

Surprises

Harry had just gotten home after a long day's practice. After the defeat of Voldemort, he had decided that he had seen enough of death and destruction to last him a lifetime, so he scrapped his plans of being an Auror. Instead, he had tried out for a Quidditch team, making his best friend Ron ecstatic when the Chudley Cannons hired him on as their Seeker. (Their previous Seeker had had enough of losing, and had completely quit the sport in disgust.) Harry had spent the past three years taking the Cannons from the losingest team in the known world to a team at the top of the rankings. He hadn't been ashamed to use his fame to get a better budget for the team, and had even spent his own money buying top of the line brooms for the entire team.

Almost the instant that he stepped through the door, he watched his fireplace flare green, and Ron's head popped out. "Harry! You home yet?"

"Just got in, Ron," came the laughing reply. "And I do mean just. If you'd called a minute earlier, you wouldn't have gotten me."

"Get yourself a shower and get yourself to The Leaky Cauldron in fifteen minutes! Hermione's back!"

Harry's heart leapt in his chest. *She's back! Great!* "I'll be there in ten!"

Ron laughed. "Make it fifteen. You've been practicing hard with the Cannons, you need the shower."

"Prat," Harry laughed as the connection ended. He jumped into the shower and cleaned himself quickly but thoroughly. *I tend to prefer the water massage after a practice, so I may regret this tomorrow, but for Hermione, it's worth it.*

Hermione had disappeared from his life right after Hogwarts, other than in letters, because she'd had the chance to go to school in the United States, at a newly opened Wizarding University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Needless to say, she had jumped at the chance.

They had exchanged letters on and off, although they had largely stopped by the middle of her second year, what with the massive workload she had taken. She wanted a Bachelor's degree in three years, not four. The fact that she was back in England was a good sign that she had successfully achieved that goal.

Fifteen minutes after Ron's Floo call, Harry was walking through the door to The Leaky Cauldron. He saw the old familiar red hair of his best friend and started to head over. His eyes slid over and caught sight of the brown haired woman next to him, and his heart stopped. There she was. He'd waited three years to tell her how he felt, and he'd do it today.

He started walking again, and got to the table. "How do you tell someone that they haven't changed a bit, but somehow are more beautiful than ever?" he said, smiling.

"Harry, I didn't know you cared!" Ron laughed.

"Git!" Harry laughed in response. "I was talking about our Hermione here." She blushed beautifully in response.

"You have no idea how good it is to see you again!" she said.

"I do," Harry murmured.

Hermione was gushing. "I wanted you two to be the first to hear my big news. I haven't even told my parents yet." She took a deep breath. "I want you two to be at my commitment ceremony in a month. For all intents and purposes, I'm getting married!"

Instantly, Harry had a wide smile on his face, but there was a loud roaring in his ears. *Married? Hermione's getting married? But ...*

"Lisa's got to get here from Dallas, Texas, and then get settled before we do it." She looked at the both of them. "It may sound odd, Harry, but I'd like it if you'd stand beside me as ... well, if I were a guy, you'd be my best man."

If you were a guy, I wouldn't be lying to you with my eyes, telling you that I'm happy for you, rather than wishing I was in Lisa's place. "Hermione, I would be honoured to stand beside you as best man. I'd say groom's-man, but you're not a groom, and ladies-man has another meaning entirely," he laughed. "And if it's a game day, then that's why they have a reserve Seeker."

Ron sputtered. "But the Cannons ..."

"... are doing well enough that even if they lose a game with me not being there, we'll still make the Cup this year. And Dickinson is good enough that he puts me to shame occasionally."

"You play for the Cannons?" Hermione said. "You never told me that! You just said you were playing professional Quidditch!"

"Yup!" Ron said. "Took 'em to the Cup his first year! Looks like it'll be their third year at the Cup."

Harry looked down at his watch and winced. "Where are you staying, Hermione? I have to run and deal with something, but I don't know how long it'll take."

"Chum..." Ron began.

"I have to deal with this, Ron. I am not begging off on being with my two best friends."

Hermione hadn't had the chance to learn that Harry had properly learned to lie in these last three years, and Ron still wasn't used to the fact that he could look someone in the eye and lie now. He nodded to Tom and borrowed the fireplace, Floo'ing to his own home.

