

Together Forever

Together, Forever

Tears spilled down Ginny Weasley's cheeks as she watched the sunlight dance on the wall. She was beyond consolation. The birds chirping on the other side of her window in the early morning air simply served to mock her pain and only the single, driving desire she clung to, gave her the courage to keep living. No one in her family could understand what she had been going through for the past twenty-four hours and now that she had made her decision, she was bound and determined to see it through.

Pulling off her light cotton nightdress, she found her cleanest set of robes and carefully put them on. She brushed out her long red hair, not caring about the knots that ripped out with each savage stroke. Even her enchanted mirror, which usually had something cheeky to say, had sensed her mood and remained silent. She pinned her fringe on either side of her head with dark green clips then reaching out to her nightstand, cradled a small glass orb and placed in her pocket.

An owl alighted on the sill outside her window and tapped his beak on one of the panes of glass. Opening it, she realized what it was the owl was delivering and as she untied the small vial from its leg, a smile graced her lips for the first time in days. Since the day Voldemort was destroyed.

Confident in her plan, she fashioned a clasp for the vial and set it on a thin silver chain then pulled it over her head and concealed it under her robes. Ginny felt in her pocket for the orb and grasped it tightly, saying the incantation that would let her relive the thoughts that kept her mind on the task at hand.

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The orb had been given to her yesterday morning when she had just come to terms with the death and destruction left in the wake of the last great Wizarding war. Her father had found her on The Burrow's garden swing and with a tear in his eye, sat next to her.

"Hi, Daddy," she said with a wan smile, trying to hold her grief in check. "It's a lovely day, don't you think?"

"Yes, dearest. It is." Arthur's hand was holding a small parcel, tied with brown string. He held it out to her and said, "This is for you, Ginny. Hermione delivered it last night."

As Ginny took the box, her hand trembled. She recognized the writing on its lid. How couldn't she, as she'd memorized everything about him over the past seven years. Her dad stood abruptly and walked back to The Burrow without another word, leaving her alone to face the contents of the package.

Still shaking, she undid the knot and removed the lid. On top was a small piece of parchment, folded in fourths. Underneath was a clear glass sphere that resembled a miniature crystal ball. Smoothing out the letter, she read:

My Dearest Ginny,

I have many regrets in life, but one stands out above all the rest. It is that I never gave you the affection you so richly deserved. Contrary to what I may have led you to believe, I've noticed you for a long time. I noticed the times you couldn't speak in front of me in your first and second year. I know that you like to eat blueberry scones for breakfast with your right hand, though you write and throw the Quaffle with your left, and that given the choice, you'd rather spend a rainy afternoon playing hide-and-go-seek with your dorm-mates than to sit by the common room fire. Not only did I notice you Ginny, but I fell in love with you.

It hurt me when you started dating Michael Corner, then Dean Thomas, and finally, Blaise Zabini, which I thought was extraordinarily kind of you. But each time you broke up with them, I couldn't help but notice the way you looked at me and it was almost too much for me to resist the urge to swallow you up in my arms and kiss you.

You're probably cursing me under your breath right now, wondering why I didn't come to you sooner. Know this Ginny; that I wanted nothing more than to do exactly that. There was only one thing that kept me from being with you. Voldemort. I knew that it had to end only one way and I didn't want to give myself a reason to not kill him. You see, I knew that if I let myself completely fall for you, I would fall so fully and be so utterly yours, that I wouldn't be able to fulfill the prophecy because I had to die to take Tom with me.

Instead, I ask that you don't cry for me, my dear, sweet Ginny, but remember me and find someone to love as much as you did me. I've enclosed something to help you remember and to give you a taste of the love I held for you. It's a variation on the Pensieve charm, but instead of only holding memories, it holds thoughts and emotions. I've recorded a few bits for you to have, in the hopes that it's enough to make up for all the time we didn't have together.

Forever yours,

Harry

P.S. To activate the orb, simply hold it in your hand and say, 'In memory of Harry Potter'.

Her mouth agape, Ginny re-read the letter three times through tear-filled eyes before casting it aside to grasp the cool glass ball in her hand and said, "In memory of Harry Potter".

Ginny's vision suddenly shifted to the entrance of Azkaban prison, where Harry had gone to confront Voldemort. She watched Harry battling Lucius Malfoy, spells ricocheting around their heads. Ginny remembered that battle because it was at this point she had finally found Harry, Ron, and Hermione. She looked to her right: there she was fighting off Draco, putting him in a full-body-bind as Harry continued to duel with his father. Anger and determination reverberated through Ginny's mind as Lucius was finally beaten, thrown against the stone walls of Azkaban in a bloody heap.

