

Matchmaker

by kalina_blue

Desperate to avoid Molly Weasley's matchmaking schemes, Charlie and Hermione fail to see that another matchmaker has already targeted them.

Part 1/2

Chapter 1 of 2

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Disclaimer: Obviously, I don't own HP nor do I intend on making money with this. It's purely for fun.

a/n: Written for the weasley_fest fic exchange at lj. This is my gift for coonassblondie.

Part I

Bill Weasley was sitting at his desk at Gringotts watching his brother pace around his office.

"And you know she's going to want to introduce me to every single woman at Harry and Ginny's wedding, no matter how ugly or brain damaged..."

"Mum means well," Bill said, though Charlie ignored him in favour of his own rant.

"It's not like I don't want to get married... eventually. You know, when I find the right witch and everything, but those women Mum keeps throwing at me...like I'm not fully capable of finding a girlfriend on my own."

Bill smirked and refrained from pointing out that Charlie had been single ever since he had broken up with his last steady girlfriend three years ago. Oh, there had been a few witches here and there, but it had never gotten past one night together or a few casual dates at the most. Charlie certainly hadn't introduced any of them to their mother or the rest of the family...they weren't the kind of girls one brought home.

A knock on the door interrupted Charlie's aggravated pacing. Bill looked up to see Hermione Granger enter his office. Well, he could see her forehead and some of the infamous bushy hair, as most of the petite girl was obscured behind the large stack of files she was carrying and which threatened to topple over at any second.

"Let me get that." Charlie took the files and disposed of them on top of Bill's desk. Bill meanwhile eyed the rather high mountain of paperwork on his desk apprehensively.

"Thanks, Charlie. I didn't know you'd be here," Hermione greeted Charlie before looking over at Bill. Bill was still looking at Mount Paperest.

"Why didn't I go back to Egypt when the War was over?" he asked.

"Because you insisted on marrying a ridiculously beautiful French girl, so now you can't leave the country for prolonged periods of time since she's likely to get lonely, remember that there are far more charming blokes than you out there and leave your sorry arse," Charlie helpfully supplied.

"Right."

"I've only brought over the most recent communication between Gringotts and Lloyd's. We need to go over it before the next meeting with them," Hermione explained.

"Right," Bill repeated, eying the pictures of Fleur on his desk to remind himself that his wife was worth having a desk job. A desk job working alongside Hermione Granger, who firmly believed that taking shortcuts while doing paperwork was the fourth Unforgivable curse.

It wasn't that Bill didn't appreciate working with Hermione. She was smart, dedicated, and he had been very pleasantly surprised when only a short while after the War the young woman had announced that working at the Ministry was just not an option for her, no matter how prestigious the positions they offered or how high the salary. Instead, she had accepted a job at Gringotts as liaison with the Muggle banks and investment corporations.

"Well, I'll leave you two to your papers then. Have fun," Charlie announced, grinning sympathetically at his brother. "I'll see you both at Ginny's and Harry's wedding," he added pulling a face, meaning to leave the office.

"Hold it!" Bill shouted and Charlie stopped, door handle in hand. Bill let his gaze wander from Charlie's to Hermione's face. Both of them were looking at him expectantly. Bill fought a smile.

"You don't have a date for the wedding," he stated slyly.

"Excellent observation." Charlie rolled his eyes. "I only told you so a mere two minutes ago." Charlie once more turned to leave the office, but Bill's voice stopped him.

"What I mean is you both don't have dates." Hermione, who had begun shuffling through the papers, looked up.

"Oh, thanks, Bill, for reminding me. I'm so proud to go to yet another wedding of your obscenely large family without an escort," she snapped. He had hit a nerve.

Both Charlie and Hermione were now glaring at Bill, who sat behind his desk, his smug smile only partially hidden by the stack of files.

"Don't you get it?" Bill asked. And when the rather impatient faces of his brother and co-worker indicated that there was going to be some hexing directed at his person if he didn't explain himself properly, he added, "You should go together. This way neither one of you would be dateless."

Charlie and Hermione first eyed him, then one another critically. Clearly, that thought had never crossed their minds.

"Of course, if you would rather go alone, I'm sure Mum will find suitable dinner partners for both..."

"I'll pick you up at three," Charlie said to Hermione, interrupting his brother.

"I'm looking forward to it," Hermione agreed instantly.

That settled, Charlie finally left the office with a quick good-bye.