Dammit, he grumbled to himself, stalking outdoors at the ancestral Potter home. He had built a wizarding version of a skeet shoot, which he used originally to practice his curses that he might use against Voldemort, but it had rapidly become a way of blowing off steam. He activated it.

A block of wood shot into the sky, and Harry fired off a curse. The resulting explosion made him pause, if only because it had been so bright that his vision was sparkling for the moment. *I guess my mood goes quite a bit past annoyed.*

It's not at her, either. She deserves to be loved. I'm not angry at Lisa either. If Hermione chose her, then she must be worthwhile. I guess I'm angry at life for letting me fall in love with a lesbian.

BLAM! He'd been smart this time, and wasn't blinded, but he still saw the flash through his closed eyelids. BLAM! Another block. This continued for quite some time, until it began to get dark, and he noticed that he was tired, and he staggered back into the family home. He was both surprised and amused to see Ron waiting for him.

"Hey chum, how was your meeting?" Ron asked him in a voice that told Harry that he knew exactly what had happened.

"Loud. I was blinded at least once." He laughed. "Can you imagine saying that to Hermione, but not explaining what I was doing? 'Oh, yes, Hermione. We have quite spirited team meetings!' I think her eyes would fall out of her head."

Ron laughed with him for a few moments. Then an uncomfortable silence fell.

Finally, Ron broke it with, "Why not tell her how you feel?"

Harry laughed bitterly. "Yeah. You know how she hates to hurt people's feelings. Remember how she cried when Neville told her he had a crush on her, and she had to tell him that she didn't return the feeling? She teared up for a week whenever she was near Neville. 'Oh, by the way, Hermione – did you know that I'm so in love with you that I'll stand by you at your wedding to a woman, wishing for the first time in my life that I'd been born female, just for the chance for that woman to be me? I love you so much that I'm willing to tear my own heart out just to see you deliriously happy?' She'd never be able to be near me again!"

Ron was staring at him. "Gods, chum, I never knew how much you cared for her. She really needs to know."

"No she does *not* really need to know, Ron, and I promise you this, since I know you well enough – if you tell her the way I feel about her in any way, I will refuse to speak to you until the next millennium." He stared at Ron, and could hear Ron gulp as he recognized that Harry was dead serious about this. "I know you mean well, Ron, but to tell her how I feel would kill her. Do you really want to hurt her that much?"

Ron's face fell. "No, you're right. She'd cry herself to sleep for a year. So what are you going to do?"

"Be her friend, like I've always been. What other choice is there?"

"Lisa will be here tomorrow," Hermione said three days later. "I'm looking forward to you two meeting her."

Harry smiled. "Well, after you've finished welcoming her to England," he said with an amused leer, "you can bring her over to Potter's Field. We'll throw a little party to welcome her."

Hermione's eyes suddenly glistened with tears. "What if you don't like her, Harry? Then you'll have someone in your house you can't stand."

He laughed. "She's the woman you're spending the rest of your life with, Hermione. You haven't made stupid romantic choices since that crush on Gilderoy Lockhart. I'm sure I'm going to like her."

"I hope so. I so want you and Ron to like her."

"Don't worry about it, beautiful. Now you just need to let me know when you want to throw the soiree, and who you want invited."

She looked at him for a long moment. "Okay. Give me a few minutes on the list, and then give me a little time to talk to Lisa. Are you aware that this is the second time in probably ten years you've told me I'm beautiful, and the first time was less than a week ago?"

He smiled. "Being in love looks good on you, obviously." *I just wish it had been me that gave you that look.*

She scribbled for a few minutes, pushed the list across the table to him, and then pulled out her cell phone. Trying not to listen, Harry scanned the list.

"Hey lover! What do you mean, who is this? Just for that, I'm not kissing you when you arrive at Heathrow. Oh, now you know my name!" she was

laughing. She started to blush, and Harry noticed the evidence that she certainly liked what she was hearing on the phone. "I'm in a public place, honey, in front of my best friend; please don't do this to me ... oh gods, please?" she whimpered into the phone. Harry moved closer to Hermione, worried, and put his arm around her as Hermione whimpered a little more, and then started to quiver against his side. Her breathing was fast, and Harry suddenly felt himself both embarrassed and aroused as he realized what was happening. Breathing a little fast, Hermione moaned into the phone and whispered, "You are a very evil woman, Lisa." She paused for a long time to listen to the comments from the woman on the other end. "Okay, I promise. I'll see you in a number of hours. By the way, my best friend wants to throw you a 'welcome to England' party."

