

Burning Desire

This is an out take from chapter 11 of the fanfic 'Betrayal of the Best Kind'. What started out as a joke (Thanks to Cettia cetti) captured my imagination, so here for your enjoyment is the only Harry/Fawkes romance fic I've seen. I suppose that if the Harry/Ginny ship is an enormous battleship, then the Harry/Fawkes ship is a little inflatable dingy. grin

What if Harry had flown to another place he always felt safe?

Burning Desire

The sunset-red-stained sea crashed against the bottom of the cliff face, somewhere on the west coast of Scotland. A group of robed figures looked over, and down to where the waves crashed into foam far below. Filled with a desperate hope, they all scanned the ocean, searching for a tell tale sign of The-Boy-Who-Lived-Again.

Harry was already miles away, flying faster than the speed of sound. His magical phoenix form pumped its wings furiously, desperately trying to get away from the heartbreaking pain he had been subjected to.

Harry screamed his agony, the sound emerging from his beak nothing like the usual exhilarating phoenix trill. This sound caused icy shivers to run down the spines of everyone nearby, wizard and muggle alike. Entire towns and villages of people sat bolt upright, hearts racing, petrified at something they knew, but could not identify.

The blood-red phoenix flew across the Scottish landscape, nothing more than a faint blur. Cho's words were still echoing in his mind. Her voice kept yelling, "I hate you!"

Harry needed to escape that terrible voice. He needed to leave behind the caustic burning his heart felt at the memory.

Unconsciously, he sped towards the only home he had ever known.

Fawkes perched serenely in his large cage. His lord-master had left with the dog-wizard that recently began to visit regularly, though at odd times. They pair had seemed excited at something, and had left in a hurry.

A strange feeling came over the magnificent bird. A feeling he had not had for over one hundred and fifty years settled over him. Another phoenix was nearby. And in pain. Terrible pain.

Crouching down to prepare for flight, Fawkes was surprised when the body of a boy-wizard fell into the office from the window to the floor.

Hogwarts quickly came into view. Harry's avian eyes easily picked out the single open window to the headmaster's office, even from several miles away.

In just seconds, the massive castle Hogwarts filled his field of vision. With one final beat of his wings, Harry tucked his shoulders and aimed for the window in a thrilling dive. Entering the window at an incredible speed, Harry was shocked at the wards placed on the window, which suddenly, and without anything resembling gentleness, forced him back into his human form.

Changing aerodynamics made Harry fall like a stone, rather than float like a feather. The impact on the hard stone floor jarred his consciousness, and Harry found himself fighting the darkness that started collecting at the edge of his vision.

Fawkes watched as the boy-wizard rolled groaning on the floor. His initial instinct was to aid the unfortunate child the best he could, until the lightning-bolt-shaped scar became visible.

The boy-murderer! Fawkes had always had a soft spot for this boy-wizard, ever since he had witnessed Fawkes' last flame-day. The boy-wizard's simple and honest aura had endeared the phoenix to the human his lord-master called 'Harry'.

Now the filthy thing was writhing in pain on the floor of the room. Fawkes had never hurt a human before, but was now too angry to refrain from doing so.

Fawkes filled his lungs with air, then let out a piercing trill. To good, noble creatures, the sound would fill their hearts with courage and peace. To evil, vile monsters it would cause pain and suffering, even death.

The boy-murderer's reaction to the sound stunned the phoenix. The pain-wracked form calmed, and heaved a sigh of relaxation. The almost painfully thin figure rose to his feet, a smile of such peace and serenity on his gaunt face. Scintillating green eyes regarded the surprised phoenix.

"Thank you Fawkes. I really needed that." the boy-wizard said.

Fawkes tilted his head to one side. If his song caused no pain, then the boy-wizard standing in front of him must be good and true!

"Thank you Fawkes. I really needed that." Harry told the scarlet bird.

The look on the face of Dumbledore's familiar could almost be described as shock, though Harry didn't have enough experience to tell such things. The smile Fawkes' song had brought to Harry's face slowly faded.

Harry walked around the room in a large circle, stretching his aching muscles. With the exhilaration of the phoenix song fading, his heart once again felt as though clenched in a giant's fist. Harry placed one hand on his chest and grabbed Dumbledore's desk for support. Tears glistened in the corners of his clenched eyes.

