Hello everyone. I'm happy to publish a New Chapter of A Nundu for A Pet, and Like the Chapter if you Enjoyed it.

I want to give a Special Shout Out to Terrance Smith for becoming a Creator Patron. As one, he can choose one Story to be updated four times a month. The Story he chose is A Nundu for A Pet. There will be Three More Chapters of this Story for this Month.

The cobblestones of Rue de Séraphin had lost their helpful nudging by the time Harry's group reconvened at the designated café. Now they seemed content to trip up distracted British tourists—or maybe that was just Harry's interpretation after watching Ted nearly faceplant while juggling an armload of self-stirring ladles that kept trying to escape their wrapping.

"Got everything?" Harry asked, though the question was clearly rhetorical. Tonks had acquired what appeared to be half a boutique, including a scarf that shifted through the entire color spectrum in perfect synchronization with her hair. Currently, both were cycling through shades of sunset orange, which made her look like she was permanently on fire.

"These beauties," Ted announced, brandishing a copper pot, "will revolutionize British cooking. Self-timing, self-seasoning, and they argue with you if you try to add too much salt."

"Argue?" Andromeda's voice carried the particular tone of a woman who'd suffered through seventeen years of her husband's cooking experiments.

"Constructive criticism," Ted corrected. "The shop owner called it 'culinary guidance.' Very French. Very sophisticated."

The pot chose that moment to emit what sounded suspiciously like a derisive snort. Harry decided not to mention it.

The walk back to the palace should have been pleasant—golden afternoon light painting the magical quarter in shades of amber and rose, the air carrying hints of fresh bread and that peculiar ozone scent of concentrated magic. Instead, Harry found his stomach performing increasingly creative acrobatics as they approached the palace gates. The evening show meant spending hours in close proximity to Fleur, who had a talent for making him feel simultaneously clever and completely out of his depth.

Like trying to duel with someone who keeps changing the rules, he thought, then immediately felt ridiculous for comparing conversation to combat.

"You alright there, Harry?" Tonks asked, falling into step beside him. Her new scarf had shifted to match her knowing grin. "You look like you're calculating potion measurements in your head."

"Just thinking about tonight," Harry admitted. The palace loomed ahead, all marble and gilt and architectural showing off. Somewhere in there, Fleur was probably selecting robes that would make everyone else look like they'd dressed in the dark.

"Ah." Tonks's grin widened. "Worried about impressing a certain French witch?"

"I'm worried about not tripping over my own feet during a formal event," Harry corrected.

"You'll be fine. You've gotten much better at the whole 'acting like you belong in fancy places' thing."

It was true, Harry reflected as they entered the palace through the visitors' entrance. Andromeda's etiquette lessons had transformed from torture sessions into something almost automatic. He no longer had to consciously think about which fork to use or how to properly acknowledge a diplomatic introduction. Though that might have less to do with the lessons and more to do with facing down basilisks and negotiating international contracts—table manners seemed less daunting after that.

Their suite hadn't changed in their absence, but the afternoon light streaming through the windows transformed it into something from a fairy tale. Harry's room still had its sunrise enchantments, currently showing a false sunset that made everything glow warm gold. His formal robes from the morning hung themselves properly in the wardrobe, while the components from Madame Baudelaire's shop pulsed gently with contained magic from his expanded pockets.

"Harry!" Andromeda's voice carried from the main room. "You have forty minutes to prepare. That means actually preparing, not staring at those new books you bought."

"I wasn't going to—" Harry started, then sheepishly set down the French talisman text he'd already pulled out. The woman had developed an uncanny ability to predict his procrastination methods.

The casual-formal robes Andromeda had insisted on packing ("You never know when you'll need something between 'meeting ministers' and 'attending lectures'") turned out to be perfect for the evening. Deep blue with silver threading, it looked good enough without screaming for attention—sophisticated enough for a palace event but relaxed enough that Harry didn't feel like he was wearing ceremonial armor.

He was still adjusting the collar when Newt knocked. "Itisa's getting restless," the magizoologist announced. "I think she can smell the evening excitement. Or possibly the canapés being prepared—the French do use an unusual amount of fish in their appetizers."

