

Fate's Dilemma

Standard Disclaimer:

"What's this?" asked Alyx.

Bob looked up from plugging in the new story. "Do you remember that blurb I wrote a long time ago about Harry and Fate?"

"Yeeeahh," came the cautious reply.

"Well I though it could use a little polishing and altering. Besides, this was a bit of a plot bunny that wouldn't let go."

Alyx sighed. "I know what you mean, why the other day I had one that bit me on the..."

Bob leaped to his feet and put his hand over her mouth. "That was me that was doing the biting," he hissed in her ear. "Remember?"

Alyx nodded and he removed his hand from her mouth. "Sorry about that, I keep forgetting that this is supposed to be family friendly."

"Don't forget it! We don't need another visit from the CENSORS," Bob said with a shudder. The last visit resulted in the confiscation of two Llamas, a Saint Bernard, a jello filled hot tub and a lifetime subscription to the playboy channel. All the necessary things for a needed to provide inspiration for a pair of fan fiction authors.

Alyx looked slyly at Bob and turned to the audience. "Because this is family friendly fan fiction, I have to tell you that we don't own Harry Potter. Harry Potter and the potterverse belong to the corporation of ghost writers that picked up the storyline after book five and have attempted to continue JKR's work following her tragic demise at the hands of a rabid midget."

"What!" screeched Bob.

"Well it's true, we read about it in the Quibbler," Alyx said smugly. "Besides, what are you complaining about, I didn't mention that you like to tie me up, nor did I mention my enjoyment of power tools and..."

Bob stood and placed some duct tape over Alyx's mouth. "Erm, excuse us folks while we discuss the need to keep some things private. Please enjoy this little short, entitled Fate's Dilemma."

As Alyx walked off the stage Bob snickered and held up a sign that read, "Alan Rickman and Snape suck!"

"I saw that!" called Alyx.

"Oh bugger," Bob muttered, then he followed her from the stage.

Fate's Dilemma

"Argh!" Moirae grunted in annoyance. She paced in her office and ignored the gorgeous view of Fifth Avenue at night.

She was in the corner penthouse of Celestial Influences Inc, which owned the fifty five story skyscraper. Few people knew of the organization, and fewer still knew of it's real purpose.

Moirae, like her counterparts, was an executive member of the company.

Moirae wasn't even her name. It was merely something given to her by an old Greek she'd once been fond of. For some odd reason, he thought there were three aspects of Fate, and she'd been too polite to correct him. The embodiment of Fate had always been one.

That the old Greek had lived 1400 years ago meant little to her, nor had his odd notions. It was just a name she liked, just as she preferred assuming the female form.

"Dammit, dammit, dammit," she muttered as she paced.

"That's not helping matters," Mortuse said from the doorway.

Moirae glanced up at him and frowned. "You know this is partially your fault!" she said with a growl.

Mortuse straightened and looked surprised. "Me? How do you figure that? What did I do?"

"Yes, you," she spat. "You had to enjoy those Egyptians so much you let them discover the secrets of soul magic! We wouldn't be in this situation if it weren't for you."

Another figure appeared in the door and shoved Mortuse into the office. "Enough. This fighting is pointless," Kronos said. "We have a problem, and if we don't fix it, we're looking at a quantum flux that will disrupt the plan! You know what happened the last time there was a flux!"

The other two shuddered and recalled their creation. George had been extremely pissed off and had eliminated the Incarnations who'd caused the problem, along with 98% of the species on the planet. Homo Saurian never had a chance to walk upon the Earth. And worse, the new Incarnations he'd raised had been given a planet populated with tiny rodents and told to do something with it to make it conform to the plan!

They were still behind schedule!

Mortuse collapsed into a chair. "Man, I picked the wrong profession," he muttered.

Kronos snorted. "Like you, or any of us, had a choice? We all did what George wanted."