"I can't... I just... It hurts..." gasped Harry, and he transformed, desperate to escape the pain.

A trill filled with surprise and alarm sounded from Dumbledore's familiar. Fawkes was staring at the magnificent sight of Harry's animagus form. For long minutes, the pair of phoenixes gazed at each other.

You are a phoenix! exclaimed Fawkes.

Harry blinked. He had heard and understood Fawkes' trilling. *You can speak?* he asked Fawkes.

It was Fawkes' turn to blink in surprise. *I have not met another phoenix for over one hundred and fifty summers. I did not realise you were a phoenix.*

I am only a phoenix sometimes. Harry explained. *The same way Professor McGonagall is sometimes a cat.*

The cat-teacher was the mistress of your lion-family, wasn't she?

Yes. But no one in my house believes that I am innocent, Fawkes. I just want to go home, but I can't! I no longer have a home here.

Fawkes tilted his head and continued to look at Harry. *You still have a home here. You just don't know it.*

What do you mean?

Fawkes didn't answer directly. *Just follow me. I'll show you.*

For the first time in living human memory, two phoenixes flew together across the sky. Harry and Fawkes left Hogwarts behind and flew north.

Within minutes, land gave way to water. Still Fawkes led Harry north, the air getting colder and colder. Finally, ocean gave way to ice, and they flew over the arctic pack ice. Fawkes flared his wings, slowing rapidly, and gently alighted on the ice below. Harry gracefully joined him.

First you must realise that there is still beauty in the world. Fawkes trilled.

Beauty? I have no home! All my friends have deserted me! They put me in a place where my worst fear guarded me day and night!

Yes. You have to heal yourself before you can regain your home.

Harry was about to reply when a scintillating burst of colour appeared overhead. Looking up in shock, Harry watched in awe as curtains of shifting colours writhed in the night sky. All around, the dark, white landscape was bathed in every colour imaginable.

Not even the intense cold could drag Harry's attention from the magnificent scene. The northern lights twisted and danced in the dark sky, putting the stars to shame. Harry couldn't even identify every colour he saw, but the entire display was permanently etched into his memory.

Harry released a quivering sigh. Had he been human and capable of preventing himself from being frozen to death, Harry would have had tears of joy freezing on his cheeks.

When was the last time you just looked at the beauty around you? Fawkes asked.

I cannot remember. I remember staring at Cho, and thinking she was beautiful, but I can no longer remember what she looks like. This is just, indescribable. Harry replied.

No matter how bad the situation, no matter how alone you feel, always be on the lookout for beauty. It can be found in the most unlikely places, but it can help forget the pains of the past, and fortify you for the trials ahead.

Harry forced himself to look away from the hypnotic celestial show and looked at his phoenix companion. *Trials? Am I going to have to suffer more?*

Everyone endures trials during their life. To the individual, his own trials appear more difficult. Come, there is more for you to learn.

Harry watched as Fawkes spread his wings and launched himself into the frigid air. With a great deal of reluctance, Harry managed to tear his eyes away from the most beautiful sight he had ever beheld, and followed his avian guide.

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*Magnificent, are they not?* Fawkes asked Harry.

Harry could not help but agree. The pair perched atop the largest of the three pyramids on the Giza plateau. Though he knew about the pyramids, seeing them for the first time drove home the simple fact that textbooks could not adequately describe these massive structures.

Looking down, with his powerful eyes, Harry could easily make out the noseless sphinx, staring due east, awaiting the rising sun. *The sphinx I met had a larger head than that one. Proportionally I mean.*

Fawkes regarded him. *A long time ago, the head was the correct size for the body. Every time a king-god wanted his face carved into it, the head by necessity became smaller.*

Harry looked around at the other two nearby pyramids. *They are indeed impressive. How they were built so long ago, I'll never know.*

Fawkes turned to face him, his head tilted onto one side. *Just look.* he said.

*Look? Look where?* asked Harry.

*Not where. When. Focus on then, not now.* Fawkes' song betrayed his amusement.

Confused, Harry looked down at the weathered stones beneath his feet. How was he supposed to focus on then? He wondered what Fawkes meant.

The stone beneath his claws showed its age. He could see the erosion patterns on the face of the slab. Harry tried to imagine what it looked like before it became so weathered, and almost fell over in surprise when the stone flickered and appeared newly quarried.

