

## Gone/Ghost of a Memory Gone

You're Gone

(Song performed by Diamond Rio)

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*I said hello I think I'm broken*

*And though I was only jokin'*

*It took me by surprise when you agreed*

*I was tryin' to be clever*

*For the life of me I never*

*Would have guessed how far the simple truth would lead*

*You knew all my lines*

*You knew all my tricks*

*You knew how to heal that pain*

*No medicine can fix*

"How did you put up with my being a clown?" Harry asked the beautiful redhead in his arms. They sat on the couch staring into the fire; him relaxed against the arm of the couch, and her half sitting, half laying across him. He gently stroked her hair. "I kept making jokes at all the worst times, and still you were there. Why?"

"Because I love you, Harry," was all that Ginevra Weasley said. "Hermione put me onto the fact that the only time you were a clown was when I was around. I then noticed that it always got worse when you were either trying to draw my attention, or when you had actually gotten it, and I was getting closer. You're scared of intimacy, Harry."

"I've lost everyone I ever loved, Ginny, and I was afraid of admitting it about you, because I knew I'd lose you too."

"What are you saying, Harry? I ask because I don't think you realized what you almost told me right then," she said, trying to keep the excitement from her voice.

He laughed and kissed her forehead. "What, the fact that I just glossed past the fact that I can't hide that I love you anymore?" She looked up at him, and he could read her thoughts in her eyes. *He actually said that he loves me! In the Gryffindor common room!* He grinned and looked around. "Guys, I have an announcement for you, although I'm sure everyone here has already figured it out. I love Ginny Weasley, and I'm proud of it!"

"Bout bloody time you admitted it," came a familiar voice from behind them. "You do know that I'll have to kill you if you break my sister's heart though, don't you?"

"Get in line," Harry said. "You're third – Ginny gets first shot at me."

"Who's second in line then?" Ron asked, puzzled.

"Harry," was Ginny's simple response. Harry simply smiled and looked down at her. He tightened his arms around her shoulders, pulling her up to him, and her arms went around his shoulders. The kiss actually caused conversation to stop in the common room, and Lavender Brown was heard to say, "Oh my God – she's curling her toes! I wish I'd kissed him at some point, if he's that good."

"I love you, Ginevra Weasley, and I think I have for a few years," he whispered in her ear.

"I know I've loved you for years," she breathed back.

He grinned as they broke apart. "What do you think of a summer wedding after you're done with Hogwarts, then?"

Her eyes went wide. "Did you just ..."

"This is my seventh year, and next year is your seventh. It'll be tough, but I think I can live happily knowing that you were waiting for me."

"I think a summer wedding would be wonderful, Harry James Potter. I will gladly consent to be your wife." They sealed the bargain with another kiss.

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*Lookin' back it's still surprisin'*

*I was sinking you were rising*

*With a look you caught me in mid-air*

"I now pronounce you man and wife," said the minister. "You may kiss your bride." Harry took the new Mrs. Potter into his arms and kissed her. He poured all the love he felt for her into the kiss; all the happiness he felt at knowing he would spend the rest of his days with this beautiful woman he held in his arms.

When the kiss broke, the hall was filled with faerie lights, and the minister breathed quietly, "Truly God has blessed this union."

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*Now I know God has His reasons*

*But sometimes it's hard to see them*

*When I awake and find that you're not there*

*You found hope in hopeless*

*You made crazy sane*

*You became the missing link*

*That helped me break my chains*

The final battle was truly horrendous. The loss of life was minimal, somehow, but the sheer physical destruction at the meeting of the two unstoppable forces known as Voldemort and Harry Potter was of the type that referring to it as holocaust-like devastation didn't begin to describe it.

It had come when Voldemort had made the mistake of kidnapping Harry's wife. He had felt that he could wrestle concessions from his nemesis, and intended to threaten her before Harry for just this purpose. What he hadn't realized was that he had provided the catalyst for Harry's final breakthrough, and the meeting was titanic and brutal – and utterly a given as to who would win the day. Harry walked from the rubble, broken, bruised and battered, but carrying what was left of Voldemort's body. He dropped it roughly before Dumbledore and the gathered Death Eaters, who gasped and fell to their knees before him.

"Harry, I have some bad news," Ron said, almost crying. "The building Ginny was in has been destroyed. No one made it out alive. The anti-Apparition charms are still up around the building. We'll keep looking, but there are no signs of life in the building." Ron could handle it no more, and fell to sobbing on his best friend's shoulder.

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"We are gathered here not to mourn, but to celebrate the short life of Ginevra Molly Weasley Potter," the minister was saying. The same one who had performed the marriage ceremony six months ago was now speaking at her wake, tears flowing openly. "She was truly a gentle, beautiful flower, whose life was blessed by God. I remember performing the ceremony, and those lights that came from the couple as they kissed, truly proved that God had seen fit to bless them. Further ..."

Harry tuned out the speakers as they went to the podium, and openly cried through the speeches, until it was nearing his time to speak. He dried his eyes, and walked to the podium. Looking out over the assembled crowd, he suddenly laughed, drawing shocked looks from them. "Ah, Ginny, you're still with us," he laughed. "I look out over this group, crying as I was, and all I can think is her voice saying, 'Hey, this is a party! Let's enjoy ourselves! We all die someday, so let's just get on with living. Enjoy it while you've got it! Eat, drink, and be merry, and enjoy tomorrow's hangover!' That's the Ginny I love, and the Ginny you should all remember. So let's honour her properly, and party like mad!"

As some of the crowd began to mutter, "Well I never!", Molly Weasley stood. "Her husband is right! My baby girl would want us to enjoy ourselves! So let's enjoy ourselves!"

The wake 'degenerated' into a party that did Ginny's memory proud.

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*And I bless the day I met you*

*And I thank God that He let you*

*Lay beside me for a moment that lives on*

*And the good news is I'm better*

*For the time we spent together*

*And the bad news is you're gone*

"Harry? It's time to go," Hermione said from behind him. He was visiting Hogwarts after the ceremony, looking out over the cliff that he and Ginny had enjoyed cuddling on any number of times.

"I know, Hermione. Just wanted to say goodbye one last time."

"Don't go all morose on us now. Don't forget to live, Harry."

"If I did that, she'd come back and kick my arse from here to America. Besides, sitting around moping wouldn't do her memory proud. I'll live, knowing that for one brief, shining moment in my life, the world was perfect, because she loved me."

*And the good news is I'm better*

*For the time we spent together*

*And the bad news is you're gone* GoneGhost of a Memory - 1Ghost of a Memory - 2Ghost of a Memory - 3Ghost of a Memory - 4Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue

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# Gone/Ghost of a Memory

## Ghost of a Memory - Chapter 1

### Ghost of a Memory

#### Chapter I

---

Harry climbed on the plane, still more than a little annoyed at Hermione Weasley, which is why the threat from her husband still rang in his ears. Of course, having given Hermione the single finger salute had been what had led to the threat, so he really couldn't blame Ron. *I went overboard in my comment to her, but damn it, it was the only way to stop her!*

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"Harry, I worry about you, you know that!" Hermione said to him as he sat in his kitchen, trying peacefully to drink his coffee.

