

Harry set the book down, eyes wide. That was... quite the story.

It was familiar to him, of course. He'd read the Tales of Beedle the Bard, after seeing so many copies of the book in the Peverell family vault. He knew the Tale of the Three Brothers — altered, sanitised to become a children's story. Had Beedle been a Peverell? Or merely spoken to one, thinking it a fanciful tale?

To think that the Hallows were real... a sick sense of clarity curled within Harry, icy and sharp. His cloak, handed down from father to son — making him invisible to even Dumbledore's eye. The true Invisibility Cloak.

Dumbledore's wand, rumoured to be won in the battle with Grindelwald himself.

He flipped to the front of the book, to the family tree, following generation after generation down from Cadmus Peverell all the way down, eventually marrying into the Gaunt family — culminating at one Tom Marvolo Riddle, Jr.

The ring horcrux, the one Dumbledore had been so obsessed with, had almost died over. Snape had said there was a stone set in it, hadn't he?

A wand, a stone, a cloak. Three Hallows — all now in Dumbledore's grasp. Harry's blood ran cold.

Was he truly the Master of Death, now? If so, what did that mean for the future? What power would that give him?

And why hadn't he used it against Harry while he had him?

Unless it took more than just the Hallows. A spell, or a ritual. The book just said that the person who united the Hallows would *know what to do with them*.

Harry had promised Ceri he wouldn't stay up all night reading. But even when the book was returned to Seren Du by the elf, Harry lay there for a long time, staring at the crimson drapes above him, mind full of all the horrible things that could come from Dumbledore having access to the power of Death itself.

Sleep did not come easy, that night.

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Sirius had to hand it to old Xeno Lovegood — he might be mad as a box of frogs, but he was a brave bugger.

The *Quibbler's* final issue had arrived in the talons of every owl they could afford, printed as many times over as the printing press could handle. Copies spread far and wide, through the UK and beyond — to European magical newspapers, telling them the sordid truth of Albus Dumbledore and the lengths he would go to just to remain a hero in the eyes of the world.

Since then, Sirius could hardly keep up with all the requests for sanctuary. The Pottery was full to bursting, and the other safe Black properties close to the same. Malfoy Manor held