

Practice Makes Perfect

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Title: Practice Makes Perfect

Challenge: After a Bludger to the head during a Quidditch match, Harry walks into the wrong changing room.

Summary: Amazing things can happen when you get hit with a Bludger – watch as Harry discovers more than he had ever bargained for thanks to a concussion.

Rating: NC-17

Word Count: 7,929

Notes/Warnings: Thus begins a story that was SUPPOSED to be a simple smut-fest. Feh. Damned thing demanded a plot! With explosions! And True Love! At least I talked it out of the explosions...

I changed it slightly, also. My beta pointed out that this would be MUCH easier to pull off after a practice, rather than a match.

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Quidditch practice was in full swing. Unfortunately, so was Sloper, and he'd managed to drive the Bludger straight into the side of Harry's head. Luckily, Harry was only five feet off the ground. Unluckily, it had rained the night before. Luckily it wasn't a puddle he landed in. Unluckily, it was a particularly soggy patch of mud.

Harry lay there in the mud for a moment trying to remember when the sky had gone brown before Ron and Ginny landed next to him, and carefully rolled him over. "Oog," he said eloquently. He blinked a few times, focusing on the twin masses of red in front of him before one of them pulled him close, and his face gently impacted with something soft and warm. *Hmm, must be Ginny. Damn, what a time to not be able to see – I think she's got my face mashed between her breasts.*

"Ginny, let him breathe!" Ron said. "He just took a Bludger to the skull, thanks to Sloper, and now you're smothering him!" Harry felt her release him, and found himself cursing his best friend for just a moment. He tried to scowl at him, but couldn't help but laugh at the utter silliness of it all. He closed his eyes and chuckled.

"Are you sure you're all right?" Ginny asked him.

He looked at that red blur again and said, "I will be after I find my glasses. You're all out of focus." He could see someone moving around, and then heard a murmured "*Reparo!*" cast, and then his glasses were pressed into his hands. When he had them on again, he found that he was staring straight into Ginny's breasts. For the moment, at least, he really couldn't think of a reason not to look at them, after all, they were right in front of him, and he could always use the excuse that he was making sure he could focus properly ...

"Harry, stop staring at Ginny's chest," Ron said, which made the rest of the team, who had landed and were watching from the sidelines, laugh quietly.

"Sorry," Harry blushed. "The Bludger stunned me, and even with my glasses, I wasn't sure what I was seeing."

"Harry, if you weren't sure what you were seeing, then you have a bigger problem than being stunned by a Bludger," said Vandery, one of the fifth-year Chasers.

"You could always give him a better look!" Kirke quipped from the side. The entire team turned to glare at him, Harry more so than anyone else. Kirke paled. "Or ... or not." Showing a belated burst of intelligence, he shut up.

Harry shook his head slightly, ignoring the dizziness that assailed him, and said, "Look, we've gone the whole year without me getting a Quidditch injury, right?" When the team nodded, he said, "Well, isn't it better to get my yearly thwacking out of the way in a practice, rather than in the Slytherin game next week?" He climbed to his feet and got back onto his broom. Lifting into the air, he laughed. "See? I'm fine!" He started to fly around the group.

"Okay," Ron said. "Looks like you'll be okay. Just don't be putting on a brave face or something and end up letting Malfoy win because you were in the hospital wing again." He turned to the rest of the team. "Okay, I think that's enough for the day. We'll leave Harry to his usual post-practice flyby, and see him back up in the castle shortly." He turned back to Harry and added, "Right?" in a voice that made it quite clear that it was not actually the request it sounded like.

"Yes, Father," Harry laughed and flew around a short distance. He flew around for a while as the team disappeared, but finally decided that the dizziness was just too much for him, so he landed and walked slowly into the changing room, carrying his broom over his shoulder. *Damn, that Bludger must have hit me harder than I thought. It only felt like a glancing blow. Huh. It's so quiet in here. I must have been flying long enough for everybody else to finish up and head back to the castle.*

He got into the room and quickly stripped out of his muddy clothing, letting it fall haphazardly on the floor. *How in hell does a game played in the air generate so damned much mud?* he asked himself, definitely not for the first time. *Oh yeah, I landed in it today. But I've gotten muddy on days I spent all the time in the air. How?* His thoughts wandering aimlessly through theories about the origins of mud in Quidditch, he waved his wand at the shower stall and heard the water start, then stepped inside. As the water hit him, it set off another bout of dizziness and he braced himself against the tiled wall.

"Okay," he said out loud. "When I'm done here, I'm willingly visiting Madame Pomfrey. I think that Bludger gave me a concussion."

"That might explain what you're doing in the girls' changing room taking a shower," said a familiar voice. "Either that or you've come to ravish my intensely nubile sixteen year old body, since I'm all alone in here after every practice," Ginny finished with a laugh.

