

Prequel (sort of) Fated Fantasies

*The Awakening
of Magic*

By Holly Oliver

The Awakening of Magic

Tiberius and Harvey

Prequel (sort of) Fated Fantasies



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The Awakening of Magic (Fated Fantasies Prequel (sort of))

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Table of Contents

[Authors Note](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Prologue](#)

[Chapter One](#)

[Chapter Two](#)

[Chapter Three](#)

[Chapter Four](#)

[Chapter Five](#)

[Chapter Six](#)

[Chapter Seven](#)

[Chapter Eight](#)

[Chapter Nine](#)

[Chapter Ten](#)

[Chapter Eleven](#)

[Chapter Twelve](#)

[Chapter Thirteen](#)

[Chapter Fourteen](#)

[Chapter Fifteen](#)

[Chapter Sixteen](#)

[Chapter Seventeen](#)

[Chapter Eighteen](#)

[Chapter Nineteen](#)

[Chapter Twenty.](#)

[Chapter Twenty-One](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Two](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Three](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Four](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Five](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Six](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Seven](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Eight](#)

[Chapter Twenty-Nine](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[The End.](#)

[Meet the Family.](#)

[Thank You](#)

[Follow Me Links](#)

[Other Books](#)

[Coming Next](#)

Authors Note

Holly Oliver

Hello lovely readers, and thank you so much for being here.

Just a quick note from me to explain the back story for this particular book, especially when many of you were expecting Elliot and Thaddeus's story.

I have been hard at work on the Fated Fantasies series, learning and growing as a writer in every way imaginable, when I was asked to take part in Stormy Glenn's ManLove Fantasies.

I tossed and turned with ideas, but one burning question kept coming up from readers and friends alike – how did the Array come to be?

It was in the process of pondering this notion when Tiberius and Harvey shared their story with me. The short version of 6k words was available as part of ManLove Fantasies, but it refused to end there. And before I knew it this book was finished, and I was compelled to share.

I am in the process of revising and rebranding the Fated Fantasies stories and I plan to have Elliot and Thaddeus's tale out to you all as soon as I am happy with where their story is.

At the same time, I am working on a "secret squirrel," and completely unrelated story, and Freddy and Archie is being revised and given some fresh consideration.

In the meantime – I hope you enjoy my first foray into Mpreg and the beautiful tale that Tiberius and Harvey have to tell.

Find a Spark of Magic Every Day

Holly

Dedication

This one was written purely and simply from a place of curiosity. I would like to dedicate it to the readers who believe in my stories, and who keep turning up in all manner of ways to support me.

Mum, I promise one day I'll stop pestering you with questions.

To Phil, for being a constant support and always checking I'm doing my homework.

My incredible beta readers, Megan, Trudi, Kalinda, and Ruthy.

The best damn editors a girl could ask for, Jen and Lynnette.

And to every author who sits to write who dares to ask - what if?

I see you, I hear you, and you inspire me.

Prologue

Helena

It was sometime in the 1800s when Helena first met the most unusual man. The youngest of the Ravynbright brothers, Tiberius, had threads attached to him in so many vibrant colors she couldn't help but stare. There was something about them that captivated her, and she was filled with an unshakeable urge to do whatever it took to see them come into fruition.

Tiberius's soul animal, who went by the name Chester, surged gently beneath Tiberius's skin. Helena sensed an element of unease in him, that she couldn't place. They met, when Tiberius's father, Theodore, had come to Helena's clan with some ridiculous notion of having his family's hoard hidden away in one of the many secret clifftop caves in the DeMasque territory.

Who ever heard of a family hoard?

Safely tucked away in a small off-the-map settlement in one of many coastal towns that made up the United States, Helena's clan was close enough to Massachusetts to have been impacted by the unspeakable acts of the past, but too far away to have worried themselves into the hills.

Let's not digress... the threads that clung to the long-haired man were shimmering in every color of the rainbow, which was odd in itself. There was a magic in them that Helena knew she had to help solidify. The Fates had an impeccable way of allowing for free will, so nothing was set in stone, but they clung like a promise in the air around Tiberius.

Helena's father, Hardinger, was for want of a better word, mortified at such a request. The Ravynbright clan was not exactly known for making what could be considered very dragonish decisions, and Helena's father was determined his clan wouldn't be party to any of their outlandish ideas.

