your mom ran out for some errand later on. Regardless, you marched downstairs, dark circles under your eyes and Arty's bite marks concealed by quick change into a collared PJ top. Your mom is waiting at the table a mug of coffee in front of her and one waiting for you as well. Sitting down and taking a sip, you appreciate that she knows your tastes, even if you don't drink java terribly often. 2 sugars, 2 creams. Perfection. As you set the cup down, she spoke at last.

"So... have fun last night?"

"Wh-what? Yeah, you know I love Christmas game night!"

"Yes. That is obviously what I meant, Elliot. I guess I don't have to worry about grandkids for now, but you might want to ask that wonderful girl to keep it down a bit. Luckily, your father and her brother both sleep like logs but still," your mom says in a tired but taunting tone. You meanwhile clap both hands over your cheeks and eyes.

"I do think I heard some crying though, and not the good kind. Did you make that sweet girl sad, Elliot? You know I do not approve of you making girls cry unless you are besting them in a competition.", she continues.

"I-it was just a bit much for her, mom. I-I think I might try and figure out how to get her...her and Apollo both, into some muggle counseling. Maybe this summer.", you sigh.

"I see. Well until then, just do what you can for them. You are a good person, Elliot. But on another note, a late Christmas present.", the dark-haired older woman says, rising up and going to a cupboard, before handing you a box with a small bow embossed on the packaging.

“Just in-case the two of you want to try some... alternative options. Much less messy with these. Fewer stains too.”

In your hand is a value sized box of condoms that promise maximum sensation and best fit. Because your mom thinks you might want to fuck your petite girlfriend in the ass or not have wash the sheets or something.

You wonder if you could use embarrassment to cast Avada Kedavra if you pointed the wand at your head right now.

From a deep part of your soul, you can distinctly hear the warm, loud laughter of a thousand-year-old ghost, the rustle of grass and leaves as she rolls back and forth on top of them.