Harry spun his head around and looked at the scene. No longer was it a tableau of the late twentieth century. Harry could see thousands upon thousands of workers below, slowly but methodically sheathing the pyramids in limestone.

Harry focused again, imagining what the pyramids looked like halfway through their construction. Again there was a flicker, and Harry was perched on air, looking down at the workers as they painstakingly positioned the quarried stone, forming what would be a massive chamber deep in the bowels of the pyramid.

Harry's eyes swept over the scene below, fascinated at the almost ant-like activities of the workers. A single figure momentarily caught his attention, standing next to a seated individual who was obviously the pharaoh. A delegation was presenting a proposal to the pair.

The man who Harry was focused upon was tall, robed, and lean. What caught Harry's attention was the creature sitting on his shoulder. A brilliant gold and silver phoenix sat preening himself as his master listened to the presentation.

For a long time did Harry watch the proceedings. He watched as the vast work gangs were organised into smaller groups with almost military coordination. A single worker could be followed from hauling a particular stone slab from the Nile to placing and fitting that slab on the pyramid.

*Interesting how a simple and unremarkable man can be part of something that has outlasted empires.* came Fawkes' disembodied song.

Harry forced himself to focus on the present, and again faced Fawkes. *That was amazing. I have never seen anything like it. The scope, size and organisation of just the army of workers was simply breath-taking.*

Fawkes fluffed his scarlet and gold feathers. *A monument stands here, supposedly for a god-king. In fact it is a monument to every worker who contributed to it. They are unnamed and forgotten, yet without each and every one, this would not exist.*

Harry sat and thought of the anonymous masses, on the backs of whom these amazing constructions had been formed.

The man for whom they were created has his name associated with them, yet didn't raise a finger in their construction.

With a start, Harry realised that it was the same with Voldemort. His Death Eaters were the real villains, performing acts that build a palpable aura of evil over the entire wizarding world, yet they are anonymous.

The seeds of a plan to cripple the Dark Lord germinated in Harry's mind. He looked deep into the eyes of his guide. *Do you have anything else to show me?*

With a look of anticipation, Fawkes silently launched into the night air. Harry spread his wings and followed.

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Once more, Harry followed Fawkes into the sky. The pair soon left Egypt behind, flying towards the west across northern Africa. The desolate sand-choked landscape below quickly passed, and soon they were winging their way across the Atlantic Ocean.

Harry watched with amusement as the sun seemed to rise in the west. The two phoenixes had flown so fast that they had caught the day. Again, the vast body of the Atlantic was stained red. The beautiful sight brought back the memories of that evening. Though in his phoenix form Harry's emotions were less sharp, the ache of rejection and betrayal by his friends still pained him.

Fawkes gave a musical trill, dispelling the pain. The song banished the negative emotions from Harry's heart like a clearing fog.

For long minutes Harry and Fawkes sped over the deep blue water. Suddenly, the water was replaced by land, and the thin strip of land joining the two American continents flashed below. Then, just as suddenly, the deep blue water below was now the Pacific Ocean.

Fawkes steered the pair towards a single island. As they flew overhead looking for a landing place, Harry could make out several stone heads. Fawkes alighted on one.

*What on earth are these?* Harry asked Fawkes.

*All that remains of a small civilisation. Muggle-wisemen have pondered the meaning of the statues, but in truth, have no idea.*

*What happened?*

Fawkes almost sighed. *Those who lived here were ruled by wizards. A wizard-king was insulted, took offence at something trivial, and refused to help his people-subjects when they needed him. They built the statues in an effort to appease the wizard-king, but in vain.*

Harry stared at his guide. *They died out?*

Fawkes looked sad, his dark eyes showing his deep regret. *Yes. Then, without their people-subjects, so did the wizard-kings. So much was lost, knowledge and talent both. All because someone powerful couldn't see past his own pride.*

Harry shimmered, and returned to his gaunt, human form. He ran a skeletal hand over the rough stone, worked by many desperate and powerless people. He turned to face Dumbledore's familiar.

"I need to forgive what others have done to me? I don't know if I can, Fawkes. I honestly don't know if I can."

Fawkes just perched silently on the head of one of the statues. His dark eyes regarded Harry with sorrow and sympathy.