He spun and then staggered backwards against the wall as dizziness hit him full force. As he fought down a bout of nausea, he opened his eyes to find Ginny, her red hair darkened from her shower, standing in front of him holding a small towel in front of her more interesting features. More precisely, he saw two Ginnys.

"Only good thing about this concussion," he murmured, unaware that he was speaking aloud. "There's two of her. Now if only they'd drop those towels..."

"Really, Mister Potter," she said, sounding affronted. "Is that all you think of me, as a piece of meat?"

"Oh my God," he breathed, horrified. "I said that out loud, didn't I?" She nodded at him, the corners of her mouth quirked upwards. He went white and staggered out of the shower toward his clothes, slipped on the wet floor, and bashed his head against a bench. Unconsciousness claimed him.

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He felt himself come back to some general feeling, but he wasn't sure he was awake yet. *Got to talk to Dumbledore and tell him what happened here. Take my punishment for invading the girls' changing room. Got to find Ginny and apologize for barging into her shower ... and for saying that ... Just my luck to go exposing myself to the one person I think I might love ... hell, strike that – I do love her ... she'll probably never speak to me again ... serves me right ...*

"Hey Harry?" Ginny's voice said, breaking into his reverie. "Want some help with that? I've been training with Madame Pomfrey in Healing, so maybe I can do something for your concussion? It might help you stop saying things out loud that you probably don't want me to hear, even though I'm glad I did hear them."

"If you can help me with the concussion, then I'll be glad of it. Feel free," he murmured.

He could see a look of repressed humour cross her face as she thought about what he'd said to her, but her only response was to sit down behind him and pull him back against her chest. *Holy ... she dropped the towel! I can feel skin against my back! Gods, I hope she doesn't notice ...*

"I'd ask if that was a wand in your pocket, but since you're not wearing trousers, I'd say you're happy to see me," she giggled.

Oops. She noticed. "I'm sorry, Ginny ..."

"Why? I take it as the compliment it is." Her hands touched his temples, and he closed his eyes without thinking. "Now I need you to relax as much as you can, Harry. It'll make the Healing go easier." She gently stroked her fingertips along his temples for a time, before moving forward to his brow, where she began to massage lightly. Her fingers brushed gently along his scar for only a moment as if it weren't there, and he smiled to himself to realize that she simply didn't care about the scar. The headache that had been forming disappeared as her fingers worked their literal magic, and he sighed with contentment.

Her hands worked down his face, and finally reached his neck, where she began to gently knead. He groaned and relaxed, but stiffened again (in multiple meanings of the word) when he felt her biting his neck with extreme gentleness. "So, Harry, how do you feel now?" she purred gently in his ear.

"The headache and dizziness are gone, but now I'm tense," he groaned as she nibbled on his neck a bit more.

"At least in certain areas, extremely tense," she giggled. She stopped nibbling and moved Harry forward slightly in order to stand. "Scoot back, Harry. I want to switch positions," she said after stepping out from behind him.

As he moved back slightly to lean against the wall, she stepped into his line of view, and his breath caught in his throat. "Oh my," he breathed. "It's even better than I fantasised about." She blushed deeply as she sat down again, leaning with her back against his chest. He wasn't quite sure what to do with his hands in this position, since the most appealing places to put them were all on her and he didn't want to make assumptions. She rescued him from the quandary by grabbing his hands and placing them so his arms were wrapped around her just below her breasts, and then covered them with her own hands and arms to hold them there.

"After that comment, I'd definitely say you're glad to see me," she said with a smile. "Have you been fantasising about *me*?" she asked with some incredulity.

"Do I look stupid?" he asked with a laugh. "Of course you're in my fantasies! You're the sexiest redhead in the school, and I have a weakness for redheads."

"I think Susan might be a little annoyed to be out of the running as 'sexiest redhead'," she laughed back at him.

"Ah, but I'm not in love with Susan," he said with a chuckle, and then stiffened, as he realised what he had just said.

"And you *are* in love with *me*?" she asked faintly, but the hope in her voice was raw.

"Since the end of summer after fifth year – mine, that is. I was too cowardly and still hurting too much to say anything. Then when I wasn't hurting anymore, I was still a coward. Besides, you'd moved on, so I wasn't going to make you feel bad, realising that I'd come to my senses too late." He laughed softly. "So I've pined for you since then. Pathetic, huh?"

"As pathetic as me lying to Hermione about moving on," she said softly. "If only I hadn't lied to her ..."

"Hey, 'if only' solves nothing, and makes you feel bad about things you can't change. Trust the king of 'if only' on this. Just let it go." He paused. "Is it too much to hope that this means that you return my feelings?"