"Can't let her out yet," Harry said regretfully. "Maybe after the show, when it's darker."

"I'll tell her, though I make no promises about her response. She's already rearranged my suitcase twice in protest."

Harry could picture it perfectly—Itisa in her false house-cat form, radiating displeasure while methodically destroying Newt's careful organization. The thought made him smile, easing some of the nervous energy that had been building since Fleur's invitation.

"Five minutes!" Ted called. "And Tonks, that means five actual minutes, not five Tonks-minutes which somehow become twenty!"

"I'm nearly ready!" Tonks's voice was muffled, probably by whatever elaborate outfit she was attempting. "Just need to... ow! Stupid French buttons! Why do they button backwards?!"

"They don't," Andromeda said patiently. "You're putting it on inside out."

"...Oh."

Harry took one last look in the mirror. He looked... older, somehow. Maybe it was the French tailoring. Or maybe it was just that negotiating with international ministries and creating revolutionary magical items aged a person prematurely. Either way, he looked less like a kid playing dress-up and more like someone who actually belonged at sophisticated magical events.

Small steps, he thought. *First, get through tonight without Tonks accidentally starting an international incident. Then worry about tomorrow's ball.*

"Harry?" Andromeda appeared at his door, already perfectly put together in robes of midnight blue. "Ready?"

"As I'll ever be," Harry said, meaning it. Whatever the evening brought—constellation shows, French culture, or Fleur's particular brand of sophisticated teasing—he'd handle it.

After all, how hard could watching stars be?

The knock came precisely at eight, because of course, Fleur Delacour would never arrive fashionably late to her own invitation. Harry opened the door to find her wearing robes that somehow made casual elegance look like an art form—soft grey fabric that moved like water, silver embroidery that might have been decorative or might have been functional runes. Knowing the French approach to fashion, probably both.

"Bonsoir," she said, and her smile widened when she noticed his ensemble. "Oh good, you did not wear your formal diplomatic robes. I was worried I would have to watch stars next to someone who looked like they were attending a funeral."

"British formal wear does tend toward the mortuary," Harry agreed. "Though at least we've moved past the Victorian era when everything was black and involved at least seventeen layers."

"Progress," Fleur said solemnly. "In another century, you might discover color."

"We have color. It's just... subdued. Dignified. Like a whisper instead of a shout."

"How poetic. And how very British to think enjoyment must be quiet." She peered past him into the suite. "Is your family ready? We should claim good spots before the tourists overwhelm the terraces."

"Nearly ready," Harry said, stepping aside to let her in. "Tonks is having a philosophical disagreement with her robes about which shade of purple they should be."

As if summoned, Tonks emerged from her room in robes that seemed to have given up on purple entirely and settled for a deep emerald that complemented her currently violet hair. The effect was striking, if slightly Christmas-themed.

"Oh," Tonks said, stopping short at the sight of Fleur. "You're here. Hi. Hello. Bonsoir?" The last word came out as more of a question, her accent making it sound like she was asking about soup.

"Bonsoir," Fleur replied warmly. "I love your robes. That color combination is very bold."

"Bold," Tonks repeated. "Right. That's what I was going for. Bold. Not 'explosion at a paint factory.'"

Harry recognized the signs of Tonks spiraling into self-consciousness and intervened. "Where are we watching from? You mentioned terraces?"

"The Celestial Terrace," Fleur said, her attention shifting back to him with obvious relief. "It has the best view and"—her eyes glinted with mischief—"the most interesting people. Including, I am told, a certain Italian delegation who wish to thank you for their new talismans."

"Oh good," Harry muttered. "Nothing like mixing business with stargazing."

"You sound thrilled."

"I'm practicing my diplomatic enthusiasm. How's it look?"

"Like you ate something unpleasant but are too polite to mention it."

"Perfect. That's exactly what I was aiming for."

Ted and Andromeda appeared, completing their group. Newt had elected to stay behind, claiming someone needed to keep Itisa company, but more likely wanting to avoid the crowds Harry could already hear gathering outside.