Bill watched him go and then redirected his attention to Hermione, who by now had taken a seat in front of his desk, a stack of papers in her lap.

"So, you're going out with my brother."

"Honestly," Hermione huffed. Taking the top file from the pile on her lap, she ignored Bill's smirk and began discussing their upcoming business meeting.

The following Saturday at exactly three o'clock, Charlie Weasley Apparated in his dress-robos to a secluded spot near Hermione's flat in Chelsea and rang the doorbell. Hermione had just finished getting ready herself and opened the door wearing the form-fitting blue dress Ginny soon-to-be-Potter had chosen for all her bridesmaids. Her hair was pinned into a beautiful knot at the base of her neck, and a touch of make-up completed her outfit. Charlie had to swallow twice before he could compliment Hermione on her looks.

Blushing slightly, Hermione returned the sentiment, and together they Apparated to the Burrow, where the wedding was to be held in the back garden. Hermione went to join the bride and the rest of the bridesmaids while Charlie headed off to look for his brothers.

He found them all inside Ron's room where Bill was just explaining to Harry, in detail, how they planned to torture him, should he ever dare to hurt their sister. Not one to be outdone, Charlie added that they could always feed Harry's body to his dragons in order to get rid of the evidence.

Harry looked rather nervous, though Charlie couldn't be sure if the nervousness was due to the six red heads that were glaring at him dangerously or due to the prospect of getting married to their sister. Probably a mixture of both, he decided.

Arthur finally came to Harry's rescue, announcing that the ceremony was about to start. They all went outside where Harry took his place at the front with Ron at his side. Charlie and the rest of his family took their seats in the front row.

The same wizard that had performed Bill's wedding and Dumbledore's funeral conducted the ceremony that left almost nary a dry eye, at least not of the female guests. Once Harry and Ginny had been proclaimed husband and wife, the chairs disappeared and a dance floor appeared, and Harry led Ginny to their first dance.

After the first dance of the bride and the groom, other guests joined them on the floor. Hermione saw Ron pulling his girlfriend, Lavender, closer for a slow dance. Smiling at the couple, Hermione was just about to search for her own date when she was stopped by Molly Weasley and a very awkward looking wizard, who appeared to be around 30.

"There you are, dear," Molly crooned. "I wanted to introduce Milton Monaghan to you. He is a friend of Percy."

"Nice to meet you," Hermione offered, looking over the wizard's shoulder in search of Charlie.

"Mrs. Weasley has told me a lot about you," Milton said while Molly surreptitiously tried to leave them alone. She failed miserably, seeing as she met her husband, Arthur, a few feet away and told him rather loudly how Milton and Hermione would make such a nice couple.

Hermione sighed inaudibly and, since Charlie seemed to be nowhere in sight, was forced to listen to Milton describing his position in the Ministry, where he apparently was in charge of the distribution of office supplies. Hermione tried hard to suppress a yawn.

Just as Milton was recounting the tale of how he had appealed to the Minister of Magic himself that the toilet paper should be switched from three layers to four, Charlie appeared at Hermione's side and flung a casual arm around her shoulder.

"Sorry to interrupt, mate," he said to Milton, pulling Hermione away with him. "But the lovely lady promised me a dance."

Before Milton had the chance to object, Charlie and Hermione were already in the middle of the dance floor, dancing to a slow and melodious song.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you!" Hermione blurted out, the second they were out of earshot.

"That bad?" Charlie asked while he led her around the dance floor.

"You've got no idea. He apparently is a friend of Percy." Charlie gave a short laugh.

"I would have thought that was your type," he said. When he saw Hermione's questioning look, he added, "Scholarly and serious, I mean."

"You mean boring," Hermione corrected.

"Well," Charlie stumbled slightly.

"Ron once told me that I need a boyfriend who keeps me from working too much and forces me to have fun," Hermione admitted.

"I'd have thought Ron fit that description," Charlie retorted, dipping Hermione low as the last chords of the song played out.

"Maybe so," Hermione straightened up again. "But we discovered soon that we've been friends for far too long to have a romantic relationship. He's better off with Lavender."

The music stopped playing, and Ron got up to the stage that had been erected at the side of the dance floor.

"Oh, no, speeches." Hermione blanched.

"Are you nervous about yours?" Charlie asked, giving her shoulders a squeeze.

