

from beyond. Death granted his wish, in the form of a stone from the riverbank.

The youngest brother, still shaken from his experience, merely asked for a way to avoid such a traumatic thing happening again — he asked for something that would let him leave, and stop Death from following. So Death granted his wish, too, and gave the brother a cloak torn from the fabric of his own. A cloak that would make him invisible to all — even Death.

Harry was enraptured as he read about the power-hungry eldest brother killing his enemy, bragging about his unbeatable wand and then being killed for it that very night. About the arrogant second brother, who went mad in front of the shade of the girl he had once loved, unable to fully breach the gap between life and death — except by joining her at his own hand.

And about the third brother, who avoided Death using his cloak, until he reached a grand old age. Only then did he pass the cloak down to his son, and greet Death willingly.

And only then did he learn the truth of the *boons* Death had offered.

It seemed, in rescuing their younger brother, the Peverell boys had tied all three of their magics to Death himself, sacrificing part of it for the life of their brother. Death became the head of the family, in a sense — the brothers had no one left but each other. So in those boons, Death left enough of his own magic to strengthen his connection to the Peverell boys, and their offspring. He had always known how things would play out, he told the third brother — but he'd been waiting for such an opportunity for a very long time.

With those three objects now in the world — the stone and the cloak passed down through the family, the wand leaving a trail of death and destruction behind it — Death's magic could spread further, grow stronger, *understand* the strange thing called humanity better. The Peverells would always have an... *affinity* for death, thanks to their ancestors' works.

And one day, so Death told the third brother, a person would come along who could unite all three objects — all of Death's Hallows — and the cycle would be complete. That person would have Death's power at their fingertips. That person would have *earned* it, Death insisted. That person would know what to do with it.

But Death did not tell the third brother what would happen when that time came. He only sounded far, far too pleased about the outcome.

At the very end of the story, there was a warning.

*Our family has been Changed by our connection with Death. We are followed by Him in our every waking moment. Many a Peverell has greeted Him far too soon.*

*Only a Peverell can truly understand the power of the Hallows. This bloodline has been tasked with the solemn duty of keeping the Hallows safe and protected and apart from one another. To betray their knowledge is to betray the family — to seek their union is to seek only Death. This is our family's power, our curse — we are friends of Death, but Death is not always a friend to us in return. Be wary of the Hallows, and teach your children the same. Such power does not come without a price.*