The palace gardens at dusk were a different world from their daytime grandeur. Floating lights bobbed between carefully sculpted topiaries, casting shadows that seemed to dance independently of their sources. The air smelled of night-blooming jasmine and that peculiar crispness that promised stellar magic.

"The gardens were designed by Adalbert Lacroix in 1742," Fleur said as they walked, slipping into tour guide mode. "He was famous for incorporating astronomical movements into his landscaping. See how the paths curve? They match the orbital patterns of the planets."

"Subtle," Harry observed, genuinely impressed. "British magical gardens usually go for 'look, we made the hedges into dragons.'"

"There is something to be said for the direct approach," Fleur allowed. "Though I prefer elegance to obviousness."

"Shocking," Harry said dryly. "I never would have guessed."

She bumped his shoulder lightly—a surprisingly playful gesture from someone usually so poised. "You are in a mood tonight. Nervous about tomorrow?"

"What makes you think I'm nervous?"

"You make more jokes when you are uncomfortable. Also, you keep touching your pocket where I assume you have stored the components from today's shopping."

Harry forced his hand away from the expanded pocket. He hadn't realized he'd been doing it. "You're observant."

"I am French. We are trained from birth to notice everything while appearing to notice nothing." She paused at a fork in the path. "This way. Unless you prefer to take the tourist route and arrive after all the good viewing spots are taken?"

They followed her through a maze of hedges that seemed to part more readily for her than they would for outsiders. Harry caught Tonks muttering something about "bloody French plants playing favorites" and hid a smile.

"So," Andromeda said conversationally, "tell us about this constellation show. Is it a regular event?"

"Monthly, during the new moon," Fleur explained. "The Department of Celestial Affairs organizes it. They claim it is for educational purposes, but really"—she lowered her voice conspiratorially—"it is because the department head is a romantic who thinks Paris needs more beauty."

"Needs more beauty?" Ted looked around at the immaculate gardens, the palace glowing with soft light, the very air seeming to shimmer with contained magic. "What's he comparing it to, heaven?"

"Probably," Fleur said seriously. "French standards are very high."

They emerged onto a terrace that made Harry's earlier nervousness evaporate into awe. The space opened like a amphitheater carved from starlight, stone steps descending to a central

viewing area where hundreds of witches and wizards already gathered. Above, the sky had darkened to deep purple, stars beginning to emerge like shy performers before the main show.

"This," Harry said quietly, "is incredible."

"Wait until you see the show itself." Fleur's voice carried genuine pride. "Though I warn you—after seeing French constellation magic, everything else seems dim by comparison."

"Including British attempts?"

"Especially British attempts. Did you know your Ministry tried to recreate this show last year?"

"How'd that go?"

"They accidentally summoned a small meteor. It destroyed the refreshment tent."

"That sounds about right," Tonks muttered, then yelped as her robes snagged on absolutely nothing. "Even their terraces are judging me!"

"The stones are charmed to prevent accidents," Fleur explained. "They sometimes overcompensate."

"Story of my life," Tonks said. "Even helpful magic thinks I need extra supervision."

They found spaces near the middle of the terrace—close enough to see everything but not so prominent as to draw unwanted attention. Though Harry noticed several heads turning their way, recognition flickering in more than a few eyes. The curse of international newspaper coverage.

"Ignore them," Fleur advised, settling gracefully onto the stone bench. "They will lose interest once the show begins."

"Voice of experience?"

"Perhaps." She smoothed her robes with practiced nonchalance. "Being quarter-Veela at public events teaches you to either ignore stares or hexe everyone. I find ignoring requires less paperwork."

"Practical."

"Always." She tilted her head, studying him. "You know, you handle attention better than most. Even now, you are not fidgeting or trying to hide."

"I'm excellent at pretending confidence I don't feel," Harry admitted. "It's a survival skill."

"Most survival skills are less charming."

Before Harry could process that comment, she was pointing toward the palace. "Look, they are beginning."

The first sign of magic was subtle—a dimming of the floating lights until the terrace existed in soft twilight. Then, as if the universe had been waiting for its cue, the stars above blazed to life. Not just the usual pinpricks of light, but actual depth and dimension, as if the sky had transformed into a vast ocean of luminous pearls.