"You've got no idea," Hermione mumbled and then turned to listen as Ron told the cajoling crowd about the time where Harry had kissed Ginny for the first time, in front of the whole Gryffindor common room. When he was done, Ron left the stage under thundering applause and Hermione fidgeted fretfully.

"You'll do just fine," Charlie whispered into her ear, then gave her a slight push in the direction of the stage. Reluctantly, Hermione climbed the few steps, painfully aware that everyone was looking at her expectantly.

"Hello, everyone," Hermione began with a shaky voice. "I'm Hermione, Ginny's Maid of Honour, and I just want to congratulate the bride and groom and wish them the best of luck. I know Ginny has waited a long time for this day to come, and I hope it's all she's dreamed of and more."

Polite clapping followed Hermione's words as she paused briefly and then continued in a slightly more confident voice.

"I'm also Harry's best friend, and therefore, know that Ginny is the best thing that has ever happened to him." Harry nodded in agreement from his place at the centre table while Ginny blushed slightly.

"And I'm sorry"...Hermione looked apologetically towards Harry..."to say so, but your track record isn't the best, and you probably will screw this up."

The garden went deadly silent.

"But," Hermione continued unfazed, "I think as your friend it's my duty to help you as much as possible to prevent this from happening, and that's why..." Hermione was filtering through her evening purse "...I did some research." She pulled out a scroll of parchment and unrolled it. Everyone looked at her expectantly.

"I did a survey among all of Ginny's ex-boyfriends," Hermione announced, and everyone laughed.

"Ear, Ear!" George could be heard shouting from among the crowd.

"Here's what they had to say: First of all, Ginny likes lilies, chocolate and Quidditch. She hates seafood, daffodils and pricey jewellery. Always keep that in mind when buying her gifts." Ginny nodded vehemently.

"Secondly, while you might have realised, Harry, that unlike you Ginny isn't a lightweight when it comes to drinking..." Ron gave Harry a hearty clap on the back while Harry and the entire wedding party remembered a rather embarrassing incident where after drinking too much Firewhisky the-Boy-Who-Lived had decided to run along Diagon Alley starkers. Mrs. Weasley almost had a stroke when she opened the *Daily Prophet* the following Sunday, where the pictures of Harry's escapade had been printed on the first page...in colour.

"Two of Ginny's ex-boyfriends mentioned that you should never let her cross-drink beer and Champagne unless you're alone with her and want her to give you a lap dance." It was Ginny's turn to blush, while the guests cheered, and Harry looked at his bride with interest.

"And last but not least, during the night you might hear sounds you'll accidentally interpret as snoring. All exes were very adamant that you should never ever suggest to Ginny that she might be the one snoring. In fact, don't even mention that you heard something; just learn to live with it."

Hermione rolled up the parchment again while the whole wedding party cheered and clapped.

"Those are the most important points; I can give you the full report later. Thank you." Hermione ended her speech.

When the applause finally subsided, Hermione laughingly exited the stage and returned back to where Charlie was standing. He congratulated her on a job well done before asking, "You don't have, by any chance, the list of guys with you who were in the position to tell you that my sister snores?"

"I was just about to ask you the same question." Bill joined them. Before long, all six Weasley brothers were crowded around Hermione demanding names.

Hermione just laughed and shook her head. "I promised absolute confidentiality."

"Oh, come on, 'Mione," Ron pleaded, which owned him an exasperated look as he perfectly well knew Hermione didn't like that nickname.

"I told you, *Ronald*, I promised all her ex-boyfriends I would keep their information secret."

"Now, Hermione, help us out here," Fred tried.

"We just want to have a little talk with them," George continued.

"Yeah, right."

The Weasley boys were still trying to get details from Hermione when Ginny got ready to throw her bouquet, and all unmarried women were called upfront.

Hermione moved forward as well, resigning herself to yet another fight over a bunch of flowers with several desperate witches.

"Hold on, 'Mione." Ron stopped her, completely ignoring the roll of her eyes when he once more used the nickname she hated so much.

"What you wanna do is always keep eye contact with the Quaffle...flowers, I mean."

"Ron, are you trying to tell me how to catch the bouquet?" Hermione asked exasperatedly.

"Of course. Now listen up, always..."

"If you're so desperate to marry Hermione, why don't you just ask her?" George chimed in, elbowing his younger brother. "I'm sure she'd let you down gently," he stage

whispered. Hermione and the rest of his brothers laughed. Only Ron looked annoyed.