"So, what do we do?" whined Moirae. "We have very little time. According to the skein, there's less than 10 million years before the plan unravels. If George comes back from his vacation and sees what has happened, he's liable to start all over once more!"

All three shuddered. The Earth had gotten off lucky the last time, as George had a fondness for the small blue sphere. Cassiopeia A hadn't been so lucky. George had caused the star to explode nearly a 1000 years ago as part of his plan to beautifying the cosmos. That three different intelligent species had been destroyed had not been a problem. According to the plan, it was simply their time.

Kronos turned to Moirae. "Have you tried talking to those involved?"

Moirae stared at him in dismay. "And violate the cardinal rule?"

"Oh, please. You know as well as I do that we violate those rules all the time. Besides, this is clearly a class five emergency."

"I don't know," she said doubtfully. "I mean, this is a pretty big step. I know I've broken a rule or two in the past, but this is a cardinal rule, for George's sake!"

Mortuse stood. "Well, in that case, I'll call in the others."

"No!" shouted Moirae. "I'll talk to them. There is no need to form a conclave over a minor disagreement."

"Minor Disagreement?" echoed Kronos in dismay. "You just told us the skein unravels in 10 million years and you think it's the result of a minor disagreement? No, I think this has gone on for too long. We three will talk to them."

"All of us?" exclaimed Mortuse.

"Knock it off, Mortie," snapped Kronos. "You know you're as responsible for this mess as the rest of us. Face it, Immortals, we blew it big time. If George comes home and finds out how badly we messed up, we'll all be out of jobs."

Moirae hid a smile. With all three of them involved, there would be plenty of blame to spread around if George got angry.

Kronos gestured and Moirae's office altered into a fine conference room with a mahogany table and plush leather seats.

"Do you mind?" Moirae said acidly.

Kronos shrugged. "We have to meet with them somewhere, so why not here? Don't worry, I should be able to put most of your office back the way it was."

"Most," Mortuse said with a snicker. When Moirae shot him a glare, he shrank back.

Kronos looked around with satisfaction, then turned to Moirae. "Well, you know them. Summon the principles so we can get this fixed!"

She scowled at him and gestured with a hand.

Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore appeared.

Harry looked around and his expression turned thunderous.

"If you would all take a seat, we can get this going," Kronos said amicably.

Dumbledore nodded, sure that these people were here to help set things straight.

"This isn't going to work," Harry said angrily. "Moirae already told me she can't send me back unless I'm willing, and I'm not willing."

Kronos and Mortuse turned to Moirae with expressions of astonishment.

"So much for breaking cardinal rules," Mortuse muttered.

Moirae looked down at the table and refused to meet their stares.

"So, you have talked with Harry?" pressed Kronos.

"Until I was blue in the face," she replied, as she looked up at him. "I even showed him what the future could be like and he still wouldn't listen to me."

"That's because I refuse to be your bitch any longer... bitch," Harry spat.

"Now, Harry, mind your manners," Dumbledore said, his eyes twinkling.

"Stuff it, goat lover. If Snape hadn't punched your ticket, I'd want to do you myself!"

"No, no. They only proved Aberforth was guilty. There was no proof I was involved," Dumbledore stated.

Everyone turned to look at him in astonishment.

Mortuse rubbed his temples painfully. "Oh, the headache. You do know there's no medicine an Incarnation can take for a headache, don't you?" he whined.

"Let's hope the pain kills you, then," Harry replied, then turned back to glare at Dumbledore.

"He can't die, Harry," Kronos replied. "He *is* Death."

Harry shrugged. "Sucks to be him then, I guess."

"Harry, please," Kronos said placatingly, then he gestured to a chair.

Shrugging, Harry chose a chair as far apart from the others as he could manage and sat down.

Kronos smiled weakly and nodded in gratitude to him. "We called you both here today because we have a problem. If it's not resolved, the results will be...well, things will get really bad."

Dumbledore nodded sagely and twinkled at everyone.