She watched as Harry advanced through the final door that stood between he and Voldemort. A curse flew from behind them and caught Ginny in the back; she'd let out a scream and she felt Harry's heart clench. She could feel the conflict of emotions as he debated running back to help her and going forward. Ron was the one that made up Harry's mind as he fought off the Death Eater and bent to care for his sister. She'll be fine, Harry thought, I must kill Voldemort. Hermione urged Harry on and they entered the dark chamber.

The battle was surprisingly swift. Hermione was able to distract Voldemort long enough to let Harry perform his final spell. Ginny felt him concentrate on his love for her. Memories of her had filled his mind: in the common room twirling a lock of hair as she worked on a homework assignment, holding the Quidditch Cup aloft as the team carried her on their shoulders, and the last time he'd seen her at The Burrow, hair tousled from sleep and clad in a thin rumpled nightdress.

Finally, the surge of love he felt for her threatened to overwhelm him, and her, as she watched the events unfold through Harry's eyes. He let loose a bolt of bright white light that ripped at his chest and the Dark Lord fell, his corpse a smoking ruin. With Harry's last breath, he collapsed to his knees and said, "I love you, Ginny," before the memory went black.

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When she had first seen what was in the orb, it had taken her a full hour to watch it all and another two to recover long enough to watch it again. It was then that she'd known what she had to do. Harry had loved her, had used that love to defeat the darkest wizard in a hundred years, and she couldn't let that sacrifice go unnoticed and unpaid. Staring at the signature line on the letter, she had a flash of something. It was foolish and rash, but she was in such a state that she couldn't let go.

A quick letter to a friend who wouldn't ask about her strange request was sent that evening and Ginny was left to herself, to wait for her chance.

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After the funeral was finished and the mourners had left, Ginny hung back, staring at his still form lying still on a slab of exquisitely carved granite at the front of the Great Hall.

An arm came around her shoulder and her father's voice sounded in her ear. "He loved you, Ginny," he said.

"I know," she replied, unable to feel her pain any longer.

A moment passed and Ginny thought that she might not be able to get Harry alone. Then he cleared his throat and sniffed. She turned to him, snaking her arms around his middle and said, "Don't cry Daddy. It'll be all right."

He hugged her back and kissed the top of her head. "It shouldn't end this way, Ginny. Harry deserved to live a long life, marry someone that would have made him happy...." He trailed off, and she could tell his voice would have broken, had he continued.

Feeling the weight of the vial in the hollow of her breasts as she breathed, she found her voice. "It's not over yet," she said, looking into his swollen eyes. "As long as we remember him, he'll never be truly gone."

He smiled and squeezed her shoulders. "You make me very proud, little one." He looked over her head, to where Harry lay in state. "Would you like some time alone? To say goodbye?"

Ginny let herself smile one more time and she nodded her head. "I'd like that a lot, Dad."

"I'll just be out in the entryway when you're done, then," he said.

She watched him turn, walk past the rows of chairs and out the door. She took out her wand and waited for it to shut completely before she locked it. The doors were large enough to hit at this distance and her only concern now was having enough time. She had always been an excellent Charms student. Only Dumbledore and possibly Hermione would be able to counter the charm she had chosen, and she hoped that by the time that happened, it would be too late.

Her heart beating rapidly in her chest, she walked quickly to the stone slab and stared at the boy turned man in front of her. He was beautiful, even in death and her hand wiped his fringe back to expose the now almost completely faded lightning-bolt scar.

She pulled on the chain around her neck and the vial was lifted out of her robes, its green liquid glowing with a faint light. Clutching it in her hand, she straddled Harry's still form and bent low to kiss him on the lips. They were cold, but when she pulled back, they were no longer blue, having taken some of the warmth from her kiss.

"I'm coming, Harry," she said in a whisper as her lips lingered over his. "I love you."

The sounds of fists banging on wood echoed through the hall and she knew it was time. Unscrewing the lid, she drained the foul liquid in a single swallow, feeling it burn as it slid down her throat. She welcomed the pain.

Tossing the vial to the ground, she heard it shatter, then the sound of her locking spell being ripped apart from the opposite side of the hall. *It*

doesn't matter now, she thought, *I'll be with Harry soon*. Calmly, she laid her body next to him, sliding between his arm and torso, placing her hand on his chest.

Shouts now caught in her ears, but she couldn't understand what they were saying. Her eyes blurred and her breathing hitched as she let herself be taken to that place that Harry had gone, to forever be by his side.

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A radiant light filled Ginny's vision as she stepped from her body, drawing her upward. Looking down, she saw her father and mother hovering over her and Harry's entwined bodies. They were crying and shouting. Professors McGonagall and Snape appeared in the hall before her vision clouded with white clouds and she was taken from their presence.