"I'm not proposing. I'm trying to get her to catch the flowers so my girlfriend won't," Ron explained impatiently. The twins quieted down immediately. Bill and Percy, both happily married to Fleur and Penny respectively, still laughed as Fred and George joined Ron in explaining several tips to catching a ball, or in this case flowers, to Hermione. Charlie remained silent.

Hermione brushed them all off and joined the other women at the front of the stage. Amused she noticed how Lavender, Ron's girlfriend, eagerly eyed the bridal bouquet. Maybe Ron's fear of being dragged in front of an altar in the very near future wasn't completely unfounded.

Ginny turned around and under cheers and whistles threw the bouquet over her shoulder.

Hermione didn't catch it. Neither did Lavender. But Angelina and Katie both had their hands on the flowers and were tugging. Hermione pushed her way out of the crowd, laughing out loud when she heard Lavender demand that both Katie and Angelina should be disqualified because they were professionals. Hermione really hoped Lavender meant professional Quidditch players, but she couldn't be sure.

Once out of the bulk of slightly hysteric, unmarried woman, Hermione started towards the table where Charlie sat with all of his brothers. She had to laugh again when she saw the identical apprehensive faces of Fred and George as the twins watched their girlfriends fight over the flowers.

Eventually, both Fred and George went to break up the fight between their girlfriends (or possibly to get a box ring filled with Jell-O, as Fred had suggested), and Bill and Percy left the table as well in search of their better halves, leaving Charlie and Hermione alone.

To their mutual surprise they had a rather interesting conversation discussing Charlie's work with the dragons and Hermione's work with the bankers (who apparently could breathe fire just as well if given the right incentive).

A little while later, Hermione excused herself to the loo. She came back to find Charlie sitting at their table with a very skinny and tarted up brunette, who was talking to Charlie in a rather shrill voice, when Hermione returned. Hermione couldn't help but smile when she noticed Charlie's pained expression. *Skinny girl*, however, didn't seem fazed by Charlie's lack of interest and continued to prattle on.

Hermione gave a polite cough when she reached the table, and Charlie looked up in relief.

"Hermione," he exclaimed, "there you are." The look he gave her suggested she had been gone on a trip around the world instead of to the loo.

Skinny girl on the other hand appeared less than pleased to see Hermione and continued to talk to Charlie without acknowledging her presence. Charlie shot Hermione an apologetic glance.

Wondering where on earth Molly Weasley found girls like that, for Hermione was sure that it had been Molly who had forced *skinny girl's* company upon Charlie, Hermione resolutely sat down...right in Charlie's lap.

"Hello, my name is Hermione. I'm Charlie's girlfriend." She offered her hand to *skinny girl*, who looked at her, crestfallen.

"This is Annie. Mum just introduced us," Charlie supplied, taking hold of Hermione's waist, and showing no signs of objection to her presence on his lap.

"My name is Amy," *skinny girl* hissed. She didn't take Hermione's offered hand. A few seconds later, she excused herself, and neither Charlie nor Hermione was sorry to see her go.

"That was easier than I thought," Hermione announced, starting to get up from Charlie's lap. But Charlie just tightened his hold on her waist.

"Stay," he pleaded. "That way Mum won't try to introduce us to any more potential spouses." Hermione relented, settling back into his embrace, and the two of them resumed their easy conversation from earlier.

Across the room, Bill just finished dancing a slow number with his wife. He had watched Hermione and his brother talk all evening. He had also seen his mother drag over an impossibly dolled up brunette the second Hermione had gotten up from the table. Bill could only shake his head. He didn't need to see Charlie's suffering look to know that girl wasn't a girl his brother would ever consider going out with.

To his great amusement, Bill had also witnessed Hermione's return to the table and how she had gotten rid of the other girl. Although Bill had been too far away to hear anything, from the way the girl practically fled the table he could guess the gist of what Hermione had told her. His brother didn't seem to mind at all.

Bill was thrilled to see that Hermione remained seated on Charlie's lap afterwards. The couple seemed very cosy as they resumed talking. Bill smirked.

"You look awfully pleased with yourself," his wife noted in her heavy French accent as he led her off the dance floor.

"Look at them." Bill nodded towards Hermione and Charlie.

"You set them up, didn't you?" Fleur asked suspiciously. Bill denied it, although he had learned very early in their marriage that lying to his wife was pointless. She knew him much too well.

"Tu es désespérément romantique." Fleur smiled at her husband.