"I know, and I appreciate it. You and Ron are my best friends, and I know you're trying to do what's best for me. I grieved at home. I see no reason to go out in public in black. I saw no reason for it at the time. I didn't go out and get plastered, but I certainly felt it necessary to live the way she'd want me to. My public face was the one she'd want – get on with your life, and live! I still grieve, Hermione – I pray you or Ron never have the chance to discover what it's like to have the only thing that ever really gave life meaning suddenly not be there. But she'd kick my ass if I sat around wearing black all the time, and moping. I do my job hunting down the last of the Death Eaters, although there aren't many of them left after I scared most of them by destroying Voldemort, and the somewhat battered condition of the bodies that I brought in of other Death Eaters. I scared the hell out of them enough that most turned themselves in. Why do you think they'd rather be Kissed than face me?" He smiled. "I live, Hermione, and face another day. She taught me that. I do my best to face it with a smile, the way I did when I woke up next to her every day. It's how I honour her memory."

"But you don't have any real contact with anyone anymore!"

"You know why, Hermione?" he answered, getting a little hot. "Because I get the same reaction from everyone. Molly smothers me like no one's business. Fred and George are so serious that it's not funny, and I'm well aware of the multiple meanings of the phrase. The Order members by and large avoid me because they don't know what to say. Even you and Ron can get a little too close sometimes. Take inviting me on this vacation to St. Tropez. Is there a hidden reason you two are taking me to a clothing optional beach?"

She grinned. "We thought you might enjoy the scenery," she blushed. "It's why Ron and I go."

"When you can get your eyes off each other," Harry laughed.

"Well, that's part of the scenery!" Her eyes sparkled. "Ginny always seemed to enjoy it when we went together."

"Well, I never told you, and I don't know if she did, but I think during that period that some kids seem to develop homosexual feelings, well, she had a crush on you, and neither of us ever exactly complained about the way you fill out a swimsuit."

"Why, Mr. Potter – are you putting the moves on a married woman?" she laughed.

"Not if I want to keep everything attached, I'm not," he laughed. "I'm merely stating an appreciation of a pleasantly artistic composition."

"Nice *safe* answer. Did she ... was she ... um, how do I ask this?"

"She never told me she was bisexual, and considering she'd tell me anything she thought might either shock me or turn me on, I seriously doubt she was bisexual, and I think I can state with some certainty that if she was a lesbian, then she was one *hell* of a good actress. She merely told me once, just like I admitted to looking once or twice in the showers. Doesn't mean I swing that way. I was a kid, and so was she." He grinned at her. "Did I cover your question, and any of the others that might have come to mind?"

"Yes. How did you get to know me so well, Harry?" She smiled at him across the table.

"By being your best friend for these past eleven years. Dating you for a couple months didn't hurt either." He chuckled. "Ginny always seemed to appreciate some of the training you gave me while we were dating."

"Oh, I know she did," Hermione blushed. "She thanked me for teaching you a few things."

They sat for a while, quietly drinking their coffee, when Harry saw Hermione's face change, and he knew what she was going to say. He knew she didn't know that she telegraphed this specific statement with that specific look, and he knew that he was going to say something he'd regret this time, but ...

"Harry, it's been three years. You need to find someone new."

*Yup. Well, here goes ...* "If you're so hot and bothered to replace the love of my life, Hermione, you could always dye your hair red and sleep with me."

\*SLAP\* \*CRASH\*

The strike across his cheek was quite painful, and he knew he'd be cleaning up the coffee cup she'd just belted out of his hand. He tried to clear his vision of the stars she'd caused him to see. As he moved his jaw to make sure she hadn't broken it, he heard the crack as she left. *Can't say as I didn't deserve it, but maybe someday she'll stop saying the same fecking thing. I have no intention of remarrying. And finding someone new means replacing Ginny. I can't. I won't. That's the one piece of my grief I refuse to lose.* He felt tears threatening. *Damn it, I haven't cried in two years, and I'm not going to start now.*

He walked into the kitchen and waved his wand around to clean the floor and repair the coffee cup. *I really shouldn't have been that snide.*  
\*CRACK\* "Ah, Ron. Good to see you," Harry said without turning around.

"What the hell did you say to her?" came the shout from behind him. "She can't decide whether to cry or scream at me!" Harry didn't turn around as he finished cleaning up the kitchen. When he felt Ron's hand grab his shoulder and start to turn him roughly, he spun, and the fist in Ron's stomach drove the air from him.

"I am sick of everyone telling me that I need to replace Ginny! I loved her, I love her memory, and I am damned if I'm going to go looking for someone to replace the best thing that ever happened in my life. If I had to offend your wife and you to get that point across, then so be it!" He pulled a spare coffee cup to himself, made it a portkey, and then handed it to Ron and activated it.

Up went the anti-Apparition wards, and he locked his doors. About half an hour later, he had a flight booked to Logan airport. He needed to get away from everyone for a while

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He sat in his seat in first class, looking out the window. He could actually still see Hermione and Ron in the window; Hermione looking worried and Ron fuming. *I really shouldn't have flipped her the finger, but she was falling back into it again. I need to get away from everyone for a while.*

He slept for a time on the flight, and found, not for the first time, that he much preferred flying via broom. The feel of the wind in his face was much better than this canned air being pumped at him

Finally, to his great enjoyment, the jet landed at Logan Airport. It was a pain in the butt going through security, but given what had happened in New York City, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. just a few months ago, he couldn't exactly complain about it. He couldn't be sure, but he thought that the loss of life in those towers being so low was probably due to a hell of a lot of Apparating going on. *Obliviators must have been working overtime, if that was the case. It would also explain all those small explosions people kept reporting in the conspiracy theory sites online.*

He got to his rental vehicle, a rather nice convertible sports car, and looked at his maps for how to get to Salem. *Nice to know that I'm not going to be driving all day. I should be in my residence hotel before the hour is out, if these directions are correct. Fourteen miles? Not bad at all!*

Sure enough, he was relaxing in his room a short time later, and dozed off, not waking until the next morning.

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He walked the town, enjoying the sights. Given that it was summer, some of those sights did happen to be young women in sundresses, miniskirts, or tight shorts. *I may be a widower with no intention of remarrying, but I'm not dead,* he chuckled to himself. *Besides, Ginny always suggested I look. I resisted at first, until she explained what would happen if I did look. I looked with abandon after that. Never understood why me looking at other girls turned her on so much.* He thought for a moment. *Change that – I do know, now that I think about it. She knew that she was the only one in my life, and always would be. Sort of a sense of victory, or something of the sort. Don't know, and it'll be a long time before I can ask her. So I'll watch girls in her honour.*

He'd been openly watching them for a while when a blonde girl looked at him with some disgust and came over to him. "I don't think I have to ask if your wife knows if you're doing this," she barked at him.