"Yes, Harry. I love you." She paused for a moment before saying rapidly, "I want to make love to you, if you'll have me."

"If I'll have you?" he whispered incredulously. "If I'll let the sexiest girl in Hogwarts ... if I'll have you? How could you think otherwise?" He took what felt like a risk to him by lifting his hands to her small breasts and gently squeezing them, and was rewarded with a moan. "I'll probably get you angry with me by admitting this, because I've hidden it for so long, but you've haunted my dreams; you and this body you're letting me touch. I've had dreams that would lead to your parents hexing away my ability to continue the Potter line if I followed through on them."

She giggled, a throaty sound given that it was mixed with a moan. "I'll protect you, Harry. We just might have shared those dreams. I've had dreams of you taking that thing poking my back and making it poke me somewhere else." She lowered her own voice to a whisper, making Harry lean forward to hear. "I've dreamed of having a family as big as mine, with you as my husband, not that you'd want that."

"If you bet money on that," he said in a quavering voice, "you have lost the bet. I've had the same thoughts, Ginny. I've seen you at your worst, and at your best." His voice was getting stronger. "If you'll have me, Ginny, I'll be your ... boyfriend is too weak a word ..."

"Fiancé?" she asked quietly.

"We haven't even dated, Ginny. Are you sure?"

"Harry, I may have crushed on you when I was between nine and twelve or so, but somewhere in there I took you down off that damned pedestal, took a damned long look at you – and fell helplessly in love with the man I saw, with all his flaws. His desire to take the blame for all the ills of the world, his infuriating moodiness, his explosive temper – all these things. But also his love of people he doesn't even know, his desire to help. His forgiveness, which is at an unbelievable level – I would have taken a much longer time to forgive Ron for that crap with the Goblet of Fire, if I ever did. Then again, you forgive me for it as well. I never told you whether or not I believed you. And let's not forget the physical attributes either, Harry. We're talking about a man with a body many of the other guys at school would kill for, and most of the girls would kill to be cuddled up with like this – hell, before she took up with Ron, Hermione even admitted that she thinks you're sexy. Those eyes that look into you and make you feel naked – in a good way. There's something about the way you look at us girls that makes us just burn, and in a *very* good way, I might add. That hair that seems to always have that 'just been shagged' look to it." She looked up at him. "Personally, Harry, I'm all for giving you a good reason for your hair to look that way, if you catch my meaning."

Harry had softened somewhat as they talked, but was hard again so fast it almost hurt. "Are you sure, Ginny?" he asked, his voice quavering again. "We haven't even dated yet. Hell, we've only just verbally told each other that we love each other, and we're jumping straight to making love?"

Her eyes went wide, and Harry could tell from her demeanour that she wasn't being humorous when she asked, "Don't you want to, Harry?"

"Isn't it bloody obvious!?" he asked. "I just poked you in the back, sexy!" He leaned over and nibbled her neck gently for a moment.

She moaned at his ministrations before finally saying in a throaty growl, "Then get into that shower stall, Harry. I want you to make love to me, and I want to fulfil a fantasy of mine."

"Making love in the shower?" he asked thickly, the lust darkening his voice as well.

"Yes. Me against the wall, my legs wrapped around you, and you being the first and only man to be allowed inside me. I want to feel you making me a woman, Harry. I want to feel you coming inside me." She grabbed his wand and murmured, "*Contraceptus*." A white glow enveloped her stomach for a moment, and the erotic gasp she released made Harry twitch. "I want to pretend, at least for a moment, that my husband is giving me the baby I so want to give him."

The thought of marriage should terrify me. Why does it excite me so when I think of Ginny? Why does it feel – right? "Are you sure you want to skip right past dating and all that?" He paused. "The thought of marriage shouldn't be turning me on like this, Ginny. The more you talk about it, the more I want to just ... well, it would be somewhat rough if I didn't hold back."

"You'd like to 'plunder my depths', eh?" she purred at him. This was more than he could stand, and he picked her up by the waist and pulled her close. As she rearranged to wrap her legs around his waist, she marvelled, "I can *hear* your heart pounding, Harry. It's so hard and fast." She gave a smouldering half-lidded look. "Like how I want you to make love to me."

"I'm scared, Ginny, but it's a good scared. I'm about to get the only thing I've ever really wanted in my life, and I'm scared that you won't enjoy it – that I'll just do it for me."

"Oh Harry!" she gasped and hugged him tightly. "This is why I love you. You want me so badly that you're afraid of hurting me, and yet you worry that I won't enjoy myself." She smiled. "I understand that the first time it's rare for a guy to last long enough to ... well ... no matter – don't worry about my pleasure, just see to your own."