For some inexplicable reason, Helena knew they needed to be allowed to pursue their obscure way of life – for now at least. Behind

closed doors she convinced her father it was the right thing to do, not necessarily forever, but for now.

Despite what Helena lacked in years, her father had come to learn to trust her instincts, and in the end he begrudgingly agreed. In exchange, Helena acquiesced to take over the homestead in Wyvern, and keep watch until such time as she was confident the awe-inspiring threads had reached fruition. Only then would her father be able to renege on his agreement with the obscure Ravynbright King.

For many years Helena sat and waited, watching over the poor brothers as they served their time guarding the family hoard on the clifftop - decade after decade. One morning she woke with the strangest feeling in the pit of her stomach. The Fates were moving, and fast. There was no time to waste, and Helena set about making her preparations. All she could be sure of was a guest would be arriving in the next few days, and their appearance would change everything.

As Helena set about preparing the master suite for her guest, she hummed a happy tune, one she had heard a million times throughout her life, and one she would hear a million times again before her final breath - "How To Tame A Dragon."

In the course of the days that followed, Helena watched the most extraordinary story of love and magic blossom before her eyes. Unbeknownst to him, the choices her fated guest made on those momentous days would change the course of the history of magic as we know it, and with his arrival, the potential for those remarkable threads would come to realization.

Chapter One

Harvey

“Can I get you anything to drink?” Harvey called.

“I’m okay,” the little redhead angel replied.

The cacophony of noise radiated through Harvey’s head. Veronica was merrily decimating yet another classic on her violin. Harvey rubbed his creased brow, willing the ache to ease.

Surely, she must be almost finished.

After a particularly strangled note, the clamor came to an abrupt stop.

Ahhh, sweet silence.

“Am I doing better?” Veronica asked, her voice twinkling into the silence.

Nope.

“Of course you are, sweetie. You’re improving every lesson.”

She’s not. In fact, I swear it’s getting worse, his hedgehog chattered into his mind.

Shhh, not helpful.

“You’re funny,” she laughed. “I much prefer drawing, to this,” she said, lifting her violin and plonking it down against the chair.

“What do you draw?” Harvey asked, glad for a moment of respite from the noise.

Veronica opened her jacket and pulled out a battered book. She flipped through the pages and showed him a sketch of him playing his lute at the fair a few months ago.

“Veronica,” he breathed, flicking through the well-loved pages. “These are beautiful.”

“Do you really think so?” she murmured, blushing, and quickly stowing her book away in her coat.

“Of course, why are you keeping that kind of talent hidden away?”

“Ma says drawing will get me nowhere.”

Poor child.

“Hmmm,” Harvey mumbled quietly.

She has such a gift.

“You won’t tell, will you?”

It’s a damn shame. These parents...

“Of course not. It’ll be our secret,”

...have a lot to answer for, he silently fumed.

“If you could do anything, Veronica, what would it be?”

“I’d be a famous artist,” she mused, her eyes twinkling. “People would come from all around so I could draw them, and I’d be happy every day of my life.”

Wow. Look how her face lights up.

“Sounds like a fine dream. What stops you?”

“I just... don’t wanna disappoint Mama,” Veronica replied, hiding her glistening eyes. “She says to have a good life, I have to be... accomplished... to find a... husband. Ick, blech. Apparently, being able to play an instrument is part of that.”

“I’m sure if you...” Harvey stopped. *Don’t give her false hope.* “Keep at it. You may just get there one day.”

“Doubt it,” she muttered. “But I can dream, I s’pose... What about you, Mr. Harvey? What would you do?”

“Considering I’ve only left Erinaceus once, I’d love to visit the sea. Oh, and ride a dragon, of course,” he said. *Where did that come from?*

“You’re silly, Mr. Harvey.” Veronica laughed. “Everyone knows dragons aren’t real,” her sweet giggle chimed through the lounge. “The rest sounds lovely, though,” she mumbled quickly, fidgeting with the hem of her jacket.

“You’re right as usual, Miss Veronica, but you know that’s the beautiful thing about dreams... They don’t always have to be possible, but they give you something to cling to on a dreary day, don’t you think?”

