

## Chances Guess Who Just Got Back Today

Harry James Potter took a long drink of his Pina-Colada and sighed happily. He stretched out on his sun bed to gaze happily at the beach before him. His eyes surveyed the scene with a casual ease, seeing everything, checking for threats. Seeing none, he touched his sunglasses and admired a scantily clad lady as she walked past.

He could tell that she was checking him out, his muscled form had attracted plenty of attention on his holiday, especially when combined with his bright green eyes and unruly hair that begged for someone to come and tame it. He didn't care though; he wasn't in the mood for a casual relationship. If he was to be honest, his first. Apart from a brief thing with Cho that had been more about mutual comfort than passion, and he had never had a full relationship.

Voldemort had been defeated at the end of Harry's sixth year. The prophecy had come true, and Harry had done what he had been born to do. Win.

As the Dark Lord had fallen, so too had all the loyal Death Eaters; the Dark Mark ensuring that they were as loyal in death as they had been in life.

There had been a sense of disbelief amongst the members of the Order of the Phoenix, as they realised they had won, and they had all looked on in awe as Harry had approached them.

"I need some time to myself," he half whispered. "I'll be back for school next year." And with that, the 'Boy Who Lived', the 'Man Who Defeated Voldemort' vanished.

The Order had been shocked, but with the shift in power and the knowledge that Harry was the most powerful wizard alive, they accepted his wishes and didn't try to find him.

That of course didn't stop his friends, as they were not yet full Order members, but without a clue as to where he was, they had nothing to go on. Owls came back with their message undelivered.

Harry appeared a second later on the hill outside Godric's Hollow and kneeled in the dirt, in front of his parent's grave. Sirius Black was buried next to them, as he had revealed in his last will and testament.

"What do I do now?" Harry asked them softly. "I've done what I was born for, what else is there? I've got nothing to live for, I've pretty much sacrificed everything, and now I'm lost."

Harry stayed there, on his knees, before he finally fell asleep, and started to dream.

"What do you mean nothing to live for?" a voice demanded.

"Sirius?" Harry gasped, before leaping up and hugging him.

"For a bit," the ex-convict agreed. "People upstairs felt that you deserved someone to set you straight, as a small part of a thank you for everything you've done."

"You're dead?" Harry asked, a little disappointed.

"Yep," Sirius agreed. "But, I've found your parents, and they are so proud of you its unreal. They've been watching you all your life, and hated everything you've been through, and are amazed at what you have become. James has all sorts of plans for the Dursley's when they arrive in the afterlife. I wouldn't be surprised if, after we get through with the lot of them, they become the first family in history to request a change of address downstairs."

Harry laughed at that.

"Anyway," Sirius continued. "It was agreed that I'd be the one to come down and knock some sense in to your thick head."

"What?"

"Harry," Sirius said, sitting down against his own tombstone. "You seem to think that you have nothing left to live for."

Harry nodded in agreement.

"You've got it completely wrong. You've got everything to live for. Harry, you're the most famous person in the wizarding world now, and with Voldie gone, you're gonna have every eligible witch in the world at your feet. It's time for Harry 'I fight the Dark Lord' Potter to retire, and be replaced by

Harry 'I'm gonna have some fun' Potter.

"Besides, think of all the pranks you can play now. Think of what you can do to Snape. Harry, you've got to go back to school next year and take up our mantle. Show that you are a Marauders son."

"But," Harry started.

"No buts, Harry. You've won, you've done it, now it's time to move on and be Harry."

"Be Harry?"

"Yes, be yourself. Be irritable, be happy, be mad, be what ever you want, just be because you can, and not because you have a Dark Lord staring down your back."

"I'm not sure I know how to be myself," the green-eyed wizard admitted quietly.

"You've got the rest of the summer, take yourself to some where far away, and find yourself. Oh, and no feeling guilty. Yes, people died, a lot of them, me included. And while I would love to still be on earth, it's great up there. Prongs, Lil's and I are creating havoc." Sirius's smile suddenly turned a little evil. "You know, if you listen really carefully at night, when the wind is in the right direction, you can hear Voldemort's screams of pain. They don't accept failure downstairs, and Voldie failed big time."

Harry actually managed a smile for the first time.

"I'm serious, Harry. You've done everything that has been asked of you, now it's time for you to have some fun with your life. Remember us Harry, but remember that we all love you, we are proud of you and we will always be watching after you."

Harry smiled slowly and hugged his godfather.

"You can be everything and anything you want now. If you want to be an Auror, you can be. Personally, I think you should be a professional Quidditch player. What ever, you've got enough money now to retire and spend the rest of your life loafing on a beach. It doesn't matter; all you have to do is be happy."

"What about the prophecy, being the Minister for Magic?"

"The prophecy has done what it was designed for, it's defeated Voldie, and the rest is up to you. If you want to be a Ministry man, you can be, if not, don't. You've paid any dues anyone could ask of you, Harry, now it's time to live your own life."

"I miss you," Harry whispered.

"I know, I miss you too. But, we're never really gone."

Harry nodded slowly, a tear dripping down his face. "Will I ever see you again?"

Sirius grinned. "That all depends on the quality of the pranks."

Harry laughed softly.

"I've got to go now, Harry. Remember to enjoy yourself, and make Snape's life a living-hell."

"Bye, Sirius."

"Bye, Harry."

Harry opened his eyes, and smiled. For the first time in ages he felt good about himself. "I'm free," he yelled into the early morning light, and promptly vanished.

Which left Harry having the first proper holiday of his lifetime, on a small beach in Hawaii. A small charm kept him invisible from owls, and he spent the entire time relaxing and sunbathing.

He idly glanced at his watch and froze. The digital numbers in the corner clearly stated what day and month it was. "Oh, bugger," he muttered to himself. He quickly calculated the time differences, and swore again. He remembered last looking at his watch a week ago, and reminding himself that he had to get back to school in a weeks time. He had then promptly forgotten and went for a refreshing swim.

He was due at Hogwarts, for the start of the new term, in five minutes. He thought quickly, most of his supplies from last year would still be there, so he should be ok for the first few days, till the weekend when he could get down to Diagon Alley. With a wave of his hand, he made all of his belongings vanish from the hut he had been staying in, and took a deep breath.

"Ok, as I can't Apparate to Hogwarts, I hope this works."

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Ginny Weasley sat in front of a dresser in her room in the Burrow, examining herself critically.

She moved her hands to her hair, lifting the heavy mass and twisting it up, trying to see what she would look like with shorter hair. With an audible

sigh, she released it, and smiled slightly as it dropped down to mid-back.

Her hair was, without doubt, her favourite feature. Flame red, with the ability to match her mood.

Her eyes were pretty good as well, she decided, clear and a deep brown that seemed to attract attention, not all of it warranted.

Her nose was cute, and she had a nice smile. In all, she was happy with her features, feeling blessed that her freckles were more of a highlight than a blemish.

She stood, and felt part of her good mood evaporate. No matter how she posed, she couldn't hide the fact that she was built like a boy. While Lavender Brown had grown udders, she was cursed with boobs that barely needed a bra, a thin body, and straight legs.

"How the hell are you going to get Harry to notice you when he comes back, when you look like this?" She asked the mirror softly.

The mirror, wisely, decided that this was one time when answering would not be a good idea.

Ginny took a deep breath, and then slowly smiled at herself. "Ok Gin," she said, her voice growing in strength. "You may not have the equipment that certain witches like to display for the world, but damn it, you can use what you've got. You've waited this long, and now Voldemort is dead; there is nothing to stand in your way. You're his friend, you know he's attracted to girls like you - Cho was small as well, so that's not a problem. You just have to make sure you're in the right place when he gets back."

She adamantly refused to even contemplate the idea that he wouldn't be back - he was too strong for that, even if he didn't think so himself. She was quite prepared for him to be upset still, and was willing to help him anyway. Besides, not even Harry Potter could remain miserable through a good snog.

With that final thought, she giggled to herself, and pulled on a t-shirt.

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"Hi Guys," Ginny said, as she wandered into the kitchen. As normal, Ron and Hermione were sitting next to each other, patently ignoring the fact that both of them wanted to jump the other. It was one of the most impressive displays of denial Ginny had ever seen.

"Ginny," Ron nodded, while Hermione smiled at her.

The red-haired girl sat down at the table and took a deep breath. "When Harry gets back, I'm going to ask him out," she said bluntly. Several years of being his friend, being in the Defence Association, and fighting in the final battle had eliminated a lot of her shyness.

Hermione tilted her head, and looked piercingly at her. Slowly, the bushy-haired witch smiled and nodded.

"You're doing what?" Ron demanded.

"Going to ask Harry out," Ginny sighed, having expected Ron's over-protectiveness of her. None of her boyfriends had ever been good enough for him, not that she had really had that many, just Michael and Dean.

Ron took a deep breath.

"Look, Harry is your best friend," Ginny interrupted. "If you can't trust him, who can you trust? I'm more than old enough to date, to kiss, to do what ever."

"What?" Ron asked, looking completely lost.

Ginny frowned, looking at him as if he was insane. "Your over-protectiveness of me, it's time you stopped it. I want a proper boyfriend, and I want Harry."

Ron bit back what he was going to say first, took a deep breath, and tried a second track. "Ginny, I love you. You're my only sister, and the closest sibling out of all of them. But I'm not sure I want you dating Harry."

Ginny opened her mouth to protest, but was stopped as Ron forcefully held up his hand.

"You are more than old enough to look out for yourself these days, you more than proved that during the battle. If you want to date, I won't stand in your way anymore, I'll even be nice to Dean.

"I haven't been the best friend to Harry I could have been. I've been jealous of him, not stood by him, even came close to hating him. Yet during the battle, he stepped in front of that Cruciatius curse Malfoy Senior cast at me, and he took it.

"I realised then just who Harry Potter is, what it means to be him. I was envious, but I'm not anymore. He has lost nearly everything, and me? Charlie got a broken arm and Percy was knocked unconscious. My whole family survived the war - the war that killed his parents and his godfather."

Ginny and Hermione were both looking at Ron in shock; never had they heard him speak like this before.

"So, I am going to be the very best friend I can be, for the rest of my life. I am going to be there for Harry every step of the way, as a loyal friend should be. I am going to ignore the crap that comes from other people, jealous, because I am Harry's best friend.

And part of that, Gin, is protecting him. I am going to make sure that she decides to date after his fame or fortune, but wants him. I want him to be happy.

"I love you," he reiterated, "but I don't know if you are right for him. And, in case you haven't noticed, you've got a boyfriend."

Ginny thought for a second. Her first reaction was to explode into a temper, till she looked into his eyes, and instead of seeing something like his standard jovialness, she saw something she hadn't seen in his eyes before. It was vaguely familiar - an iron hard determination to follow through on his words. It reminded her of the look in Harry's eyes as he had finally approached Voldemort for their last duel.

"I've never been serious about Dean, and I don't think he has been about me. We've just been together in name - I mean we've hardly done anything more than kiss the whole of last year." She said quietly.

"And as being right for Harry, I think I am. I know Harry better than anyone except for you two. I am his friend, and he is mine. Yes, I did have a crush on him, but that crush was */NEVER/* about him being the famous Harry Potter, it was about him being Harry. I have dated Michael and Dean, as I tried to find out if what I have felt for Harry was real.

"I can assure you, that what I feel is very real."

"How do I know you won't say the same about Harry next year?" Ron asked softly, his eyes pinning his sister. "Harry is the loyal type; it's very likely that if he falls in love, it would be for life. Sure, he can be irritable and secretive at times, but deep down, where it counts, he would put up with anything for a family, and I'm not prepared for that to be used against him."

Hermione was looking on with shock at Ron. Like Ginny, she had expected her friend to go into Ginny-Protect mode. Seeing him much more concerned about Harry's emotional state suddenly made her realise that Ron had grown up - as they all had.

Ginny gulped, she hadn't expected this, and had no idea how to handle it.

"I love him," she said softly, looking her brother directly in the eye. "I always have. I've waited all these years for him, and with Voldemort gone, I finally have a chance to have a relationship with him. I don't know what Harry will be like when he gets back, I just know that he promised to be back, and he always keeps his promises.

"Last year, he was totally focused on Voldemort. He said he couldn't have a relationship because of him. Well, that's out of the way now, and I know that he is going to get a load of offers, not just from students. If I don't move now, I will lose my chance, maybe for ever."

"What if Harry is still depressed?" Hermione interjected.

"I'll get him out of it," Ginny said, with complete self-confidence. "I did it last year; I can do it this year. I just want more out of him, and I don't care how long it takes, I'm going to get it."

Ron looked thoughtful for a second. "Ok. I will always love you, Gin, but if you hurt him, I will never forgive you," Ron said, his voice hard. He stood, and walked out of the kitchen. A few seconds later, the sound of a high-pitched scream emanated from his direction, as he took out his frustration by de-gnoming the garden.

Ginny looked shell shocked.

"Not what you expected?" Hermione asked quietly.

"No."

"What are you going to do about Dean?"

"Dump him, gently," Ginny replied. "He deserves me doing it face to face."

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"Where is he," Ron demanded. "He said he would be here."

"I don't know," Hermione replied. "And don't snap at me. I'm just as worried as you are."

"You saw how he was, who knows what he might have done in that state of mind."

"Ron," Hermione said sharply. "Don't even think that."