"No, Ginny. We are going to be the exception to the rule. If I can't pleasure my wife, then what kind of man am I?" He motioned the shower back on and gently let go of Ginny, gently pushing her under the stream of very warm water, and marvelling at the beauty of the rivulets running down her body. "Oh my, I'm marrying a goddess ..." he breathed, as if unaware that she could hear him. Their eyes met for a moment, and he could see the shock, and then acceptance in her eyes, which she then closed in order to enjoy giving him a show.

He grinned and gently dropped to his knees, moving forward until he had pressed his lips to the red triangle before him, drawing a delighted gasp from her. "Harry, are you going to ..."

"If my lady would like me to, I will certainly endeavour to make the experience an enjoyable one," he said, knowing there was no way he could hide the arousal he was feeling.

"Just pay attention to my reactions, and you'll do fine," she moaned. He took a finger and placed it gently on the wet slit before him, gently probing for entry. "Yes ..." she hissed slowly. "Please"

Harry often had become the 'beneficiary' of Dudley's magazines whenever he was afraid of being caught with them. He had been horrified to discover that the woman that Dudley seemed most attracted to looked like Tonks and Ginny, but he had, if only from boredom, read some of the articles that the magazines had on pleasing women. He led his finger slide forward until he found a little nub that seemed to make her squeal, and leaned forward again. His tongue slid out and found that same nub and began to tease it mercilessly, enjoying the panted squeaking noise she seemed to be making. He tried to ignore the insistent, almost painful throbbing below his own waist – there was time for that later. His hands came up and gripped her arse firmly but gently.

He continued to torture his love's clitoris until he felt her entire body stiffen, but when her hands came down to press his face closer to her as she thrust forward, he realized what was happening, and redoubled his attack before she simply started to shudder and suddenly hit a note he hadn't though possible for a human to make, it was so high-pitched. He continued to tease until he heard a sound that seemed as if she were uncomfortable, so he stopped, and she collapsed, his firm grip holding her up.

"Harry," she finally panted. "Please tell me the name of the woman who taught you that. I need to thank her."

"Ginevra Weasley," he said smugly, avoiding the temptation to stand and dance a victory dance. "She told me to pay attention to my lover to make sure I properly pleased her." He gently released her as he felt the strength return to her legs. "Is it wrong of me to want to dance like a moron after doing that to you?" he asked, his grin threatening to split his face.

"After making your fiancée come *that* hard the very first time you make love to her? Feel free," Ginny responded, absently brushing her hands down her breasts and across her nipples, which felt as if they were throbbing. She squeaked happily as Harry's hand shot back to her buttock and gave it a light squeeze. "Harry!"

"Well, you said 'feel free'," he laughed.

"That I did, my love," she said, obviously happy that he was feeling so good. "Now you need to fulfil my fantasy. Stand and make love to me, Harry. I need to feel you inside me. Please?"

He stood again and took her into his arms. "I ask again, Ginny – are you sure? Once I do this, you can't go back and give this to someone far more worthy than me."

She met his eyes, and he could feel her searching for something. "Harry, there is no one I want to have this other than you. There is no one more worthy of getting my virginity than you, and there never will be." She took his face into her hands. "I want you to be the father of my children, Harry."

He felt a weight rise from him inexplicably, and he grinned at her. "Okay. I hope your husband won't mind, though."

"Prat," she said, and then reached down to gently grasp his erection, stroking it lightly. He moaned, and she giggled. "I think my husband won't complain in the slightest." Getting suddenly serious, she said, "They're his children, after all."

He pulled her to him and kissed her hard. Her mouth opened, and their tongues met and clashed for a time. All the while, his hands slid along her back, caressing and stroking the wet skin, making her moan into his mouth. She finally pulled her mouth free and whispered, "Please, Harry. Make me yours."

The naked desire in her eyes was all that it took to crumble the last of Harry's defences. His hands went to her curvaceous rear end again. He pulled her tight and lifted her off the ground. "I love you, Ginevra Weasley. Help me to love you properly."

Smiling, she carefully reached around and guided his erection where she so wanted to feel it. He lowered her slowly, almost stopping when she began to moan. "Don't you dare, Harry." She punctuated her comment by wrapping her legs around him and tightening her grip, leaving him no choice but to continue sliding into her.

As their pelvises touched, an odd sensation hit him, and he closed his eyes. He could feel himself deep inside her, and he could feel her heartbeat surrounding his erection. But deep inside himself, it felt as if ... he couldn't be sure, but it felt as if he could feel himself.

It got weirder as he began to pull out. He opened his eyes, and for just a moment, he saw his own face. He shook his head, and concentrated on Ginny – there would be time to pay attention to weird things later. He moved to press her against the wall, and the shower head followed them, the water striking them in the hollow between their bodies. "My God, Ginny!" he whispered, his voice breaking. "I love you."