"Psst, don't let my brothers hear you say things like that," Bill whispered, looking around worriedly. To his immense relief, Fred and George were still trying to keep their girlfriends from fighting, Percy was dancing with Penelope, and Ron and Lavender were nowhere in sight, and Bill suspected that it was best that he didn't know what those two were doing.

"Don't worry, I won't tell," Fleur assured indulgently. Bill pecked her on the cheek, and they sat down at an empty table. Bill seated himself so he could keep an eye on Charlie and Hermione. Did Hermione just lean her head against his brother's chest?

tbc

a/n: Tu es désespérément romantique. = You're a hopeless romantic.

Thanks go to luvscarlie who beta'ed this part. Also, thanks to alexia_drake who helped with the French translation.

Reviews are love.

Part 2/2

Chapter 2 of 2

Desperate to avoid Molly Weasley's matchmaking schemes, Charlie and Hermione fail to see that another matchmaker has already targeted them.

Disclaimer: I don't own Harry Potter, and I'm not making any money with this fic. This is purely for fun.

A/N: Here's the second and last part. Thanks go to the awesome ceirdwenfc who helped with this and beta'ed this part in record time.

Part II

Later that evening when the crowd began to quiet down, Harry and Ginny made their rounds, chatting with all their guests for a few minutes. By the time they reached Hermione and Charlie, Hermione was still sitting on Charlie's lap. She was comfortably leaning against his chest, her head nestling in the crook of his neck, and Charlie was unconsciously drawing lazy circles on the small of her back with his thumb.

An empty bottle of wine was standing on the table in front of them, and a second one had already been opened. The two were so engrossed in their conversation that they only noticed Harry and Ginny when the newlyweds sat down on two empty chairs and Ginny cleared her throat noticeably. Both Hermione and Charlie then looked up guiltily.

"I hope you're enjoying the wedding," Harry politely stated, raising an eyebrow at them while Ginny grinned.

Hermione straightened a bit on Charlie's lap, but didn't deem it necessary to get up completely. Charlie clearly seemed to be of the same opinion...he didn't let go of Hermione either.

"We're just trying to avoid being set up by Mum," Charlie explained, though, when Harry eyed him suspiciously.

"Of course, you are," Ginny agreed, sarcasm faintly noticeable in her voice.

"Are you looking forward to your Honeymoon in New Orleans?" Hermione asked, effectively changing the subject.

"Oh, yes," Ginny enthused. "I've always wanted to go there. There are so many things I want to see. The French Quarter, the galleries..."

"If you plan on keeping her in the hotel room the whole time, please don't tell me," Charlie begged Harry, who just smirked.

"We should get going. Still have many tables to visit. You two enjoy the rest of the wedding," Ginny got up.

"You're the one who wanted a big wedding," Harry reminded her good-naturedly, standing up as well. Eying the two bottles of wine at the table, one empty the other one well on its way to reach the same state, he flicked his wand to change the contents of the bottle and both glasses.

"You'll thank me in the morning for that one," he explained when Charlie and Hermione looked at him questioningly. Then he followed his bride to the next table where Neville Longbottom and Hannah Abbott were seated.

Charlie suspiciously sniffed the liquid in his glass, took an experimental sip, and then shouted after Harry, "Pumpkin juice! What are we? Twelve?" But Harry just winked at them and continued to chat with Neville and Hannah.

Charlie scowled first at Harry, who completely ignored him, and then at the bottle of pumpkin juice on their table.

"You know, I've got a really nice bottle of wine at my flat," Hermione suddenly suggested, surprising Charlie as well as herself. Charlie recovered quickly though and accepted the invitation before Hermione could change her mind.

Together they got their cloaks and Apparated to the secluded spot outside Hermione's flat. Hermione unlocked the door, took the magical wards down that provided additional protection to her flat and led Charlie inside.

"The living room is through there," she explained, pointing at one of the doors leading off the corridor. "I'll get the wine from the kitchen. Make yourself at home."

Charlie curiously entered her living room while Hermione went in the other direction. The first impression Charlie got from the room was that it would be more appropriate to call it a library. Three of the four walls were lined with shelves, all of them filled with books and books and books. More books were littering almost every available horizontal surface, including the floor. Charlie couldn't suppress a smile. This room was everything he had expected of Hermione.