"I wouldn't bloody be thinking that if the bloody Order hadn't decided to leave him alone."

"Ron," her voice was a little more understanding now. "He'd just defeated the Dark Lord; it was his right to ask for time alone. The Order had to say yes after everything they've done to him."

Ron sighed, "I know. It's just, you know, I never really got a chance to say anything to him. To tell him I was sorry."

Hermione nodded, "I know, Ron, I know."

Ron smiled slightly, and turned his attention to the sorting. The Hat's song was almost boring compared to previous years with most of the Death Eater's children having left, and the remaining one's publicly disavowing Voldemort, the school was very close to being united once more.

The new students looked around eagerly, hoping to find Harry Potter in the crowd, and were disappointed when they saw he wasn't there. To say that Harry was a hero in the wizarding world would now be an understatement. And only his promise to be back on the first day of school had stopped the press from printing headline-grabbing lies about his heroic death.

"Well," Professor Dumbledore said cheerfully, as he stood at the head table. Everyone who knew him remarked on how much younger he looked, as the pressure of dealing with Voldemort had been removed. "Welcome to a new school year."

His welcome was met with every single voice in the school cheering their approval.

He smiled happily. "It does make a change to be standing here and not having to make a comment about Voldemort."

A second cheer went up from the students, one that some of the staff joined in on.

His next comment was interrupted as a small ball of fire suddenly appeared in the middle of the hall. It slowly grew in size, becoming a perfect sphere.

Dumbledore frowned, unsure as to what it was, and if it was from outside, then how could it pierce the wards? In a second, his genial Headmaster persona was dropped, instantly replaced by the second most powerful wizard in the world. He walked down, his wand at the ready. Professor Snape joined him a second later. Ron, Hermione, Ginny, and the other members of the D.A were there shortly afterwards. Everyone had the same thought running through their minds. "I wish Harry was here." He was their talisman, the unbeatable Boy Who Lived, who never gave up no matter what the odds were against him.

The fire seemed to burn brighter for a second, before vanishing in a puff of smoke.

A loud coughing was heard from the centre of the smoke, followed by a voice muttering. "I'm really going to have to work on this smoke problem. That'll teach me to spend too much time on the beach."

"*Acclaro*," Professor Dumbledore said, causing all the smoke to start to clear.

"Oh, it worked," the voice said, as it recognised the clear spell. "Thanks, Professor."

The whole school seemed to gasp at one, as the smoke cleared, to reveal Harry Potter.

The gasp was followed a second later, by the sound of female jaws hitting the ground. Hard.

In his haste to get back on time, Harry hadn't bothered to change, and as such, was still wearing the shorts he had been sunbathing in.... And nothing else.

Similar thoughts flew around the room. Fighting the Dark Lord, then taking some time off, obviously had agreed with Harry. This person in front of them, with the unruly hair and faintly visible scar was now six foot tall, but carried himself with an attitude that seemed more suited to a giant. His green eyes, once hidden behind old glasses, were now hidden behind a stylish pair of sunglasses. His sun tanned-torso spoke clearly of a summer spent pursuing sports of all description, as he was glowing with health and muscles.

The next obvious thing about Harry was that he was smiling happily, as if he was pleased to be back.

Ginny's eyes went wide, and if anyone had been looking closely, they would have seen them dilate. She licked her lips slowly, and complimented herself on her decision to dump Dean.

"Sorry I'm late, Professor."

"Quite alright, Harry. Did you have a good summer?"

"Excellent," Harry grinned. "I'd recommend Hawaii to anyone looking to get away from it all."

A small rising of an eyebrow was the only sign of the surprise that the headmaster felt.

"Potter," Snape sneered, deciding that he should put the boy down now, before his head got too big.

"Sevviel!" Harry called delightedly, and jumped straight into his Potions Professor's arms.

"What are you doing?" Snape growled.

"You didn't say that, that night; didn't it mean anything to you?"

The whole school gaped once more, and focused on the professor.

Severus Snape, spy to the Order of the Phoenix, a man who prided himself on his ability to remain cool no matter what, was flabbergasted.

"Come on, give me another kiss like you did then," Harry cajoled, his voice soft and loving.

He looked around wildly, and saw all his colleagues smirking at him, and, for the first time he could remember, blushed furiously.

Harry grinned, and without seeming to move, was out of Snape's arms and had a camera in his hands. He snapped pictures as quickly as he

could, getting the Potions Professor in as many angles as possible.

"POTTER!" he roared.

"Gotcha," Harry grinned happily. "And, unless you want Tonks and Moony receiving copies of these photos, I'd sit back down."

Snape snarled, his face going red, before slowly paling. He glared at Harry and returned to his seat.

Dumbledore stood in place, his eyes twinkling merrily, suddenly realising that what ever had happened to Harry was good, and that the boy seemed determined to have fun this year.

"Err, Harry...did...you...you know, with Snape?" Ron asked, slowly. He had re-holstered his wand, as soon as Harry had appeared, and had watched in disbelief.

"Of course not, I'm as straight as they come," Harry reassured his friend happily. "But I now have pictures of our Professor blushing like a bride."

Harry didn't notice the sigh of relief that swept around the female half of the room.

"Well, I'd hug you, but you're not dressed."

Harry looked down at himself in surprise. "Damn it. This has not been my day. I completely forgot that I was due back at school today, till around ten minutes ago, and have been in a panic ever since."

With a wave of his hand, Harry seemed to blur, before reappearing in a pair of tight blue jeans and a pure white t-shirt. Brown boots appeared on his feet at the same time.

"Better?" he asked Ron cheerfully.

His only response was a deep hug from his best friend.

Harry was released, only to be hugged by a crying Hermione. "We are going to talk later," she sniffed, trying to look mad at him.

"Of course, wait till I tell you what happened this summer."

Hermione smiled at him, "It is good to see you."

"Anyway," Harry disengaged himself smoothly. He shot an impish grin at Ginny, before continuing, "I do seem to have interrupted the speech, and I'm guessing that by the rumbling of Ron's stomach, a lot of people would be much happier if we all sat down and let our illustrious leader finished his words of wisdom."

Dumbledore laughed softly, and nodded. The rest of the D.A. members smiled wildly, and decided to welcome back Harry in person as soon as they could.

"Well," an extremely happy professor continued, as everyone once more took their places. "A few more notices. The Forbidden Forest is still that, forbidden." He tried very hard to ignore Harry's smirk at that. "I have decided that, for the first time in Hogwarts History, the school club, known as the D.A. will be taught as a full subject, and will concentrate on the practical aspects of Defence, while the Defence Against Dark Arts will continue as normal, to be a mainly theory based subject."

Gasps of shock echoed around the hall, for the fourth time that evening. All of the students now knew about the D.A. because the press had made much about how the students, led by Harry, had been key figures in the final battle. The remaining members, those who hadn't graduated, let out a sudden cheer.

"Whoa," Harry's voice easily rose above the cheers; a silent Sonorous charm took care of that. "Quiet!" The D.A members instantly stopped cheering, and looked at Harry. "Thanks," he grinned, before turning to his headmaster. "Who's going to be teaching it?"

Dumbledore's expression instantly put Harry on his guard. The twinkling blue eyes were now so bright, the boy was positive they could have turned the lights out and the room would have kept its brightness.

"You have got to be kidding me," Harry demanded. "Are you insane?"

Some of the students, even though they knew how close the two of them were, gasped as Harry queried his headmaster.

Snape was the second person to realise what Dumbledore meant, and his groan echoed around the hall as he put his head in his hands. This had not been a good day - even though it had started so well, what with Harry still missing.

"I assure you, I am in complete control of my facilities," Dumbledore replied, grinning widely.

"No, you're bonkers." Harry replied.

"Well?" Dumbledore asked.

Harry thought about it for a second, and then nodded once.

"Thank you," the headmaster smiled. He faced the rest of the school once more, who were now looking confused. "I see no need to change the

structure of the D.A, after it has done so well. The teacher for the new D.A. class will be..." he paused for a second, and hid a full-blown laugh, as the student body seemed to lean in. "Harry Potter."

The D.A. members were the first to react, cheering loudly, while Hermione looked stunned. "Not in the history of Hogwarts," she mumbled to herself. Ron and Ginny didn't care, they were cheering with the rest of the students.

After the noise had died down, he continued, "You will find sign-up sheets in your common rooms. Now, a few final words before we eat. Swizzlepop, canary creams, red monkeys." The professor sat down as the food appeared.

Harry dug into the food lustily; he was starving after transporting himself half way around the world.

Opposite him, Ron and Hermione started to argue again, over Ron's eating habits.

Harry turned and caught Ginny's attention, raising an eyebrow, indicating his arguing friends next to him.

"All summer," Ginny mouthed back, instantly understanding where he was coming from.

Harry looked down mournfully at his food, and sighed. He banged his hands loudly on the table. "No more," he said loudly. "I've had enough."

Ron, Hermione, and the others close by turned and stared at Harry, expecting an explosion of bad temper like the previous few years. What they got instead was something none of them would ever forget.

Harry jumped to his feet and stood on the table. The whole school, teachers included, were now silent, watching him.

"Does anyone here, in any year above the third, not know that Ron and Hermione have feelings for each other?" he asked, his voice rose to carry across the four tables.

Complete silence was his only reply.

Harry strode down the Gryffindor table to the end, dancing a little to avoid stepping on any plates. At the bottom, he jumped, landing on the Hufflepuff table. He walked up that, stopped in front of a student. "Susan, what do you think of them two?"

"That they are in love with each other," the quiet red haired girl replied with a smile.

"Thank you," he cried happily. With a magically enhanced leap, he somersaulted backwards, landing on the Ravenclaw table. "Luna, what do you think?"

The blonde girl looked up at him and smiled slowly. "That they are meant for each other," she said loudly, with complete conviction.

Harry raised her hand and kissed it gallantly. "Luna my dear, I adore you." He looked down the Ravenclaw table; "I do hope that no one is calling you names anymore." The threat was unmistakable in his voice.

With a Ravenclaw backing him up, he jumped again, landing on the Slytherin table. The table was noticeable for its absence of Draco Malfoy, who was suffering from a bad case of Death, his punishment for his eager support of Voldemort.

He strolled up the table, and decided to take a huge gamble. "Pansy, Queen of Slytherin," he cried in a loud voice, going on one knee in front of her. "Please, pass on your wisdom to us poor peasants. What do you think they should do?"

Pansy looked at him closely, her bright blue eyes meeting his, before she slowly smiled. "I could like you when you act like this, Potter," she said quietly, so that only her table heard. "I think they should kiss each other and stop this infernal arguing that's driving the rest of us insane."

"Thanks," Harry whispered, before he jumped over her head, and approached the Professors table. Snape was not looking amused, so Harry shot the professor a look that reminded him of the blackmail material the boy held. "Professor Dumbledore!" Harry called.

"Yes, Harry?" Dumbledore's eyes were twinkling wildly.

"You always have words for this sort of occasion, please don't disappoint me now."

Dumbledore climbed to his feet. "I think that when times look dark, the light of love can lead the way forward."

Harry grinned at him, "Perfect." The green-eyed wizard walked back over to the Gryffindor table. He stood at the front, looking down at his housemates, before finding the one person other than himself that had the best insight in to Ron and Hermione. "Ginny," he began taking her hand in his. "They are our best friends. What words do you have for Ron and Hermione?"

"That they should stop denying their feelings and let the rest of us have some bloody peace."

Harry winked at her before glancing at the rest of the table. "Do you agree, Gryffindor?"

The roar of approval was deafening.

Harry finally turned to his two friends, both of whom were shooting daggers at him, while blushing furiously. Next to them, Ginny was killing herself with laughter.

"Now, we have the entire school requesting that you two get together and that you do it now. So, here's the deal. Ron, Hermione loves you, has for

years. Hermione, Ron feels the same way. Now, you can either kiss each other, or I'll take you to the Room of Requirement and lock you in 'till you give in."

Ron and Hermione looked at each other and found the same thing in each other's eyes. Slowly, they leaned in and kissed each other.

The cheer that roared through Hogwarts was louder than when one of the Houses won the cup.

Harry grinned at his two best friends, who were no longer paying attention as six years of hormones were released.

As the feast ended, and with Hermione and Ron still making up for lost time, Harry decided to take care of the new first years. He jumped to his feet, "Gryffindor First Years, follow me."

Harry strode off confidently, fully expecting them to follow. And follow they did.

He took them through the corridors, pointing out some of the more esoteric aspects of the school, till they reached the portrait of the Fat Lady. It was only then that Harry realised he had no clue what the password was. He grinned at the younger students, and to their awe created a small fire circle in front of him. "Ginny," he said into it. A second later, the stunned face of Ginny Weasley appeared in it. "What's the password?" Harry asked.

He could see that she had a few thousand questions for him, but bit her tongue and replied with only, "Voldemort."

Harry smiled his thanks, and his approval of the password, and dropped the circle. "Voldemort," he said to the Fat Lady.

She smiled back at him. "It's good to see you again, Harry. In you go."

Harry entered first; the first years following close behind him.

"Welcome to the Gryffindor common room. Your dorms are up there, and you'll find that your trunks will be next to your beds. If you have any problems, the prefects will be happy to help you out, and if they can't, try me as a last resort. I might not be a prefect, but I can normally sort things out."

Having seen him talk to the headmaster as an equal, and as they knew he defeated Voldemort, they could truly believe this.