"Bad for you, perhaps," Harry retorted with a snort, "I'm already dead. Been dead ever since Voldemort hit me with his killing curse. I'm happy I'm dead, I finally get to meet my parents and can be with Sirius again. You can't do anything else to me."

"Wait!" Mortuse said, "If we have to do this, we need all of the representatives!"

With a small gesture, another figure appeared, although it seemed to be in the form of a badly deformed small toddler.

"Is that?" gasped Moirae.

"Yep. All of the soul fragments we have so far from Voldemort. Granted, it's not exactly coherent at the moment, but he should be here."

"Buh, buh, buh," muttered the miniature Voldemort as he drooled on himself.

Harry smiled for the first time since his arrival. "I like it! It sort of looks like Dumbledore, don't you think?"

Dumbledore shot Harry a reproachful glance.

Mortuse stared at the mutant toddler, who had crawled into a corner and was currently banging his head against the wall. "You know..."

"No," Moirae said firmly. "He's not related to Dumbledore, no matter how much he looks or acts like him."

Dumbledore blinked and appeared hurt.

Harry chuckled and watched Voldemort attempt to dig his way out of the office, using his head as a shovel.

"It's an improvement!" Harry said brightly.

"Can we please get back to the topic at hand?" moaned Moirae.

"With a moan like that, I bet she's really hot in the sack," muttered Harry.

"You have no idea," Mortuse replied with a snicker.

Kronos gave his fellow Incarnations a disgusted look. Since he lived his life backwards, some aspects of the human existence were denied to him. What woman wanted to have sex with a man who started by ending?

"Look, it's really simple," Harry said. "You fucked up and let Dumbledore run things. He, in turn, messed things up even more. And you expect me to go back to the living world to fix things? Wrongo, boys and girls. I did my job and vanquished Voldemort back in 1981. If you three had properly interpreted the prophecy in the first place, I wouldn't be here."

Harry pointed to Voldemort in the corner. "And neither would dribble cup over there."

Voldemort bounced his head against the wall several times to signal his agreement with Harry's statement.

Mortuse blinked and looked at the other two. "You know, he has a point. We've been assuming that convincing Harry to go back is the only solution to this problem. What if we backed things up and picked another time to address the problem. Say, an earlier time? And send someone else back; like Dumbledore?"

"Wait a minute!" protested Kronos. "Now we're getting into my territory and I'm not about to start messing around with time unless it's really important. If Harry returns, he returns to the present. Sending someone else back could further disrupt the plan!"

"And a quantum flux in the plan isn't important? Or how about George coming back and atomizing you to create a new Kronos?" Moirae asked.

"George?" asked Harry.

Kronos sighed. "Well, you would call him God, but he likes the name George. All his friends call him that."

Mortuse leaned closer to Harry, "When we have our semi epoch barbecue, he gets smashed and lets us call him Georgie," he said quietly. "At the last barbecue, he got totally fershnickered and ended up causing two galaxies to collide, just to provide us with a bit of a fireworks show."

Harry's eyes widened. He was having difficulty picturing an all powerful God named George. It didn't help that one of the few books he remembered from his early childhood concerned a curious monkey with the same name.

Frowning at that thought, he leaned toward Mortuse. "He's not a monkey, is he?"

Mortuse blinked. "Well, he is God. He could be anything he wanted, I suppose. We all had a laugh the time he tried being a Platypus. I asked him about it once, and all he could say was he was feeling creative when he made them."

Kronos looked at the two and sighed. This wasn't going as well as he had hoped!

"I don't believe going back to an earlier time is a good idea," Dumbledore said softly. "It's for the greater good that Harry return to the world and take care of Voldemort now."

Harry looked from Mortuse to Moirae. "I'll do it, if you bring both of us back to life and let me repeatedly kill this fucker over and over again."

"Harry!" Dumbledore admonished. "You must learn to control your baser tendencies."

