"Do you have any bandages on you?" Harry asked.
"A few, if you want," Hermione replied. She was crouching, scanning the edge of the trees with her assault rifle.
Harry grabbed the bandages and quickly used them to boost his character's health, dropping to the ground to make himself a smaller target.
"Soon, we'll need to find a car," Hermione said. "We can get everything else during the game, but only if we're mobile."
"You're right," Harry said. "I see something ahead. Let's go check it out."
He leaned forward in his computer chair, commanding his character to run alongside Hermione's character, moving past the trees and cover they had been expBellatrixng for most of the match. Ahead of them loomed a building, the only thing nearby that seemed worth investigating.
"It looks empty," Harry said, zooming in with his pistol to examine one of the broken windows on the second floor of the ruined building.
"We should wait. Remember what happened last time we went in without waiting?" Hermione's soft, feminine voice crackled slightly, probably due to the quality of Harry's headphones or her microphone.
"Yeah, yeah," Harry said. "That was more about the guy having a good hiding spot than a bad decision on our part."
"Never mind," Hermione said.
Harry was about to say more when there was a knock on his bedroom door. He lifted his headphones slightly to hear better as the door opened, and Bellatrix, his adoptive stepmother, walked in.
"Hey, sweetie," Bellatrix said. "I'm heading to a wedding. I just wanted to check on you before I leave. I know you said you had plans later."
He nodded, most of his attention still on the video game. Bellatrix walked behind his chair and placed a hand on his shoulder, watching his game from where she stood.
"Please don't tell me this is the extent of your plans," his stepmother said. "In my honest opinion, online video games don't count as going out."
"I'm playing with Hermione," Harry mumbled.
"What?" Hermione asked.
"Never mind," Harry said.
"At least it's something," Bellatrix said. "Invite her over for dinner, please. She's almost as bad as you when it comes to wasting the last summer at home, at least according to what her father says."
Harry resisted the urge to grimace. He and Hermione were still watching the house. He took off his headphones completely for a moment and turned to look at the woman who raised him.
Bellatrix was beautiful and relatively young to be the stepmother of an eighteen-year-old, especially through adoption. It was something Harry had to acknowledge, even as her son, even if it made him feel a bit strange. At 38, she was still in fantastic shape, partly thanks to an active lifestyle that left no room for drinking or smoking. Her hair was dark, almost black, and long enough to fall over her shoulders, stopping just above her large, well-formed breasts. Harry tried not to notice, but the thin, purple summer dress she wore without a bra made it hard to ignore.
She was a petite woman, more than half a foot shorter than him. Her face was conventionally pretty, with large hazel eyes, silky lips, and a smile that would have secured her a career as a model or actress if she hadn't gone into real estate first.
"Look, Hermione is playing for her streamers right now," Harry said. "She needs someone she can duo with, and she prefers me over a random stranger from the internet."
"I think she prefers you for more than just that." Bellatrix crossed her arms over her chest and smiled at him. Her dress was cut low enough to reveal a substantial amount of cleavage, which her movement only accentuated. It was her day off, which explained why she was wearing casual clothes instead of her usual skirt and stockings.
"Harry!" Hermione shouted, loud enough for him to hear even with his headphones off. "Are you even listening to me?"
"Sorry," Harry said, both to his stepmother and into the microphone. "I can't talk right now."
"I understand." Bellatrix rubbed his shoulder, and Harry glanced back at her. She had a way of looking at people, a gaze that was more thoughtful than piercing, but still seemed to lay him bare. Harry felt like she was searching for something in him. If it were anyone else but his stepmother, he would find it odd, but with her, he felt like her son.
"As for dinner, I'm up for anything," Harry said.
"I'll let you know what I have planned later," Bellatrix said. "When you're free, we can have a chat. I just wanted to remind you that I love you and I'm proud of you."
She hugged him from behind, her hands moving over his chest and stomach, then planted an exaggerated kiss on his cheek.

"Harry!" Hermione's shout came from the headset.
"Sorry, Mom," Harry said. "Duty calls."
He quickly put his headphones back on, listening as his stepmother's footsteps faded through his bedroom door. Hermione was moving towards the building, her avatar seeming torn between aiming at the door and glancing in his direction.
"Sorry," he said. "I'm back. Your streamers aren't too mad at me, right?"
"They already hate you," Hermione said.
"Wonderful," Harry said.
There was indeed someone in the building, and Harry and Hermione were drawn into a firefight that lasted longer than it should have, as their opponent was on the second floor and had a large supply of grenades. Moments like this made Harry wish his magic worked in the game, but it was also what he liked about games—the rules were the same for everyone, unlike in the real world. After that, the game continued, and they both made it into the top ten before being eliminated by another duo shooting at them from a distance.
"Not bad," Hermione said. "Not great, but not bad."
"One more?" Harry asked.
"No, I need to get to my other stream," Hermione replied.
Harry smiled, knowing her real meaning. Hermione had been his friend since their Hogwarts days when her family first moved to magical England and into the house next to the one he and his stepmother shared.
There was an understanding between both families. Bellatrix was a single stepmother, and Hermione's parents were eager for a playmate who would help their reserved, lonely daughter come out of her shell. Harry spent many evenings and weekends at Hermione's house, and the two of them shared a long friendship that had evolved over the years.
Throughout Hogwarts, Hermione was very shy and a bit of a bookworm. Harry himself wasn't popular, but he made friends with enough people to fit in reasonably well. Hermione, on the other hand, always felt comfortable with only a few selected people, among whom Harry was the most important.