He looked down at the wedding ring he still wore, and started to laugh quietly. "Miss, my wife knows better about my girl-watching now than she did when she was still alive and asking me whether or not I found this girl or that one cute." He looked back up into her face, and became aware that she was trying to choose between blushing furiously or turning white in horror at the horrible faux pas. "Don't worry about it, miss. It's not like I wear a sign around my neck that says 'Still in Mourning', after all. She loved life, and I honour her by living it, and loving it as best I can."

The girl hung her head, ashamed. He smiled and put his hand under her chin and pulled her face up to look at him. Once she was looking at him, he leaned over and kissed her cheek. "That's from Ginny. She'd have appreciated your efforts too." He kissed her other cheek. "That one is from me."

"Does it hurt to talk about her?" she asked.

"No. We threw a massive party for her at her wake. 'Eat, drink, and be merry, and enjoy tomorrow's hangover!' would have been her attitude. So we did. Oh yeah, I cried, but that's normal."

"How long has she been dead?"

"Three years now. I came to America yesterday to get away from the friends who keep telling me I need to move on and get involved with someone else. That's the one thing I won't do unless she appears before me and tells me to move on and find a new love. And since I never saw her ghost, I'd say that she moved on somewhere happier, and I'll see her again someday when I die. Since killing myself would really piss her off, I live life and enjoy it. I'll just spend the rest of my life a widower." He laughed. "Damn, that sounds more depressing than I intended. Sorry about that."

"That's all right," she laughed. "You're a lot more together about life and death than most people. Most people look at you oddly if you talk about ghosts, and here you are talking about them as if you've seen them."

"I have. My school was haunted. I used to talk to them on a regular basis."

"Cool! Would you be willing to talk to my boss?" she asked, but he lost the rest of what she was saying as his eyes caught sight of someone walking toward them. She was no taller than five-foot-two, with quite pleasant curves. Her red hair was waist length, and done into a long braid that swayed as she walked toward them, which is how he'd realized its length. She was wearing a long dress, long and flowing, with a gauzy appearance, and clung to her enough to advertise those curves. It was her face that he was staring at, though. The woman walking toward him looked as if she was Ginny's twin sister.

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# Gone/Ghost of a Memory

## Ghost of a Memory - Chapter 2

### Ghost of a Memory

#### Chapter II

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*That's impossible! It's not Ginny!* He shook his head violently. The girl he was talking to was looking at him. "I'm sorry, I missed what you said. I got a bit of a shock. The redhead over there ..."

"Hey Megs! Come on over and meet someone!" The redhead grinned and walked over to them.

"Picking up guys again, Amber?" came the bemused question from Harry's vision.

"Not this one. He's taken," the blonde said, pointing at his finger.

"Ooo, who's the lucky woman?" the redhead asked. "By the way, my name is Margaret Nivalis. Amber here gets away with calling me Megs a lot, even though I keep threatening to dock her pay." She looked at him closer and shock filled her eyes. She quickly threw her arm around his waist and led him to a short wall and helped him to sit down. "Are you okay?"

He shook his head again. "I'm sorry, Miss Nivalis. You gave me quite the shock."

"Why?"

"Right down to your voice, you're a ..." He snorted as he realized what he was going to say. "You're a dead ringer for my dead wife." He started to chuckle. "She set this up somehow; I know it. That's her sense of humour."

"You look a little out of it, sir," she said. "Think you can make it to my shop? I've got some calming drinks there. Non-alcoholic, so there's no worries there."

He laughed. "Hmm, follow a pretty girl who looks like my dead wife somewhere. Should I or shouldn't I?" He looked down at her. "Lead on, beautiful." She put her arm around his waist again, while he put his arm around her shoulder and smiled at how natural it felt. "Five-foot-one-and-a-half inches tall in stocking feet," he murmured as Amber put her arm around his waist on the other side. "How jealous are the guys in town going to be?" he asked with a laugh.

"Rather," Margaret said with a grin. "They're always trying to get me to agree to a date. Amber at least says yes occasionally. Can I assume that your wife was my height? You just quoted it."

"Yeah. I thought it when I realized how natural it felt to put my arm around you." He stopped for a moment, surprising them. "Please forgive me, Miss Nivalis, if I get too familiar with you. I don't want to fall into patterns with you that I shouldn't. You aren't my wife, even if you look and sound like her. Hell, your hair's too long, for one thing."

She started to walk forward, dragging him with her. "No worries, sir. If you go too far, I'll just slap you," she laughed.

"Use the right cheek, please," he laughed in return. "One of my best friends already tried to fracture my jaw on the left side. By the way, I can't be that much older than you, so both of you please call me Harry. My name is Harry Potter."

"I'll start calling you Harry if you call me Margaret. I'll even accept it if you call me Meg or Megs."

"Correct me if I call you Ginny, though. Please." He was surprised to see her stop short. "What?"

"My middle name is Virginia. Weird."

"If I didn't know better, I'd think you were someone's idea of a cruel joke on me. How long have you been here in Salem?"

"About three years. Moved here from the Midwest. Kansas. Folks had lived in England, and I guess a little of the accent stuck, because some people keep asking me if I grew up in England."

"Folks still around?"

"No. Died in a really ugly fire a few years ago. Luckily it wasn't the fire that got them; it was the building hitting them as it fell. Dead in an instant." They walked into a store called simply 'Enchantments'. "My rivals in town call this place Molly's Folly, or Meg's Dregs. They're just jealous that my elixirs work when theirs don't." She laughed and sat him in a chair before walking behind the counter. He heard a small refrigerator open, and she came forward with a bottle of pomegranate juice and a tiny vial. "Allergic to pomegranate?" When he shrugged, she did too, which set up some interesting vibrations beneath the dress that Harry was more than willing to watch for a moment. He shook his head again, scowling. "Here, drink this," she said. "It'll calm you down."

Her voice was so like Ginny's that he couldn't help but grin and say, "Yes, dear." He scowled again. *Damn it! She's not Ginny, so don't keep acting like she is!* He began to drink the pomegranate juice, but stopped suddenly. He knew that undertaste! "Where in hell did you learn to brew

a Calming Draught?" he asked.

"A what?" Amber asked.

He shook his head. *Damn, I'm so flustered that I'm about to break secrecy! Someone already did, though. I have to follow this one down. It's my job as an Auror.* "Who brews these potions ... sorry, elixirs for you?"

"I do it myself," Margaret said, looking both worried and angry at the same time.

"Who taught you?" he asked with some interest.

"Se ... hmm, I can almost remember their name. Begins with an 'S'." Her pretty brow furrowed.

"Severus?" he asked quietly.

"Could be. Could be Sam, or Serina, or Sethra Lavode, for all I can remember right now. Why is it important?"

"You were taught to make magical potions. I need to know by who."

"Why is it important?" Amber said in a huff. "We're a new age shop. Of course we sell magical things."