"Love you too, Harry," she whimpered back, squeezing him tightly, which made him groan. "Harry, just fuck me. Please?"

"Never," he whispered in her ear. "Never will I just fuck you. I will always make love to you." He kissed her passionately as his thrusts began, gentle and slow. The sensations were astonishing to him – she was so marvellously tight and yet slippery at the same time. His in stroke was maddeningly slow, because he wanted to enjoy the sensations for as long as he could. *No, this is for her*, he thought to himself and tried to stop paying attention to his body, instead concentrating on her pleasure. It almost felt to him as if he *could* feel her reactions, and he found himself tailoring his actions to her. Reaching deep caused particularly pleasurable feelings, so he tried very hard to go as deeply as possible.

He felt an odd sensation, a building tension, deep within his stomach, and a burn like he'd never felt before along his cock, and it was surprisingly erotic. Just then, Ginny moaned, "Oh goddess ... I'm gonna ... gonna come, Harry." She tightened her grip with her legs, and Harry felt the tension release into a rhythmic pulsing as her entire body began to shudder. It was such a powerful feeling that he felt himself lose control, and he orgasmed inside her, his own body shivering in time with hers.

As he came back to his senses, he could feel Ginny cuddling against his chest, and if he didn't know better, he would have sworn that she was purring. "Oh, Ginny," he breathed. "That was ... that was beyond description."

She moved languorously against him and looked up into his eyes. "Harry," she purred at him, "I'm a ruined woman. Now you have to marry me."

"Ruined how?" he asked, curious as to where she was leading.

"You just gave me a mind-blowing orgasm that I know I could never get from any other man. I've been spoiled by perfection. You have to marry me now."

He grinned widely. "Tough job, but I think I'm up to the challenge," he laughed.

"You were certainly 'up' for it a minute ago," she giggled in response. She disengaged gently from him and climbed down. "Oh, that hurts a little, thank Morgana." At his mildly alarmed look, she said, "Harry, I was a virgin until you. You stretched muscles that have never been stretched like that before. Basically, we just had one hell of a fun workout for my ... well, I'll be blunt. We gave my pussy a workout. Of course I'm a little tender, and I want you to know that I expected it and am damned glad to be tender."

He got a wicked look in his eyes. "Does this mean we should hold off on further workouts until you've healed?"

"Well, being a Healer does have its advantages ... how soon were you thinking of?" she asked. Her eyes went wide as she realized that he was already recovering and 'rising to the occasion', as it were. "Morgana give me strength," she breathed. "The massage table this time, I think," she said. "I want to look in your eyes as you make love to me. It wasn't that easy to our first time."

His answer was to gently sweep her off her feet, which made her simply melt into his arms. He carried her to the massage table, which he lowered after placing her on it. "My love?" he asked.

"Just be in me, Harry," she sighed happily. "I'm certainly still aroused enough."

He climbed onto the table with her. "Are you sure?"

"Oh yes, Harry. Very sure. Big advantage to being a woman, once we start going, we can ... oh! ... keep going ... " He responded by once again gently sheathing himself within her, and her words gave way to delighted moans. He was once again sweet and gentle, and it seemed as if her soul was in her eyes as they locked gazes. *If I had doubts before, they're gone*. They made love, again to a mutually very satisfying conclusion.

Finally, after recovering, he said, "I hate to break up this time with you, but we need to return to the world, beloved. As much as I don't want to."

"Why?" she murmured against his chest with a slight giggle.

"Because, my love, they'll send out search parties soon. We've been in here a while. If we get back to the castle now we might get away with it. But if they figure out where we were and what we did ... We'll probably get some detentions because of it. I'm pretty sure there's a rule against what we just did. Not that I'm big on rules." He hugged her tightly. "It was worth it, if we do get a detention. I have something to live for now."

Her eyes shot open wide. "You mean that, Harry?"

"Of course I do, Ginny. I've decided to make something Trelawney said come true. I'm going to live to a ripe old age, become Minister for Magic, and have twelve children. That last is negotiable, by the way."

"Only twelve?" she asked with a hurt tone in her voice, but a mad twinkle of merriment in her eyes. His response was a soul cleansing laugh.

Finally, they got to their feet, took another quick cleansing shower involving a little bit of fun with their hands and what they could reach, and then moved to get dressed. Harry *Scourgified* his Quidditch gear and put it back on while Ginny dressed – as much as he wanted to help her, he knew that he'd end up making love to her again if he tried. "Be back in a few, Gin. Gotta get my stuff from the guys' changing room."

"Okay. I'll meet you outside then," she replied.

Harry found himself whistling quietly as he circled the building, and stepped into the boys' changing rooms with a spring in his step. The room was utterly silent, and he chuckled to himself as he realized that he was going to have to explain to somebody eventually. *Actually, it probably is best if I go to Dumbledore and admit that I ended up in with Ginny. Can't complain; she has good hands.* He started to laugh as he thought about the other meaning for that, rather than the Healing that he had originally intended.

