

Harry Potter

**Charm and a Galleon
Will Get You to
London**

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Summary: Sometimes all you need is a little charm.

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If he could cry another tear, Harry would be surprised. He felt drained and a little hollow inside. They'd just buried Fred along the edge of the clearing where the Weasleys played Quidditch. It seemed a little odd for the grave to be there, but George assured them that Fred would want nothing to do with being buried in the stiff (geddit, *stiff?*) and gloomy cemetery in Ottery St. Catchpole. He would want to be where he could watch the family Quidditch matches and heckle the players, where he could oversee family picnics for years to come, and watch as they all got married and attempted to take over the world with hordes of miniature redheaded Weasleys.

Even looking up to see George wearing fake glasses with a large plastic nose and mustache during the graveside service hadn't seemed completely out of place. And when Ginny nudged his arm and handed him a brightly wrapped sweet, Harry only hesitated a moment before slipping it into his mouth. The elephant ears and trunk he sported were a fitting tribute to a friend—a true brother.

The Burrow was quiet—strange, considering how many people were actually crammed into every corner of the place—and it felt odd.

The animated faces that were caused by George's sweets were long gone, replaced with red, puffy eyes and noses sore from being wiped so much. This was the last of the funerals that Harry would attend. For a very long time, hopefully, he thought.

It had been less than a week since the Battle at Hogwarts, since he'd become a free man, and yet Harry felt... odd. It didn't feel like anything had changed, and yet he could feel it inside himself. Logically, he knew it was the missing bit of Riddle's soul that left him feeling out of sorts, as if he was constantly forgetting something, but couldn't quite remember what it was.

Hermione said it would just take time to get used to, and Harry sincerely hoped she was right.

"I hate this," Ron muttered as he stared into the kitchen where his siblings were sitting around the table, their swollen eyes staring down at the table.

"Last one," Harry sighed in relief. Now that the funerals were over, Harry felt as if they were standing on the edge of a large precipice, just waiting for the wind to blow them all on to the next adventure—whatever that might be.

For Ginny and Hermione, it was back to Hogwarts after the summer. The two girls had already been talking about it in whispered conversations. For Ron and Harry it would be positions with the Ministry, helping to rebuild the world.

And yet it still felt so... odd to be thinking of a future like that. Not only because Harry hadn't ever allowed himself to think that far, but more that he was growing up and still had no idea what he was supposed to do to be an adult. It all felt so... abrupt.

"I wasn't sure I could..."

Percy's rough voice made them all turn, but he didn't finish his statement. Instead, he removed his glasses and rubbed his face.

"We all thought the same thing, Perce," Bill said.

"Funerals aren't for the dead," Hermione said. She slipped her hand into Ron's and looked up at him. "At least that's what my Grandmother always told me. They're for the living, so we can say goodbye."

"Rather dull job of it, then, we did," George scolded slightly. "This was Fred; we should have had fireworks, pints of bitter and dancing girls."

Harry couldn't help but snort at the idea. He swallowed it back, worried that his out of place amusement would offend someone in the family. But sly smiles were breaking out all around the table. Ginny even laughed softly.

"If only we could have figured a way to get Peeves out of the castle for the occasion," she said quietly. There was a sparkle in her eye that Harry hadn't seen in far too long, even though it was far duller than he wanted it to be. Ginny was... she was life itself. She should be outshining everyone in the room, laughing and glowing with fire. Over the past few days she'd been far too melancholy for Harry's liking, even though he understood why perfectly.

"That would have been perfect," Ron said. The corner of his frown turned up in enjoyment. "Water balloons being tossed about..."

"Dung bombs," Charlie supplied.

"Chewing gum flying everywhere," Hermione said, a hint of disapproval in her voice, despite the lighter turn to the conversation.

"Waddiwassi!" Harry supplied with a fond tone at the memory of Professor Lupin sending the chewing gum into Peeves' nose.

Ron and Hermione both chuckled.

"It's my fault," Percy said through clenched teeth. His eyes were glassy with unshed tears and Harry could tell he had found no humor in their comments. "I should have... pushed him out of the way, or done something to—"

"There was nothing to be done," Charlie interrupted. "Flitwick said the wall was going to come down no matter what. Pushing Fred out of the way would have taken you instead."