He reached into his jacket and pulled out two wands. "Pick a feather, point the wand at it, and say *Wingardium Leviosa*, Remember to swish and flick," he said, showing her the exact hand movements and handing her the second wand. As he expected, Amber couldn't do anything.

"You act like it was supposed to do something. There's no such thing as flash-bang magic, Harry," she huffed at him again.

"Care to try it, Miss Nivalis?" He handed her the wand that Amber had used. A breeze came up as she took the wand in her hand, and it ruffled her hair. There were ... other effects, he noted with some amusement. *Ginny always pointed like that, too.* "You're her psychic twin, I think. A magical identical twin. Try to lift that feather."

She pointed the wand at a feather and whispered, "*Wingardium Leviosa* ." The feather lifted gently from the counter and began to float around the room as she pointed the wand in various directions.

He sat back down, heavily, and his shoulders began to shake. "I can't take this. Why must the gods be so damned cruel?" He began to cry. "Damn it! I said I wasn't going to cry for her again! She wouldn't want that!"

"Cry for yourself then, honey," Meg said as she knelt next to him and put her arms around him. "Let yourself mourn her loss like you've wanted to these past three years. You've lived for her, but you stopped living for yourself. You've wanted to cry for her, but you won't let yourself. Would she want you killing yourself by forcing yourself to be happy?" After a pause, "Did she like it when you lied to her?"

His answer was to sob against her shoulder. He threw his arms around her and began the process of releasing three years worth of sorrow. Gone Ghost of a Memory - 1 Ghost of a Memory - 2 Ghost of a Memory - 3 Ghost of a Memory - 4 Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue

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# Gone/Ghost of a Memory

## Ghost of a Memory - Chapter 3

### Ghost of a Memory

#### Chapter III

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He awoke in a strange room, on a couch. Sitting up, he found a note on the coffee table before him.

*Harry,*

*Brought you up to my apartment above the store. I'm downstairs, most likely, but I'll be popping up fairly often. I'd like it if you could tell me about your wife, if she could bring so strong a reaction from you. From what I've seen of you (admittedly not that much), that sounds like quite the compliment to her.*

*See you soon.*

**Margaret**

*P.S. – I will find you if you try to sneak away without at least saying goodbye. I have spies in town, and I might just have snuck a tracer onto you. \*grin\**

He smiled at the note. *I'd better head downstairs. Damn, that's not fair, though. I'll bet money that she's got a boyfriend.* He scowled again. *Doesn't matter. I'm not going to get involved with her – I'd try to mould her into Ginny, and she's her own woman, damn it.*

He walked to the entrance to the apartment and opened the door in time to get bowled over by Margaret. He landed flat on his back, with her atop him. He hadn't been in this kind of a position in three years, but his body remembered it, and she quickly stood, blushing. "I think I'd best go, Margaret," he said in response. "That wasn't ... umm ..."

"I took it as the compliment that it undoubtedly was, Harry. Your body reacted to having a sexy woman laying on top of you." She smiled at him.

He frowned. "That's why I'd best go, Margaret. I reacted to having my *wife* laying on me. If I stay, I'm going to try to steal you from your boyfriend and force you into the mold that reads 'Ginny'."

"How do you know I have a boyfriend?" she asked archly.

"True," he replied. "You could have a girlfriend instead."

"What makes you assume that I have a 'significant other', to get to the question I'm really asking?" She was tapping her foot on the floor.

"Please. A woman as beautiful and sexy as you? With your brains? You probably need to beat them off with a stick."

Her eyes sparkled. "No, I prefer my hands. They come back then, except for the really kinky ones." She started to laugh at Harry's extremely confused look. "Double entendre, Harry. You meant 'drive them away'. I was being sexually suggestive. To beat off is to masturbate."

He turned bright pink. "Oh gods, I never heard that one!" he said, and started laughing. "I haven't been caught like that in years!"

"Sorry," she said, not sounding very serious about the apology. "You're right, though. I've got a boyfriend I'm trying to decide about."

"What are you trying to decide?"

"Whether or not to marry him. He's cute, but he's not what I'm looking for. I think."

"Can't help you with that one, unfortunately."

"Maybe you can. If I'm your Ginny's psychic twin ..." she said suggestively, although with no sexual component to it.

"That's dangerous for both of us, Megs ... sorry, Margaret. What little I've seen of you seems so like Ginny that I'd unconsciously be trying to force you to be her. That's not fair to you. And it's not fair to me, because I'd fail to make you into Ginny and break my own heart." He laughed. "Amusingly, I think I did just help you with your question though, if you think about it."

She looked at him for a moment, and then snorted. "Good point, sexy. I'll have to tell him no. Care to come downstairs so you and I can hang out in front of my store? Quiet day. Maybe having an Adonis in front of the store will bring in the ladies, who'll bring in the guys hoping to have a reason to ogle me." She laughed. "I wonder what they'd do if I dressed comfortably in my store, rather than how they expect me to dress?"

"You a naturist?" Harry laughed.

"No, but I prefer things like mini-skirts and spaghetti strap tops. How do you think the guys would react to that?"

"Jaws on the ground and wet spots in their pants," Harry said. He scowled again. "Damn it to hell!"

"What's wrong, Harry?" she asked in alarm.

"I met you not that long ago, and I'm saying things to you that I'd only have said to Ginny. I'm sliding into that, and I have to get out of town, because I *really* want to stay and get to know you, and there's a part of me that would love to try making love to you," he said, realizing that he had just babbled a run-on sentence at her.

"I'd let you, too. Harry, you're not the only one reacting as if we've known each other for years. You think I make racy jokes like that 'beating off' one to guys I just met? There's something in me telling me that if I lick behind your left ear, you're going to have your knees buckle on you, and if I continue by nibbling on your earlobe for a couple minutes, you won't need me surrounding you, if you catch my meaning." She paused. "The fact that your eyes are so wide right now tells me that I'm right. Now, I grew up in Kansas. How in hell do I know that? It certainly doesn't work on Lukasion. Sorry, that's my soon-to-be-ex." She took his hands into hers. "If nothing else, we owe it to each other to explore this magical/psychic twin thing, Harry." She chuckled. "If that happens to include us fucking like bunnies for a while, I'm certainly not going to complain."

He inhaled deeply; a ragged sound. "I think you're right about the exploration of the psychic twin thing, but I think it's a bad idea for me to get too ... umm, close with you."

"I think you're scared of intimacy, Harry." She said in a voice that flashed Harry back to the Gryffindor common room the night he'd publicly proposed to Ginny.

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"You're scared of intimacy, Harry."

"I've lost everyone I ever loved, Ginny, and I was afraid of admitting it about you, because I knew I'd lose you too."

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He looked to the ceiling. "I was right, Ginny. I did lose you, too." He looked down, shaking his head as he did. "I'm sorry, Meg. I think I need to call Ginny's family, and have them do the work on checking how alike you are. I won't let you get intimate with me. That's been a death sentence my entire life. I know that sounds like a romance novel piece of crap, but it's true. My parents died for me, my godfather died for me, and my wife died because of being close to me. The Death Eaters are still out there, and I'll be damned if I'm going to make another person a target in my lifetime."