"Wrong," Harry interrupted, hoping it was loud enough for Lisa to hear. "It's a 'welcome to the family' party."

"You heard that? What did I tell you about him? Yeah, exactly. I told you that I promise to do that. Do you want me to wait until you're around? No? Okay. I'll be waiting for you at Heathrow in a few hours. Love you, too." She pressed the button to end the connection. "She says that any time you want to throw the party is good. She gets in a little after midnight. How about that night, after we've had a chance to get a little sleep?"

"Once you're done ... welcoming her?" he grinned, letting his eyebrows speak for him.

"You!" she laughed. "She's looking forward to meeting you. I've told her a lot about you."

"Oh gods, please tell me she's not looking forward to meeting The-Boy-Who-Lived," he grumbled.

"No, she's looking forward to meeting The-Boy-Who-Hermione-Calls-Her-Best-Friend." She leaned over and kissed his cheek.

I can't believe that I'm bantering like this, as if ... gods, I feel like I'm in some really cheesy, badly written romance novel. I mustn't tell Gloria that I love her, for it would destroy her relationship with Penelope.'

I thought the worst of the pain would be over when Voldemort was dead. Now I wish that he'd killed me as well. I thought losing Sirius hurt. How do I deal with this with a smile on my face? He shook his head.

"Something wrong, Harry?" Hermione was asking. "You were a million miles away."

"No, just a few years away. Mind was wandering, and I had to send out a search party after it. It's too small to be let out on its own," he laughed.

Oddly enough, she didn't join him. "I will not have you insulting my best friend's intellectual capacity, even jokingly. You are a very smart man, Harry James Potter."

He blinked for a moment, and held up his hands. "I give! I didn't know that it would make you angry."

"I'm sorry," she said, deflating. "It's just that after everything that happened, you were so down. I hated to leave, but it was the only chance I was ever going to get to do this, and I did get the chance to meet Lisa." She sighed. "It's just that I think you deserve the very best, Harry."

"I can't have the very best," he murmured. "She's marrying another woman." When her eyes widened, and her hand shot to her now open mouth, he realized that he had vocalized his thoughts, and performed an action that had saved his life many times in the past – he ran. Without a further thought, he Apparated back to his home and threw up the charms to prevent others from Apparating in. "Oh Jesus Christ," he said in a panic.

"Where do I go? I can't be here when she finally gets the coordinates from Ron. Can't go to the Burrow – that might be the first place she contacts. Ah!" He grabbed a few things and ran to his fireplace. "Chudley Cannons Team House!" he shouted, and stepped through the flames.

"I don't understand it," Ginny Weasley was saying a week later. "I've watched Harry play Quidditch before, and he's had a play named for him before – that one in his very first Quidditch game ever, where he stood up on his broom? They call that the Potter Grab now. This week alone he's invented three new moves that anyone else will kill themselves doing. He actually let go of his broom at two hundred feet up!"

Another pretty redhead, almost as tall as Ron, with hair to her waist, turned around from the window where she was watching Ron talking to her life partner. "He's embarrassed, and he thinks that he'd literally rather die than face the woman he's sure will be hurt by his admission."

"He's trying to kill himself with Quidditch?" Ginny asked. "Suicide by bludger?"

"Not really, but I'll lay every last cent I have that he's sure that he's just admitted to his lesbian best friend that he loves her, and that with her being so tender-hearted, she'll be torn apart knowing that she can never return his feelings."

Molly was looking confused. "Unless I'm sadly mistaken, given some of the kissing I saw down here in the family room a few years ago, Hermione's not a lesbian. I think Ron can vouch for that as well," she finished, shaking her head with a smile.

"How does she feel about Harry; that's the important question," Fred was saying, uncharacteristically serious.

"Exactly," George said the same way. "Harry's like a brother to us; except in actual blood, he is our brother."

"I just hope that someone can get in touch with him soon," Lisa Thompson said. "I want to meet the man who holds her heart so tightly, yet doesn't know it."