Harry felt his stomach roll uncomfortably with the harsh return of the grief. Was it selfish to want to change the subject, to talk of anything besides death and battles and loss?

"Then it should have!" Percy exploded. "Then you could all be happy again. You could—"

"Percy, shut the hell up!" George slammed his hand down onto the table, making everyone jump. "Is that what you think? That Fred would trade places with you simply to satisfy your guilt over ditching the family years ago?"

Harry knew from the look on Percy's face that George had guessed it right. And, in a way, Harry

understood where Percy was coming from. Harry felt incredibly guilty for the people who had died because he'd taken so long to find the Horcruxes, had let them die while he wandered around Britain searching for the Hallows.

"It would have been justice," Percy huffed.

George swore violently and tugged at his hair. Harry had never seen him so worked up he couldn't speak, but it seemed like he was reduced to spluttering nonsense currently in response to Percy's view.

"That's morbid, Percy," Ron complained.

"Don't be an arse," Bill scolded.

"You came back when we needed you the most, Percy," Charlie pointed out. "No one expected you to come through that portrait, I'm betting. And I'd wager Fred was just happy to have you back."

Percy opened his mouth to retort, but George cut him off.

"It's true. And I should know. We'd discussed it months before—what we'd do if we ever spoke to you again. I was all for making your return as painful as possible, but Fred..." He swallowed and looked away for a moment before clearing his throat. "Fred just wanted you to come back. Maybe it was just so we could use you to test products, but..."

Awkward laughs circled the table and Harry looked up to see an intense look on Ginny's face that he couldn't place. Her eyes bore into his and he finally understood. She was trying to ascertain whether Harry was blaming himself for Fred's death, as well. He thought about it for a moment and then gave a slight shake of his head.

She stared for another moment before turning back to Percy.

"If Fred were here, Percy, he'd be the first to tell you to get your head out of your arse and stop taking your family and life for granted."

Harry felt a fierce stab of pride at her words and wanted nothing more than to go to her and wrap his arms around her. They'd only shared a few short conversations since the battle, and one or two stolen, but chaste, kisses more out of affirmation for life than affection. Harry was determined to steal more than kisses very soon. They needed to talk.

"Amen," George crowed. "And I have the perfect idea. No more of this brooding, suffocating grief and teary eyes!" He turned and whispered something to Bill, who looked thoughtful.

Harry and Ron exchanged a curious, puzzled glance but had no idea what was going to happen.

"Right," Bill finally said after a whispered discussion in French with his wife. "Shell Cottage in thirty minutes. You'll all be there, and plan to stay the night."

Shock and confusion reined as questions peppered both Bill and George. The two grinning brothers refused to answer any of them, but assured everyone that they were simply going to celebrate

Fred's life in a way much more fitting than some somber funeral.

"What do you think, mate?" Ron nudged Harry. "Want to go?"

"Doesn't look like we have much of a choice," Harry answered with a shake of his head and a smirk. The idea of escaping the sad Burrow however was tempting. Ginny caught his eye and gave him the sort of look that set his whole insides alight. "I'll go," he told Ron after swallowing thickly. "I'll go."

Hermione chuckled and looped her arm through Harry's. "And if Ginny's forced to stay here? She's underage, after all."

Harry stared at Ginny once more. "I'll Apparate her myself." His heart thumped merrily in his chest when Ginny got up from her seat at the table and began approaching.

Ron snorted and clapped Harry on the shoulder. "Good luck with that, mate. Mum might have something to say about it."

"She'll be fine with it," Ginny said. Her hand slid into Harry's like it was made to go there and Harry felt himself melt just a bit. "I'll be with Harry. And the rest of you gits."

"Cheers," Ron grumbled sarcastically and swatted his sister on the behind. "I'll leave you in charge of her, Harry. Merlin help you!"

Harry watched them walk away and then turned back to look down at Ginny. "You really think she'll be all right with you coming? Somehow I doubt anything George has planned will be mild."

Ginny gave him a patient smile. "Harry, you barmy arse, like I'm going to be without you."

It was the perfect answer and Harry wrapped his arms around her fully. "That's what I wanted to hear."

"I let you out of my sight last year and look what you got up to," she teased. "I can only imagine what you'd accomplish with more encouragement."