"Now, any questions?"

Just about every hand went up as one.

Harry laughed under his breath. "Yes, I am Harry Potter, yes I did fight Voldie, and yes I have been away all summer on a very nice holiday. Any questions that aren't covered by that?"

Most of the hands went down.

"You," Harry pointed to one of them. "What's your name and question?"

"Maggie Bell," the blonde haired girl started.

"Katie's sister?" Harry asked.

"Yes," the girl blushed a little.

"How is she?"

"Err, fine. What I wanted to know is, is Professor Snape really as bad as people say?"

Harry smiled at her. "Worse," he said cheerfully. "But let's make a deal. Every time he does something mean to you, I'll play a prank on him. Then we'll measure how long it takes for him to realise the correlation."

The new students all laughed together, till a shocked voice interrupted him, "Harry!"

"Erm," Harry smirked at them. "I meant to say that Snape is a fine professor who will cause you no problems at all." He followed his statement with a wink, one that the entranced students all grinned at.

"Ok, off to bed the lot of you. You'll get your timetables at breakfast tomorrow. Sleep well."

"Night, Harry," they chorused, and then vanished into their dorms, all chattering about how cool Harry was.

"Now then," Harry said with a smile, moving over to the corner where Ron, Hermione, and a smattering of sixth and seventh years were sitting "Ron, can I borrow Hermione for a second?"

"Sure," Ron agreed, ignoring the displeased look his brand new girlfriend was shooting at him for treating her like a piece of property.

Harry smirked, and reached out and grabbed the bushy haired girl's hand. With a quick tug, he pulled her into his arms, bent her over backwards, and kissed her as hard as he could.



There was complete silence in the group as the group was stunned. Ron was stunned, literally gaping at the two of them, unable to comprehend what was happening.

Ginny gaped along with the rest of the old D.A. members. She could hardly believe what she was seeing, or the feeling of devastation that was coursing through her at seeing Harry kiss someone she knew he loved in one way or another.

Harry broke the kiss, and then smiled at the girl. "Thank God for that!"

"What was that?" Ron croaked.

"The most passionless kiss that could ever be exchanged by two non-blood related people."

Ron blinked, and felt his temper trying to explode.

"Huh?" Only the fact that every other time he'd exploded with Harry in the past, he'd been proven wrong stopped him now.

"I had to know," Harry explained simply. "I had to make sure that there was nothing between us. There's always been this tension between the three of us, maybe Hermione and I might find our love for each other was more than merely platonic, and it's been holding all three of us back. As you can tell from earlier, I think you'll be great together, but we all had to know that there wasn't going to be anything between us. Well, now, I can state, without a doubt, that I love Hermione as the closest thing to a sister I will ever have, and as my best friend."

Ron looked to his girlfriend, who nodded slowly, then smiled at her boyfriend.

"You could have done it another way," Ron said slowly, a smile starting to form. "One that wouldn't have given me a heart attack."

Harry grinned, "I figured that doing it in front of you would mean that you didn't hear about it from someone else, and you'd be able to understand."

"Is this a sign of maturity?" Ron asked suddenly sounding scared.

"I think so," Harry agreed with a smirk.

"Well," Ron said. "I better put a stop to that instantly." He grabbed his girlfriend and repeated Harry's movements; only this time the passion was almost visible as the two kissed.

As they finally broke, Harry said dryly, "I'm glad you stopped there, seeing that's my sister you were mauling.

"Harry," Hermione said quietly. "What the *hell* happened to you over the summer?" The very fact that she swore was notable in itself.

It was a question that Ginny wanted answered as well. The rush of relief that had shot through her when Harry had explained that he thought of Hermione as a sister had been intense, and now she wanted to know how he had changed so much. For the better. She was having trouble keeping focused on his words, as she kept imagining her legs being wrapped around his hard waist. It didn't help that she was sat next to Dean, who had been oblivious, as he sat next to his soon-to-be-ex girlfriend.

Harry removed his sunglasses for the first time, and looked his adopted sister directly in the eye.

"My freedom," he replied simply. "With Voldie and the Death Eaters dead, which, by the way, sounds like a cool name for a band, I thought I had nothing left to live for.

"I've been concentrating on that for so long, that I didn't know what to do with myself. After I Apparated from the battlefield, I went directly to my parents and Sirius graves, and fell asleep. I had a dream about Sirius, and he told me that far from having nothing to live for, I have everything to live for. I'm young, rich, okay looking and have paid any debt that society might want from me.

"He told me that the prophecy was done with, that I had my own life to live, and I can do what ever I want with it. When I woke up, I felt better than I had in years, so I Apparated to Hawaii. I spent the rest of the summer relaxing on the beach, playing with my magic and sorting out whom Harry Potter really is.

"I decided that I was not going to let this opportunity go to waste, and that I was not going to spend the rest of my life sulking, or worse, moping, and I was going to enjoy what ever it is that I end up doing. Be that professional Quidditch, international play-wizard, or Minister for Magic."

All of Harry's friends had huge smiles on their faces, as they realised that their biggest fear - that Harry might become so down heartened and disillusioned that he would either kill himself, or worse, become a second Voldemort, had been vanquished instantly.

"Mr Potter," The stern voice of Professor McGonagall interrupted them. "The headmaster would like to talk to you."

Harry smiled at her, and absently waved his hand in front of himself. A circle of flames appeared in front of him. "Albus Dumbledore," Harry stated, and a second later, the surprised face of the Hogwarts Headmaster was in front of him. "Professor McGonagall said you wanted to talk to me, Sir?"

The ancient headmaster's eyes twinkled merrily. "Perhaps I was a little to literal in my request. I was wondering if you'd join me for supper, I have a few questions."

"Of course sir, I'll be right down."

With a casual wave of his hand, the fire vanished, and Harry jumped to his feet. He flashed his friends a grin, then followed his head of house out of the common room and down to the headmaster's office.

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As Harry left the room, Dean jumped to his feet. "I'd love to stay and chat," he yawned, "But I've been up all day. I'll see you guys later." He paused, and then dropped a quick kiss on Ginny's hair. "Night," he whispered, before walking up the stairs, leaving a frustrated girl behind who really wanted to talk to him.

## Chances What Have I Got To Do To Make You Love Me

As Harry walked into Dumbledore's office, he was surprised to see that it was bigger than normal, with most of the members of the Order of the Phoenix standing around, talking happily.

Harry threw a grin and a wink at McGonagall over his shoulder, and crept silently to a group of them.

"Wotcha, Tonks," Harry exclaimed, right into the metamorphous' left ear.

Tonks jumped nearly a foot in the air, and turned fast, pulling her wand out and preparing to attack. Unfortunately, the young Auror overbalanced, tripped over her own feet, and went flying into Harry.

Her yelp alerted the rest of the Order, who turned as one to see Tonks lying on Harry.

"You know, if you wanted to get horizontal with me, all you had to do was ask," the green eyed wizard smirked. "And I knew you Aurors were adventurous, but doing it at an Order meeting is a little much, don't you think?"

Nymphadora Tonks, who had been in the process of standing, gaped at Harry, then slowly started to blush, till her face resembled a Weasley at their best. A blush that grew even brighter when some of the other members added some ribald comments.

As he had earlier with Snape, Harry seemed to hardly move, yet he was on his feet, snapping away with a camera as fast as he could.

"What are you doing?" A now enraged Tonks demanded.

"Blackmail material," Harry explained happily, "I'm sure a lot of your Auror friends would just love to see you blushing like a school girl."

"What?!"

"I got Snape earlier, now I have you. Don't worry; these pictures will not be given to anyone...yet."

Tonks pulled out her wand, and shouted, "*Accio Camera!*" The Order members present watched, with smiles on their faces, as the camera flew out of Harry's hands.

"That's not very nice," Harry announced with a grin. As Tonks, now over her blush, smirked at him, Harry held up his hand, palm up. "You know, you can keep the camera as a present, as long as I have the negatives."

"*Accio Negatives,*," Tonks tried again.

Harry smirked and let the negatives float out of his hand. He waved his other hand casually, creating a circle of fire between them. As the negatives flew through it, they vanished. "Whoops," the young man grinned.

"Where did they go?" The now purple-haired witch asked.

"Somewhere safe," Harry replied. "Now, let's all get this meeting going. Professor, you said something about supper?"

"Merely a ruse," Dumbledore explained with a smile. "I didn't want the junior members to accompany you."

"Ahhh," Harry said. "Well, you don't mind if I help myself, do you? Travelling several thousand miles always makes me hungry."

"Of course not."

Harry snapped his fingers, and soon started to eat a huge roast beef sandwich that appeared in front of him.

"Welcome, everyone. To be honest, I never thought I would see the day when we would meet, not to discuss the latest horrors from Voldemort, but as friends."

"Come on, Professor," Remus Lupin interrupted with a grin. "Get to the interrogation, that's why we all came here."

The remainder of the Order laughed loudly.

Dumbledore laughed gently along with them, understanding, as always, that something's are always better left unsaid.

"Would you like to be the interrogator?" The Professor asked the Werewolf.

"I'd be honoured," Lupin replied.

Harry watched the byplay with a smile, wondering whom they were interrogating. A second later, he got his answer as a spotlight suddenly fell on him. A wry smile appeared on his face for a second before it vanished, as did any sign of personality.

"Now, Harry," Remus said, sliding around the table, looking for the entire world like a lawyer in a courtroom. "Can I start by asking you to explain your absence from the Order, for the past few months?"

"Potter, Harry James, Commander, 43627," the boy replied in a monotone tone of voice.

"I'm sorry?" Remus said, looking confused.

"Potter, Harry James, Commander, 43627."

"Harry? Are you alright?"

"Potter, Harry James, Commander, 43627."

---

Surprisingly, it was Professor Snape who broke first. He'd lost a lot of his grudges against Harry over the summer, when the boy had defeated Voldemort, and had a grudging respect for the prank he played earlier.

The idea of Harry blackmailing him like that was a very Slytherin one, and it was something that he could appreciate. Then the way he had first caught out Tonks had made him smile inside. It looked like this new Harry Potter was going to be a lot of fun. But what Harry was doing now was the last straw for him. Lupin had said that this was an interrogation, and Harry had gone into interrogation mode. Not even Voldemort himself, when he had tortured Harry for information had gotten him to say anything other than his name, rank, and serial number. The stupid werewolf had got a lot more than he had bargained for, and now didn't have a clue what to do about it.

The first sign of Snape's reaction was a muffled cough, which soon wasn't enough to hide it. He gave in and roared with laughter, a laughter that increased as he realised that he was the only person who had seen Harry like this before, and, as such, knew what was going on.

---

Fred and George Weasley, looked at each other in shock. They were full members now, as well all the Weasley's who were of age. They didn't even know that Snape could laugh.

"Severus?" Dumbledore asked, looking a little concerned that he didn't have a clue what was going on.

Snape tried very hard to control himself, and placed his head in his hands to try and help his recovery. "Lupin said it was an interrogation, so Potter's treating it that way. All you'll get out of him is his name, rank, and serial number. Even Voldie couldn't get anything out of him when he's in this mode. That's what you get for trying to be clever."

A look of immense chagrin slowly over took both Dumbledore and Remus' faces, as they realised they had been out-maneuvred by their own attempts to be clever.

Quick as a flash, Harry's hand jumped out, and his camera jumped from Tonks' hand, and as it flew through the air, a roll of film appeared and leapt into place, before it took several pictures of the two of them. The green-eyed wizard caught the camera, and then threw it in the air, creating another fire circle to send it elsewhere.

"You know," Harry grinned at the two twins. "I'm starting to get an idea for a rival to the wizard cards you get in chocolate frogs."

Fred and George's eyes lit up with unholy glee.

"Fred," George started. "Our co-owner is an absolute genius."

"That he is, George." Fred wiped a fake tear from his face. "It makes you proud to know that your high standards are being kept up after you leave."

Molly Weasley blinked. "You!" she pointed at Harry. "You gave them the money to start this?"

"Of course," Harry replied blandly. "I figured we'd need a few laughs with Voldie running amok, and it's hardly as if I, of all people, need cash."

"Thank you," Molly said with a smile. The twins business was a roaring success, making both of them very rich. The twins had insisted on fixing the Burrow themselves, so that it was now an extremely nice house, although it still had the family feel to it.

Harry shrugged. "Well, the twins insisted on making me a partner, so I've had my investment back many, many times over."

"Okay, Harry," Dumbledore, said. The headmaster's tone had changed to a serious one. "Can you please tell us where you've been all summer, then how you got through the wards when you arrived back."

"As for where I've been, I spent one night at Godric's Hollow, talking to my parents and Padfoot's graves, and then spent the rest of the summer playing with magic and sunbathing in Hawaii."

"Playing with magic?" Lupin asked, sitting back down.

"Yeah," Harry replied. He raised his hands down, and seemed to almost push. As he did, he rose up slowly until he was hovering above the table. "During the final battle, I got hit with a curse that made my brain feel like it was on fire for a second. It seemed to change me a little. I played with it over the summer." He slowly sank back down into his chair.

"What else can you do?" Charlie Weasley whispered, looking at Harry with an expression akin to awe.

Harry smiled, "Oh, a bit of this, a bit of that. Full control over the elements, bake a pie, you know, normal stuff."

"Harry, it's not nice to spring a surprise like that on an old man," Dumbledore said reproachfully. "Are you telling me that you are the first full Elemental in history and that you got the powers from an unknown curse?"