He shook his head again. "If you're still willing to deal with me, I'll be your friend, but nothing more. I won't sign your death warrant."

"I'm going to work on you, Harry James Potter," she said with a dark look in her eyes. "If I have anything to say about it, I'm going to have you in my bed someday, begging me to stop strangling you with my thighs. Or begging me to keep strangling you with them," she finished with a grin.

He laughed in spite of himself. "I am definitely going to enjoy being your friend, Meg. You're as crazy as Ginny ever was." He crooked his right arm and held it out to her. "What say we go downstairs to draw in the tourists?" He looked at his watch. "Merlin! How did I lose so much time? It's five o'clock!"

Meg looked a little too innocent. "Well, I might have sneaked a sleeping elixir into the tea I fed you once I'd gotten you up here."

"I guess I needed it, if I didn't even recognize the taste." He laughed. "How much longer is your shop open?"

"In the summer? Usually until about eight o'clock, but if we haven't done much better by six, I'm closing for the night. We almost never see people between six and eight." She looked skyward, and was lost in thought for a moment. "No, it's not a full or new moon, so there won't be any last minute runs on supplies. We can close at six, most likely." She looked at him again. "Probably earlier."

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Downstairs, Amber looked at the two of them and said, "Y'know, Megs, with how long he was up there, and how long you were just now, I'd expect you to look a little more rumped."

"He's all foreplay, no follow-through," Meg laughed.

"Hey! I resemble that remark!" Harry laughed in response.

Meg looked at him. "Somehow, sexy, I seriously doubt that."

"Oh, Megs? Luke was here while you were upstairs. He'd like to see you a bit later. He'll be by about eight o'clock, he said." Harry heard Amber mutter, "Asshole," beneath her breath.

"Good. I need to talk to him. How have sales been?"

"I was tempted to strip naked and stand in the window just to attract attention. This town is dead this week!"

"Feel free to strip naked anyway, Amber. I doubt Harry's going to complain about it."

"Do I look stupid?" he laughed. "Don't answer that, by the way."

They walked out front and sat for a while. At about five thirty, he suddenly said, "We definitely need to bring the Ministry or someone in on this. You've done two things today you shouldn't have been able to. I never told you my middle name, yet you used it, and you knew that I've been a widower for three years. I also know I never told you my age, but I'll bet you could tell me."

She blinked at him for a moment, and then said. "Twenty-two tomorrow. How in hell do I know that your birthday is July thirty-first?"

"It's that psychic twin thing. We definitely need to get you talked to by the people here in charge of investigating this sort of thing. Want to cut out early? You can close the store down, get changed in time for me to take you out to dinner in thanks for being so nice to a truly bizarre customer, and meet your Lukasion. Interesting name. What's his last name?"

"Pendragon," she said as she walked in the door of the shop with Harry right behind her.

"Damn. I'll bet he got a lot of jokes growing up. I'll bet he's glad he wasn't named Uther or Arthur, though."

"Never asked him, but I'll bet you're right. Knock off, Amber. We're closing for the night. I'm going to close and get changed for dinner, and this sexy man is going to feed me." She let her eyes twinkle. "I know what he told me, but I still intend that it's going to be foreplay."

Amber grinned. "You're doomed, Harry. She tends to get what she wants." She set about helping Meg close for the night, and they were finished by six PM. Amber headed home.

"I'm going to change, Harry. Come on up so we can keep talking."

He looked at her seriously. "On one condition. You don't strip naked in front of me, or bring all your clothes out and dress in front of me. You change in your bedroom, and only come back out once all the interesting bits are covered. If you don't, I don't agree, and if you 'accidentally' flash me while dressing, I leave."

"Agreed," she said. "I'm really not trying to be a cocktease, Harry. You just set me on fire like no other man I've met, and it's done things to my judgement." She walked up the stairs ahead of him, and he let himself relax enough to enjoy the pleasantly natural sway of her hips.

About five minutes later she walked out in a frilly mini-skirt and green spaghetti strap top that left her navel exposed. Harry felt his heart racing. *Jesus! She looks even more like Ginny now!* She grinned at his look and headed into the kitchen; more precisely, she tried to head into the kitchen. She caught her foot on the slight rise from the living room into the kitchen, and sprawled on the floor with a thump, legs splaying as she landed. Harry ran over to see if she was all right, but stopped short at the sight before him. Her skirt had flipped up, exposing a muscled yet curvaceous rear end. What had stopped him, though, was the tattoo on her inner thigh, where under normal circumstances only a lover would see it.

It was a tattoo of a Golden Snitch.

He helped her to her feet shakily. "Are you okay?" he asked.

"Yeah. I trip there on a regular basis, damn it. You're not leaving because I flashed you?"

"It wasn't intentional. You could have been hurt." He bit his lower lip. "I have a question about that tattoo I saw."

She blushed furiously. "I was hoping to show that to you someday, but not quite like that." She frowned. "I don't even remember getting it. I must have gotten it on spring break one year, though. I don't even know what it is. Why would I tattoo a ball with fairy wings on my inner thigh?" It was then that he saw her look at him seriously. "Sit down! You've gone white!"

He opened them again. "I need to step outside and think. I'm not imagining that tattoo." He drew in a ragged breath. "Too many shocks for one day."

"What does my tattoo have to do with anything?"

He shook his head. "I'll be back. I need to think, and call a couple people. Back shortly, okay? I have *got* to get some air."

"You'd better come back. You owe me a dinner," she laughed, but it was a bit ragged.

"I promise. I will come back, no matter what," he said, trying to show his sincerity. She nodded and calmed immediately.

He headed downstairs and pulled his cell phone. "The charges are going to be a killer," he muttered, and dialed the first speed dial number.

"Weasley residence, Hermione speaking," came the voice at the other end.

"I'm sorry and you can hit me with anything you want but I need to talk to you!" He said quickly, before her temper could hit and make her slam the phone down in his ear.

"Harry? What's happening? Why are you calling at eleven thirty at night?"

"It's six thirty here, and I've just had the worst shock of my life. I need to contact the Aurors and anyone else you can think of." He took a deep ragged breath. "I was serious, Hermione. For what I said to you, and for flipping you the bird, I'll even help you brew the potions that'll put me in St. Mungo's for a year." He began to cry. "But I need the help of the smartest witch in England right now. I'm going insane, I think. I've had something happen today that simply can't have happened."

"Explain it to me, Harry," she said, getting down to business.

He started to speak, but he heard Ron in the background. "Harry? What's he want? To abuse you more? Hang up on him!"

"No Ron, he's in trouble."

"Well, the bastard should have thought about it before insulting you! Twice! It'll be a while before I forgive him! I thought he was your friend." There was a pause. "What's he said to twist the knife to get you to help him?"

"He thinks he's going insane, Ron."