Harry took a deep, quivering breath. "You are right. What if Voldemort manages to gain more power while everyone is divided about trying to find me. I need to forgive them, and help them work together."

Fawkes gave another musical trill, sending shivers of delight down Harry's spine. The Scarlet and gold bird spread his wings and took off.

Harry grinned, crouched and leapt into the air. He blurred briefly, then followed once more.

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Two red blurs streaked across the bright blue sky. Harry and Fawkes had sped across the Pacific, and had started to fly across the island continent. The harsh Australian desert flowed below them. A massive sandstone monument attracted Harry's attention momentarily, but they had flown on, and Uluru had disappeared over the horizon.

The power of suggestion is enormous. Many people, magic or not, have believed things that were false. Fawkes said.

Harry looked around. The two phoenixes had landed and perched on a tree in what looked like the middle of a scrubby desert. Red sand and clay covered the baking land from horizon to horizon, broken only by some spiny grass and the occasional bush. *There don't appear to be many people here.*

Fawkes gave him a look filled with amusement. *Then look at when there were.*

Harry would have blushed had he been human. He focused on the tiny bones on the ground, willing himself to see them when they belonged to a living being.

The now familiar blurring occurred, and Harry watched a solemn scene. A ring of naked, dark-skinned men sat in a circle, a fire going in the middle. The men all had paint of various colours and patterns decorating their skin. One elder, obviously the leader, spoke at length at a much younger man, who looked dejected and defeated. With a flash of insight, Harry understood that he was watching a trial.

The elder came to a decision, and pointed a fragment of bone at the accused. A look of terror and despair crossed the young man's face, and he stood and ran out of the ring.

The warrior-youth will die soon. Said Fawkes, sadly.

How? They did not cast a spell on or at him, and no one looks like they are going to follow and attack him.

In this culture, if an elder-shaman points a bone at you, you will die. The belief is so deep, that nothing could convince the warrior-youth otherwise.

Harry watched the retreating figure. *Nothing can stop it? Nothing can prevent him dying?*

No. The natives of this land are remarkable. Their tolerance for heat and cold is beyond any other man-race in the world. They can survive for days without water, food and rest in this place, when anyone else would die in hours. For tens of thousands of summers, they have lived in perfect harmony with this land. They are strong, tough and honourable. Yet their belief is so strong, that a perfectly healthy warrior-youth will die

within days if he believes he will die.

Harry's vision blurred and again looked at the small pile of bones on the desert floor. *Belief can kill. Even when it is wrong.*

Yes, even when wrong. You believe your friends still think you guilty. That will cause you to risk everything, even your life.

They do think I'm guilty, they tried to capture me.

My link to my Lord-master allows me to understand his emotions, if not his thoughts. He no longer believes you guilty, and if my lord-master doesn't believe it, soon, no one will.

For long moments, Harry pondered Fawkes' words. He thought back to what he had been shown over the course of the evening, and tried to bring together what he had learned.

I know what I need to do, Fawkes.

There is just one last thing you need to experience, please come with me before making your decision.

Harry watched as Fawkes leapt into the air one final time. He spread his blood-red wings, and followed, to one final and important lesson.

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Faster and faster, Harry and Fawkes flew across the globe. Harry had no idea how fast he could fly, but Fawkes kept steadily accelerating.

Faster than could be registered, landmarks sped beneath them. The Himalayas were a brief blur. The Pacific Ocean, very little more than a deep blue flash.

Still faster did they fly. Harry watched as the sun rose and set, rose and set then rose and set once more. Through it all, Harry's joy of flying threatened to make his heart explode with happiness.

With a twist of his wings, Fawkes minutely changed their course, and now the two phoenixes flew around the world on a different angle. Harry caught his breath as different countries and continents flashed below. For a few minutes, the pair were flying around the world over the poles. Harry thought the sensation of heat at the equator and cold at each pole was curiously satisfying.

Flying at a substantial fraction of the speed of light, Harry let his mind open up to the new sensations flooding him. Concepts he had never thought of coursed through the newly opened pathways in his mind. Memories of his life flashed to his attention, before being replaced by others.

Harry could plainly see his mother's smile of joy at his birth, and her amusement at his father's embarrassing fainting spell at the news. Clear as if he was there, Harry could suddenly see his father swing him high above his head, singing a children's ditty about Quidditch.