Harry chuckled and bent down to kiss her, but Ginny pressed her finger against his lips. "Hold on to that for a little while, will you?"

She pulled out of his grasp with a laugh and disappeared out the door, leaving Harry gaping after her. But he couldn't help but think that tonight might turn out brilliant, despite the weepy start to the day.

* * *

Mrs. Weasley was hesitant to let her daughter out of her sight—and even her other children, actually, but Bill's assurances that he and Fleur would chaperone went a long way. And then when Harry added the weight of his request to go, she couldn't help but melt.

"Of course, if *Harry* asks, she melts like an ice lolly in July," Ginny grumbled good-naturedly as she prepared to floo to Shell Cottage.

"Don't complain," Harry teased. "You're coming. I could have left you here, you know."

Ginny mock glared at him and the heated look caused his skin to prickle all over. "You wouldn't," she warned.

And just like the ice lolly she'd mentioned before, Harry melted. "Of course not," he assured her. "You're much better at taking the piss from Ron than I am. I need entertainment."

She laughed and took her turn in the fireplace, disappearing in a rush of green flames.

"You're truly barmy over her, aren't you?" Ron asked.

Harry watched the flames until they disappeared and then turned to his friend. "About like you are for Hermione, mate." He clapped Ron on the shoulder and laughed at the dawning realization blooming on his face.

"You... you..."

"I'm not about to say it to you before I tell her, now am I?" Harry asked thoughtfully. A slow smile spread over Ron's face.

"About time."

Harry snorted in amusement. "I could say the same thing, you know." Ron tilted his head to the side in acknowledgement. "Although at least I caught on before snogging Ginny in the middle of a battle."

Ron flushed and nudged Harry toward the fireplace. "Oi, you can't help it when the moment arrives, you know?"

Harry did know, but he wasn't about to forget Ron and Hermione's timing anytime soon. It was going to be something he brought up occasionally, simply because it was his right as a friend. Ron had certainly pointed out Harry's shortcomings in the romantic department a time or two, so it was only fair.

"See you there!" He grinned and tossed his floo powder in.

* * *

Just as Ron predicted, George's idea of a celebration of Fred's life was less than mild. They began with a solemn toast, glasses full of firewhisky held high. Harry kept his hand in Ginny's holding tightly. He could hear her snuffle softly and felt the burn in the back of his own eyes, but no tears fell.

The firewhisky stole his breath away, but warmed the whole way down. When he drained the last of his small glass, he turned to see Ginny looking up at him.

"Let's find a seat."

He nodded and kept his hand in hers. She could lead him anywhere and he would willingly follow.

They'd spent far too long apart over the past year and more than anything he just wanted to be near her.

After a playful tussle with Ron over the corner of the sofa, Ginny guided Harry into the spot and sat extremely close. Normally, Harry might have complained at having four full sized people shoved onto the cushions, but since the whole of Ginny's body was pressed against his side, he was far too distracted to demand that Ron and Hermione give them some space.

"I don't think I have a single, solitary memory that Fred isn't in," George said from where he sat across the room. His voice was weak, but he said it fondly.

"He was the first to learn to walk, of the two of you," Percy informed them all. He was leaning next to the fireplace and had another glass in his hand, which he was staring at darkly.

"I remember that," Charlie nodded in agreement. "He used to pull things down just so the two of you could get into even more trouble."

George grinned and held up his drink in salute.

"Partners in crime from the beginning," Ginny mumbled to Harry.

Fond remembrances of Fred started pouring out of everyone and turned more and more humorous as the evening progressed and the drinks kept coming. Charlie played bartender for everyone and got more creative as they began to relax and laugh more.

Harry found himself drifting away, staring more and more at Ginny than listening to the words around him. His fingers wound in her hair, letting the ends curl around the tips and inhaling the floral scent.

"Are you pissed?" Ginny whispered when she saw him take a huge sniff of her hair.

"Maybe," he admitted. His head was pleasantly light and his chest wasn't weighed down by the grief and heaviness that he'd carried for so long. He only wanted to touch Ginny, to kiss her and hold her until... Well, he wasn't sure until what, but he wanted her in his arms.

"You are," she accused softly. There was just enough amusement in her voice to make him really look at her. "Otherwise you wouldn't be talking like that in front of my whole family."

Harry's face flushed and he quickly glanced around. "I said that out loud?"