The clouds surrounded her and embraced her as she floated towards the source of the light. Soon, they parted to reveal a large open field of grass and softly swaying trees. Someone was there, walking through the grass towards her. She could see his dark messy hair as she approached and her heart burned with anticipation.

As she landed gently on the grass, he ran forward and embraced her. "Ginny," he whispered into her hair. They held each other for a long while and she was surprised to learn that he smelled exactly as he had when they were alive.

He pulled out of the embrace and held her at arms length. "What are you doing here so soon?"

She grinned up at him and put her arms around his neck. "After I read your letter and saw what was in the orb, I couldn't wait to be with you again, so I.."

The concern on his face silenced her. "You... killed yourself for me?" he asked incredulously.

"I – Well, yes," she said, suddenly ashamed. "Don't you want me?" she asked tentatively.

His eyes focused on hers in a penetrating gaze that took her breath away, even though she had no need to breathe. "Of course I want you, Ginny. I meant everything I said in the letter, but I'm not ready for you yet."

Ginny frowned, releasing the grip on his neck slightly. "You're... not ready for me?"

"No, Ginny. You need to live your life, to be happy and to be with your family."

Miraculously, a tear escaped her eye and trickled down her cheek. "I won't be happy unless I'm with you, Harry," she said as she buried her face in his neck, squeezing him with renewed vigor.

Harry returned the embrace with the same fervor. "Ginny," he said at length, tickling the hairs on her neck. "You need to go back."

She shook her head violently. "I don't want to leave you, Harry. I... I love you."

"If you loved me you wouldn't cut short what I loved most." Harry's green eyes blazed briefly and then went black. "I'm gone, my time is done, Ginny. You have your whole life ahead of you. You need to fall in love again and marry, have babies and tell them about love and hope and faith. And after you're done, and only then, come back to me."

He gathered her up into his arms again, holding her close. Then he kissed her, causing her world to explode in light.

A force pulled on Ginny and she felt herself falling away from Harry, desperately trying to cling to him for just a moment longer.

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The bright light faded and her eyes fluttered open. A warm sensation spread from her stomach to her toes and head, activating her nerve endings as it expanded.

"Eugh," said Ginny, pulling at her temples with her thumb and forefinger. "My head is *killing* me."

At once, she was pounced upon by two sets of arms and a flurry of wet kisses. "Oh, my *baby*!" cried her mother. Once her mother was done checking her over, Ginny's father helped her sit up and she surveyed the room she was in, her head spinning.

"You shouldn't make any sudden movements for a while," came the silky voice of Professor Snape. "The Elixir of Death has many subtle side effect which will linger for a number of days."

"What happened?" she asked, but as soon as the words left her mouth, the memories flooded back to her.

She was still in the Great Hall, but was now on the floor, off to the side of the altar that held Harry's body. There were more people staring at her with concern on their faces, Snape's being the only one that held any disdain.

"That," said Dumbledore, who had been waiting behind the others, but had now approached her place on the floor, "is precisely what we'd like you to tell us."

She ducked her head and let out a long breath. "I went to see Harry," she said, her voice mixed with joy and regret. Then looking up to meet their stares, said, "He said he loved me and that he always had. I just had to..." Her voice broke and she couldn't continue as silent tears spilled down her

cheeks and onto the front of her gown.

"He sent you back, didn't he?" asked the Headmaster.

Ginny's head shot up. "How did you..." she asked incredulously before he continued.

"Suicide is almost never acceptable to those we love, Ginevra. More importantly, those who love us are determined to see that we not choose the easy path, so that we might become greater people when the time does come for us to be reunited."

His eyes were twinkling as he knelt down effortlessly beside her. "Harry confessed his love for you to me two years ago, and despite my efforts to the contrary, refused to talk to you about it." With a heavy sigh, he continued. "It is no small wonder, then, that his greatest desire would not be for you to join him in the hereafter, but for you to live. To live and to love and to be with him again when you have been through life properly."

Ginny's mind churned on his words and she recalled what Harry had said to her before she came back. *If you loved me you wouldn't cut short what I loved most.*

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Standing on the top of the hill above The Burrow two weeks later, Ginny let the cool evening breeze blow her cotton nightdress around her body and press it into her warm skin. As she thought about holding Harry and how right it felt to have him in her arms, she tried to imagine it being any other way. He had wanted her to live her life and that was what she was determined to.

She would live her life, enjoy her family, find love again, however impossible that seemed at present, and return to Harry's arms when she was well and truly done with her life. Sitting up, she surveyed the twinkling lights of Ottery St. Catchpole once more and walked resolutely back to her home, to her family, and to her destiny.

The End