Harry decided after two weeks that it was safe to go home to Potter's Field. He stepped through the fireplace and headed immediately for his shower, and let it pound on him for a while. *I need to contact Hermione soon, because I promised her that I'd stand by her at the wedding.*

He stepped into the shower and performed a drying charm. Being the only one in the house, he didn't bother to grab a towel. "It's time I stop running away. I should face Hermione and take what's coming to me."

"Good idea," said a voice from his bed as he stepped into his bedroom. He spun to find Hermione and a rather attractive redhead sitting on his bed.

"Oh my goodness!" said the redhead. "And you walked away from *that*?" she asked, her hand to her chest. Her eyes had not reached Harry's face, which was causing a rather embarrassing reaction to happen below his waist. "Oh, please don't cover up!" she pleaded as his hands moved to cover himself.

"May I please grab a towel?" he asked in a strangled voice. "Or something?"

Hermione giggled and sent his bathrobe flying to him. He spun around and heard, "Ooh, nice ass!" from the girl he assumed was Lisa.

With some shred of dignity restored, he turned back to the ladies. Before either of them could speak again, he looked to Hermione. "Hermione, I owe you multiple apologies. First was for running away like that two weeks ago. Second was for putting you in an unforgivable position like that, letting something slip you were never meant to know."

Her eyes glistened. "You have to not speak to Ron now until January. When I told him what happened, he decided that he might as well tell me what you'd said to him." She blushed. "'I'm so in love with you that I'll stand by you at your wedding to a woman, wishing for the first time in my life that I'd been born female, just for the chance for that woman to be me?' You really said that? 'I love you so much that I'm willing to tear my own heart out just to see you deliriously happy?' Why didn't you ever tell me?"

"Remember Neville?" was all he said, thickly. He was fighting very hard not to be the one to burst into tears. He was horrified at the reaction that he knew it was going to cause, and to cause her that level of pain would kill him. "If him admitting he had a crush on you made you cry for a week, what would one of your best friends admitting that he'd rather die than hurt you in the slightest do to you? I didn't want you to know, because you don't deserve that kind of pain." He was losing the battle, and he fell to his knees. "I'm sorry, Hermione; I never meant to hurt you." He began to sob uncontrollably.

He finally came to himself again and found himself pressed against Hermione's stomach, his arms around her waist. He let go quickly and tried to pull away, but something held him there. "You're back, Harry," he heard her say. "I'm not releasing you just yet. You need to hear a few things, and I don't want you running away from me."

"If I promise not to run away, will you let me go? I'd prefer to look you in the face, even if you do have a nice stomach." He could tell she was thinking. "I'll even swear a wizard's oath not to leave until you've had your say." She released him. He started to reach for his wand, but she waved him away.

"I trust you. If you promise not to leave until I finish, you'll stay."

"I promise," he said, putting just a small amount of power into it to make it an oath.

"Harry," she admonished. "I told you I trust you."

"Honey, he was just trying to show his sincerity," Lisa said. "That's another sign of how much he loves you."

"Why didn't you ever give me any hints about how you felt, Harry James Potter?" Hermione asked, somewhat angrily. "How long have you felt that way?"

In a very small voice, he said, "Ever since I met this little miss know-it-all girl on the Hogwarts Express, back when I was eleven. I didn't know really until I saw you with Viktor, and then it was Ron who was reacting, and you seemed to be happy with him. Even after you broke up with him amicably, there was the feeling that there was someone else. And then when you got that offer to study in the U.S., well, I was damned if I was going to stand in your way."

"I would have stayed if you had asked me," she said.

"I didn't know that at the time, and if I had, you definitely wouldn't have heard me say anything. Miss a once in a lifetime opportunity? For me? Are you crazy? Besides, you never would have met Lisa." He turned to the redhead. "I assume that you must be Lisa."

"Yup, Lisa Thompson."

"Have you had the 'Nice to meet you' threats yet?" he asked with a sad smile.

"Not that I'm aware of," she laughed.

Harry cleared his throat. "It's nice to meet the woman who has our Hermione's heart," he pretended to quote. "You need to be aware that we will have to hurt you if you break her heart." He moved as if putting index cards in his bathrobe pocket. "There, now you been properly threatened into the family and friends."

Lisa laughed. "I understand a lot better now, Honey Lips." At Harry's quizzical look, she said, "First time I kissed her, she'd been drinking tea with honey, and I could taste it on her lips." She blushed. "I believe when you remembered your tea, it was cold."