He was a little disturbed to find that his clothes and broom case were missing, but quickly chalked it up to Ron deciding to prank him. With a grin, he practically bounced from the room to meet up with Ginny.

"Ron must have grabbed my clothes, but it doesn't matter. I'll change later." He grinned and hugged her.

"You're in a good mood," she said brightly.

"I just made love to the most beautiful woman in Hogwarts – twice, mind you – so I think I'm permitted a good mood. I should be screaming my joy at the top of my lungs, because I'm engaged to be married to that selfsame woman." He grinned widely. "In fact, I think I will. Woo hoo!" The last was bellowed as loud as he could manage.

It was answered by a call from the side entrance of the castle. Harry saw two people running toward him and Ginny at high speed, and as they got closer, they resolved into a tall redhead and a bushy haired brunette. "Where the bloody hell have you been?!?" Ron nearly screamed at him as he approached.

"Down here the whole time," Harry answered, puzzled.

"No you weren't!" Ron answered back, slowly getting his temper under control. "We checked in here. You weren't flying, and your broom case and clothes were still down here. The whole school's been mobilised to find you!"

"Did anyone go into the girls' changing rooms?" Harry asked, blushing furiously.

"Why would they?" Hermione asked.

"Because I was a bit more stunned than I thought, and staggered into the wrong changing room. Didn't realise it until Ginny interrupted me during my shower."

Hermione blushed furiously as she put the pieces together. Ron's face was a study in contrasts. Part of him was relieved to find Harry, but another part was annoyed at him having been so close by all this time. Part of him was furious that Harry had been naked around Ginny, but another part was happy that the two of them had stopped dancing around each other. Part of him was worried about the concussion being so bad that Harry had walked into the wrong changing room, but another part of him was glad that he seemed to be doing so much better that he was happily holding Ginny's hand, relaxed and showing no sign of pain. This being the case, Ron responded to Harry's pronouncement with all the intelligence and aplomb for which he was so famous. "Gkk!" was his response.

"You seem to have enjoyed your shower," Hermione said with a knowing smirk as she recovered from her embarrassment.

"Showering with your fiancée is always enjoyable, I'd imagine," Harry said simply, waiting for the responses.

Ron's jaw simply dropped, while Hermione did something Harry never would have expected from her – she began bouncing up and down, squealing happily. Ron looked mildly distracted by the sight, and Harry had to admit that it wasn't exactly unpleasant, considering her chest was a bit larger than Ginny's. He watched her bounce for a moment before saying, "Be that as it may be, why were you looking for me?"

Ron took a deep breath, obviously trying to calm down as to not deliver what he had to say as a single word. It still came out a bit fast. "Well, when we were coming up to the castle after practice, we saw the greasy git heading down to the gate at top speed ... and you know what that means."

"He must have been summoned. But why didn't my scar hurt ..." He paused. "... or maybe it did but I thought it was the Bludger headache."

"Yeah, probably. So after a while McGonagall comes into the common room and asks where you are ... Dumbledore wants to see you ... so we realize you didn't come up after your flying time ... and we go back to the locker room ... and you're NOT THERE! You're not on the pitch, you're not in the shower, your clothes are still in the locker and your broom case is empty ... we thought you must have been kidnapped by Death Eaters or something."

"In the middle of the afternoon?" Harry asked incredulously.

"Well, you never can tell with those gits ... So we took your stuff and went back up and told the Headmaster ... and now everybody's looking for you all over the school ..."

"And then I realized we hadn't seen Ginny either so we came back down to see if maybe she'd been kidnapped too ..."

"No, she kidnapped me, I think. But I went willingly." He grinned an evil grin. "Or should I say that I *came* willingly?"

"Harry!" Ginny squeaked, blushing furiously.

"Hang on here," Ron said. "Are you trying to say that you two did more than just shower in there?" Harry couldn't tell how Ron was reacting to this information.

"Ron, I'm stating this to you right now, before anything else. My reference to her as my fiancée is serious. I intend to marry your sister. That being said, I will admit that more than the simple scrubbing of backs happened in there. We did, in fact, do what you think we did." He took a deep

Breath, waiting for the reaction.

Ron stood looking at him for a moment, and Harry tried, with just his eyes, to tell him just what Ginny meant to him. Finally, Ron inhaled deeply, and then leaped forward to pull Harry into a hug. "Welcome to the family, chum!" he laughed. When he released Harry, he laughed, undoubtedly because of the look of shock that Harry wore on his face. "What, you thought I'd get angry or try to beat the hell out of you? I know you well enough to know that you wouldn't go for just a quick shag with her – you're in for the long haul. And if you say 'fiancée', then I expect to be going to my sister's wedding."