"Well, I didn't know I was the first in history," Harry looked a little grumpy at that. "But, in effect, yes."

As Harry looked around the table, he wished he hadn't sent his camera to his trunk so quickly. *Oh well, there'll be other times*, he thought to himself.

---

The morning started bright and early, which, coincidentally, were the two main things Harry had against mornings. As far as he was concerned, it was still 2AM on his body clock, and while the bright English sunlight might light up his dorm room, but it sure as hell didn't warm it up like the Hawaiian sun did.

He pulled on the same jeans and t-shirt he had been wearing the day before, and tried on his robes. With a sigh, he realised they didn't fit, and were looking a little old anyway. He'd have to ask for permission to go to Madame Malkin's later.

He yawned, and looked around to find that all his dorm mates were still asleep. With a shrug, he left them and wandered down into the common room.

The first years were all up together, and looked like they had been for hours. Harry smiled, remembering what it had been like his first night here, hardly able to sleep for the excitement of knowing that they were going to be taught magic for the first time the following day.

There was a smattering of students from other years, but no sign of the prefects or the Head Girl.

"Ready for breakfast?" Harry asked them.

They nodded eagerly.

"Well, come on then, the first people at breakfast always get the best choice of food."

Like the Pied Piper, Harry led the smaller children through the maze of Hogwarts to the Great Hall. He actually remembered being as small as they seemed now, and knew it would take them some time to relax around him.

As they were still early, the hall was deserted, so Harry decided to sit with them. It had been a long time since he had enjoyed a full English breakfast, so he took advantage to help himself to a huge one.

"I'm still a growing boy," he grinned at the awe-filled faces of the first years around him. "Eat up, the day is always a lot easier to face on a full stomach."

"Harry," one of the girls started. "I heard a lot about Quidditch, but I don't know what it is?"

The green-eyed wizard grinned at her cheerfully. "You're Muggle born?" he asked.

She nodded, looking a little scared, as if she should be ashamed.

"I was brought up a Muggle, and didn't know the difference between a wand and a broomstick the first time I came here."

"But, you're the youngest seeker in over a hundred years," one of the boys stated firmly, as if he were stating that the sun rose each and every morning.

"I know - pure luck and having good genes." Harry smiled, and launched into an explanation both of Quidditch and his first ever match, where he almost swallowed the snitch.

---

Professor Dumbledore was the first teacher into the Hall for breakfast. He had been surprised to hear the laughter coming out the hall this early in the morning, and had quietly entered, sticking to the shadows.

For a second, he couldn't hide a smile of pleasure and relief. He was still very worried about Harry, and knew that a lot of it was his own fault. Harry had been manipulated and pressurised his entire life, and at times, had come very close to breaking. But now, he had an entranced group of first years around him, as he told old Quidditch stories and was looking happy.

---

The Hall filled up rapidly, and Harry eventually stopped talking, so he could enjoy his breakfast.

As breakfast finished, Hermione, in her role as Head Girl, brought over the first years timetables, as well as Harry's.

"Oh no! Double potions with the Slytherins!" One of the first years moaned.

"What's the problem with that?" Harry asked, sounding a little surprised.

"The Slytherin's are evil?" the boy half questioned. "My brother told me all about them."

Harry nodded slowly, trying to decide what to do about this. He felt it was time for the enmity between the houses to end, and knew it was up to him to do something about it. Not that he was being arrogant, it was just that there was no one else powerful enough to get away with what he was going to do.

He hated being the centre of attention, but knew that it was the only way to start what he wanted.

He stood up, and walked to the foot of the Gryffindor table, so everyone could see him with ease. "Can you all see the blonde at the end of the Slytherin table? The gorgeous girl who looks like she should be on the cover of Witch Weekly?" His voice seemed to float around the Great Hall, attracting everyone's attention.

The Gryffindor's nodded, although everyone's eye were now on the girl in question, who was fighting a blush.

"That is Blaise Zabini. She is one of the best members of the D.A. At the final battle, she threw herself in front of a stunning spell, which was aimed at my back. If I that had hit me, the final duel with Voldemort might have turned out very different.

"She is a Slytherin. She is not evil. She is a very good friend of mine, and is a perfect example of someone who is determined to push herself to be the best that she can be. The Slytherin ideals don't say that you have to look down at everyone else, to rule – that was a corruption brought by Voldie and his friends – it's to push yourself as hard as you can, to be the best that you can.

Harry turned his voice down, so that he was almost whispering, in an intimate manner. All the students leaned in to listen to him. "The head of Slytherin house is Professor Snape. Most people here have heard bad things about him, or have experience of it. Some of you probably hate him, as I did for a while. But do you know why the Professor is like he is?"

There was a complete silence in the hall, as if everyone was afraid to breathe and break the spell Harry had them under.

"Professor Snape has been a spy for the Order of the Phoenix since he was eighteen years old. He has had to face the most evil wizard in history time and time again, and has endured more curses than anyone else alive. He sacrificed everything he had, because he believed that Voldemort was wrong and needed to be stopped.

"I picked these two members on purpose, as I could have picked most of the members of their house. The same as I could have picked people from Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, and Ravenclaw. It's time for house rivalries to be put to one side. Voldemort did his best to divide the school, and it nearly worked, but in the end, people like Blaise and the Professor stopped him, and helped save the world."

Harry took a deep breath, and knew that he would need to give a big finish. He concentrated hard and started to float, so that he was 6ft of the ground, then sent a wave of fire around him, so that he was literally glowing.

"The only rivalry I want to see this year is for the Quidditch cup. If I hear about anything else between the houses, I will be disappointed."

The wizard crossed his arms, and slowly sunk to the floor, his flames dying out.

"I really don't want to be disappointed this year," he whispered before turning on his heel and walking out of the Great Hall, leaving nothing but silence in his wake.

---

Professor Dumbledore slowly rose to his feet. He had never been as proud of Harry as he was in that moment. The boy had accomplished more with that speech than the Headmaster had hoped to achieve in the next four years. He didn't quite know what to say: he agreed with everything that Harry had said, and didn't want to take away anything from that speech, but he wanted to give his full backing as well. He smiled, as he realised a way he could do just that.

"Please remember that Mr Potter is a professor of Hogwarts this year, and as such has the power to give and take house points." He left the rest implied.

"Now, might I suggest that you all finish breakfast and move on to your classes?"

The noise level soon rose, as everyone turned to their neighbour and started to talk about what had just happened.

The rest of the Slytherin house looked pretty shocked: with Draco Malfoy dead, along with his two bodyguards, they know longer had to pretend to be something that they weren't.

Dumbledore stood, and started to walk out of the hall next, but paused next to his Potions professor. "You've been given another chance, Severus. I do hope that you take it." The threat, politely phrased as it was, was evident.

---

Inside the hall, Ron turned to Hermione. "Do you think he meant that?"

Hermione nodded, "And Dumbledore backed him up completely."

"What?"

Hermione sighed, she loved Ron completely, but sometimes his ability to turn off his brain irritated her. "He gave Harry carte blanche to do what ever he wants to get the school together. There have been exactly three students who have helped teach a class in the history of Hogwarts. They are normally called student Professors, and basically have the same powers and privileges as a prefect. Dumbledore just gave Harry the full powers and privileges of a Professor."

Ron took a deep breath. "It's going to be hard, but I reckon he's right. Blaise is okay, and I'll bet without Malfoy, they'll be a lot easier to get on with." He grinned suddenly. "At least Harry said we could still have a Quidditch rivalry."

Hermione laughed quietly, and dropped a kiss on his cheek. "Don't ever change, Ron."

---

Harry walked down to Dumbledore's office.

"Harry?" The professor was obviously surprised to see him there.

"I need to go to Diagon Alley," he explained. "I'm not exactly prepared for school."

"Quite," Dumbledore agreed with a smile. He had wondered why Harry hadn't been wearing any robes. "I'll excuse you from morning lessons; be back for lunch."

Harry smiled gratefully. "Am I going to need dress robes this year?" he asked directly.

The professor laughed softly. "There may be a Ball or two."

The boy-who-lived suddenly tilted his head. "Do you want to come with me? I'll show you elemental travelling."

"The ball of flame?"

Harry nodded.

Dumbledore's eyes twinkled excitedly. "Well, I do need some more lemon drops. Let me just tell Minerva."

"I'll wait for you in the Great Hall, sir."

Harry walked out with a smile on his face. It felt good to make friends with Dumbledore again. Their relationship had been strained over the past few years, as Harry had resented the way the professor had hidden information from him, and had manipulated him to become what he was. While he wasn't ready to completely forgive the Headmaster, he understood that Dumbledore had done his best; he was ready to move past it, and not let it run his life.

---

"Minerva," Dumbledore said excitedly into the fire, the floo was connected to her classroom. "I'm going with Harry to Diagon Alley, he's going to take me elemental travelling."

The transfiguration Professor looked amused; for a second she was reminded of Arthur Weasley with a new Muggle invention. "Okay, Headmaster."

He shot a grin at her, and vanished, leaving her with a smile on her normally stern face.

"Professor?" Ginny asked, wondering what was causing the smile on her face – it almost seemed out of place.

"Oh, Harry's showing the Headmaster elemental travelling."

"What is elemental travelling?" One of the Ravenclaw students asked, not going to let an opportunity to learn more pass him by.

Professor McGonagall frowned a little. "No one really knows. The last elemental died over two hundred years ago, and he controlled Earth. Mr Potter seems to travel by Fire, and there hasn't been a fire elemental for nearly a thousand years."

She clapped her hands suddenly, the smile vanishing from her face as if it never existed. "Get back to transforming your cushions into porcupines."

---

Professor Dumbledore walked into the Great Hall, to find that Harry had created a circular space in the middle. "Ready?" he asked.

Dumbledore nodded, his eyes twinkling happily.

"The first thing we have to do is get off the ground," Harry explained, raising his arms.

The professor found himself slowly floating into air, until he was hovering around three feet up. Harry started to float as well, arranging himself in a

seated position.

"I'd recommend sitting down," the boy said, "it's a lot more comfortable."

Dumbledore moved his body, and instantly found himself in the most comfortable seat ever, as the air gave him support, but didn't force his body to take a slightly unnatural position.

"The second thing we need is fire."

A sphere of fire surrounded them instantly. The fire itself looked hot, but didn't give off any heat.

"We now need to check where we are going."

Before them, like a Muggle TV set, a small circle of fire appeared, showing pictures of their destination.

"And finally... we go!"

There was a brief sensation of unimaginable speed, before it stopped, and the fire vanished, leaving only the same smoke as earlier.

Harry cast the clear spell he had heard Dumbledore use earlier, and the smoke disappeared in a second.

"Et voilà!" Harry grinned, with an atrocious French accent. "Destination reached." He casually waved his hands, setting them both down on the floor comfortably. They were in a small side alley off Diagon Alley, and their arrival had gone unnoticed.

"Remarkable," Dumbledore said with a large smile, "most enjoyable."

Harry nodded in agreement, "It's a lot more fun than Apparating; more comfortable as well, as there's no sensation of hurling yourself into the abyss."

They walked together into the bustling alley, and meandered down slowly, just talking to each other casually. Neither was completely unaware of the fact that they were the centre of attention.

"Does it get any easier?" Harry asked softly.

"Not really," Dumbledore sighed. "We are different, Harry. We have done the impossible and will forever be looked at by others."

Harry nodded, fading into silence.

They entered Madam Malkin's to get Harry his robes. He purchased two school robes, and two dress robes in a green so dark they were almost black. The professor and the 'boy who lived' bantered amicably, as Harry tried his best to get the headmaster into a distinguished blue robe that was all one colour. Dumbledore tried very hard to avoid it, preferring his more esoteric collection.

Dumbledore smiled, as he realised for the first time that this must be what going out with a grandson would be like. There was a sense of family between them now, one that went so much further than a professor-student relationship.

They both realised it, and both liked it.

---

Ginny was in hell. Or at least the closest equivalent of it she had yet to experience. Dean was avoiding her as if she were diseased, and now she had to sit here in a deserted Common Room -- in silence -- and listen to Lavender and Parvati. Much as she wanted to leave, she wanted to know what they were up to more.

"Did you see those stomach muscles?" Lavender asked Parvati with a distant look in her eyes.

"Oh yeah," Parvati agreed dreamily. "I want to spend all night exploring and seeing what other muscles he has."

"Sounds like a plan," Lavender agreed. "So, no hard feelings if one of us gets him?"

"Of course not," Parvati said. "Never let a boy come between friends."

"So, how do I look?" She asked, as she leant forwards, the modified top of her robes suddenly gaping open, revealing an impressively large expanse of skin.

"That should grab his attention," Parvati said with a smile, then undid the buttons of her robe. She walked a few steps, the robes swinging to the side, to show off her long light brown legs.

Lavender whistled. "Can you get that skirt any shorter?"

Parvati shook her head, "Nope. I had to charm it to stay down as it is." The Indian girl scowled suddenly. "I asked Hermione for a charm that would allow it to fly up when Harry could see it, but she wouldn't help."

"Why not?" Lavender asked. "It's not as if she wants him for herself, she has Ron."

"I don't know," Parvati sighed mournfully.



“Cheer up. Your legs look amazing like that - if I don’t catch his attention, you’re sure to.”

Parvati grinned. “Unless I get to him first.”