"Considering I had to come out of the bedroom to get to the cup of tea? Yeah," Hermione laughed. She looked back at Harry and stopped laughing. "Why do you take so much pain onto yourself, Harry?"

"Actually, I have a better question," Lisa said. "We've heard what Ron says that you told him. Let's pretend that I don't exist for a moment. That Honey Lips here had returned to England to see you guys with no intended following behind. What would you have done?"

"Well, I would have eventually have ditched Ron and started to hint at how I felt. When I reached the point where it seemed that she didn't return the feeling, I would have stopped. But I would have told her that I love her, that much I know." He sighed. "I really don't know why. That sort of happiness really was never meant for me. I'm sort of like Frodo in that respect. Someone must take the hurt and pain of the world onto themselves so that everyone else can appreciate and enjoy the life that surrounds them. But those that take the pain into themselves can never experience the best things in life."

"Why can't you experience, as you say, 'the best things in life'? I believe that you told her that she was one of them. 'I can't have the best. She's marrying another woman,' I believe Hermione said your words were? Why can't you? Ignore conventional morality for the minute. Why can't you go for the gusto?"

He looked at the floor and murmured something. He heard Lisa inhale sharply, and realized that the woman had incredibly sharp ears. Hermione looked alarmed. "What? What did he say? What did you say, Harry?"

He wouldn't repeat it, but Lisa looked up, horror and anger mixed in her eyes. "Unless I heard him wrong, Hermione, he said that he doesn't deserve it. Am I right?" She locked eyes with Harry as he looked up, and he realized the power in this woman. He nodded.

"I'm lauded throughout Europe, and possibly the United States, for committing a cold blooded murder. Think about that. I have constant offers from women who want to bear the child of The Man Who Killed Voldemort. I killed a man. As simple as that. I tried to talk to someone once, supposedly trained for that sort of thing, but the basic response I got was, 'But it was Voldemort, so it's okay.' I can't very well talk to a Muggle psychologist about it, because the best I'll have is the likelihood of spending the rest of my life in Bedlam. I can't say as I'll ever trust Dumbledore again, so I don't dare talk to him."

"I think that's the real reason I was sent to the Dursleys as a child; to teach me from an early age that I really *am* as worthless as they kept saying I am." He looked down at the floor.

He suddenly found himself with his face buried in cleavage, and could hear someone stomp out to his family room. He knew that it had to be Hermione, because she was definitely not tall enough to easily plant his face in her breasts. He reached up and tapped Lisa on the shoulder. When she let go, he gasped. "I appreciate it. I couldn't breathe."

He suddenly heard a shout of "Albus Dumbledore!" come from near his fireplace. He ran out in time to see his old headmaster's face appear in his fireplace. "Ah, Miss Granger! Good to see you. I understand ..."

"Later, Professor. I need you here, now! I'm at Potter's Field."

The elderly teacher blinked several times at her forceful demand, and disappeared from the picture. A moment later, the fireplace flared, and he stepped through. "What is wrong, Miss Granger?" he asked with worry in his voice.

"*He's* wrong!" she barked, pointing at Harry, and Harry realized that she was nearing tears. He motioned to Lisa to go be ready to hold her. Lisa mouthed 'No' at him. "Did you know that he's had, at absolute minimum, three years of believing that he's not good enough to experience the good things in life? He's spent three years thinking he's a murderer, and the best he can get from wizard head-shrinkers is that it was Voldemort, so it's all right, and that he should get over it! He thinks he was placed with the Dursleys to teach him from an early age that he's worthless! I'm betting that's why he joined the Chudley Cannons, forgetting just how good he is at Quidditch! Because he thinks that he deserves to fail."

Albus Dumbledore stared at her in shock, and then his eyes slid to Harry. "Is what she is saying true, Harry? Do you feel that you should be denied happiness because of what you did to Voldemort?"

"Sir, I murdered a man in cold blood. It was planned for two years; at least, two years that I had an involvement in. If it hadn't been Voldemort and I had trained for two years to murder a victim and succeeded, then I would currently be keeping the worms company, because I would have been murdered days after getting sentenced to Azkaban. Even if it were Lucius Malfoy, I'd have gone to Azkaban. Because it was Tom Riddle, I get parades and a bevy of women who want to say that they're The Woman Who Shagged The Boy Who Lived. Why is his murder okay?"