The fourth wall was bare of any shelves or books, but clearly this was only due to the fact that it was largely dominated by a huge window that afforded a rather nice view over Chelsea. Charlie took a seat on the large, brown sofa, which mercifully was not buried underneath books.

Hermione joined him soon afterwards, carrying a bottle of wine and two glasses. She sat down besides Charlie, pushed a few books on the couch table out of the way and set the wine down. Using her wand to open the bottle, she demanded, "Go on, say it."

"Say what?" Charlie looked at her in confusion.

"That my flat looks like a library, and that I'll one day end up as Madam Pince's replacement as Hogwarts's librarian," Hermione clarified, pouring the wine into the glasses, handing one of them to Charlie. "Everyone visiting my flat feels the need to point that out to me."

Charlie took the offered wine, smiling at her.

"Well, you do own a lot of books."

Hermione shrugged. "I like reading, though it's hardly the only thing I'm interested in."

"Really?" Charlie teased. He comfortably leaned back on the couch, sipping his wine, his body half-turned to Hermione. "Do tell. What else you do, when you don't work or read. Don't your books get jealous when you cheat on them?"

His teasing was accompanied by a broad smile and laughter in his voice. Hermione couldn't help but smile back.

"If you must know, I have a lot of other hobbies."

"Such as?" Charlie prompted, genuinely interested.

"Well, I love the theatre and going to museums and art galleries, I like rollercoasters..."

"Really, rollercoasters?" Charlie interrupted. "I didn't think you'd be the type for fun fairs."

"Oh, I love them," Hermione enthused. "Harry and I usually ride a rollercoaster together at least once a month. It's kind of our thing. I think, he just wants to have a bit of his childhood back. I doubt the Dursleys ever took him on any rides." She paused briefly, frowning, but continued before Charlie had the chance to say anything. "And I just love the feeling in my stomach when you reach the highest point and the carts slowly drop down."

"Yeah, it's almost as good as flying," Charlie agreed.

"You think so?" Hermione asked. She was slightly flushed, but whether it was due to the wine or their conversation, Charlie couldn't tell. "We took Ron and Ginny with us once. They both absolutely hated it. Ron believed that Harry and I had been angry with him and wanted to kill him for weeks afterwards."

Charlie laughed. "My dear baby brother has always been something of a wuss," he stated. "I expected more of Ginny though."

They both laughed. When they quieted down some, Charlie slung one arm around Hermione's shoulder pulling her closer.

"Say, Hermione, how come we haven't done this before?" he asked.

"This?" Hermione asked, leaning her head onto his shoulder, enjoying the closeness.

"Spend time together. Going out." Charlie rested his head on top of hers. "I'd never thought it'd be so much fun to talk to you."

"Likewise," Hermione replied. "But it would have been a bit strange if we'd have gone out while I was still dating your brother."

Hermione could feel Charlie's body vibrating as he laughed.

"Yeah, Ron might have had a bit of a problem with that."

"And then there's the fact that you work in Romania and only visit England while you're on holiday."

"True," Charlie reluctantly agreed. "Although..." he trailed off.

"Although?" Hermione asked when he didn't continue.

"You can't tell anyone," Charlie insisted. "But Hagrid owed me last month. He's been thinking about giving up his job at Hogwarts. Apparently, it's not been the same ever since Dumbledore died. He's considering going to Eastern Europe with Grawp, tour the countryside...Madam Maxime would come along as well, it seems."

Charlie stopped and Hermione patiently waited for him to continue, using the time to snuggle closer to his body.

"Hagrid says, McGonagall is going to offer me the position as Care of Magical Creatures professor," he finally announced.

"Oh, Charlie. You'd make a great teacher," Hermione said.

"You really think so?" he asked, sounding unsure.

"Of course," Hermione confirmed without hesitation. "You love the subject. But wouldn't you miss the dragons?"

"Yeah," Charlie sighed. "That's why I haven't decided yet. On the one hand I can't work with dragons all my life, it's very demanding physically. But on the other hand, I just can't imagine not to. I love working with those oversized lizards."

"You'll figure it out," Hermione assured him, and Charlie tightened his hold on her shoulders.

There was a little boat, seesawing in the water. Hermione was lying on deck, basking in the sun's warmth...

Then Hermione woke up, slowly realising that there was no boat, no ocean and no sun. There was, however, Charlie, whom she was using as pillow and whose even breathing accounted for the rocking motions. Also, her head felt like it had expanded to twice its original size over night.