"Good. Serves him right," was all he heard before the line went dead.

*Well, he's not getting any sex for at least a week, after hanging up on her like that. I give it about five minutes before I get a call back on my ...*  
\*RING\* *Well, looks like two weeks, then.* "Hello?"

"Harry? Hermione again."

"Two weeks?"

"Three. He's angry, but he knows better than to try to end a conversation for me."

"Put me on speaker, Hermione." He heard the click and said, "Let him know that I am making a wizard's oath to permit him to give me *whatever* punishment he feels is fitting when I see him again. And there *must* be a punishment, even if it turns out that I'm *not* insane, and just found Ginny alive in Salem, Massachusetts. Gone Ghost of a Memory - 1 Ghost of a Memory - 2 Ghost of a Memory - 3 Ghost of a Memory - 4 Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue

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# Gone/Ghost of a Memory

## Ghost of a Memory - Chapter 4

### Ghost of a Memory

#### Chapter IV

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"That is not fucking funny, Potter!" screamed Ron into the speakerphone's microphone.

"How do you think I feel, Ron?" Harry asked softly. "I terminally ruin my friendships with the two of you, run away to America, and find her."

"Are you sure?" Hermione asked softly. Harry proceeded to tell her about the day, walking down the street as he talked. He told them everything; how similar they were, how Meg had used his middle name, how she's known he'd been grieving for three years, and about all the little things she did that were so like Ginny. "So far, Harry, it could be what you suggested – a magical twin."

"Does it make sense that a magical twin would get a tattoo of a Golden Snitch, not knowing what it is?"

He could *hear* Hermione's blush as she spoke next. "How did you happen to see this tattoo, Harry?"

"What tattoo? Ginny didn't have any tattoos on her body," Ron protested.

Harry chuckled despite himself. "Ron, how many times did you have reason to part *your sister's* thighs? If Hermione knows about it, then I may have to apologize for lying to you the other day, Hermione."

The laugh that came across the phone was tinged with embarrassment. "She wanted to show it to someone, and figured that Ron would fall over dead if she lifted her skirt and opened her legs." She snorted. "She told me about that night the next time we talked. Girls talk about things you wouldn't dream of."

"It was certainly something to talk about," he laughed.

There was silence on the line for a moment, and Harry could hear the tapping of a keyboard. "That last name was spelled 'enn-eye-vee-ai-ell-eye-ess', right?" When he agreed, he heard a few more taps. "Oh shit!" she exclaimed, which surprised Harry. She still was not a big user of profanity. "Even if the tattoo didn't prove it, the last name would. I know who kidnapped her, too, and you need to watch your back. *Mustela Nivalis* is the Latin name for a species called the Least Weasel."

"Shit!" Harry cried. "Lukasion Pendragon! Lucius' Son Little Dragon! Draco fucking Malfoy!"

"Actually, my middle name is Ananias, Potter. Turn the phone off, put it away, and turn around." Harry pressed a button on the phone and carefully put the phone back in its holster before turning around to see Draco with his wand pointing at him. "Now, isn't this fun? I'm looking forward to this one, Potter. Margaret Virginia Nivalis is in fact Ginevra Molly Weasley. I'm rather proud of that last name, myself."

"Well, you're allowed to be brilliant once in your life. Pity you wasted it coming up with a last name."

"Droll, Potter. Very droll. I've got you this time."

"Really, Malfoy? Do you remember what it was that led Voldemort to his end? Cast your mind back a few years, and see if you can remember that."

"Huh, so the rumours are true – you really *did* kill the insane old Muddblood. I'm a lot smarter than he was, though, Potty."

"Not really, Malfoy. You're just more psychotically confident than even Voldemort was. We're standing in the middle of the street in Muggle Salem. You really think that the Americans don't have their own version of the Ministry? And that they don't notice little things like how you're holding your wand on me? Wizards and witches hold their wands differently than Muggles use theirs in their rituals. Muggle studies would have been a smart thing for you to take, but you were too proud to lower yourself for it. So now we stand here in the middle of a Muggle street, waiting for the Aurors and Obliviators to come along."

"Then we're leaving this street, Potter."

"Give me a reason why, Malfoy. You can't fire on me in the street here. At the moment, they aren't doing anything because we might be doing a street performance. The second you fire a spell off, you'll have thirty or forty *Stupefy* spells hitting you."

Malfoy spun his head quickly to see if he could find the Aurors. When his eyes came back to Harry, Harry grinned. "Besides, Malfoy, you never learned one thing in your time at Hogwarts." He slid his thumbs into his pants pockets, leaving his fingers visible.

"What's that, Potty?" Draco snarled.

"You don't need to point your wand to cast the spell. *Legilimens!*" He locked eyes with Malfoy, glad that his pockets were deep, and that his thumb could touch the handle of his wand.

The images ran through Harry's mind like water flowing down a river. He saw Draco *Obliviate* Ginny, and saw him build new memories for her. He saw her beneath Draco, not enjoying their time together, rather obviously, but it also wasn't rape, from what he could see. He saw the wedding ring that Draco intended to put on her finger when the two of them were married, and felt Draco's horror that he knew. He followed that line of thought. "I'll burn out your fucking brain to get the information, Malfoy!" He felt Malfoy relax and give up everything – no matter what Draco might have thought, he didn't want to die. He wanted to be there to see Ginny crumble after the wedding, knowing that she'd cheated on Harry, and that Harry thought she was dead and wouldn't even come looking for her.

Harry grinned as he let go of Draco's mind and let Draco fall to the street. He pulled his own wand and looked around at the crowd. "Get all that, guys?" he said as he pulled his cell phone.

"Got it," Hermione said. "What's the good word?"

"I was going to ask you. Please tell me that Ron got his dad on the line and got somebody on their way here."

"You'd be right," a voice said from behind him. "Arthur Weasley sent a message and told us to tell you that Moony is proud of you, and that Padfoot and Prongs would be especially proud. I assume that establishes the bona fides?"

"Yes, sir, it does. You'll find that he's listed as officially dead, with no body found."

"Well, he'll be extradited to your Ministry, and I expect whatever punishment is due him will happen there. Thanks to your quick thinking, we have minimal memory modification to do. Most people watching this already think we're part of a LARP. You were trained well, Auror Potter. It's been a pleasure to work with you."

"And you, sir." He looked to the phone as well. "I'm going to hang up now, Hermione. I need to go bring back my wife's memories. I'll talk to you later, okay?"

"Okay. You call us as soon as you two are sated enough, you hear, Harry?"

He laughed hard. "You know me so well, Hermione. Go tell your husband I apologize again, and he needs to think of my punishment. I wasn't joking about that wizard's oath."

"I'll tell him," Hermione sighed. "Sometimes you're too honourable for your own good. I'll talk to you later." He heard a click, and he shut off his own phone. He started to walk back toward Meg's/Ginny's apartment, and was nearly tackled as he reached her alleyway. He was mildly amused to realize that her legs were wrapped around his waist, and she was hugging him very hard, shivering.