"And you must learn to stop sticking your nose into other people's lives, you wanker. You ruined my life, all for a world that deserved to be destroyed. There is not a single redeeming feature of the wizarding world. Not one," Harry growled.

"What about Miss Weasley?" asked Dumbledore. "I know she means something to you."

"Meant. She *meant* something to me. A year ago. And even then it was just hormones. Now? No way, Jose. Moirae showed me a glimpse of that future. A loveless marriage and a kid named after a Death Eater and a goat lover? Fuck, no! If I had a wand, I'll kill myself just to prevent that from happening."

Dumbledore shook his head. "Dear boy, you're already dead."

Harry turned to Mortuse. "Is there an after afterlife?"

Mortuse grinned. This young man was very entertaining! "You know, we should mention that to George. We could even franchise it out."

"You're not helping matters," Kronos said, glaring at Death.

Turning to Harry, he smiled sympathetically. "You're correct. We do need to fix the problem, but as you pointed out, we have a difference of opinion at to what the prophecy really means. I think it behooves us to examine the prophecy in detail and see if we can come up with an interpretation that we all agree on," he continued.

Harry held up a hand. "Wait a second! If you're going legalistic on me, then I want to call my lawyer."

Mortuse snorted with laughter. "You have a lawyer?"

"The best," Harry said smugly.

"Should I have a lawyer as well?" asked Dumbledore.

"No!" shouted Moirae. "Harry gets one only because I promised him that, if this came to a hearing, he'd have a good lawyer."

Kronos rubbed his forehead. Strangely, he seemed to have caught Mortuse's headache. "All right, Harry, contact your lawyer."

Harry grinned and snapped his fingers. A moment later a short, rotund man in a deep red, almost black, suit appeared in the room. "Am I late?" he asked.

"Nope, just in time," Harry said cheerfully.

"Not you!" Moirae moaned.

Hearing her moan, Harry shook his head. "Damn, she *must* be dynamite in the sack."

"Hello, Moirae. It's been awhile, my sweet," the man said, gazing at her lasciviously.

"Lucifer? What are you doing here?" exclaimed Mortuse. Of all the Incarnations, he had the most contact with the Keeper of the Damned.

Lucifer buffed his nails against his suit. "My client asked me here. He knew my credentials were impeccable."

"Credentials?" echoed Dumbledore in confusion.

Kronos turned to Dumbledore and sighed. "The Keeper of the Damned has always been a lawyer. That's how he's able to write those airtight soul contracts of his. Besides, most of the lawyers end up being sent to him anyway. There's not much of a pool to choose from when looking for a replacement."

"It's an occupational hazard, I'm afraid," Lucifer said banally.

"Harry, you didn't sell your soul to the devil, did you?" Dumbledore asked, shocked at the thought.

Harry sneered. "I'm already dead and judged, dickhead. On the off chance you haven't been keeping up, that means I can't sell anything. Lucifer took my case because it interested him."

"Oh, quite," added Lucifer. "I mean, really. One can only torment the souls of the damned for so long before needing a diversion. This was something new and exciting. Besides, it lets me interact with people I don't normally deal with. Harry is quite refreshing from the usual dregs I have to deal with. On the other hand, Albus, you've been a very naughty boy and we will be talking about your past quite extensively over the eons. For now, I've reserved a room for you with a very nice bunk mate named Boris."

Harry snickered when Dumbledore paled at the implications.

"Can we get on with this? We have no idea when George is coming back and we'd really like to solve this before he does," Moirae said.

"Right," Lucifer replied as he reached out and pulled a brief case of out thin air.

Opening the case, he removed several sheets of paper, which he passed around to everyone present. "Now, then. As I understand it, my client is the injured party, having died well before his time due to Fate's incompetence. Additional damages were incurred, thanks to negligence on the part of Mortuse, and now you're all scrambling to find a way to fix a potential quantum flux in the plan."