"Harry, what would he have done to you? What had he been trying since you were one year old? What was your fate if it had been to him?"

"He would have killed me. He'd tried to kill me."

"What do they call killing someone in order to save your own life? Killing them because you know that it is either yourself or that person?"

"Self defence." He blinked. "That makes it all right that a man is dead, though? Even one as evil as Tom?"

"No, it is never 'all right' to kill someone, Harry, and you should never reach the point where you are making that decision, that this person is better off dead, and that one alive. But it is 'all right' to defend yourself, and if that causes the death of the one you were defending yourself from, so be it. Mourn the necessity, but never think that you are a bad person for having done it. Never think that you are not deserving of happiness. If there is anyone more deserving in this world, then I do not know their name. You have saved us all from an eternity of hell on earth. You had touched his mind, so you know what he would have done. It can truly be said that you saved the world."

"All it cost him was his soul," Hermione said through a haze of tears. Harry scowled at Lisa and walked over to Hermione, who threw her arms around him and began to cry in earnest.

"No, dear girl," Dumbledore said who was no longer crying as heavily, "had it cost his soul, he would not be in such torment, and I could not care when his friend is in pain." He turned to Harry. "I will try to find you a good wizard psychologist, Harry. You should not be in this pain, and I will regret to the end of my life that my actions placed this psychic burden upon you."

"Sir, I guess it needed to be done. You did what you felt was right, I suppose. I haven't ever had the full information with which to make decisions about it."

"Again my fault." He shook his head sadly. "I shall return to Hogwarts, Harry. I will contact you at a later time with the information concerning a proper psychologist." He quickly Floo'd back to his office.

"Are you okay, Hermione?" Harry asked, kissing her forehead without thinking.

"No," she said in a small voice. "Will you ever be able to forgive me for abandoning you when you needed me most?"

He looked at her, and moved her chin up so that he could look in her eyes. "I won't know that until you abandon me."

"But I ran away to America so quickly after his defeat! You needed me here, and I was elsewhere!" She started to cry again.

Lisa caught the look on Harry's face, and quickly took Hermione from him. His hands went to his face as he looked to the floor, and as he looked up, his hands slid up his face in a gesture of frustration, finally coming to rest in his hair, which he gripped tightly and pulled on it, as if he were trying to rip it out by the roots. "Argh!" he finally screamed. "Someday I will learn to keep my God-damned mouth shut! If I hadn't said that one thing in the Cauldron, you wouldn't be standing here blaming yourself for something you never did!" He looked to his best friend. "Hermione Granger, answer me one question. Do you regret meeting Lisa Thompson?" When she shook her head, he continued, "I thought not. You met the woman you'll spend the rest of your life with. How selfish of me would it have been to ask you to stay here to take care of an emotional cripple?" He laughed softly. "I was serious, Hermione. I will stand beside you, and be terribly happy for you when you share vows with this woman."

She was surprised when his gaze went from Hermione to her. "Do you have any idea just what I would give up to be able to be in your place, Lisa? Do you have any idea just how remarkably blessed by the gods you are to be marrying such a woman as Hermione Jane Granger?"

She swallowed the lump that was growing in her throat. "I thought I did, but I'm beginning to realize just how special this woman is." She inhaled, surprised that she was holding back tears.

He turned back to Hermione. "I need to get dressed Hermione, and you two need to finish finalizing your wedding plans. Can I meet you somewhere a little later, and hope that we can get past my unfortunate slip of the tongue?"

"No," Hermione said, "because I haven't told you what I originally came here to tell you. Remember that phone conversation where you held me while I orgasmed because this horny little thing was whispering sweet nothings in my ear?" He nodded, and Lisa positioned herself carefully, both to see the twinkle in Hermione's eyes as she related the story to Harry, but also to catch him when he fainted, as she was sure he would. *Too many shocks in one day.*

Hermione continued. "I won't get graphic, Harry, because ... well, just because. But what she was doing was being rather graphic about me being the meat in a sandwich, so to speak, although a certain emerald eyed Quidditch player was supplying *that* in the fantasy, while Lisa did certain other intense things to me." At Harry's wide-eyed look, she giggled. "Harry, she was verbalizing a fantasy I'd told her a long time ago."