Slightly disoriented, Hermione tried to get up, but couldn't because Charlie had one arm draped around her back and was holding on quite tightly. Hermione realised that they were lying on her living room couch still in their dress robes. Carefully twisting in Charlie's grasp, she took a look at the couch table where an empty bottle of wine and two glasses stood.

That explained the headache.

Hermione's squirming caused Charlie to wake up, too. He blinked rapidly, clearly as confused about his whereabouts as Hermione had been just a few seconds earlier.

"Looks like we fell asleep," he stated the obvious, to which Hermione only nodded...very carefully because her head really felt like it would explode any second. Charlie then realised that he was still holding onto Hermione and let go rather quickly. A slightly awkward silence filled the living room as both of them got off the couch.

"Er, you want some breakfast?" Hermione asked, more for the sake of breaking the silence than being a good host.

"Sure," Charlie agreed, his mood clearly brightening. Despite feeling awful, Hermione had to bite back a grin. Weasley boys were always happy when there was food. They both went into Hermione's small kitchen where she got two vials of hangover potion, handing one to Charlie, before getting started on cooking their breakfast.

The potion took effect within minutes, and as her headache subsided Hermione's mood brightened up exponentially. Humming to herself, she went to collect the ingredients from the fridge. Charlie, meanwhile, was trying to knead the kinks out of his neck.

"Has somebody ever told you that your couch is bloody uncomfortable?" he asked.

Hermione grinned at him over her shoulder. "I don't know what you're talking about. I had a rather comfy pillow."

"Well, I'm glad to have been of service." Charlie grinned back. Hermione redirected her attention to the stove and pondered how weird it was that spending the morning with Charlie Weasley was suddenly turning out to be not so weird after all.

"You can take a hot shower while I cook breakfast if you want to," Hermione offered, and Charlie gratefully accepted. While Hermione scrambled the eggs, she listened to the water run in her shower, very much trying not to think about how Charlie looked right then...naked, that is.

Before long Charlie returned, wearing the slacks from the other night, his dress shirt half unbuttoned, running a hand through his still wet hair.

"I can finish up breakfast if you want to take a shower as well," he suggested.

"You cook?" Hermione eyed him sceptically.

Charlie laughed at her. "Of course, I cook. How else do you think I feed myself when I'm in Romania?"

Hermione surrendered the spatula and went to take a shower, too. When she returned to the kitchen, wearing a pair of comfortable jeans and tying her wet hair into a messy bun, Charlie was just setting the table.

"Smells delicious."

"Don't sound so surprised," Charlie teased, and they both sat down to enjoy their breakfast. The silence wasn't awkward anymore. In fact, they were both quietly enjoying each other's company.

When they were done eating, Hermione got up to clean the dishes, and Charlie took the towel to dry them. Having breakfast together felt eerily natural, almost as if they had been doing it for years. Both of them were surprised by the familiarity and ease they felt around each other.

Hanging up the wet towel after the last plate had been put away, Charlie bent down towards Hermione, giving her a small peck on the cheek. "Thanks for breakfast." Hermione smiled up at him, and Charlie forcefully became aware of how close together they stood.

Intuitively, he leaned forward to kiss her cheek once more. Then he brushed his lips against hers.

"Charlie?" Hermione stared up to him with wide eyes. Charlie took a step back, looking slightly embarrassed.

"Er, sorry. I didn't mean to..." He started to take another step away from Hermione, but Hermione grabbed a fistful of his shirt and pulled him towards her. She crashed her lips to his in a passionate kiss.

Charlie took hold of her waist, pulling Hermione's body closer to his, as he returned her kiss with just as much fervour.

He walked her backwards until Hermione's back hit the fridge. Pushing her up against the cold surface, Charlie ground his hard body against hers, making Hermione gasp. Slipping her hands into his half-opened shirt, Hermione ran them over Charlie's muscular chest and his nipples, causing him to moan in return.

Charlie broke their kiss; nibbling his way down her jaw, to her throat and to the side over her neck, making Hermione tilt her head to give him better access. All the while Hermione was letting her hands roam freely over Charlie's upper body. When his shirt got in the way of her exploration, she unfastened the buttons with trembling fingers, sliding the shirt over his shoulders as soon as it was open.

The kitchen was filled with the sounds of their heavy breathing as they continued the onslaught on each other's bodies.

"Maybe we should move this to the bedroom," Charlie suggested breathlessly. Not trusting her voice, Hermione only nodded.