Ginny giggled softly in his ear and pressed even closer to him. "You've been saying a lot out loud, waxing poetic about my hair, and my neck, and the way my skin smells."

Briefly, he wondered why one of her brothers hadn't pounded him into oblivion, but on closer inspection he could see they were all rather... occupied.

"When did Angelina show up?"

Ginny laughed again and traced the shell of his ear with her finger. "A while ago," she said. "You've been rather... focused for some time."

He apologized softly but couldn't feel too bad about it. It appeared everyone was in their own world tonight. Bill and Fleur stood, drawing attention.

"You're all staying here tonight, so don't even think of trying to Apparate or floo away. I don't particularly care where you sleep, just don't leave."

With that he swept Fleur off her feet into his arms and disappeared up the stairs.

Ron made a gagging sound. "That's rather..."

"Romantic," Hermione sighed.

"I was going to say sickening, but..." Ron flinched when Hermione hit his arm, but then they both began talking quietly together, laughing softly.

"Let's go for a walk." Harry didn't remember how the idea entered his head, but it was a brilliant one. "I want to see the ocean." The dull sound of waves crashing on the rocks just down the rise from the cottage could be heard just outside and Harry wanted to see it again.

"No swimming," Charlie cried out. "You're both too far gone to be getting in the water."

"Just watching the waves," Ginny promised. She stood, after elbowing Ron in the ribs, and offered her hand to Harry to pull him up.

He swayed slightly when he stood, but clasped his arms around Ginny and buried his face in the soft skin of her neck.

"Easy there, Harry," George warned with a smirk. "Brothers in the room, don't forget."

"Come on, Harry, before the prats get it into their heads that we need a childminder."

"I'm perfectly capable of minding myself," Harry argued distractedly. Her skin was so soft that he had to press his lips there, covering a faint patch of freckles. Ginny laughed and squirmed away, but her hand stayed in his.

"Ginny." Charlie gave one last warning before they slipped out the door, but Harry was too entranced with the coppery hair that cascaded down onto her shoulders to listen. It shone silvery in the bright moonlight and he let his fingers lift another lock of it, watching as it fell slowly from his fingers.

"You're not pissed at all," Ginny laughed and pulled him away from the cottage. They walked slowly toward the edge of the property, where the sound of the ocean was. The long grass tickled Harry's hand and he let his eyes trace over the whole area.

"I like this place," he said. His eyes found the outline of Dobby's grave marker and he felt a momentary pang of guilt and grief. It washed over him like one of the waves down on the beach, and left him faltering for something to say.

"Dobby," he said quietly. "We buried him over there."

Ginny slowed her steps until they were standing in the middle of the grassy plain, staring into the darkness. "I know he meant a lot to you."

"I... I don't really know what to feel about it all, you know," he said. It sounded stupid, but Ginny looked like she might understand what he meant. "It's all..."

"It will take time," she said. "And you've been through a lot."

"More than you know," he said with a sigh. Even though he'd resisted talking about any of the things that had happened over the past few days, Harry felt the need to tell Ginny, at least some of it. "So have you."

A dark look crossed her face, but she forced it away and replaced it with determination. "Let's go down by the rocks."

Harry took the lead this time, picking a path through the large boulders that felt instinctual. He found the perfect place and gestured for Ginny to sit. "I came here a lot those days when we stayed."

Ginny curled into his side and stared out over the moonlit water. "I begged Bill to bring me over here," she said. "He said you had things to do, though, and wouldn't want me around."

"I would have," Harry countered. "I... I did. But..."

"I know," she sighed. "In the end, it all worked out."

"I thought about you a lot," he said. "All the time, actually."

The blazing look on her face made Harry shiver. "Probably just as much as I thought about you."

"And I didn't..." Harry floundered, trying to pull the right words from his muddled mind. "No veelas."

Ginny smiled and he traced the edges of her lips with his fingertip. "That's a good thing."

"Did you... do you..." He had no idea what words to use to ask what he wanted to know.

"I still do," she answered his unspoken question. "I would have thought the little kisses I like to steal and the way I cling to you might have given it away."

Harry smiled in relief and ducked his head to kiss her. "I'm a bit thick," he admitted.