He looked around at everyone, enjoying himself immensely.

"What's this?" muttered Kronos, staring down at the list in his hand.

"That is a list of demands my client is insisting upon before he will agree to allow you to send him back," Lucifer replied.

"Harry wants a harem?" asked an astonished Dumbledore. "I wish I thought of that. A couple of boys, maybe a goat or two..."

He trailed off when everyone turned to stare at him in astonishment.

Even Voldemort, who'd been happily chewing on his own arm, stopped to stare at the bearded freak.

Disgusted, they turned back to Harry's list of demands.

"Wait, wait. No, this can't be. He can't have Incredible Cosmic Power! I'm willing to allow for the harem, but this Incredible Cosmic Power business is out of the question," complained Kronos.

All the world knew that Incredible Cosmic Power included the ability to manipulate time, and Kronos was not about to allow anyone to interfere with his gig.

"I will point out that the prophecy clearly stated that Harry would be Voldemort's equal. Since Fate failed to deliver on that point, she is in violation of her own self imposed contract. My client, as nice as he might be, is merely a mediocre wizard, with no great powers or skills. If it weren't for his friend, Miss Granger, he wouldn't have gotten as far as he did. Why, if someone were to write a book about his last year of life, it would probably be called Hermione Granger and the Deathly Hallows."

"Just a moment! I made him an equal of Voldemort!" protested Moirae.

"You did, yes. But then you went to sleep for the next 17 years and let that old fool of a Headmaster ruin the plan. Dumbledore's actions resulted in stunting Harry's magical growth. By the time he met with Voldemort and died, he had only a fraction of what he was supposed to have," Lucifer replied. "What did you do to see that Harry discovered those powers, my sweet, luscious, Moirae?"

Fate looked down at the tabletop and refused to meet his gaze.

"I thought so," replied Lucifer. "So, as you can see, my client went to his death knowing he was going to die. He was ill prepared and not up to the task that Fate had selected him for. It's only right to expect compensation for his pain and suffering."

Harry leaned over and whispered something.

Lucifer grinned maliciously. "One change, my dearest Moirae. Harry would like to add your name to the list of girls he wants in his harem."

When Fate began to sputter, Kronos slammed his hand down on the table. "There's got to be another way of fixing this. We can't cede this much power to a mortal!" he exclaimed.

"You already turned down one approach, Kronos," Mortuse pointed out. "Now, we either agree to Harry's demands, or we wait for George to return and obliterate us."

"You know, this is silly. Send for George and let's get this over with. I'm dead and I'm going to go back to spend time with my parents. George can destroy the world, for all I care. If you three are examples of who's running the shop, I don't want to be around to watch you muck it up."

"Wait!" shouted Kronos. When Harry turned to him, he slumped in his chair. "Alright, fine. Incredible Cosmic Power and a harem."

"Harry, I do think you're being unreasonable," Dumbledore said cautiously. The last thing he wanted was someone to show up on the wizarding scene with more power than he had. He fully expected to be remembered with reverence and awe, much like Merlin.

Harry turned to Lucifer, "Can't I hit him? Just once?" he whined.

Lucifer smiled. "No. But don't you worry. I have plans for him, one of which involves a nice, ripe pineapple." He tilted his head in thought. "It's a little something I came up with for Hitler. It worked so well that I've continued to use it for my 'special guests'."

When Lucifer smiled evilly at him, Dumbledore swallowed nervously. "But I like pineapples, especially when they are chilled," he replied warily.

"We are going to have so much fun together, Albie," Lucifer said.

"All right, so Harry's going to get a harem and Incredible Cosmic Power. Looks like we're done here," Mortuse said happily. "It's time to paartaay!"

"Oh, fantastic. The last time Mortuse celebrated, he introduced the plague into Europe," muttered Kronos.

"Hey! I was holding a party and needed people to show up. Until I judge them, they are all mine," Mortuse replied defensively.