“I like that,” she said with a grin.

“Well,” Harvey said, louder than he intended. “Shall we finish our lesson early today, so you can hide away and draw some more?”

“Yes, sir,” Veronica replied, her face beaming.

“Right then, once more from the top, and you’re free.” Harvey rallied his best smile, preparing for the onslaught.

The nightmare noise was back in full force in a matter of seconds. Harvey kept his smile fixed firmly on his face, dutifully tapping along to the sounds she made while jiggling side to side. If she glanced up at him, she would see a proud teacher enjoying her performance.

Make it stop, his little critter groaned.

Not long now, Harvey replied.

After Veronica had finished the song, she almost threw her violin into her case. Excitement flooded her features as she ran out the door, yelling, “thanks, Mr. Harvey, you’re the best.”

“Have a lovely afternoon, Veronica. See you in a few days.”

Harvey fumed. *That poor girl, fancy having to hide something so important from your own parents.*

It’s the culture here, surely, you’ve noticed. Jonathan, Tim, Terry, Maggie. They all have other unique talents, but their arrogant parents force them to come here day in and day out.

It’s baffling.

Harvey forced the nagging thoughts from his mind. He was having a hard enough time getting through his days without adding the unfairness of the world to the mix.

* * *
_ _ _ _

Harvey woke with a throbbing heaviness in his head, and the sun beaming through his little cottage windows. Yawning and lazily stretching, his mind was still foggy with the remnants of sleep. He watched the light dance across his bedspread, puzzle pieces filtering down through his addled mind until he jumped up with a start.

“Dammit! I’ve slept in... again,” he muttered, dragging his heavy limbs out of bed, all the while wishing for just five more minutes. His first student would be arriving very soon, and he hated getting caught with his pants down.

Harvey took care of the usual morning matters with a “bah humbug” attitude. He pulled on his typical tailored pants, tucking in his singlet before throwing on his favorite shirt for good measure. He splashed chilly water across his face, rinsed his mouth, and stomped to the kitchen, whipping up a small fire and put a pot of water on to boil.

May my coffee be strong enough to survive today.

His mind recoiled at the memory of Jonathon’s last rendition of “How To Tame A Dragon,” and he shuddered.

I swear, if I have to listen to one more child assault a musical instrument and decimate another timeless treasure, I might lose my mind. For good measure, I’m tempted to break every musical contraption in Erinaceus.

He strolled into his room to make his bed, distracted by his reflection in the cracked mirror. He gently rubbed at the deep shadows that clung under his blue eyes and knew that deep within, his soul was as weary as his body.

Harvey was a “yes man” through and through, a pattern of behavior he had fallen into at a tender young age. But one of the benefits of his nature was that his mask was strong, and he never reneged on his commitments no matter how shattered he felt.

What a blessing, grumbled his hedgehog.

The children of Erinaceus count on me to guide them in their musical journey. But in truth, without them my days would be barren and dull. Without them, I’m nothing! I’m doing this for them and trying to hold onto my last remaining shred of sanity...

Resolution fluttered through him and then fell away as he carefully placed his large wire-rimmed glasses over his tired eyes. He ran his fingers through his scruffy sandy blond hair and put on his favorite navy-blue hat, nestling it on top of his tender head.

It had been a long frigid winter: the gray, bleak days did nothing for his increasingly desolate mood. Harvey clung to the hope that he might get out of town for a few days. *A month would be better.*

He had expected that as the seasons changed, he might feel a renewed spark for his life, but as the days grew longer and the leaves of the trees began to bud and spring to life - he only grew increasingly disillusioned and frustrated.

I just need a holiday: a cold beer, a nice meal, and a warm body to share my bed.

A sharp rap on the door reminded him that this was not the time for daydreams. There was work to be done, kids to be taught - or endured as the case may be.

He slapped a smile on his face and marched to the door, letting Jonathon in with a tip of his hat. The young man towered over Harvey these days, despite only just turning fifteen. Harvey knew he wasn’t tall to begin with, but this kid must have giants in his genetics. “Welcome, welcome,” Harvey greeted him.

Jonathon grunted. His meaty hands gripped the violin case as if it were a lifeline.

Harvey took a seat and waited for the inevitable. Jonathon quickly began to regale Harvey with his usual upset. He was blabbering on about some school concert.