She laughed into their kiss and shifted until she was sitting in his lap. Harry's hands held her hips and he let the desperation of the last year without her, the firewhisky that ran through his body, and the moonlit moment take over.

Ginny's hands were everywhere, fisting in his shirt, fingers buried in his hair and scratching his scalp lightly, tracing his arms and chest as she moved against him.

When they broke apart, Harry's head was reeling with far more than the effects of what he'd had to

drink earlier. His heart raced and he pressed his forehead against hers, trying to ground himself.

"I used to dream of moments like this," Ginny whispered. "Us, together. It helped me get through the... the bad times."

A part of him wanted to demand to know every detail of what had gone on at Hogwarts. Rage thundered through him when he thought that Ginny might have been hurt, and he wanted nothing more than to hunt down those that had even looked at her crossly.

"But then I saw you there," she continued, "in the Room of Requirement. And you were... you were *there*." Her voice caught and Harry clasped her as tightly as he could, holding her against his chest.

"I... Seeing you again was like breathing," he admitted.

They stayed wrapped around each other for a long minute until Harry began to realize just what his head was pressed against. A heat that had nothing to do with the summer night overtook him and he nuzzled in tighter.

"Harry..."

His cheek rubbed on her shirt and he savored the softness beneath it, wondering if he might be bold enough to attempt to see the skin there tonight.

"Harry!" Ginny chuckled and pushed his head away, leaving Harry scowling. "What are you..."

"I... I wanted..." But he couldn't force himself to admit what he wanted right now. His head might be fuzzy, but a good, swift slap to his face was surely in order if he continued.

She sighed patiently and pressed her lips to his cheek. "You're incorrigible."

"Am not," he argued, even though he wasn't quite sure what she meant.

"Yes, you are," she assured him. "But... but maybe that's part of your charm."

Her gaze locked with his and Harry chanced stealing a kiss. The earlier desire to touch her skin hadn't abated, in fact, since she was sitting on top of him, it had grown to epic proportions.

"I can be charming," he said. He hadn't meant it to be funny, but Ginny laughed softly.

"Perhaps you can," she said. "What would you do if you were really trying to charm me, Mr. Potter?"

The question threw Harry, who had been exploring the neckline of Ginny's t-shirt and slowly moving it aside to reveal her shoulder.

"Er..."

"I mean, you're doing well already, but... what more would you do?"

"Er..." Harry thought about that while he blinked at her. "I would..." Nothing charming came to

mind, and he almost blurted what he really wanted, but that would be incredibly... forward. "I would..."

"Yep, charming," Ginny assured him with a smirk.

"Shut it, you," he warned and pulled her down to him once more. "It's not something I can just turn on, you know."

"Oh, you seem fairly *turned on* to me," Ginny protested and ground herself against him.

Harry gasped both at the innuendo in her words and the feel of her rubbing against him. He shifted so that she did it again and lay his head back against the rock behind him.

"I can't help it," he protested. "You... you're like firewhisky, only better."

"I believe there was a compliment in there," she chuckled. Her fingers traced his chest and played with the edge of his t-shirt before darting beneath it. Harry sucked in his stomach when her warm fingers tickled it, and a jolt of arousal shivered through him.

Her eyes found his and they watched each other closely as Ginny raised the fabric off him. Harry normally might have been worried about the bruises, scrapes and scars that covered him, but tonight he could only think about the way she was touching him.

"You're like firewhiskey, too," she whispered in a husky tone that made Harry groan.

He fumbled with her shirt, as well, and was a bit too enthusiastic about removing it, because Ginny laughingly told him to slow down. His heart was thundering against his ribs, though, and he thought it might just stop beating completely if he didn't see her.

"Tell me about the dragon," she said as she removed his shirt and glasses. "The one at Gringotts."

Harry stared at her, but the fact that she was sitting in his lap, with only a bright white, lacy bit of bra covering her breasts, was distracting enough that he began to answer.

"Er... we... we broke out of Gringotts," he said quietly. Ginny let her fingers trail along his skin and any inhibitions of talking about the past year fell away. "Well, technically we had to break in also."

Ginny leaned forward and pressed her lips to his shoulder. He thought he felt her tongue there and shivered in response.

"Hermione... she was polyjuiced as Bellatrix Lestrange."