Hermione's eyes sparkled. "I think we need to get up to the castle and let the Headmaster know you're all right before we talk more about this." She linked arms with Ginny and asked with a laugh, "So, did you enjoy yourself?"

The walk to the castle was brisk, but happy. No matter how dire the situation might be with Voldemort, Harry just couldn't be down after having so much go right in his life in the last hour. They reached the gargoyle guarding the stairwell and Harry chuckled. "Everlasting Gobstoppers." A few moments later, they were in the Headmaster's office.

"Harry, my boy, I will admit to becoming just a tad worried for you when no one could find you."

"Uh, sorry, sir. I should be given a detention for that, probably. I was still fuzzy-headed enough that I accidentally entered the girls' changing room."

"Is that where Miss Weasley found you?" the elderly wizard asked, eyes twinkling madly.

"Yeah. I caught her in a towel."

Ginny spoke up. "Sir? He was quite out of it. I'm certain that, had he known, he would have ... well, he tried to leave when he realised, and fell and hurt himself more."

"It appears that Madame Pomfrey certainly was correct in teaching you Healing magic, then." He murmured a few words and ran his wand quickly in Harry's direction. "Remarkable wand work, Miss Weasley. I commend you."

She blushed at the praise. "I didn't use a wand. I just held Harry and focused on Healing him."

Dumbledore gave her a knowing look that Harry somehow deciphered. "Sir," he chuckled, "I am aware of how she feels about me. That's ... uh, that's one of the other reasons I should get a detention. Our activities went a bit beyond simple healing of a concussion, and I'm pretty sure there's rules against that. Sir."

"Ah, so the two of you have finally admitted your feelings toward each other." The both of them blushed furiously. Dumbledore laughed. "Was *Contraceptus* cast, at least?"

"Yes sir," Ginny said. "I may be engaged to him now, but I'd kinda like to wait until I've taken my N.E.W.T.s to get pregnant, you know?" she finished with a smile.

"Indeed? Felicitations *are* due the two of you?" Ginny nodded brightly, while Harry simply took her hand and kissed it gently. "Excellent. Your detention will be served with me tonight, since you are, in fact, correct, Harry." He laughed again. "It happens, and we know that it does, but we must keep up appearances, mustn't we? I realize that there are only a few weeks of school left, but I'd appreciate it if you'd practice a little discretion during those weeks, if you understand me?"

Harry smiled and nodded. "Sir? You needed to speak with me about something? I assume that it has something to do with Sn ... Professor Snape running for the gates as if the hounds of Hell were on his heels?"

"Yes. He received an urgent summons about an hour ago. I wish to know if you have felt anything through your scar?"

"No. I'm not getting anything, and don't remember getting anything but dizzy from the concussion."

"Are you Occluding?"

"Hmm? Occluding?"

"Using Occlumency."

"Ah. No."

"And you're not getting anything?"

"Nothing."

"You're sure."

"Absolutely."

"You haven't eaten any of my lemon drops, have you?"

"Ah, *ha!* I *knew* you put something in those things! Calming potion, is it?"

Dumbledore mumbled something within the range of anyone's hearing, except for Fawkes, whose chirping sounded suspiciously like laughter.

"No, I haven't had any of your lemon drops," Harry finally replied with a grin.

The headmaster was about to open his mouth to speak further when Professor McGonagall burst into his office. "Albus! Severus is back! He has some astonishing news!"

"Where is he?"

"In the hospital wing, but it's nothing serious. But he says you must come. And Harry too. Have you found ... oh, thank Merlin!" The Transfiguration teacher swept forward and surprised Harry with a sudden hug before releasing him suddenly. "We have been quite worried about you, Mister Potter," she said sternly, but was unable to hide the suspicious brightness in her eyes.

"I didn't mean to worry people. The Bludger hit harder than I thought. I ended up stumbling into the girls' changing room." He paused for her shocked look. "When I found Ginny in there, I simply had to ask her to marry me to save her reputation," he finished with a laugh.

"We shall talk later, Mister Potter," McGonagall said.

"He will be in detention with me at six p.m., Minerva," Dumbledore said. "You are free to join us. Shall we make our way to the Hospital Wing?" Seemingly forgotten in the fuss, Ron and Hermione tagged along.

The group entered the Hospital Wing to see Severus Snape lying in a bed, allowing Madame Pomfrey to bandage his arm. As Harry came into view, he smiled widely and said, "Mister Potter, I don't know what you did an hour ago, but whatever it was, it was just what I needed."

Everyone stared at the man for a long moment before Harry suddenly gasped. "He's gone, isn't he? Completely and utterly?"