"Merde," Tonks breathed, and for once no one corrected her language.

A figure appeared at the center of the viewing area—a wizard in robes that seemed cut from the night sky itself, complete with slowly orbiting planets around his hem. He raised his wand, and his voice carried without amplification, rich and warm as aged wine.

"*Mesdames et messieurs, bienvenue aux Étoiles Dansantes.*"

"He's explaining the history," Fleur translated quietly, shifting closer so Harry could hear. The proximity brought a hint of her perfume—something floral but not overwhelming, like gardens after rain. "How ancient wizards first mapped the stars, not just for navigation but for the stories they told."

The wizard's wand moved in a complex pattern, and above them, stars began to shift. Not quickly, forming patterns that pulled gasps from the assembled crowd.

"The first constellation," Fleur continued, her voice low enough that only Harry could hear. "Orion the Hunter. Watch—this is where it becomes extraordinary."

The stars of Orion brightened, and then—impossibly—stepped out of their fixed positions. The figure of a man formed from pure starlight, bow raised, muscles defined by cosmic fire. He moved, hunting across the sky in a dance that had been choreographed by mythology itself.

"Holy..." Harry trailed off, lacking adequate words. British magical displays suddenly seemed like children's sparklers.

A wild boar materialized from another cluster of stars, and the hunt began in earnest. Orion pursued his quarry across the heavens while the narrator's voice rose and fell with the action, painting the story in words Harry didn't understand but emotions he felt in his bones.

"The tragic bit comes next," Fleur warned. "Orion becomes arrogant, claims he will hunt every creature on earth. So Gaia sends the scorpion."

Sure enough, Scorpius emerged from the eastern stars, massive and menacing, its stinger dripping light that looked genuinely venomous. The battle that followed was brutal in its beauty—hero and monster circling, striking, neither able to overcome the other until both fell and returned to their eternal positions in the sky.

"In the myth, they are placed on opposite sides of the heavens," Fleur explained as new constellations began to stir. "Forever apart, so they can never fight again."

"Seems harsh," Harry murmured. "Eternal separation as punishment."

"The Greeks did not believe in mild consequences." She shifted again, and her shoulder pressed lightly against his. "Oh, this next one is my favorite. Andromeda."

The princess appeared chained to rocks, starlight dress flowing around her as she struggled against cosmic bonds. Harry glanced at the real Andromeda, who was watching curiously.

"Perseus comes to save her," Fleur continued. "But in the French version, she saves herself first."

Indeed, the stellar Andromeda was already working at her chains with hidden picks of light when Perseus arrived on his winged horse. They freed her together, princess and hero working in partnership rather than the traditional rescue.

"I like that better," Harry said. "The best rescues are usually team efforts."

"Spoken like someone who has experience being rescued?"

"More like someone who's learned that charging in alone is a good way to end up needing rescue yourself."

A laugh bubbled from Fleur. "You continue to surprise me, Harry Potter."

Above them, more myths played out in stellar glory. Cassiopeia's vanity, punished by being forced to revolve around the pole star. The Pleiades, seven sisters transformed into stars to escape Orion's pursuit, now dancing just out of reach for eternity. Each story was told through movement and light, the narrator's voice weaving French poetry Harry couldn't parse but somehow understood.

"Your friend," Fleur noted during a brief intermission as refreshments appeared, floating to eager hands. "Her hair is mimicking the starlight."

Harry looked and nearly choked on the wine that had drifted his way. Tonks's hair had indeed begun reflecting the performance above—currently cycling through silver and blue and white in patterns that matched the constellation movements.

"She probably doesn't even realize," Harry said fondly. "Her metamorphmagus abilities respond to strong emotions. She must be really enjoying this."

"And you?" Fleur asked. "Are you enjoying yourself?"

"It's..." Harry searched for words that wouldn't sound like ridiculous hyperbole. "I've never seen anything like this. We have magical fireworks, but this is art."

"Everything can be art if approached correctly." She accepted her own glass of wine with elegant fingers. "Even your talismans. You do not just create protection—you create beautiful protection. The runework on your enhanced models is quite artistic."

"You've studied them?"