"But ..."

"You've made the most elementary logical mistake you could, Harry, and it's coloured everything that's happened in the last, what, almost three weeks?"

"What mistake?" he asked, obviously puzzled.

"You automatically assumed that my sexual orientation involves only one gender. I'm bisexual, Harry."

Lisa caught him.

He awoke in his bed to see eyes as brilliantly emerald green as his own looking at him. "He's awake again, love." He turned his head to see Hermione coming out of his bathroom, dressed in his a bathrobe he knew to be hers, and he felt himself react, since it was so short that simply walking showed that she wore nothing beneath it, at least below her waist.

"Oh, he's definitely awake," she chuckled, a throaty sound that didn't help matters at all. She slid the robe off her body, and he found that he was correct; it was only Hermione under it. "Nothing may happen here, Harry, but I want something to, because it was something I was hoping to let you know slowly. You've always been a closed individual, Harry, and I never knew your feelings for me until today." She blushed, and he was amused to see it travel quite a distance down her body. "You and I are alike in more ways than I thought."

"What are you saying?" he asked. *I can not be hearing her say what I've always hoped she would tell me. I am not that lucky. I will never be that lucky.*

"We seem to have equivalent depths of passion for each other, my darling Harry. I love Lisa; make no mistake about that, and I intend to go through with that commitment ceremony, but I love you deeply, and have since school. I should have never gone to America; the fates would have found some way for Lisa and I to have met. If I'd stayed, I have the suspicion we'd be working on our second or third child," she said, blushing. She bit

her lower lip and whispered, as if she was afraid that he'd hate her for asking it, "Care to start our first?"

He looked at her in shock. "I must be dreaming. There is no other realistic explanation for me just hearing Hermione tell me exactly what I wanted to hear, and meaning it. There is no way on Earth that I could ever be lucky enough to have earned the love of a goddess in earthly form."

He heard Lisa chuckle. "Funny, I said something similar when she told me she loves me."

"I'm no goddess, Harry, and you know it. We went to school together."

"Where do you think I realized that you *are* a goddess, my beloved one?" he asked her tenderly. "If this is a dream, then I refuse to ever awaken." He pulled her close and kissed her gently and passionately.

When they finally broke for air, she gasped. "Oh my, Harry! You'd better help start that child right now, after the state you've left me in."

He shook his head. "No, Hermione. Not until our wedding night. If you'll have me, that is."

One year later

Harry came in from his latest Quidditch practice. He'd been grabbed by the England team at the end of the last Quidditch season, and had only gone when the entire Cannons team told him they'd make his life hell if he didn't accept. He had turned the team around, since they were still one of the winningest teams in England, and they were eternally grateful to him for that. (He'd also finagled lifetime box seats for Ron when he'd admitted that one of the reasons he'd tried out for the Cannons was that his best chum from school was a die-hard Cannons booster.) The English team was training extra hard, since they were World Cup contenders this year.

Hermione called to him. "We're in the kitchen, dear!" and he walked in, whistling a bawdy little song he'd learned from his Cannons team mates. In the kitchen, he found Lisa feeding Lily Anne and James Alan, his children by Hermione and Lisa respectively, while Hermione bustled around the kitchen, getting portions of tonight's 'dinner party' finished.

"Want me to start working on something?" he asked, giving her a hug in a free moment. She wrinkled her nose at him and motioned for the showers.

When he returned to the kitchen, she flowed into his arms for a kiss, when ended when they heard Lisa laugh. "Keep kissing like that, and the food will burn, 'cause you'll be too busy starting her second kid!" He had absently lifted her skirt, and was thrilled to discover to discover a complete lack of knickers. "You could at least wait until the guests have left," she finished.

"I suppose," he laughed. "But that's a promise," he added in a throaty growl that he knew got to both women.

"You seem happy, darling," Hermione said finally.

"I'm married to two goddesses in the eyes of the Universe, I have two marvellous children by these goddesses, and tonight we are having a small party to celebrate our lives together. I don't think it possible for life to get better, although I won't complain if Someone decides to take that as a challenge as to how to make me happier. Life is good. I am loved, and because of that, life is good." He kissed both women again, and set to helping prepare for the party.