Another memory flashed forward, and now Harry watched as his mother carefully charmed a star to sit on the top of an enormous Christmas tree.

More and more memories flooded Harry's consciousness. The feeling of being loved was all encompassing; he was permeated by it. Harry felt nothing but this sensation he once thought did not exist.

Harry's attention was blinded by the euphoria, and he didn't notice Fawkes drift closer. The feathered tips of Fawkes' wings brushed against Harry as they sped round the world twice a second.

The shock of the physical contact snapped Harry's attention back to current events. Gently, Fawkes caressed Harry's body, sending unique signals to Harry's overworked mind.

Without realising it, Harry responded to Fawkes' ministrations. Slowly, gently, they touched, caressed and tickled each other.

With the speed of a dam bursting, the two phoenixes wrapped their wings around each other. Their plumed, sinewy necks entwined. Over and over they rolled in the air, hunger and desperation fueling their frenzied coupling.

Fawkes had kept presence of mind enough to enact one final spell before releasing the last of his inhibitions. With a massive retort, the two birds disappeared from over the Antarctic wilderness, and appeared in Dumbledore's office.

Harry didn't notice. The sensual and erotic feelings threatened to overwhelm him. Without any remorse or fear, Harry let himself fall into the beautiful and loving embrace of his avian lover.

Fawkes screamed his ecstasy as he covered the phoenix-wizard with love. The unearthly sound brought shivers of delight to Harry, pushing him over the edge of his own release.

For the first time since the creation of Hogwarts, the voices of two phoenixes rose in shared joy. For kilometers all around, plants bloomed, trees burst into bud and leaf. People stopped still, luxuriating in the sensations the phoenix song brought them.

A celebration of life erupted all around the castle, each and every person feeling nothing but joy and a sense of peace.

In Dumbledore's office, the song continued. Dual songs came from one feathered ball. Pure emotion burst forth, and both phoenixes joyfully erupted into flame.

Harry had never dreamed of such feelings. Still trembling in the afterglow of his coupling, the sensation of cleansing fire pouring forth from within was indescribable. The bright, burning fire raced through the pair, emerging from their eyes, their mouths, from their skin.

Each feather transformed into a finger of flame. In seconds there was only a large pile of ash on the headmaster's floor.

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Darkness. Void. Silence.

Harry floated in absolute contentment. Vague recollections of his previous life could not intrude on his feeling of total peace and safety.

After what felt like both centuries and no time at all, a voice caught his attention.

*Come, it is time*

Harry opened his eyes, and the world rushed back.

Harry pushed his head through the ash. The familiar surrounds of the headmaster's office seemed out of proportion to what he remembered.

Harry crouched, preparing to jump out of the confines of the ashes pile, but realisation dawned.

He was a chick!

He was a featherless, baby phoenix!

Harry managed to stumble out of the ash. He looked over himself, shocked. Bald, skinny and tiny, there was no disputing it, he was a baby.

Harry desperately brought to mind his own human form, and forced himself to transform. He looked down at himself, heaving a sigh of relief when he discovered he was still a sixteen-year-old when in his human form.

Harry looked down at the pile of ashes, and watched as Fawkes' head also emerged.

*You changed quickly, lover.* came Fawkes' song, now high pitched and immature.

"Thank you Fawkes, for everything." Harry said sincerely. "But I need to go now. You have shown me what I need to do. When I am done, I will have fixed things for everyone."

Baby Fawkes stumbled as he emerged from the ashes. *Then go, and knowthat all my love goes with you.*

"Thank you again, and I will see you soon." said Harry. He transformed once more, his bright red feathers gleaming once again in the firelight. With a single beat of his wings, Harry left the office, no longer in pain, no longer running from the world.

Fawkes sighed and turned back to the pile of ashes and waited.

It was not long before one last head rose from the ashes. A true baby phoenix turned its head to and fro examining its surroundings.

Fawkes gave a trill of joy. No matter what species, fatherhood was always a special thing.

Dumbledore lead the downcast and depressed group up the stairs to his office. On entering, the headmaster stopped dead in his tracks.

A half-grown Fawkes was cooing over another phoenix. A baby phoenix.

Albus Dumbledore, the most powerful wizard on the planet, fainted.

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