“Oi!” Lavender yelled, and chased her friend out of the Common room.

“It’s not bloody fair,” Ginny yelled, kicking a cushion across the room. “Slut and Sluttier are gonna make a move on my Harry, and I’ve still not managed to talk to bloody Dean. Gahhh!” With the scream of frustration, she stormed into her room and looked into her trunk.

She whispered a spell under her breath, removing a protective curse Bill had taught her, and opened a secret compartment. She looked around; checking no one else was around, as she pulled out the material.

She moved in front of the mirror, and held the night gown against her, and slowly smiled. The gown was pure ivory white, and would fall to her ankles demurely. Only there was nothing demure about it. It would give the impression of innocence, while revealing hints of a lot more.

It had cost her two weeks of being Fred and George’s guinea pig, testing all sorts of pranks for them, but it was worth it. She had told them that she wanted the money for some new robes, she just hadn’t specified what sort of robe. It was her secret weapon. She was positive that Harry would be stunned if he saw her in it - all she needed was the courage to actually wear it. It had taken her several days of agonizing to order it from her mum’s catalogue, and had hidden it instantly on arrival.

She had tried it on once, and had been shocked by the outcome. With her flame red hair cascading down her back, and the way the silk slid over her body as she moved, she had felt sexy for the first time in her life. She had felt beautiful, and not even the lack of prominent bulges on her chest had been able to dampen the feeling.

Ginny had it all planned: she’d wait one night until Harry was the only one up, then she’d float down in her robe, and glide over to him - and the rest would be like a romance novel. As long as she could work up the courage to actually wear such a revealing garment in front of someone, but it was Harry, and she’d been in love with for as long as she could remember.

She sighed, and reminded herself she was a Gryffindor, and as Harry was notoriously – and cutely – dense when it came to relationships, it would be up to her to make the first move, and floating over to him in this gown would definitely be that.

He’d apologise for never seeing her as anything but Ron’s sister, and his friend: she’d pretend to be aloof for a few seconds, then she’d let him melt her with lots of kisses.

Of course, she thought grumpily, placing the gown away securely, that depended on Harry not liking huge boobs or gorgeous legs than went from here to John O’ Groats.

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After the robe shops, Harry and Albus walked over to the WWW flagship store.

“Forge,” Gred shouted, as he spotted his guests entering the store. “Get out here quickly; we have illustrious visitors that require our personal attention.”

Forge’s head appeared from behind a counter, covered in dust. He sneezed. “Excuse me.”

“So, what brings the two of you to our humble abode?”

Harry smiled, “The headmaster needs some lemon drops, and I thought I’d stop by for a chat.”

“Non-magical?” Fred asked the professor. “We have a new range that actually turns people into a lemon.”

Dumbledore laughed merrily. “No, I’m afraid that, as the headmaster, people object to me giving them sweets that transfigure them into inanimate objects.”

“Pity,” George grinned. “As the headmaster, you’d be the last person they’d blame. You could be the perfect prankster.”

Fred reached on to a shelf and pulled down a huge bag of lemon drops. They stocked them purely because they knew Dumbledore was addicted to them, and it saved him the hassle of getting them from Muggle London.

“What did you want to talk about, Harry?”

The green-eyed wizard hopped onto a counter and smiled at them. “Two things: First,” he produced – from nowhere – a bunch of photos, the ones from the day before. “Can you knock me up some wizard cards with these pictures on them? We can’t use them, but they’re going to be my ‘get out of detention, free’ cards.”

The twins grabbed the photos, and laughed at Snape. “How did you get him to blush like that?”

Harry smirked. “Jumped into his arms in front of the school and pretended that we’d ‘been intimate.’”

Fred and George looked at him in disbelief, before dropping to their knees and chanting. “We’re not worthy, we’re not worthy!”

Dumbledore laughed again; as far as he was concerned now, he was a grandfather out with his grandson, and not the most respected Headmaster

In the world.

"You said two things?" Fred asked, as he got back to his feet.

Harry nodded. "Are you guys set up for a large increase in business?"

"We have the stock," George said, his face becoming serious as they moved onto business. "But Zonko's is still our biggest competitor."

"We've got two choices," Harry explained. "We can buy out Zonko's, or try and take them out."

"We looked at buying Zonko's, but the amount of Galleons they want is more than the store and the business is worth."

"So, taking them out it is," the green-eyed wizard announced.

"How are we going to do that?" Fred asked, curiously.

"A range of Harry Potter candy endorsed by me should do it."

Fred and George's eyes lit up at the same time, before they grabbed each other and did a rather disturbing caper around their store.

When they had finally finished, they both turned as one, and spoke together, as they often did. "I thought you hated publicity?"

Harry nodded. "I do. But it's not going to go away, no matter how much I want it to. I may as well use it." He hopped off the counter. "Come up with some Wizarding Wireless adverts, and something for the Daily Prophet. We'll launch an advertising blitz. Use the money you put aside for me to pay for it."

The twins nodded, in unison once more.

"We'll see you later."

Dumbledore reached into his pockets, and pulled out some money for the lemon drops.

"Sir, you know the rules by now," Fred and George replied as one. "Your money's no good here!"

Dumbledore peered over his half-moon glasses at them, and noticed how stern they looked. "Thank you," he smiled at them both.

The professor and Harry walked out of the store, when Harry realised he had forgotten his bags. "I'll be right back," he said, jogging down to the store.

"There was one other thing," he said, as he picked up his parcels. "If Ginny and Dean break up, I'm planning on moving in on Ginny as quickly as possible."

Fred and George looked at each other, then back to Harry. "Why?"

"I had a long time to think while I was on holiday," he said calmly. "I figured that with Voldemort decomposing in a field, I can finally have a life. I did think about playing the field a little, but I think I'd rather just have a serious relationship with someone I already like and trust. I like and trust Ginny, and she's gorgeous as well."

The twins looked at each other again, and then turned to Harry. "Are you sure? She's got a right temper, that one?" George said.

"Yeah.," Fred agreed, "Not to mention she likes leaving wet towels on the floor."

Harry just laughed and turned his head, mentally storing their words for future use.

He caught up with his professor, and followed him into the Leaky Cauldron for lunch.

Harry sipped on a butterbeer, and then looked at Dumbledore. "Exactly what do you want me to teach in the D.A. class?"

"Why are we here?" Dumbledore asked, as instead of the expected Hogwarts, they had appeared in the garden of the Burrow.

"I didn't get a chance to say hi to Molly last night," Harry said with a grin. "I thought it would be a good idea. And I can't think of a better place for tea."

"True," Albus agreed. "I wonder if she has some of her apple pie available."

Harry was about to knock on the door, when it was flung open and he was embraced in an exuberant hug. "Harry!" Molly cried, her face ecstatic. "It's so good to see you!"

"Hi Molly," Harry said, as he hugged her back. He breathed deeply, realising that her hugs had lost none of their potency.

"Albus," Molly said next, beckoning the older wizard closer so he could be hugged as well. After she had finished, she asked, "What brings you two to my home?"

Well," Harry said with a smile. "Professor Dumbledore was wondering if you have any apply pie available." He moved swiftly to avoid the casual swipe from his teacher. "And I wanted to pop in and say hi."

Harry followed the two older people into the kitchen, and then frowned suddenly as a thought occurred to him. "How did you know we were here?"

Molly blushed, and pointed at the grandfather clock with her wand. "*Acclaro*". An eighth hand suddenly appeared, with Harry's name on it. "I had this made last year," she admitted. "So I knew you were safe all summer."

"And you didn't tell anyone?" Albus said, looking a little disappointed.

"Of course not!" Molly said firmly. "Harry had every right to some time off, dealing with those awful Muggles and that horrid dark wizard. If he had been in danger, I would have said something."

Harry moved around the table and hugged Molly tightly. "Thank you," he whispered, his eyes suspiciously bright.

Molly hugged him back once more. "This is your home Harry, as much as any other of my children. You will always be welcome here." She released him, and turned, moving over to her oven. "I do have some fresh baked pie. Albus, be a dear and get some cream out of the fridge, then get some plates from the cupboard."

"Yes Molly," the professor -- the second most powerful wizard in the world, the most respected wizard, the chairman of more committees than any other living person -- said obediently.

After several pieces of world-class apple pie, Harry and Albus reluctantly said goodbye to head back to Hogwarts.

"Do you mind if I have a quick word with Molly in private?" Harry asked Albus with a grin.

"Of course not," The headmaster replied, walking out of the kitchen.

"So," Harry said, looking at the motherly figure. "What do you think of Dean?"

Molly opened her mouth, and then closed it suddenly; she tilted her head, and then slowly gave him the biggest smile she ever had. "No where near as good as you are, Harry. It won't last."

"Good," Harry grinned back. "As soon as they break up, I'm moving in on her, and I have no intention of letting her go once I've got her."

"You better get back to school. Good luck!"

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"Has anyone seen Harry?" Hermione asked, as they sat down for the evening meal. "He's been missing all day."

"He went with Professor Dumbledore to Diagon Alley -- he was showing him elemental travelling," Ginny replied from further down the table. "Dumbledore floo'd McGonagall in the middle of class to tell her."

"He spent the day in Diagon Alley? Why aren't we allowed to do that?" Dean asked, thinking it was a little unfair that Harry could just skip classes and go shopping. "He seems to be getting special treatment this year."

"Perhaps after you defeat the greatest Dark Lord in history, you too will be allowed special treatment," the smooth tones of Professor Snape, who had been walking past, hissed quietly. "However, as I am reliably informed that your D.A.D.A scores are merely average, perhaps we should be grateful that it was Harry charged with the duty to save the world, and not you, Thomas. And might I remind you that as Harry *was* accompanied by the Headmaster, he obviously had something more important than attending classes to do."

Snape shot a final glare at the boy -- wishing he had the right to just transfigure the boy into a toad and be done with it -- before walking off.

Dean blushed furiously red, and went very quiet.

"Did he just call Harry, Harry? And stick up for him?" Ron asked, almost in total shock.

Hermione nodded, slowly, while Ginny glared at her soon-to-be-ex boyfriend.

Snape glared down at the Gryffindor table. They had no idea at all what Harry had been through. They looked at the world through their rose-coloured glasses, convinced that healthy doses of Gryffindor bravery would get them through the world. They claimed to be the house where everyone was loyal to each other, yet whenever anything happened they were the first to complain, and turn their backs on one another. He had seen it over the years, as they had been the first to snub Potter when the going got tough.

He would hate to see any of those prima-donnas face Voldemort like Harry had been forced to. They would have folded like Pettigrew within the hour. Voldemort would have found their weaknesses in an instant, and they would have been forever lost.

Even Snape felt that Harry deserved an easy year because as much as he derided Harry's fame he did feel that the boy deserved it no. With his own fortune, Black's, and the reward money from the Ministry it wasn't as if Potter was ever going to need a job.

Add to that his new elemental powers, and the boy's potential was limitless.

This idea gave the dark professor a sudden thought. With what he knew of Harry, it was fairly likely that Harry would get fed up with the stupidity of

the Ministry sooner of later, and would make moves to get himself elected, so he could take care of it. It might be an idea if he started to cultivate a friendship with the boy, or at least see if he could stand him at close range. After all, it never hurt to have friends in high places, and if one thing had happened over the summer, it had been the proof that Harry was *not* James Potter.

Snape's musing was interrupted by the same ball of fire appearing at the far end of the hall, as had appeared yesterday.

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The fire grew into a sphere, and then vanished, leaving the Headmaster and Harry floating.

"Hey, I managed to get rid of the smoke," Harry exclaimed happily.

"Well done," Dumbledore replied with a proud smile on his face.

"Want me to drop you off at your seat?" Harry asked, with a cheeky grin on his face.

"I'm quite capable of walking," the headmaster replied sternly.

"Oh, I know you are sir. But, I thought I could help out an old man who didn't like surprises."

"I'm still young enough to take you to task for that insult." Dumbledore tried very hard to hide his smile.

"You were the one who said it, not me," Harry grinned at him.

"Fine," the ancient professor gave in.

Harry smiled and stood from his seated position. He concentrated hard; moving someone further away from him took a lot more effort. He mentally pushed the wind with his mind, forcing it to carry the Professor at a dignified pace through the hall and up to the staff table.

It took all of the restraint learnt over many years for Dumbledore not to smirk and act like a Roman emperor as he was regally transported to his chair. The air placed him down with such gentleness, that his bones only complained slightly about the chair when he arrived.

He looked down at Harry, who now had his eyes closed, and had small sparks shooting off him as he concentrated, then smiled and released.

Harry looked up towards his normal end of the table and while there were a lot of smiling faces looking at him, he couldn't see a spare space from where he was, so sat down with the first years again, not noticing the groans of disappointment from two of his female classmates.

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## Chances You Are Not Alone

"Ron, Hermione," Harry called, as he entered the Gryffindor common room.

His two friends looked up from the couch where Hermione was attempting to study, while Ron was attempting to kiss her. It was obvious from the giggling that neither of them minded the game.

"You got a few minutes spare?"

"Well," Ron grinned, "I was planning on seeing if I could snog Hermione senseless - and she has a lot of sense, so it would probably take all night."

Hermione looked like she was trying to work out if there was a backhanded compliment in there somewhere. She elbowed Ron firmly in the side.

"Of course," she smiled at Harry.