"We're not quite done here," Lucifer interjected. "We need to work out the specifics of what Harry will do when he returns, as well as the transferring of Fate's power to someone suitable, since Moirae will be...otherwise occupied."

Moirae looked up in shock. "I have to give up my position?" she exclaimed.

"Don't worry, snookums, I'll find plenty of positions for you to fill," Harry offered with a leer.

Moirae sputtered incoherently.

"Hey, how about that Granger chick? She'd be perfect for Moirae's slot," Mortuse offered.

Harry snickered. "I like it."

"Harry..."

"Shut up, Dumbledore. Everyone goes on about Hermione being the smartest witch of her generation, and yet she's dumb enough to fall for the greatest slacker of our generation? She deserves the spot."

When Dumbledore glared at Harry, he snickered. "Be thankful I don't toss Luna's name into the running. As interesting as that would be, however, I want her for my harem."

Dumbledore's mouth snapped shut. Luna Lovegood as Fate would surely cause the entire universe to go haywire. He had visions of Snorkacks and flying, three toed sloths wielding wands.

A small window opened in a wall and Luna stuck her head through. "Harry, are you almost done? We're all waiting for you."

Harry smiled brightly. "Nearly, sweetie. Warm up the chocolate and break out the oysters. I'm feeling frisky."

She nodded and pulled out of the window, which promptly vanished.

Kronos began to speak, but was interrupted by an unholy screech from the corner. Everyone in the room turned toward the sound only to see Voldemort staring at his feet in wonder.

"Was it really necessary to bring that...*thing* here?" Kronos grumbled. "He drools by the bucket load, he's as dumb as a post..." He paused and wrinkled his nose. "And for George's sake, Mortuse, I think he's soiled his nappy!"

Mortuse looked up from banging his head against the table and waved his hand toward Voldemort. The smell disappeared, though the monstrosity himself remained. "All right," he muttered. "What else do we have to do?"

"Snape," Harry replied smugly.

"He's dead," Mortuse said.

"I know. I want him resurrected," Harry replied.

Mortuse frowned. "But I haven't judged him yet. He's mine!"

Harry looked at Lucifer and raised an eyebrow.

Turning to Mortuse, Lucifer smiled. "As the Keeper of the Damned, I hereby proclaim that I will not accept Snape's soul into my domain. And we all know Heaven won't take him, so either resurrect him, or you get to babysit him for eternity"

"We can't do that, Harry. That sort of power is reserved for George. The only time the Incarnations have access to that power is when someone like yourself dies ahead of their time," Kronos explained.

Harry frowned. So much for his plans to practice his Transfiguration on the rotten bastard. He had hoped to eventually install Snape as a porcelain toilet in the boy's Hufflepuff dorm. "All right, then make him Granger's underling and personal servant," he said, smiling at the thought.

"Oh, you're good, Harry," Lucifer muttered. "I might recommend you for my position when you pass over."

"But I don't want to be a lawyer," Harry replied.

"An exception can be made. We have more than enough of them to set up a legal department to make up your soul contracts," Lucifer replied, shrugging.

"Wait just a moment," Moirae exclaimed. "I didn't get any servants."

"Shut up, Moirae," snapped Mortuse.

She glared at him, then dropped her gaze, knowing full well that her days as Fate were swiftly coming to an end.

Kronos massaged his forehead painfully. "I don't know how we're going to explain this to George," he grumbled. "Harry gets near George like powers and a harem, and we get stuck with a bushy haired Fate with a greasy butt monkey as her servant."

"Chaos," replied Lucifer. "It's the natural order of the universe. I like it."

"I aim to please," Harry replied.

Dumbledore frowned. This had gone too far and it was time he put a stop to it. "Harry, I must insist that..."

"Do we still need him here?" asked Harry, turning to Lucifer.

Lucifer conjured a large pineapple and with a slight gesture, it vanished.