"I personally watched his head implode, and I mean that literally. Somewhere between thirty and sixty minutes ago, he shrieked in pain, clutched his head and began to melt. Not literally, but it is the only way to describe the manner in which his body fell in upon itself. His head imploded – just suddenly collapsed – and his robes fell to the ground, a simple empty sack of skin contained within. We could not detect the spirit anywhere. There was something of an immediate free-for-all as certain individuals attempted to take advantage of the resulting power vacuum, which is how I received my injuries. I sabotaged the wards while everybody else was busy fighting, and sent up a beacon for the Aurors before making a break for it. There are quite a few dead and injured being picked up as we speak at a certain household in Little Hangleton."

Harry turned to Ginny, who had suddenly realized the timing, and he chuckled at the bright blush on her cheeks. "Yes, my beloved fiancée, you killed Voldemort. Without you, we'd still be worrying about his next manoeuvre."

She laughed, a throaty sound. "I'd say you had a hand in his demise, Harry. Well, maybe not a hand, but you know what I mean."

Minerva McGonagall looked at the two of them, but before she could say anything, Severus Snape burst out laughing. "Am I to gather, Miss Weasley, that you and Mister Potter were ... ahem ... engaged at that exact time?"

Harry chuckled. "Yes, in both senses of the word."

"Harry," Ginny said, tapped her foot in annoyance. The grin on her face, however, made it obvious that the annoyance was just for show. "You know that it was you. You were the one destined to kill Voldemort. I didn't have anything to do with it."

"Au contraire, my beloved. Voldemort died because you and I truly *made love* in the girls' changing rooms. Mere sex would not have done this. It is truly something that I could not have done without you. Therefore, until my dying day I will swear that *you* are the saviour of the wizarding world, and that *I* was lucky enough to ask you to marry me before anyone else could get to you, and before you could come to your senses and say no."

"I'd have *lost* my senses to say no, Harry. I love you, and I am somehow lucky enough to discover that you love me. And between us, my husband to be, we appear to have destroyed the Dark Lord." She leaned forward and gently kissed Harry – a kiss in which time stopped as all the feelings she had for him poured through her.

"Miss Weasley!" came the shocked voice of Minerva McGonagall.

"The future Mrs. Potter, thank you very much," was Ginny's cheeky reply.

Whatever McGonagall was about to say was cut off by a sudden cheer from Snape. "Two hundred points to Gryffindor for the most inventive solution to a Dark Lord problem I have ever heard!" Snape applauded. He stopped when he noticed that all were looking at him as if he had grown a second head. "None of you understand, except perhaps the happy couple. For the first time in more than twenty years, I have hope for tomorrow. I shall undoubtedly soon return to being the irascible teacher of Potions that you all know and loathe, but for the time being, I shall revel in the knowledge that we are finally well and truly free of that madman for all time. If that means that I make you think that I am completely crazy while I laugh, then so be it." He climbed from the bed and grabbed Minerva McGonagall, and began to dance around the room. She quickly joined him in his laughter, while Harry bowed to Ginny before taking her hand and beginning to waltz with his bride-to-be. Ron and Hermione started dancing too. Albus Dumbledore was doing a jig and dragged Madam Pomfrey into it.

It finally began to sink in for Harry. The dark shadow that had fallen across his whole life was gone. And outside this room, nobody knew he had anything to do with it. He might actually be able to come out of this with a private life. "We are finally free of Voldemort," he breathed with joy. He stepped back and with a grin, began to sing.

Ding, Dong, the Dark Lord's dead,

Which Dark Lord?

The Old Dark Lord!

Ding, Dong, the old Dark Lord is dead!

Hermione was laughing as Harry began to dance around the room, singing his little ditty to the music from the Wizard of Oz. She finally chimed in with a high pitched intentionally nasal voice, "*He's not only merely dead, he's really most sincerely dead!*" The others in the room were looking rather oddly at them as they hitched their arms together, dancing a crazy little jig, but no one could keep from laughing when Severus joined them.

When the laughter had finally died down, Snape looked at Harry and said, "I'd like to talk to you later, Potter ... sorry, *Harry*. I've ... well, I've things I need to say to you. Apologies and the like." He shuddered very slightly. "Once again, sorry – old habits die rather hard," he finished.

Harry looked at him for a moment. "Are you willing to change, sir?" Snape simply nodded at him. "Well then, we're in good territory already, then. We'll talk later, but I think that we should ... But right now I've got something else that I have to do..."

His eyes twinkled. "Hey, Ginny!"

"Yes Harry?" she asked with a bright smile.

"Want to meet me in the Room of Requirement and make damned sure that Voldemort's as dead as dead can be?"

"I'd love to!" she replied, running across the room and leaping into his arms, quickly wrapping her legs around his waist. "Let's go!"