"I was so worried! When I mentioned you to Lukasion, he went ballistic, and I thought he was going to kill you!"

"He was, but I outsmarted him. Not a difficult thing to do, actually." He pulled out his wand and murmured, "*Accio* wedding ring." A few moments later, a small box shot into his open hand. He opened the box and showed it to her.

Dropping to one knee, he looked up at her. "Will you consent to being my wife? Again?"

"Again? I'm Ginny? Are you sure?" She looked worried.

He slid his hand up her thigh until he reached the tattoo, causing her to shiver in anticipation. "This tattoo told me that you have to be Ginny. There's no reason for Meg Nivalis to get a tattoo of a Golden Snitch, when she doesn't even know what it is. Ginny, on the other hand, loved it when I went after the Snitch, especially with my teeth." He looked up at her face, and noted with more than amusement that she was stretching the fabric of her shirt. She held out her hand to him.

He mentally crossed his fingers and slid the ring onto her finger. She stiffened, and bit back a scream. Finally, she collapsed into his arms. "Ginny? Are you okay?"

She blinked and looked up at him. "Harry?" She began to cry.

"What is it? Are you okay?"

"No. I've been living in America for three years, apart from my husband, not even knowing I was married, and contemplating marrying Draco Malfoy, and having sex with the little bastard. I'll never be okay again."

"Would it help if I told you I love you? And that I don't hate you for it, especially since he programmed you to care for him?" Harry took a deep breath and pulled her closer. "He always lusted after you, and was going to use the wedding to you as his final way of breaking you. The American Ministry has him, and they'll be sending him to England for trial. He's out of our lives, my love, my life, my very reason for continuing to live." She looked up at him in wonder, and he pulled her into a kiss. He poured three years of loss, of pain, but most powerfully of love into that kiss. She melted against him.

When they broke, Harry looked into her eyes. "I love you, Ginevra Molly Weasley Potter, and I always will. You truly are my reason for living."

Ginny suddenly gasped as she looked down the street. "Harry! I need to introduce you to someone."

He turned to see a little girl running pell-mell down the street, yelling "Mommy!" A woman was jogging behind her, smiling.

Ginny nodded to the woman and then swooped the black-haired girl into her arms. She turned to Harry and said, "My husband? I would like to finally introduce you to your daughter. I was pregnant with her when I was kidnapped. I hadn't had the chance to tell you. Harry Potter, I'd like you to

meet Lily Nivalis ... well, Potter now." She turned to Lily. "Honey, this is your Daddy."

Two little arms shot out to him. "Daddy!" He took the little girl into his arms, and found that he simply could not see for the tears in his eyes. "What's wrong, Daddy? Why are you crying? Are you sad?"

"No, Lily, I'm so happy I'm crying. Now that we're together, I'll never leave you or Mommy again, and I'm sorry that I wasn't here for you before."

"That's okay. Mommy said I'd see you again someday. Here you are!"

He pulled Ginny into a deep hug, with Lily in the middle. "I came to America to get away from people trying to tell me that I should move on, and instead I find a miracle." He kissed Lily on the cheek, and then kissed Ginny's lips gently. "My reasons for living are here in my arms."

He handed Lily back to Ginny and grinned as he pulled out his phone again. Hitting redial, he laughed as he heard Hermione say with her own laugh, "I never thought you were one for a quick one, Harry."

He clicked a button on his phone and grinned. "Hermione, I've put you on speakerphone here. What say you do the same there?"

"Okay," she said, followed by a click. "You're on speakerphone."

"Is Ron there?"

"Of course I am, Harry. Is Ginny there with you?"

"Yes, Ron, I am," Ginny said with a voice thick with emotion. "I miss you."

"I miss you too, Ginny," he replied, obviously fighting hard not to cry.

Harry laughed. "Ron, Hermione – I have someone to introduce you to. Lily Potter, I'd like to introduce you, over the telephone, to your Aunt Hermione and Uncle Ron."

"Hi, Aunt Her-my-nee and Uncle Ron!" squealed the little girl.

"Hi Lily," Hermione said happily, voice throbbing with emotion.

"Let's go back to your apartment, Meg ... Ginny. If you two don't mind, I'll bet we can be there in a few minutes, Ron. I think you guys would like that."

"Why aren't you here already?" he shouted into the phone.

Harry laughed. "We're walking back to the apartment right now. We'll portkey to you in a few minutes, Ron. I want a portkey back here as well."

A few minutes later, there was much hugging happening. As soon as they had shown up, Ron had run to the fireplace and Floo'd the Burrow. "Mom! Dad!"

"What is it, Ron? Did they catch Draco? Is it Ginny?"

Ginny popped her head into the fireplace. "Mummy?" she said, and started to cry. Harry pulled her away and held her to make room for Arthur and Molly to come through. There was much crying and incoherency as they reunited.

Harry sat in a chair away from the group and smiled at the reunion, then looked upwards. "Hey God? I take back all the nasty stuff I said about you. Thank you for giving me my life back."

Hermione walked over to him as he looked back toward everyone. "I think you'll see more Death Eaters turning themselves in when word of this gets out. You chased down someone who was dead and captured him, bringing back your dead wife at the same time. You'll never escape the celebrity status now."

"I have the very thing that gives my life meaning back, Hermione. I can live with being a celebrity. I can live again."

Ron walked over with the family and pulled Harry to his feet, then gave him a rough hug. "Thank you, Harry. You brought my sister back to us. I can never thank you enough for that."

"You still need to set that punishment for me, though. I owe you that, after the treatment I gave you a few days ago."

"Been thinking about that," Ron said with a sudden grin. "My punishment is this – live with my sister and have as many children as you want to."

"That's not a punishment," Harry chided. "It's what I want to do with her."

"May not be a punishment for you," Ron laughed, "but it sure as heck would be for me! I lived with her for long enough growing up!" He laughed at the playful swat to his arm from Ginny, then yanked her into another hug. "In case I haven't said it, Ginny; I love you."

"I love you too, Ron."GoneGhost of a Memory - 1Ghost of a Memory - 2Ghost of a Memory - 3Ghost of a Memory - 4Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue

## Gone/Ghost of a Memory Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue

### Ghost of a Memory

#### Epilogue

It was a week later, and they were in the Burrow. The entire Weasley family was there, even Percy, who had come quite close to quitting the Ministry when Ginny died, since Fudge had continued to try to rule his private life. He had rather publicly informed Fudge that he was going to his sister's funeral, and that if he was that concerned about keeping the Ministry running, perhaps he should stop taking liquid lunches and leaving the job at 2 PM while requiring his subordinates to work late. Fudge hadn't lasted much longer after that.

Percy was currently a six foot tall canary, and as he reverted back, he was laughing. "How in hell do you continue to get me?" he was asking Fred and George.

"Well, you were always such a target before," George replied. "You're not as fun to prank anymore, though."