They wandered over together to a table in a dark corner. Ron and Hermione sat down next to each other, Harry sitting opposite them. With a casual wave of his hand, Harry relaxed.

"What was that?" Hermione asked.

"Just set up a privacy spell," Harry replied. "But we can talk about magic later. I think that, with Commander Tom and the Masked Madmen making themselves useful by decomposing into fertilizer, I thought it would be a good time to address one of the things that is lacking in my life."

"What's that?"

"A girlfriend," Harry said with a smile. "You two are now together and happy, and I want something similar."

Hermione moved so fast she was almost a blur, producing some parchment and a quill.

"What are you doing?" Ron and Harry asked in unison.

"I thought we could make a list of everyone available that you could choose from."

"Wouldn't it be better if I just told you who I wanted?"

Hermione froze, and then blushed furiously. She tidied away her equipment remarkably slower than the way she had produced them. "Sorry, I just thought you wanted our help to find you someone."

Ron and Harry grinned at each other. Ron wrapped his arm around her, hugging her tightly. "Don't ever change."

"So, who have you chosen?" Hermione asked, desperate to get the conversation off her.

Harry took a deep breath. "Ginny."

There was another silence, which made Harry wonder if he should increase the strength of the privacy charm.

"Are you sure?" Ron asked, frowning a little.

"I know she's your sister..."

"That's not what I meant," Ron waved his hand airily. "I meant, are you sure it's Ginny you want? That you're not confusing the fact that you like her as a friend with more romantic feelings?"

Harry shook his head slowly.

"Have you at least considered other girls?" Ron asked. "You shouldn't make an instant decision. I've not got anything against you dating her; I just don't want you to make a hasty decision and regret it later."

Harry took a deep breath. Of everything he had expected when he was going to tell Ron about his sister, this particular response had been somewhere near the thought of Voldemort being resurrected and taking up a career as a French Can-Can girl.

"I've thought about all the girls I know," he admitted.

"So what did you think about Blaise?" Ron interrupted again. "You said yourself earlier that she is very pretty."

"Well, she is," Harry agreed, his tone somewhat strange. "But there's no spark. Each time I've talked to her I've not felt anything." He paused for a second, and then continued, "Ginny's Ginny, you know. She managed to drag me out of a funk so many times last year, and if it hadn't been for Voldemort, I would have probably done something about it then. Sure, while I was on the beach I did have a think about other girls, and about some of them there in front of me at the time, but... there is no one who pushes me like Ginny does, no one who makes me want to be better than I am. There's been no one, other than you two, who has stood beside me when it got dark and dangerous. How could I not choose Ginny? When we defeated Voldemort, she had this look on her face, this look of extreme happiness, that made her so radiant - and I want to see it again. I want her to look that way at me."

He paused for a few seconds, before finally finishing with, "She is who I want." He felt strangely open, vulnerable, as if a lot more had been said than he had expected.

"Harry," Ron said softly. "I think you're in love with my sister. Are you?"

Harry blinked, and then nodded slowly.

"I think I am," he whispered.

"Woo hoo!" Ron cheered loudly, jumping to his feet and celebrating wildly.

"Ron!" Hermione scolded, shaking her head, trying to clear the echo from the noise.

"Harry, mate, if she's who you want, and I do think you're insane - she has a habit of leaving plates in her room for ages - then I'm all for it."

At Harry and Hermione's identical looks of disbelief, he grinned at them both.

"Dean's a git; you're not. And if you're going to start dating someone, I'd much rather she was someone we already know and like, someone who's not going to drag you away into another family." He paused, and then continued with a self-deprecating grin, "Sure, it's completely selfish of me, but I couldn't think of anyone I'd rather you date. It still gives me a queasy feeling to think of you and Ho Chang together."

Harry sniggered, and shook his head slowly. "That's not quite the response I was expecting."

Ron shrugged. "So, you want me to break Ginny and Dean up for you?"

Harry shook his head. "No. That wouldn't be fair. I've just got to hope they break up soon, and that Ginny will say 'yes' to me asking her out."

He absently scratched his neck, missing the highly amused glance Ron and Hermione shared.

"Ron," Hermione entered the conversation slowly. "You may want to leave us alone now, because I like Ginny a lot, so I'm going to ask Harry some rather searching questions."

Harry started to look a little worried.

"I can handle it," Ron stated confidently. He reached into his schoolbag and pulled out a bag of Bertie Botts Every Flavour Beans. He offered them around, and ate one as no one took him up on his offer.

"Do you think that Ginny's breasts are too small?" Hermione asked Harry directly.

Ron seemed to convulse, before going red as the small bean lodged in his windpipe. He tried to cough, spluttering.

Hermione stood up, walked behind him, and expertly applied the Heimlich manoeuvre, causing Harry to duck wildly to dodge the flying projectile that shot out of Ron's mouth.

"Are you trying to kill me?" Ron gasped.

"I *did* warn you," Hermione said, her face twitching as she struggled to keep control of the laughter inside her.

"I know, but discussing my sister's tits isn't exactly high on my list of conversational topics. How was I supposed to know that you would go down that path?"

Hermione shrugged and turned back to Harry. "Well?"

Harry shot a look at Ron, who was now looking stubborn, and groaned. "No."

"So you've been looking?" Ron asked.

"Yes, of course I've bloody been looking, you git!" Harry said, looking at Ron as though he were some sort of never-before-seen creature. "Show me a boy my age in my situation that wouldn't have looked."

"True," Ron grinned suddenly. "I've been stealing looks at Hermione's tits for years."

"Ron!" Hermione said, shocked.

"What?" Ron asked cheerfully. "It's about you and Harry to talk about Ginny's tits and not about yours? That doesn't sound very fair."

Hermione blushed furiously, recognising she had lost control, and decided to regain it. "If you ever want to see them, you'll be quiet."

Ron paled, then went bright red, and then paled again, before returning to his normal colour.

"Harry, my friend, you're on your own!" He stood and walked away quickly, whistling to himself.

Harry looked amused as he faced Hermione. "Already using sex as a behaviour modifier?"

Hermione blushed furiously once more. "Since when did you start teasing like this?"

"Yesterday," he replied cheerfully. "So, why the question about Ginny?"

Hermione frowned briefly. "She has very low self-esteem when it comes to her body, and she keeps comparing herself to Lavender and Parvati."

"Why?"

Hermione smirked briefly. "Are you telling me you haven't noticed Parvati's legs, or Lavender's chest?"

"What about them?"

"Oh, Harry," Hermione said softly with a smile, reaching out to tousle his hair. "Just say that to Ginny at some stage, and she'll love you forever."

She paused, and then asked a question that had been bothering her. "As Ron's not here, are you sure you're alright?"

Harry nodded, and looked at his friend directly. "For the first time, I feel like myself. I've not got any expectations to live up to, and I don't have the lives of everyone I know on my shoulders. I can do whatever I want, without worrying about it. I feel like I am who I was meant to be originally, before all this prophecy stuff happened."

Hermione smiled warmly at him. "It's so good to hear you say that," she said as she rose to her feet.

"Good, then you'll turn off your Head Girl radar for a few minutes?"

"What do you mean?" she asked, as Harry took the privacy charm down, and they walked over to the others.

"I think it's time I played a prank," he replied.

"Cool!" Seamus cheered, attracting everyone else's attention. "Can I help?"

Harry shook his head and smiled at the mix of sixth and seventh year students.

"Sorry, this prank is a one man job. I'll be back in an hour," he said as he turned, and walked out the common room door.

Ginny was the first to stand. "Well, I'm following him," she declared, as she ran towards the exit, closely followed by everyone else.

As Harry walked ahead of them, he raised both his hands and slowly vanished.

Every student there, as one, turned to face Hermione.

"What?" she asked, and then paused. "Oh, right. He's probably using the Air element to hide himself. I'm going to the library to find out more."

"Well," Ron said as he watched his girlfriend. "I guess that we'll find out how the hell he did that a lot faster if we all work together." He followed her, followed by the other senior Gryffindor students.

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*The sky was hazy with a distinctly surreal feel to it. Harry wondered what he was doing here, till he caught sight of some very familiar red hair. He had never had a dream about Ginny quite like this one, he decided, but he was going to enjoy it, no matter how awake he felt.*

*The object of his affection was wearing a light summer dress, which hitched up her thighs whenever she bent over to pick flowers.*

*The sight was enough to create some blood flow issues for him, and he was tempted for a second to just stay and watch.*

*He moved slowly towards her, watching her intently, as she continued her task. He licked his lips softly, really hoping he'd get to see if her legs were as soft as they looked. They appeared perfectly formed with just a hint of the muscles she used to help control her broom in Quidditch.*

*He reached out to lightly tap her shoulder as he closed the distance between them.*

*The red-haired form turned slowly.*

*Instead of a face dominated by the most gorgeous brown eyes he had ever seen, and one of the cutest noses, he was suddenly faced by intense grey eyes, dark black hair, and a knowing smirk.*

The swearwords that Harry used to explain his current feelings were base, extreme, and called into doubt Sirius' parentage, sexual preferences, personal appearance and hobbies, and implied certain predilections that are not normally mentioned in polite society.

Sirius' expression changed from the amused 'I just pulled off a great prank' to an awed look of someone extremely impressed.

"...and shove it where the sun doesn't shine!" Harry finished, panting a little.

"Wow!" Sirius said admiringly. "I've never heard that many swearwords used in such an intricate combination in one go before."

"What the hell are you doing here, Sirius!?"

Sirius grinned. "I told you that if you pulled any good pranks, I'd be back to see you. And that one you have planned is more than acceptable."

Harry nodded, still glaring. "And how exactly do you know what Ginny's legs look like?" he asked, his whole demeaning promising a world of hurt and pain for his godfather if he didn't like the answer.

Sirius gulped. "I didn't. It was your dream, Harry, not mine; I just waited for the right moment."

Harry stood still in thought for a second. "Don't do that again," he advised seriously, before grinning massively and jumping at his godfather. "It's good to see you again."

Sirius smiled and hugged him back. "You too, Harry. I'm so pleased that you took our advice."

Harry frowned. "Yeah, I wanted to talk to you about that. Is this the only way I can get to see you, after pulling off a prank?"

"What do you mean?"

The boy sighed, and sat down in the long grass. "I'm not going to be pulling anymore pranks after this one," he explained. "I've decided that when I leave Hogwarts is going to be a happy place for all the students, even the Slytherins, and I can't do that by having a lot of people afraid of being pranked."

"Damn it," Sirius said, looking slightly sick. "Do you have any idea what this means?"

Harry shook his head mutely, looking a little upset.

"It means that I'm going to have to spend a week acting as your mother's house maid!"

"What?"

"Your too-smart-for-her-own-good mother bet me that you would decide not to launch an all-out prank war," Sirius muttered darkly. "You're a big disappointment to me, Harry."

Harry slowly started to smile, as he realised that it meant that his mum really knew him even though he'd never really met her as an adult.

"I wasn't quite honest about how I could see you," Sirius confessed. "Basically, when you die the way I did, you have a much stronger connection to earth than usual. It means I can come and see you in your dreams whenever I want. It's tiring, but you're worth it, kiddo."

Harry nodded. "Just don't enter any Ginny dreams again," he smiled.

"Yeah, not a problem, you little pervert. How's that going anyway?"

"Slowly," Harry admitted. "I've talked to Ron, the twins, and Molly, and I sent Hedwig with a letter to the others telling them, earlier. I've just got to wait for Dean and Ginny to break up - and hope that they do, then hope that Ginny hasn't given up on me."

Sirius nodded. "Anyway, I'm not just here for a social visit. I was talking to your parents the other day, and we realised you'd not been given an important part of your education."

"What's that?" Harry asked, looking a little confused.

"Well, when a wizard and a witch love each other very much, they get certain urges—" Sirius began.

"Yes, thank you, Sirius," Harry said with a sigh. "Remus has already given me the birds and the bees talk - as you no doubt know. Now, don't make me hurt you."

Sirius laughed and jumped to his feet suddenly, a long sword appearing his hand. "Nah, it's how to fight without magic!"

Harry jumped backwards quickly and raised his arms, his power level leaping through the ceiling as his body reacted automatically to a perceived threat.

"Whoa, calm down," Sirius said with a nervous laugh, taking several quick steps backwards. "No need to get excited, I'm going to train you, that's all."