Dumbledore made a noise that sounded like a cross between a grunt of pain and a squeak of surprise, then he vanished.

"No, we're nearly done," replied Lucifer.

Harry snickered, then stood and walked over to Moirae. "Ready, pookie?" he asked.

She whimpered and nodded unhappily.

"So long, babe," Mortuse muttered, "We'll miss you are the epoch barbecues."

"You know what you're going to do, Harry?" asked Kronos.

"Sure. I'm going to take over the world," Harry replied with a laugh. Then he and Moirae vanished.

Kronos sighed and stared at the empty spot unhappily. "We're so screwed."

"Nah, he'll do just fine as king of the world. Look at it this way. Voldemort wanted to make the world safe for purebloods, who make up one one millionth of the population. Harry intends to make the world safe for muggles, 99.99% of the population."

In the corner, Voldemort started to grow at a considerable rate.

"Ah, Harry's already at work," Lucifer said, then he turned to Mortuse. "This one is mine, I believe."

Mortuse nodded.

"I think he'll make a nice bunk mate for Albie and Boris," Lucifer said softly. Laughing, he disappeared.

Next to Mortuse, a brown hair girl appeared looking frightened. "Harry, no!" she shouted, then blinked and looked around wildly. "Where am I? Ronny?"

Mortuse stood and put his arm about Hermione's shoulders. "Come along, dearie. I'll help you get acclimated to you new position and introduce you

to your assistant.”

Mortuse and Hermione vanished, he with a smile, she with a whimper of fear.

Kronos slumped in his chair and looked over at the wall chart that detailed the grand plan. He winced as it began to rearrange itself.

“George help us,” he moaned and closed his eyes. They were doomed, he knew it.

He jumped and his eyes flew open as the door burst from its hinges and flew across the room.

“What the hell have you people done?” a man asked as he stalked into the room, stopped and looked around. Spotting Kronos, he drew his sword.

“Oh, crap,” Kronos muttered before standing up and attempting a smile. “Um, hi, Mars.”

“What have you done?” the massive man bellowed.

“Well, we had a little problem, so Mortuse, Moirae and I fixed it.”

“Fixed it? Have you seen what’s going on out there? The world’s at war, you bumbling excuse for an Incarnation! Where the hell are Moirae and Mortuse? I’m going to kill all three of you!”

“Now, now. We only did what was necessary,” Kronos said as he began as he backed away.

Mars glared. “Necessary? Do you know how much work the three of you have dumped on my shoulders? I had a nice little war in Polynesia brewing and you three fucked it up!” He held his sword out and began stalking Kronos. “And now I have to deal with a seventeen year old child who’s proclaimed himself king of the world, AND has the power to do just that! Power I *know* you three gave him!”

“Right. Sorry about that. Speaking of work, I need to run,” Kronos said cheerfully, then disappeared.

“You bastard!” Mars yelled, then swung his sword and destroyed the conference table. “You can run, you little pansy, but I’ll find you. And when I do, there won’t be enough pieces left for George to resurrect!”

“I’m looking for Miss Granger,” a voice interjected from the doorway.

Spinning around, Mars scowled at the man before him. Sallow, bone thin and greasy, he looked much like the mortal’s vision of death, though Mortuse was always highly offended by such visions.

“And who the hell are you?” Mars asked.

“Severus Snape. I’ve been informed that I’m to be Miss Granger’s assistant,” the man said with a sneer. “Though I’d very much like to know what I’ve done to be damned to such a fate!”

“I don’t know who this Miss Granger is, but you’ve obviously been judged, so that makes you one of the Mortuse’s creatures,” Mars mused. Hefting his sword once more, he advanced on Snape with a feral smile. “You’ll do, until I can get my hands on the others!”

FINI

Author’s Note:

This story is sort of DH compliant and takes place in that instant between Harry being killed by Voldemort and his coming back to life. :)