"Sounds horrible," Ginny murmured. She moved her kisses to his neck and Harry tilted his head to allow her more access. His hands were busy mapping every inch of smooth skin from her waist to the spot where her bra was. He sucked in a shuddering breath and let them slide around to the front of her.

"It was... bad," he admitted. Thoughts of what they'd endured in the vault fled from him when Ginny arched against him, pressing her breasts into his hands. She breathed his name and Harry pushed the niggling thought that Ginny's brothers were just up the hill away. Right now that fact

was far less interesting than what was in front of him.

In those too-brief weeks they'd spent together at the end of last year, they'd never been this far. Harry had touched her breasts exactly twice, through her uniform shirt, and she'd seen his bare chest once. There hadn't been time for much more exploration, or even the idea of it, really.

But right now it seemed so... imperative that he touch her, so essential that he press a line of kisses along her collarbone and trace the lacy cups of her bra with his thumbs.

"I got very good at healing spells," Ginny whispered.

Harry pulled his face back and narrowed his eyes in confusion. How had they gone from kissing to healing spells? Had he missed something?

Ginny's cheeks were flushed and he wondered how much of it was what they were doing and how much of it was from what she was explaining. Her eyes met his and Harry was torn with how haunted they were.

"We couldn't go to the Hospital Wing unless one of the Carrows took us."

Harry pulled her to him and held her, just abandoned for a tender moment of realization. "I'm so sorry, Ginny. If I'd known—"

"We lived," she excused after clearing her throat. "And we both did what we needed to do."

He nodded and kissed her softly. "No more of that," he promised. "No more Death Eaters, no more Voldemort, no more being apart."

Ginny nodded against him and her fingers dug into his shoulders. "I'm going back to school in the fall," she told him determinedly.

Harry pondered that for a moment, but wasn't sure how to respond. He had no idea what he was going to be doing tomorrow, let alone in the fall.

"But it'll be different," Ginny assured him quietly.

"And we have all summer," Harry said after swallowing. Visions of stolen moments just like this one popped into his head and Harry could honestly say he'd never looked forward to a summer more.

"We can fly in the sun," Ginny said. She sniffled and Harry suspected she'd been crying against his shoulder, but didn't want to ask.

"And swim in the pond." Harry picked up her train of thought happily. "And maybe even go to the beach."

"We're on a beach, Harry," Ginny laughed softly.

"Then we've started the summer off right," Harry protested. His hands were hot against her skin and he pulled back to look into her face. "I want to do so much with you. So much that we've never been allowed to even dream of."

"Like what?" Ginny prompted.

Harry's mind sped ahead, imagining a hundred scenarios where they could simply spend time together. Of course, those where there was little clothing involved were his favorite, sparkling like shining stars in his brain.

"Er... like... like maybe we could find a cabin somewhere," he blurted out. "I watched this one show once, on Dudley's telly. This couple rented this cabin in the mountains and they... er, they... got to know each other better..." He trailed off remembering just what they'd gotten up to on the screen.

"Harry!" Ginny gasped. "What were you watching?"

His face heated but he chuckled. "Dudley was watching it. I just, snuck out of my cupboard and hid—sometimes if Uncle Vernon was distracted, the latch didn't lock all the way. I only watched a bit of it before Dudley changed the channel, but... but I liked it."

Ginny had a strange look on her face and Harry wondered if the idea of a cabin angered her in some way. Or had he said something stupid again? He couldn't remember the exact words he'd used; his head was too full of fluff.

"One day maybe we'll find your cabin," Ginny said quietly. "Until then, we'll have to make do with beaches and swimming and flying."

Harry still didn't know what he'd said to make her upset, but when she kissed him again, he forgot all about it.

The earlier abandon between them returned in a violent wave, crashing just like the ones below them on the rocky beach. Harry trembled when Ginny kissed his chest, and he shook when he pressed his lips to her salty, fragrant skin.

"Can I... can I touch you, Harry?"

Her cautious question tip-toed into his brain and he hesitated to point out that she *was* touching him. But then it dawned on Harry just what she was asking.

He jerked his head up and down with enthusiasm.

"There's that charm again," Ginny said with a chuckle. She bit her lip, and Harry fought the urge to pull the pink flesh from between her teeth. Her hand shook as she placed it against his chest and slowly inched downward.

