

The Factory Duel

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The sun rose over the horizon, the men's feet fell on the divide between night and day, grinding the gravel beneath their boots. They glared at each other across the yard of the cement factory, wands drawn and pointed at the ground.

"So you're going to go through with this?" asked the first, with black, lightless eyes enveloped by a dark shadow. He held his wand loosely, almost mockingly. "Do you think you can actually kill me?"

"Probably not," admitted the second. He gripped his wand firmly, raising it before him, pointed at his adversary's chest. "You're quicker and more skilled. More talented." He gave a faint half smile. "You've got every advantage bar two."

The first man pursed his lips as he considered his words. "Oh?" he sneered simply. "Foolishness and a death wish?"

"Hardly," said the second, rolling his eyes, and then his torso as a jet of scarlet light flashed past, missing by a hair. He looked back to see the first man's wand raised, pointed at his head and already moving as it produced a second burst of scarlet. The second angled his wand in a parry, blocking and dispelling the jinx. "So you've added underhandedness and how to get even the slightest advantage to your list," he groaned. "Great."

"Hardly," echoed the first. "My willingness to take any advantage has always been there. You've just either been oblivious to it, or turned a blind eye. You'll have to take it seriously if you wish to limit your injuries to just such blindness."

The second swallowed and gripped his wand tighter in his sweaty hand. "I dunno, I was kind of hoping to come out of this unscathed," he quipped, blocking or dodging several more bursts of light, stepping back as his aggressor advanced swiftly.