*Why would I need that?" Harry asked, lowering his hands and pulling his power back under control.*

*Sirius smiled cheerfully, looking more than a little relieved. "It's never a good idea to be to reliant on any one thing, Harry," he cautioned the young wizard. "There may be a time in your life when it will come in useful. Besides, it looks really cool when you practice and chicks dig that sort of thing!"*

*"Chicks?" Harry laughed loudly, shaking his head at his godfather. "You mean girls, right?"*

*"Yeah, girls, although I probably wouldn't call Ginny a chick, she's got a bit of a temper."*

*Harry chuckled and nodded in agreement. "So, howdo we start?"*

*"You've got to have a sword first. As this is a dream, you can just call for one."*

*Harry nodded and held out his hand, a sword appearing instantly, the solid steel blade glinting in the haze.*

*Sirius sighed loudly. "You're such a git, Harry!"*

*"What?" Harry protested.*

*"Only you would bloody conjure the Sword of Gryffindor."*

*Harry glanced down. "Oh." Sure enough, the jewel-encrusted sword he'd used in the Chamber of Secrets nowrested comfortably in his hand. Only the sword seemed slightly bigger than he remembered.*

*Sirius shook his head, amused. "Well, it suits you, kiddo. So let's get to it."*

*As Sirius showed him the very basics of sword play - howto hold a sword - Harry asked, "Sirius, do you have any idea why I'm suddenly the first full elemental, ever?"*

*Sirius looked away. "No, not a clue!"*

*"Sirius!" Harry said, recognising that his godfather was being evasive.*

*"It's your dad's fault," Sirius admitted. "He was pretty annoyed that you had your childhood ruined to fix a prophecy and demanded that you get some form of compensation. When you got hit by that curse, it was used as an opportunity to give you the powers."*

*"So it's a gift?"*

*"Pretty much, yeah. You were only supposed to get Fire, but well, by the time every one of your fans got through with their demands, you ended up with everything."*

*"Huh?" Harry asked intelligently.*

*"Cedric's been watching you for ages, and by the way, he said to tell you 'hi', and he was really eloquent in arguing that you deserved more."*

*Harry blinked. "Cedric?"*

*"Yeah, nice guy. Anyway, loads of people put their oar in, and you got boosted. All nice and above board. Now, when I attack, I want you to block like I showed you."*

*The conversation turned, and the two went back to fighting, interspersing a few words with the distinctive clang of metal on metal.*

Harry awoke in a great mood and feeling relaxed. He sat up in bed and jumped as his hand touched something cold. He looked down, and he was surprised to see the Sword of Gryffindor by his side.

He swung his legs out of bed and dressed quickly. He jogged downstairs, avoiding the other early rising students, and went straight to the Headmaster's office.

Professor Dumbledore didn't show any surprise as he entered.

"Good morning, Harry," the Professor greeted him.

"Morning sir," Harry replied. "Err... I think this is yours." He held out the sword.

"You know," Dumbledore said, as he sat back, ignoring the proffered sword. "The funny thing about that sword is that it goes where it is needed. Do you know how to use it?"

"Sirius is teaching me," Harry said, then froze as he realised what he had just said.

"Really?" Dumbledore's eyes seemed to be twinkling at a record level. "Pray, do tell, Mr Potter, how is a dead man teaching you?"

Harry shook his head. Holding the sword, he sat down comfortably, and began with his dream, editing it slightly for public consumption.

---

“So, how’s your ‘Dump Dean’ project going?” Hermione asked Ginny as they walked down to breakfast.

“If I didn’t know we were dating, I’d say that he went to a different school. I’ve not managed to get him alone yet. Not even for the promise of a snog.”

Hermione shook her head sadly. “Any idea about Harry’s response to you asking him out, now that he’s changed?”

Ginny looked worried. “Not a single clue. He’ll probably laugh at me now. I mean, look at him, he’s gorgeous and has half the girls in here after him.”

“He doesn’t seem to have noticed,” Hermione pointed out calmly.

“It’s the only thing that has stopped me cursing all of them,” Ginny muttered.

Hermione nodded, hiding her smile. “Well, after we found absolutely nothing in the library last night, I want a word with him myself.”

The two entered the Great Hall for breakfast and sat down.

---

“Colin,” Harry called, marching straight up to the younger boy and wrapping his arm around his shoulders. “I need something done, and you’re just the person to do it!”

“I am?” Colin said doubtfully.

“Absolutely,” Harry reassured him. “Out of everyone in the school, you’re the best person for the job.”

“I won’t let you down, Harry,” Colin said, the light of hero-worship in his eyes.

“As you know, I’m ‘not’ pulling a prank at breakfast, and I desperately need some photos taken of it. So, I need you to hide under my invisibility cloak and take as many as you can.”

“Yes, Harry,” Colin said, almost standing to attention. “I can do that. What am I looking out for?”

Harry grinned, “Oh, you won’t be able to miss it. You will have to stand still though, both Professor Dumbledore and I can see through the cloaks when we concentrate, so I’m going to hide you with the Air element as well.”

“I’m going to be inside an Air shield?” Colin gasped, as if he’d just been informed that he’d won the Wizarding Lottery, and would be spending the rest of his life as an international Play Wizard.

“Yes, come on, we’ll get you ready.”

---

Harry entered the Great Hall, Colin creeping behind him. He chose to sit at the head of the table, so that Colin would have the best view of the professors. He raised his hand, holding a fork so the movement didn’t look too out of place, and cast the hiding spell around the already invisible Colin.

“Morning,” he greeted his friends cheerfully.

“Morning,” Hermione and Ginny said back. They were soon joined by Ron and the rest of Gryffindor house.

“So,” Ron said, as he attacked his breakfast, “exactly what prank are you pulling?”

“Me?” Harry asked innocently. “I have no idea what you mean.”

The sound of the fluttering of many wings interrupted them, as a flock of owls soared into the Great Hall, most bringing last minute supplies and forgotten items.

Harry stroked Hedwig as she imperiously offered him her leg. She was obviously pleased with herself for being useful this early in the school term.

He unrolled the parchment, absently feeding her a slice of his bacon.

*Harry,*

*It’s about time! No problems about dating our Gin; just look after her or we’ll pound you into the ground.*

*Dean’s not right for her - can you believe that he hates Dragons?*

*But are you sure you know what you’re getting yourself into? She’s got a habit of stealing a bloke’s razor to shave her legs with. It dulls the blade and bloody hurts like the Cruciatus when you try and use it afterwards!*

C.

\*\*\*

Harry,

*I figure it's best if I just attach my comments below Charlie's. Cleopatra (my owl) is currently heading towards France, and I'm sure you don't want to hang around.*

*I pretty much agree with him, Dean's a git! He didn't get my joke about the Sphinx and the Werewolf!*

*And as for Ginny, don't get in the shower after her, she never clears her hair out of the plughole, and half the time the water doesn't drain.*

Bill.

\*\*\*

Harry,

*It would seem to make sense to insert my own opinion here as well. I must say that Hedwig is a remarkably well-behaved owl. She could teach Pigwidgeon a thing or two about the suitable conduct for owls.*

*I, too, would firmly wish to offer my blessing to you dating Ginevra. I'm afraid that Dean, while indubitably a nice person, is perhaps not at the same intellectual level as her, and shows a rather surprising disregard for the inner workings of the Ministry.*

*And, to offer some advice, I would recommend learning to charm your books to stop her 'borrowing them'; as my sister has a rather irritating habit of being interested in any book you are nearly finished with.*

Percival."

Harry laughed to himself and folded up the parchment into his pocket, while petting and praising his owl a little more. "You better get going, girl."

Hedwig nodded, nabbed another sausage, and flew out the Hall.

Harry glanced at his watch and turned to face the teacher's main table.

Ron and Ginny looked at each other, and then swivelled slightly to watch as well.

---

At the staff table, Professor Dumbledore reached out with his left hand to grasp his glass of orange juice. On either side of him, the four Heads of House followed his movements exactly.

Albus paused, and then continued, bringing the cup to his lips.

Again, his four senior members of staff followed his actions precisely.

Very slowly Albus reached out and took a knife, cutting into an egg. He turned his head to the left, to watch Minerva and Filius, only to find him staring at the back of their heads as they too turned to the left.

He was very aware that something was wrong now but wasn't sure exactly what. As far as he could tell without drawing his wand, there wasn't any suspicious magic that he could sense.

He looked back forwards, now fully aware that the entire school was looking at him. He stood, the teachers standing with him, and decided that the best thing for them to do would be to leave the hall as quickly as possible, so they could determine exactly what was happening.

He walked, only to suddenly feel the magic affect him as well. He tried to fight it, only to discover that it was too late. The magic had already taken effect, and all he could do now, without putting too much effort into fighting it, was to enjoy the ride.

The table in front of him vanished, and the lights in the Great Hall dimmed. He felt his robes swish against him but couldn't see how they were changing.

A spotlight illuminated the darkness, blinding him for a second. Unfortunately, it didn't deafen him, as the laughter from the students was very audible. He looked down and had to laugh. His robes had indeed changed, and he was now wearing combat trousers, a skin-tight leopard print t-shirt, and black boots. His long white hair had acquired a perm, and was standing straight up.

Next to him, Severus' hair seemed to have turned ginger and was several inches long. Disturbingly, he was now sporting an incredibly short Union Jack dress, showing of two very white, thin legs.

Filius Flitwick, whose hair was now long and blonde, was wearing an innocently cut pastel pink baby-doll dress. He had on a pair of platform shoes with what looked like 4-inch heels.

McGonagall was wearing a classic Calvin Klein black slip dress that showed off her legs. It didn't go unnoticed that under her robes, she actually

had a very nice pair of pins, which were now emphasised by some wicked-looking stiletto heels.

Ponoma Sprout, her long hair now woven into a tight ponytail, was wearing a pair of sweatpants and a shirt in claret and blue. Colours that Dean had reliably informed Albus a few years ago was the home kit of West Ham United.

Albus slid his right hand high into the air and took three quick steps forwards, then one back, before sliding gracefully into a pirouette. The four teachers followed his lead instantly, their faces involuntarily fixed into graceful smiles.

A Wizarding Wireless appeared on the raised platform, and some music started instantly.

While his fellow teachers had forced smiles on their faces, Dumbledore smiled himself out of his own volition; it wasn't difficult for him to guess just who had caused this. Out of a school of several hundred children, there was only one with the ability to...

His thought process was interrupted as he jumped straight in the air, his arms high, before landing in a crouch. He stayed there, regaining his breath.

... to actually pull this sort of prank off. Harry. He was curious to see what the boy had to say for himself.

---

"I think I love you," Ron said to Harry, his eyes wide with awe as he watched the dancing teachers.

Harry smirked. "I told you, I don't swing that way."

Up on the teachers' stage, Snape and McGonagall hopped towards each other energetically. They clapped their hands together in a dual high-five, before locking their free legs around each other. They rotated counter-clockwise, before falling slowly onto their backs. Showing sprightliness unexpected in teachers, they pulled their legs back to their chest, and then powered themselves forwards, using the momentum to jump to their feet.

The students cheered loudly and started to clap, matching the beat their teachers were dancing to.

---

Professor Vector pulled out her wand, and prepared to try and end her colleagues dance act.

"Don't," Madam Pomfrey pleaded, moving her hand to block the wands path. "I've been wanting to see Sev's legs for years - this is my chance."

Vector blinked. Repeatedly. "Sev? Sev's legs?"

The school nurse blushed.

"You've got a crush on our Potions Professor?"

Madam Pomfrey nodded once, sharply. "Yes," she hissed. "Now shush, you're ruining my show."

Flitwick and Sprout danced to the fore next, in perfect synchronisation, despite their massive difference in size.

Filius, his hat now on the floor, jumped in to the air, executing a perfect split kick, straight over the crouching Ponoma.

The female teacher jumped to her feet behind him, and cart wheeled around the stage, before they both rejoined the line behind them.

As one, the five teachers executed a forward dance walk, bending their knees in an exaggerated fashion, before jumping high into the air, landing, and going down to their knees.

The students jumped to their feet in a standing ovation and cheered loudly, applauding through their laughter, as the music faded away.

The headmaster stood and walked over to the Gryffindor table. He was followed by his four senior teachers, who were still under the spell.

"You wouldn't know anything about this, would you, Mr Potter?"

"If you haven't got it, fake it! Too short? Wear big high heels, but *do* practice walking," Minerva agreed, then looked truly horrified at the words coming from her mouth.

Snape sneered, folding his arms, and then tilted his shoulders. He fixed Harry with his harshest glare. "Girl Power!" he agreed as well, before looking shocked and appalled.

"About what, sir?" Harry asked innocently, his face devoid of any expression.

"Our unusual display, and clothing, this morning," Albus replied.

Harry felt Dumbledore attempt to probe his mind, and lowered his shields slightly, pulling the headmaster into a carefully constructed memory.

"Girl Power," Snape snarled, as if he was trying to say something else.

Dumbledore had a slightly confused expression on his face. "Are you saying that you don't know anything?"

Not at all," Harry said with a straight face.

"It's always the same. I never know what to wear," McGonagall blurted, before slapping her hands over her mouth.

"If you do hear something, Harry, I would appreciate it if you could let me know," Dumbledore said.

"Girl Power?" Snape queried, looking surprised.

"Indeed," Dumbledore agreed sadly, and led the teachers out of hall. As he walked in a straight line, Severus and Minerva circled him closely - in opposite directions - while Filius and Ponomo pumped their arms up and down in unison.

---

As the door slammed shut, the spell broke, and the teachers regained complete control of their faculties, not to mention their clothes.

"Why did you let him off the hook?" Snape demanded angrily.

"He didn't do it," Albus replied slowly.

"What!"

"I looked in his mind; he didn't do it."

"But!"

"Minerva, would you please investigate this prank," Albus said, as he walked towards his office, smiling to himself. Harry had explained quite clearly why he had pulled the prank -- that he was honouring his parents and padfoot -- and promised at the same time that it would be his last. While the Hogwarts Headmaster might have had something to say about it, the mischievous old man who felt that Harry was family, held more than enough influence to lie to the others to ensure that Harry got away with his prank.

---

After a full five minutes of laughter, and the evacuation of the Hall towards classes, the entire senior year of the D.A. gathered around Harry, as he walked towards his Herbology lesson.

"Can I help you?" Harry asked, his left eyebrow raised.

"How did you lie to Dumbledore?" Hermione demanded.