"Of course. Know your competition, as they say." At his startled look, she laughed again. "I joke. Mostly. Though I did examine the one Papa purchased. Your matrix design is genuinely innovative."

"High praise from someone who probably grew up surrounded by the finest magical craftsmanship in Europe."

"Flattery? From a British wizard? What is the world coming to?"

"Clearly the wine is stronger than I thought."

She smiled, and for a moment they just stood together, watching the crowd and sipping drinks. The comfortable silence felt as natural as their verbal sparring.

"The finale is beginning," Fleur said eventually. "This is worth attention."

The narrator raised both arms, and every constellation they'd seen—plus dozens more—emerged simultaneously. The sky became a tapestry of living myth. Heroes battled monsters while lovers pursued each other through the heavens. Dragons made of stars breathed fires that birthed new constellations. The Milky Way itself seemed to pulse with life, a river of souls dancing their eternal dance.

"*La danse éternelle des étoiles*," Fleur whispered. "The eternal dance of stars. We are all made of starlight, so the theory goes. This is our origin story."

The display reached impossible heights of beauty. Constellations waltzed with each other in complex patterns that somehow never collided. Music seemed to emanate from the stars themselves—not heard but felt, a cosmic symphony that resonated in Harry's bones.

At the climactic moment, as every star in the sky seemed to pulse in unison, Fleur's hand found his. Her fingers were warm against his cool ones, and Harry found himself squeezing gently.

Then it was over. The constellations returned to their fixed positions, the narrator bowed, and the floating lights gradually brightened. The crowd erupted in applause that sounded like rain on leaves.

"So?" Fleur asked, releasing his hand as naturally as she'd taken it. "How does this compare to British entertainment?"

"Like comparing a masterpiece to a child's finger painting," Harry admitted. "I'm genuinely jealous."

"Good. Jealousy motivates improvement." She stood, smoothing her robes. "Though I notice you watched the entire show without once checking those components in your pocket. Progress."

Harry hadn't even realized. He'd been too absorbed in the performance—and, if he was honest, in Fleur's quiet commentary—to worry about tomorrow's challenges.

"Shall we return you to your suite?" Fleur offered. "The gardens can be maze-like in the dark, and I would hate for British wizards to get lost and start an international incident."

"How thoughtful," Andromeda said dryly, appearing with Ted and Tonks. "Though I suspect we could manage."

"Of course," Fleur agreed with a smile that suggested she knew better. "But why risk it?"

As they walked back through gardens now painted in silver moonlight, Harry found himself already anticipating tomorrow. The ball would bring new challenges—Nicolas Flamel, international politics, probably seventeen ways to embarrass himself—but somehow that seemed less daunting after tonight.

"Thank you," he told Fleur as they reached the suite. "For inviting us. That was..."

"Magical?" she suggested with gentle teasing. "One would hope so, given the subject matter."

"Beyond magical. Transcendent."

"Such vocabulary. Careful, or people will think British education is actually adequate."

"Can't have that," Harry agreed. "Our reputation for mediocrity is all we have."

She laughed one more time—that genuine sound he was starting to treasure—and bid them goodnight with promises to collect Harry tomorrow for the Beauxbatons visit.

"Try to sleep," she advised. "Tomorrow will be exhausting, and you will need energy to properly appreciate how much superior our school is to yours."

"I'll prepare my jealousy in advance," Harry promised.

After she left, Tonks collapsed on the suite's couch with a dramatic sigh. "I'm moving to France. I've decided. They have better everything."

"The grass is always greener," Ted said philosophically.

"The grass literally IS greener here, Dad. It's charmed to maintain perfect color. I asked."

Harry retreated to his room, finally letting himself examine the components from Madame Baudelaire's shop. The Lunargent glowed softly in its container, and he could already envision

how it would integrate with his existing designs. But more than that, he thought about the memory talisman he'd promised to create. A widow wanting to dance with her husband one more time.

After tonight's display of impossible beauty, creating something to preserve a single precious memory seemed like the least magic could do.

Through his window, the stars continued their eternal dance, and Harry fell asleep calculating rune arrangements while somewhere in the back of his mind, the warmth of Fleur's hand lingered like an unfinished spell.