"Ever since I got that stick out of somewhere tender, right?" Percy laughed with a twinkle in his eyes. "Can I assume that you are getting your senses of humour back, now that Harry has pulled a miracle out of his hat and brought our sister back to us?" He walked over to Harry. "I don't think any of us can thank you enough, Harry. You helped make our family whole again."

"Well, I think you had a hand in it, too, back when you told Fudge to fold it until it was all sharp corners and place it where it would do him simply a world of good," Harry responded with a laugh. "Of course, he probably would have enjoyed it, so that might not have been a good idea."

"I was just sorry that my sister's death was required to help me see what was really important. I am serious when I say that I will do *anything* for you if you ever need it." Percy hugged his sister with tears in his eyes. "I'd never gotten the chance to tell her that I love her, and now I can, because of you, Harry."

"If you're serious, Percy, you could keep an eye on Lily for a week or so," Ginny purred, "and we'll get started on little Molly."

Harry laughed again as he picked Ginny up and swung her around; a sound of joy that the Weasley family hadn't heard for three years, but were glad to have heard quite a lot of recently. "Why wait?" he grinned, still laughing loudly. "I intend on dragging you out by your pond tonight. We can start little Molly or little Ron or Bill or Percy then."

There was a moment of shocked silence, during which a small sniff could be heard from Ron. "You know, Harry, I'd never have expected to hear something like that from you," Charlie said.

"Charlie, Ginny was dead for three years. A miracle happened, and I get to hold her in my arms again. If she wanted me to make love to her in the street in Diagon Alley, I would. My reason for waking up in the morning is alive again, and has even given me a new reason for living. The same as Percy says he'd do anything for me, I would literally do *anything* for this woman."

"Even strip naked and take me on that coffee table?" Ginny asked with a laugh. His response was to start unbuttoning his shirt.

"I'm serious, Ginny. If you ask me to, I will." She didn't stop him until he reached for the zipper of his jeans.

Her eyes shined with happy tears. "So many guys would say that, but you were serious! You'd have embarrassed yourself in front of the entire group, just for me."

"He'd have nothing to be embarrassed about," Hermione murmured into the sudden silence. Looking up, she blushed as she realized that everyone had heard that. "What? We dated for a few months. We never did *that*, but we've seen each other nude. Trust me, neither Harry or Ron has anything to be ashamed of," she said, the blush getting more pronounced.

"What would there be to be embarrassed about?" Harry asked. "I learned to enjoy life, from you." He snorted. "Girl-watching will now be a religious experience for me. I never would have found you again if I hadn't openly been ogling the girls the way you always asked me to. Amber wouldn't have gotten angry at me, and I wouldn't have been there when you found Amber." He kissed her deeply. "I'm serious. If you ask me to do something, I will. I will bless every day that follows July 30th of this year as a gift from the gods, because the woman who was my very reason for living has been returned to me, blessing me with a second reason for living, too. If you told me that my making love to Charlie would make you happy, I would." He looked to Charlie. "This assumes, of course, that she'd gotten the idea from you."

Charlie laughed. "Hey Ginny?" he asked speculatively.

Wait 'til I'm tired of him. Should only be a couple thousand years." Charlie snapped his fingers, and Harry had the good grace to blush.

"I never knew you felt that way, Charlie," he grinned.

"You've known that I'm gay for years, Harry."

"Yeah, but I never knew you fancied me."

Charlie shrugged with a grin. "I fancy a lot of people. Doesn't mean I'm going to do anything about it."

Percy cleared his throat. "When do you want us to start babysitting, Ginny?" He had his arm around Penelope Clearwater-Weasley, who was smiling and nodding.

"I wasn't serious!" she said.

"Well, we are," Penelope said. "Harry hasn't seen you for three years, and you two need some time to yourselves. Let Lily get used to her uncles, aunts, and grandparents, and Harry can get used to living again, rather than merely surviving."

Molly walked over to Harry and Ginny, carrying a picnic basket and a blanket. "You'll want a little dinner out by the pond, so I packed you something. It's very warm this time of year, all night long, so I'll tell you right now that I'll burst into tears if I see you two back in the house before morning."

Ginny's jaw dropped, but Harry simply stepped forward, tears shining in his eyes. "Thank you, Mum. I love you." He kissed her on the cheek before taking the basket and blanket from her.

As he walked toward the door, he heard Ginny ask Molly, "Why, Mum? Not that I'm complaining, mind you, but you never seemed to condone that sort of thing before."

"It's going to take you some time to really grasp what having you back means to us, Ginevra. You being alive brought not only you and your daughter back, but Harry as well. I think the only reason he was still alive to find you was that he was afraid that if he committed suicide, he'd end up someplace other than where you were. He kept living because he wanted to honour your memory."

Yes," Hermione added. "He refused to consider getting involved with another woman because he felt that it would make him forget you in some way." She grinned at Harry, who was looking at them. "By the way, Harry, I was thinking of dyeing my hair. How do you think I'd look as a redhead?"

If he'd been drinking, it would have been a classic spit take. "I'll explain later," Hermione chuckled quietly. "Now, go on out to the pond and enjoy yourselves."

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They lay on the blanket after their second round of love-making. "Ginny, I will never tire of telling you that I love you."

"And I will never tire of hearing it," she smiled in return. "By the way, what are you thinking of naming our new child?"

He laughed. "Let me guess, Molly packed a Fertility potion in that basket for a 'just in case'?"

"Yup. One for men, as well. I'm fertile right now anyway, so I figured it couldn't hurt." She looked smaller than normal. "I should have asked, Harry. I'm sorry."

He laughed. "For what? We're going to have another baby. We'll have to see what it's sex is, but I'm not against naming the baby Percy or Ron if it's a boy. I think I'd like to name a daughter Hermione someday. She was there for me when I needed her most. If she ever needs me that way, I'll be there for her." He looked Ginny in the eyes. "You understand, don't you? She proved that she's my friend by letting me be me at my worst, and only lashed out when I stepped over the line."

"What did you say?" Ginny asked in horror.

"That if she wanted me to replace you so much that she should dye her hair red and sleep with me." He scowled. "I'll be making up for that one for a long time."

"She forgives you, Harry; I think her joking about it proves that."

"I don't forgive me, though. I wanted her to stop, and I knew what I was saying was wrong, but I said it anyway. Basically, I was Malfoy for a while. I said it to hurt."

She put his head between her breasts. "Hear that, Harry? It beats for you. We all say things we regret. You stopped living because of me, no matter what you said you were doing. Don't let what you said to Hermione get you down. You need to forgive yourself." He heard her heart rate pick up slightly. "So, sexy – have you recovered enough to go for a third time?"

He stood up. "Let's go into the pond. The water's warm, and I think I'd like to make love to you there." They walked into the water hand on hand, and made love again, fairy lights once again filling the area as their passions flowed together. Gone Ghost of a Memory - 1 Ghost of a Memory - 2 Ghost of a Memory - 3 Ghost of a Memory - 4 Ghost of a Memory - Epilogue