When Hermione finally "bloomed" in her final year, starting to take care of herself and finally developing the breasts her feminine figure had always suggested, it was too late to change her reputation. She turned down a few boys who tried to ask her out, which worried Harry. He thought of her as a sister and was a bit concerned she would end up with a weird approach to dating and sex.
And he was right.
"Alright," Harry said. "Have fun."
"I've turned off the game stream," Hermione said. "You can say what you really think."
Harry smiled. Could he really be open with her about how he felt when he wasn't even sure he understood it himself? Hermione's family wasn't wealthy, which made the unexplained influx of cash she suddenly had at the end of their last year even more noticeable. He had asked her about it, and it only took a few probing questions for her to confess.
"I think you should be careful," Harry said. "And try not to let the fact that dozens of men will pay good money to see you strip on camera go to your head."
"I won't," Hermione said. "I'll text you later, okay?"
"Alright," Harry said. "Oh yes, my mom wants you to come over for dinner."
"Probably not tonight," Hermione replied. "Maybe tomorrow? Maybe tomorrow?"
"Sure," he said.
Harry exited the game and took off his headset. He had the house to himself, which was rare, at least on weekends. It was the beginning of summer after his final year at Hogwarts, and he had only a few months of living at home before heading off to magical college.
He went downstairs to the kitchen, checking if his mom had gone to the market as she said she would. He was always a bit excited when Hermione mentioned her "second stream," more because of the idea than the reality. This excitement led him back upstairs to his computer, browsing EroticGate, his favorite porn site. There was a thrill in knowing he was doing it in broad daylight, behind stepmother's back, and while Hermione was next door in her room, stripping for strangers. It put his urges into context and made them feel a bit less aimless.
The website displayed a range of suggested videos based on Harry's recent search history. He browsed through them, surprised at how accurately they matched his tastes. He clicked on one that caught his eye, a thumbnail of a blonde in a white button-up blouse and a black skirt. The video was titled "Cum On In."
"I see you looking at me."
Harry flinched at the sound of the woman's voice as she started speaking. It was his stepmother's voice, or at least very close to it. He felt his heart race as he examined the woman's features and noticed even more similarities between her and his mom.

She had blonde hair, unlike his stepmother's dark hair, and wore glasses. Her makeup was different from his stepmother's, and she appeared a bit taller. But otherwise, it was uncanny how similar the two women looked.
Harry was already scrolling to click on another video when the woman continued.
"Are you waiting for something?" the woman asked. "You can leave, or... you can stay."
He hesitated, unnerved by how closely her words matched his thoughts. He scrolled back to the video and put it on full screen, his curiosity getting the better of him. He knew it wasn't and couldn't possibly be his stepmother. It was ridiculous to even consider it. And if it wasn't his mom, there was nothing wrong with watching for a bit, right?
He felt his cock harden in his jeans as the woman smiled.
The woman smiled in a way he had seen many times on stepmother's face. He felt a knot in his stomach and a contrasting surge of excitement. His hands moved on their own, unzipping his jeans and pulling out his tool.
"I came here for a reason." The woman unbuttoned the top button of her blouse, revealing the edge of a black lace bra. "I wonder if you can guess what it is?"
She made a soft, purring sound and stared into the camera, making eye contact with Harry through his computer screen. He stroked himself faster, ignoring the voice in the back of his head that begged him to stop. She looked so much like his mom. That wasn't why it turned him on, he told himself. It was something else, something unrelated to the woman in the room.
"It's all right," the woman said. "You can relax. Start breathing and take your time."
She undid the last few buttons of her blouse. Behind her stood a bed, onto which she reclined, tossing her blouse aside. As she got on all fours, she allowed her breasts to hang down in a way that maximized the amount of cleavage exposed by her bra.
Harry was more aroused than ever before in his life and found himself needing to heed the woman's advice not to come prematurely. He paused his stroking and forced himself to breathe, using the opportunity to study the woman more closely. She had the same hazel eyes as his mom, though the glasses made them seem slightly smaller.
The woman unhooked her bra and cupped her breasts. She pulled it down just enough to reveal her pink areolas and slowly licked her lips. Harry groaned and shook his head. It was almost too much for him to watch.
It was haunting how much she resembled his stepmother. He suddenly feared that the memory of what he saw would linger, hovering over every interaction he had with her. He knew he should close the browser or at least click on another video.
"Go ahead," the woman whispered. "Stroke it for me."
She dropped the bra, and two firm nipples popped free. Her breasts were large and perky, two perfect mounds on her chest begging to be touched and caressed. Harry did exactly as she suggested, moving his hand up and down his shaft, embarrassed by how good it felt.
"You don't have to be ashamed," the woman whispered, as if reading his thoughts. "I do it too."
She leaned back on the bed, hiking up her skirt and revealing a pair of white panties underneath. Her hand slipped through them and started rubbing, the woman letting out a low moan, her other hand traveling to one of her nipples. Harry couldn't see anything between her legs, her hand and panties obscuring the view, but it was enough to push him over the edge.
He sped up, just as the woman did. Her breathing quickened, and Harry leaned closer to his computer monitor. She gasped and let out a pleasurable cry as he crossed his own threshold, not stopping even to grab tissues to minimize the mess.
Pleasure and shame hit him in a tangle of emotions. He came harder than he ever had before in his life, and the aftermath felt like a return to reality. The video was still playing, the woman who looked too much like his stepmother to be anyone else slowly catching her breath.
"Mmm..." she moaned in a voice like his mom's. "That was nice."
"Harry?" mom's voice called from downstairs. "Can you help me with the groceries?"
He banged his knees against the underside of the desk and flinched in surprise. His face burned with heat as he closed the video and wished he could pour bleach on the memory of what just happened.
"Coming, mom," he called. "Just... give me a minute."