Harry's breathing hitched and he sucked in when she traced the hair around his navel. Ginny gave a nervous little laugh and looked directly into his eyes as she slipped the button on his jeans open.

"You... you don't have to, you know," he said, even though he knew if she stopped he might not be able to breathe again.

"Stop being noble," Ginny chided. "I'm pretty sure you want me to do this."

"Yes," he hissed out in relief. "But... not... you know... if you don't want to."

She gave him a smirk and lowered the zip on his jeans as she moved down his thighs. "I'm here, aren't I?"

He nodded again and rested his head against the rocks, silently thanking the twinkling stars that he'd lived this long.

"Lift your bum, Harry," Ginny directed. He looked up to see her watching him intently and colored at the thought that she must have asked him at least twice.

"Sorry, I'm rather..."

"Drunk," Ginny filled in.

"Not as much as I thought," Harry said. "More... distracted."

She laughed and the sound made every hair on Harry's body stand at attention. He pressed his hands down into the sandy dirt and lifted his hips so Ginny could tug his jeans down further.

"Sorry." Harry apologized again when his erection sprang away from the confines of the stiff fabric, tenting out his boxers.

Ginny smirked. "I'm not. It's rather... exciting that I can do that, you know."

Harry laughed nervously and shifted his legs. Ginny slid his jeans down to his knees and then sat on them. She seemed just as nervous as he was, and kept wiping her palms on the thighs of her trousers.

"I have no idea what I'm doing," she admitted. "But... but I still want to try."

He nodded and leaned forward to kiss her. The fact that she was willing to touch him at all was enough for Harry. He'd never dreamed when he woke up this morning—the morning of Fred's funeral—that he would be here, right now, with Ginny.

"It's okay," he whispered. "I'm new at this, too."

They lost each other in caresses and kisses, nerves pushed to the back of their minds. Every place that Ginny touched felt ignited on fire, and Harry wanted to make her burn the way she did to him. He paid close attention to the sounds she made when his fingers brushed her nipples, and focused there.

Ginny breathed his name over and over again, along with soft moans. It was enough to spur Harry on and he placed kisses all along the edge of her bra, marveling at the butter soft flesh there. Ginny held his head to her, burying her fingers in his hair and arching against him.

Harry's tongue darted out, tasting her skin. It was salty and slightly bitter—from perfume, he guessed—but he returned time and time again, sucking lightly.

"You're trying to distract me," Ginny accused softly.

"Not at all," he denied. "I just... I want you to feel... good." It sounded weak in his ears and he took

a breath to explain himself better, but Ginny's nimble fingers slid below the elastic of his boxers.

Harry made a whimpering sound and immediately winced, but Ginny didn't seem to notice. Her attention was solely focused on her hand and sliding it up and down his penis.

He moaned her name and lifted with the movement.

"Lay back, Harry," she commanded softly. Harry blinked away the dark edges of his vision and nodded. The rock behind him was rough, but he barely felt it as Ginny lifted him out of his underwear.

"Anything special I need to know?" she asked after swallowing several times.

Harry's mind reeled and he stared down at himself, cupped in her hands. "Er... not... not really. Just... that I love you."

She chuckled and slid her fingers upward giving an experimental squeeze that caused Harry's head to fall back against the rock sharply.

"Oh!"

"I'm fine," he winced out. "Don't... don't stop."

Ginny paused for a moment but laughed and mumbled something about priorities. She moved her hand all the way down to the base of him and Harry forgot all about the sharp pain in his head and began worrying about the impending explosion in Ginny's hands.

"Er... I'll, er, try to warn you when..."

"You'd better," Ginny smirked. Without saying a word, she wiggled her hips backward and dipped her face down to his lap.

Harry swore loudly and jerked when her hot mouth closed over him. He certainly hadn't expected *that*. "Merlin, Ginny," he hissed. She slowly lifted and gave him a curious look. It was only then that he realized his hands were buried in her hair.

"Oh... sorry..." He pried his hands away and rubbed them on his bare thighs. "I... didn't... I mean..."

"Is this okay?" she asked far too innocently considering what she had just done.

"Er... yeah! I mean..." Harry gave a tentative glance over his shoulder, waiting for the killing blow to come from one of her brothers. After all, their sister had just put her mouth on his...

Harry swallowed and threw himself into the moment. Brothers be damned, if Ginny wanted to put him in her mouth, Harry wasn't about to stop her.