“I keep telling her I need to practice! She just yells at me – be better! Mr. Harvey, we all know I’m no good at the stupid violin. Will you talk to her for me, tell her what a nightmare it’ll be?”

Jonathon’s eyes implored Harvey to answer, but he was simply not in the mood to be reassuring.

I haven’t even had my coffee yet.

“I’ll speak with her, Jonathon.”

Not that it’ll do any good.

“But right now, why don’t you set yourself up, and I’m going to finish making a drink.”

The groaning and squeaking from the lounge ground down Harvey’s last nerve. But the poor kid who was forced to come wasn’t to blame.

His damn mother, though...

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After two grueling hours, Jonathon’s lesson had finally finished, and Harvey was sitting in the blissful silence once more.

I can’t keep doing this day in, day out...

Maybe we should go away then, his helpful hedgehog chattered. *We’ve sat here all winter having our eardrums assaulted and I for one, wish to visit the sea. It’s been so long.*

The sea? Why does that keep cropping up?

Oh, we have lovely dreams about staying by the ocean, fishing, and meeting new people, don’t you remember?

Obviously not, Harvey replied.

An unexpected and urgent knock at the door disrupted Harvey's silent chatter.

What now? Please gods, tell me I haven't forgotten another student was coming? I'm not in the mood.

Harvey stomped to the door to open it.

"You..." a grumpy, round, scruffily dressed woman with wild wiry brown hair screeched, jabbing at Harvey with a stubby finger. "How dare ya tell my son he ain't good enough to enter the school show..." she pushed past Harvey, slamming the door behind her before continuing her little rampage. "What do we pay ya for if not to make him *better*?"

"Ah, Mrs. Jones, always a pleasure. Please won't you sit down?" Harvey tried to muster a smile and gestured with a bow for his *guest* to take a seat.

"I'll not sit. I demand an expl'nation for your insult to my boy. Ya must be jealous, that it?"

"Mrs. Jones, I can assure you, I said nothing to insult Jonathon. If I can be frank, he would have preferred to play the flute. So, he isn't putting in the work. Possibly hoping you'll allow him to change instruments."

"Not puttin' in work..." Mrs. Jones was getting more irate by the second. "It's ya *job*," she said, her jabby finger at work again. "To *ensure* the boy does the work."

Momentarily distracted by the wobbling of her arm as she assaulted him, Harvey mustered a forced reply. "Yes, Mrs. Jones, I ensure he works diligently for the two hours in my humble abode. After that, I cannot be held responsible."

"So, ya sayin' this's my fault?"

"I said no such thing, Mrs. Jones. I merely stated that my reach is limited, and perhaps he simply doesn't have an affinity for the violin?"

"So, ya *did* tell him he wasn't good enough!" she shrieked, and Harvey was developing a nasty headache.

“Mrs. Jones! Sit and listen.” Harvey’s clipped tone startled the agitated woman. She sat.

“Jonathon simply does not *enjoy* the violin. Yet he comes twice a week for two hours and works his fingers to the bone. I would *never* tell a child they were no good, despite the statement’s truth. So, if you won’t allow him to change instruments, nor will you allow him to practice at home... likely because you can’t stand the racket he makes. How can I be held responsible for that?”

“Well, if ya won’t help him, then I don’t see the need to pay,” she snapped, promptly standing, jabbing Harvey one last time for good measure, and she left, slamming the door behind her.

Harvey stood blinking at the vibrating door, his ears still ringing. He began to twitch, his hands gyrating. With a tight jaw and clenched fists, he stormed over to his desk, scattering tidy stacks of paper to find a fresh piece of parchment.

This is the final straw, he fumed. Scribbling furiously, he wrote.

All lessons are canceled effective immediately.

I am out of town until further notice.

Have a lovely silent summer.

Harvey

He enthusiastically nailed the sign to his front door, banging it shut as he marched inside.

I’ve given these ungrateful people the best years of my life. I smile and nod. I help at school events. I endure their untalented children, hanging onto the hopes that a prodigy will walk through my door... They pay me a pittance. Demand the world, and for what?

Where are we going? His hedgehog almost whispered.

To the sea, my little friend, to the sea.

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