"Now that would be telling," Harry smirked at her, and wrapped an arm around her shoulder. "And as Head Girl, I'm sure you wouldn't want to be late to class, now would you?"

"But!" Hermione said, as Harry grabbed Ron as well, and marched them both through the crowd.

"But nothing," Harry interrupted cheerfully. "You have a reputation to uphold, my dear Hermione, and it would be remiss of me to allow you to interfere with that."

"But..." Hermione tried again.

"Has anyone ever told you that you're cute when you're nonplussed?" Harry asked, and then paused. He made a couple of quick movements, and Ron and Hermione found themselves hugging each other.

"Because it's really Ron's job to do that, not mine, so I'll see you two kids later," he told the two of them with a smile. "Don't do anything I wouldn't." With that, he ducked into an empty corridor, and seemed to vanish.

"Hermione," Ron said slowly. "Can you move your arms?"

"Why?" Hermione asked with a smile. "Not liking me hugging you?"

"No. That I love. However, I physically can't move my arms."

"What?!" She tried to move, several times, before yelling indignantly. "Harry James Potter! I am going to kill you."

Her only response was distant laughter.

---

Harry whistled to himself cheerfully as he walked towards the Gryffindor common room.

"Harry!" A voice behind him called.

He turned, and watched as Parvati Patil sashayed towards him. Her robes were undone, and she was wearing what he thought was a skirt that was *definitely* against school policy. She had nice legs, long and smooth, but they weren't Ginny's. There was no hint of musculature in them, and that was something that really attracted him. The amount of dreams he'd had over those same legs wrapped around him like she wrapped them around her broom had been enough to keep him warm many nights over the past year or so.

Hi," he said politely.

"I was wondering when the D.A. is going to start again," Parvati said, as she closed the gap between them.

"I believe that Professor Dumbledore is going to arrange that with me tomorrow," Harry said, moving backwards slightly.

"Harry, Parvati," Lavender said, as she joined them. Her robes were open as well, and she placed one arm on a statue near Harry, leaning forwards at the same time. The movement allowing Harry a clear look at her abundant chest.

"I was just asking when the D.A. was going to start again," Parvati said to her friend.

Harry was starting to feel slightly uncomfortable. While Lavender's cleavage was impressive, it certainly wasn't something that attracted him. He'd always preferred the slim form, right from the start with his massive crush on Cho, and Ginny had just confirmed his tastes.

"Oh?" Lavender asked, inching closer.

"Yes," Harry said, "Professor Dumbledore and I will be arranging it tomorrow." He closed his fists behind him, and waited.

"What are we going to be studying?" Parvati asked, as she turned sideways, and bent over to tie her shoelaces - her skirt hitching up even higher, revealing the full expanse of her leg.

"Discretion," Harry muttered inaudibly. "We're going to be reviewing last year," he said out loud, still being as polite as he could be.

"Fascinating," Lavender said, deciding to pull out the big guns - literally. She leant forwards, scratching her knee as if it itched, and then smiled up through her lashes at Harry.

Seeing his escape, Harry made a surreptitious movement with his hand, using the Wind element to knock Lavender forward, at the same time, casually taking another step backwards.

The top-heavy blonde fell into her friend, causing them both to topple to the ground.

"Are you all right?" Harry asked, helping them both to their feet.

"Yeah," Parvati sighed, shooting foul look at her blushing friend.

"Good, I'll see you two in class later then," he said, as he turned and walked away fast.

He tried not to smirk as Parvati demanded, "He was in my grasp, what the hell happened?"

"I don't know," Lavender replied apologetically.

"Okay," Parvati replied, giving her friend a quick hug. "Let's skip dinner and go give ourselves a makeover. We can try again tomorrow, only this time, we'll plan what we're going to say before hand."

---

"Harry," Ginny said, as she approached him. "Can I borrow the map?"

Harry looked up. He was lying on the couch, his feet up, with a book in his lap. Next to him, a quill was taking notes.

"Why?" he asked, fixing her with an intense look.

"Dean's been avoiding me," she admitted. She had been intending to lie and say she had wanted to pull off a prank, but found she couldn't. "I wanted to see where he is."

"Library," Harry stated without thought.

Ginny blinked and looked at him. "How did you know that?"

"You know," Harry replied, dropping his eyes back to his book. The idea of Ginny and Dean kissing actually made him nauseous. "I have no idea."

---

"I should curse you into next week," Hermione said grumpily, as she sat down on the couch, causing Harry to pull his legs out of the way quickly.

"Me, I enjoyed it," Ron grinned, "So I'm staying out of this."

"You weren't late for class, where you?"

"No," she admitted.

"And you enjoyed the hug?"

"Yes."

"Then what's the problem?"

Hermione put her hands on her hips and glared at Harry. "The problem is that, well, you can't just lock up your two best friends in a hug!"

"Why?"

"Because..."

"I thought that brothers always teased their sisters," Harry said softly, looking at her directly. "That it's a family thing."

Hermione's face went several different colours, before she burst into tears and flung herself into Harry for a hug.

"Do you mean that?"

"Of course," Harry whispered. "I told you yesterday. You and Ron have been everything to me since I got on the train at Hogwarts. You two are the brother and sister I always dreamed of. And even with things changing as we grow up, this will never change."

Hermione smiled, her face a little blotchy, and punched him in the arm. Then she pulled Ron in to join the hug.

"Now, we just need to get Ginny in here, and we're complete."

Neville, entering the room in a hurry, interrupted them. "Have you heard the news?" he gasped.

"Heard what?"

"Dean dumped Ginny in the library. He said she was a crap kisser, and a frigid bitch!"

"He said what?!" Ron demanded, his sibling protection genes immediately kicking into high gear.

"That she was a crap kisser, and that he didn't want to go out with her anymore!" Neville squeaked.

Harry's eyes lit up and he jumped to his feet. "Ron, promise me you'll stay away from Dean."

"Why?" Ron demanded.

"He's mine... later. But I need to check that Ginny's okay first."

Ron looked at his friend and slowly regained control over his own temper. "Good luck, Harry. Make her happy."

Harry looked him in the eyes and whispered, "I promise. For the rest of my life."

"Go," Ron encouraged with a smile.

"*Accio* Marauder's Map," Harry shouted, as he exited the common room. His new-found ability to locate anyone in Hogwarts was proving to be frustratingly inconsistent. He meant to talk to Dumbledore about it, but hadn't really had the chance yet. It had allowed him to locate Dean instantly when Ginny had asked him, but now, when he really wanted to locate Ginny, he was coming up blank.

"You just gave him permission to date Ginny?" Neville looked shocked.

"Can you think of a better man in the world?" Ron asked simply.

"No."

Harry poked his head back in to the common room.

"Actually, you can make plans to get him back after I do," he amended his earlier instructions. "He should pay for that remark."

His head vanished again, before it reappeared once more. "Strike that, we'll do it together - the four of us!" His face took on a positively evil look. "He will regret saying that for the rest of his time at Hogwarts."

---

Harry dashed through the halls of Hogwarts and up to the Astronomy tower, where the map told him his chance for the future was waiting. He opened the door warily, and walked in.

Ginny was pacing up and down the length of the room, a thunderous expression on her face. Taking his life into his own hands, he walked up to her and gave her a firm hug.

"So you've heard?" Ginny asked disgustedly.

"That you and Dean are no longer dating? Yes," he said carefully.

"Why did he have to be such a git about it?" Ginny demanded, hitting Harry firmly in the chest, repeatedly.

"You're not upset about losing him?" Harry asked as he carefully grabbed her hand, and held it to his chest, to stop her hitting him. He was a little surprised by her reaction to being dumped.

"Not at all," she grumbled. "I've been trying to dump the git for days. It wasn't going anywhere; but when I told him that, he shouted out that I was a crap kisser, and a frigid bitch!"

Harry shook his head; anyone with as much passion for life as Ginny was sure as hell not going to be frigid.

"He was just saying it because I hardly even kissed him," she admitted. "I was kinda busy last year, what with the D.A. and everything, and I dunno, we just never got time to spend in a closet somewhere."

It was a struggle for Harry not to start dancing around the room in celebration. "I'm sorry," he said quietly.

"Why? You're not the obnoxious asshole!"

"Give me a smile," Harry said, deciding to try and get her out of her foul mood.

Ginny shook her head mutely.

"Come on," he cajoled her. "Show me the Ginny that is willing to take on the Dark Tosser. Show me the Ginny that's not going to let a git like Dean keep her down."

Ginny shook her head slowly, and then smiled at him; it was a small smile, just touching the side of her mouth.

Harry looked into her eyes for a second. He suddenly had the urge to set fire to half the room in celebration. He knew he wasn't very good at reading women, or anyone really, but the look in her eyes was familiar. It was identical to the way that his dad had looked at his mum in Moony's Pensieve, when he had thought his mum would never return his feelings.

"Come on," he said, the first way of getting back at Dean suddenly forming in his mind. "Let's go to dinner."

"I don't really want to face people, Harry."

Harry smiled at her. "I'll be right next to you, I promise."

"Really?"

Harry offered her his hand, as he released her from the hug, which she took.

Together, they walked down to the Great Hall. As they got there, Ginny straightened her shoulders. A look of determination appearing on her face.

"There's the Ginny I love," Harry said, opening the door before she had a chance to respond to that statement.

They walked in together and heard some people giggle at Ginny, pointing at her as they repeated what they had heard.

Harry stopped suddenly and turned to the girl next to him.

"So, you're supposed to be a bad kisser?" He decided to ignore the other part of Dean's insult (for now), if what he hoped would happen, happened, it would be obvious to everyone that it wasn't true.

Ginny blushed, and looked at him, a hurt expression on her face.

"How can he be sure it was you? I mean, it takes two to kiss."

"Huh?" Ginny asked intelligently.

Harry smiled, "I just think that before you accept being a bad kisser, you should have someone else check you out first."

"What!?"

"I just think," he repeated, making sure his voice reached everywhere in the Great Hall, "That you should let someone else kiss you, just to make sure it was you that was the bad kisser."

"And who do you have in mind?" Ginny demanded. She placed her hands on her hips and glared at him, a sure sign she was losing her temper again.

"Me!" Harry said brightly.

Ginny's jaw dropped as Harry reached out and lightly touched her cheek. With infinite slowness, he leaned forwards and softly touched his lips to hers.

The rest of the school watched in respectful silence as Harry kissed Ginny for the first time.

Ginny gasped with pleasure as she realised that she was finally kissing Harry Potter. She pulled him close, breaking the kiss for a second so that she could jump up and wrap her legs around his waist, before kissing him again as hard as she could. She was determined to seize the moment, in case it never happened again.

Harry's hands automatically dropped to support her, to the most obvious place, and found that he enjoyed the feel of her bum nearly as much as the



mind-blowing kiss he was receiving. A small portion of his mind noted that he could feel her muscles, and that her legs felt as good around him as he had dreamed. He could feel her small tongue press against his teeth, and as he opened his mouth, she started to explore with absolute enthusiasm.

They finally broke, ignoring the stunned silence as Ginny rested her forehead against his.

"You are, in no way, a bad kisser," Harry gasped loudly.

Ginny giggled happily.

"So it must have been Dean. Typical. I guess; a guy can't do something right, so he blames it on everyone else."

The giggles made their way around the room, as everyone turned to Dean who looked shocked and seemed unable to defend himself.

"You love me?" Ginny asked, suddenly remembering what he had said earlier.

"With all my heart," Harry replied, not willing to hide his feelings for a second longer than he had to.

"Then why didn't you say something earlier?"

"I had to wait and hope that Dean would eventually be an idiot and let you go. I'm so pleased he did."

"So am I," Ginny said, as she leant in to kiss him again. This time they were cheered on, as Ron let out a whoop of joy - a cheer that was taken up by nearly all the other students. The teachers exchanged wry looks among themselves and smiled.

Ginny broke the kiss again.

"I have been in love with you for six years, Harry James Potter," she told him as they broke for air. "I love you completely with everything I have and everything I am."

Harry hugged her closely, as he lowered her to the floor. He placed his forehead against hers. "Mine," he whispered in her ear. "Let's get out of here."

She nodded, and wrapped an arm around him, unwilling to let him go now.

As they walked up to the common room and to what Harry hoped was the first of many, many, many, snog sessions, he asked, "Is it true you leave wet towels on the floor?"

"What!?" Ginny asked.

"Or leave your hair blocking the shower?"

Ginny pulled her hand out of Harry's and turned to face him. "Exactly what else have my darling brothers been telling you?" she demanded.

Harry was impressed she had worked out who had been talking about her. "That you also like to leave plates in your room, you've got a nasty temper, you prefer men's razors to shave your legs, and like to steal books people haven't finished yet."

"My darling brothers told you that, and it didn't put you off?"

"Well, no actually. I kinda thought it would be fun to see if you did them," he admitted with a smile. "If I was to find if that stuff is true, it would mean living with you, and I liked that idea. A lot."

Ginny favoured him with a huge smile and closed the distance between them. "You know, I was planning on asking you out myself," she whispered, as she dropped soft kisses on the corner of his mouth. "I was going to seduce you."

Harry gulped audibly.

"If you play your cards right," she purred, "and help me teach my brothers the meaning of discretion, I might just let you see what I had in mind."

Harry slid his arms around her. "Revenge later," he advised, kissing her properly.

"A lot later," she mumbled against his lips happily.

The End