"I really, really do love you," he fumbled. "And not just because..." He gestured helplessly to his lap and Ginny grinned.

"I love you, too, you idiot. Now, do you want me to finish?"

He sucked in a breath and laughed at the same time, making him cough. "Yeah, yeah."

"Make sure to warn me when you're about to... to go," she said softly. She darted forward to kiss his chin before lowering back down.

Harry anchored his hands to her shoulders and stared out at the ocean, praying that he wouldn't explode immediately on contact. Her lips closed around him again and Harry's eyes fluttered closed at the ecstasy.

Ginny was awkward and her teeth grazed him several times. The pressure wasn't perfect, and she seemed at a loss as to what to do with her hands, but Harry couldn't imagine a more ideal moment. In all the fantasies and dreams he'd had, nothing could compare to being here now, in this moment.

She huffed in frustration when her hair got tangled in her mouth and swiftly gathered it all behind her head, clasped in one hand. Harry watched her bob down once more and his eyes widened as he watched the head of his penis disappear into her lips. With a jerk and a weak shout, he came in a rush.

Ginny barely escaped getting a mouthful. She spit to the side of his leg while he spurted all over his stomach.

"Merlin, Ginny," he moaned once more. "I'm sorry."

"s'okay," she mumbled, but there was a satisfied little grin on her face that whisked away any concern Harry had. The moment grew a bit awkward as Harry's body calmed down and Ginny stared with wide eyes.

"Er... I... thank you," he said lamely. "I mean..."

"Shhh," she soothed him. "No need to talk." She fumbled next to him and came up with his wand. "Just a normal cleaning charm?"

Harry gave a jerky nod and braced himself for the cool sensation of the charm. Once he was cleaned up and his jeans pulled back up, but still unbuttoned, he helped her put her shirt on and then pulled her to him.

"Ginny, I..." He wasn't sure how to express what he felt. There was a bubble of emotion that welled up inside him and threatened to erupt. But he wasn't sure whether it might result in him crying or attacking her with kisses. "I don't know... I want to..." His hand hesitated in the front of her trousers, but Ginny's fingers closed over them.

"It's okay. We have time. I just... I wanted to do that for you."

Harry swallowed thickly and pulled her to him again. "Next time for you," he promised. They kissed until Harry felt too tired to continue. Ginny curled into his side as they lay in the sand.

"You didn't have to," he told her one more time. "But I'm rather glad you did."

She laughed and leaned up to search his face. "I don't want you to think I'm some sort of slag, or

anything. I've never..."

"I know," he assured her. "I didn't think that. Not at all. I think... you're the most generous, loving person I've ever know."

She ducked her head and Harry had no doubt that her cheeks were burning, but he couldn't see them in the dark. "I love you, Harry."

He kissed her forehead and lay back, staring up at the fuzzy stars above him. "When I was in the forest... before... before he... I saw you in my mind. That's when I knew that I loved you."

Ginny sat up on her elbow and peered intently at him. "You saw me?"

"You gave me the courage to do what I had to do, Ginny," he continued through a thick throat. "By... by dying I was giving you a chance at life."

She opened her mouth several times but then closed it. "You're a prat, you know, Harry," she said fondly. "Only you would think dying would allow me to live, when if you had *really* died..." She trailed off and Harry pulled her down to lie on his chest.

"It's over now. We have... forever. As long as we want."

They lay together in the cooling night air, content in simply being together. Harry let his eyes drift closed and let himself sink into the moment. He couldn't remember ever being so completely happy.

There were still problems out there—Death Eaters to track down, grief and death to deal with—but they were together. And together was a brilliant thing.

"We should get back," Ginny finally sighed. "They'll worry."

"No, stay," Harry said. "Just... just until the sun comes up. I want to see the sunrise with you. And the sunset."

She looked startled for a moment, but a slow smile bloomed on her face. "We did miss watching a few of those together, didn't we?"

"A few," Harry agreed ruefully.

"All right," she said, "but you're explaining to my brothers when they find us lying out here like loons."

Harry snorted and pressed his lips to the crown of her head. "Well, you see, Bill, it all started when Ginny told me to take off my trousers..."

"Charm will only get you so far, Harry, and I think that's a bit beyond the line."