She led the way to her bedroom, with Charlie following close behind and somehow still managing to lick her neck while walking at the same time. He stopped, however, once he entered her bedroom.

"What, no books?" He asked bewildered, looking around the bright room, which held Hermione's bed, a nightstand, a wardrobe and little else.

"Focus, Charlie," Hermione ordered laughingly, pulling him down for yet another kiss.

Charlie gladly fulfilled her request, releasing her hair tie and burying his hands in her half-dried curls while exploring her mouth with his tongue. Hermione slowly pushed him backwards until they reached the bed. The couple tumbled onto the mattress without breaking their kiss.

They were rolling around on the mattress, kissing, each of them trying to be the one on top and playfully fighting for control. Hermione finally managed to get Charlie on his back, quickly straddling his hips to keep him in place, smiling down at him smugly. Charlie raised an eyebrow, grudgingly acknowledging her victory...she may have won the fight, but not the war...before using the opportunity to slip his hands underneath her shirt to take it off.

While Charlie ran his hands along the sides of her body, Hermione bent down to kiss his chest. Kissing, sucking, biting...she was working her way down his torso, until Charlie was moaning deeply and holding onto her hips tightly. Reaching the waistband of his slacks, Hermione traced a path of wet kisses along the edge of the trousers.

"Hermione," Charlie breathed, urging her to touch him.

Opening his belt, Hermione got rid of his trousers first before cupping his hardness through his boxers, eliciting a loud moan from Charlie.

Smiling, Hermione slipped one hand into his boxers, sliding it slowly up and down his length. The slow pace was driving Charlie mad, and when the teasing became too much, he grabbed her arms, pulling her up until their faces were level again.

Kissing her deeply, Charlie slid his hands around her back, unfastening the clasp of Hermione's bra and slipping it off. His hands found her breasts, kneading them until Hermione sighed into the kiss.

Flipping them over quickly, Charlie settled himself between Hermione's legs, bending his head to suck one of her nipples into his mouth while his hands continued their massage. Hermione forgot all about wanting to be on top.

Charlie then kissed his way down Hermione's body, mirroring her earlier actions. When he reached her jeans, he quickly unfastened them. Hermione raised her hips, and Charlie slid both the jeans and her knickers down her legs, taking them off and throwing them onto the growing pile of clothes on the bedroom floor.

Taking his time now, Charlie kissed his way up her legs until he reached Hermione's thighs.

Sucking the inside of Hermione's left thigh hard, Charlie marked her. Turning to the other side, he repeated the process with Hermione's right thigh. Hermione's breath came in irregular gasps.

"Charlie, please," she begged. Knowing what she wanted, but ignoring her demands for the moment, he instead moved to the spot where her leg joined her body, biting the tender skin roughly. Hermione's hips bucked up involuntarily.

"Please."

Charlie finally relented. Kissing his way towards her centre, he gave her clit a flick with his tongue, before closing his lips around it and sucking. Hermione moaned.

Looking up from his spot between her thighs, Charlie saw Hermione's sweaty hands twisting into the sheet at either side of her body. Her head was thrown back and her eyes closed tightly...her expression one of pure ecstasy.

The sight of her made Charlie lose what little self-control he had left. Quickly crawling up her body and getting rid of his boxers on the way, he entered Hermione in one swift motion.

They moaned simultaneously, finally getting what both of them had wanted since the previous night.

Charlie set a fast pace, slamming into her willing body, while Hermione let go of the sheets, clawing at his back instead, trying to draw him as close as possible.

Too worked up to last very long, they both tumbled over the edge far more quickly than either of them would have liked.

Careful not to crush her, Charlie rolled on his back, and Hermione snuggled up to his side. As he was struggling to get his breathing under control, Charlie idly wondered how an innocent peck on the cheek could have possibly escalated to all this.

"I'm really glad you were at Bill's office when I had that meeting with him," Hermione mumbled while tracing patterns on Charlie's chest.

"Wait. That meeting was scheduled?"

"Yes. Why?"

Charlie groaned. "We've been set up."

"I don't think Molly planned on getting us together."

"Not my Mum. Bill! He told me to come over at exactly that time. He must have known you'd be there."

"Oh."

"There'll be no living with him after this."

Hermione smiled. "I'd say it was well worth it though. Wouldn't you?"

Charlie spent the rest of the day showing her exactly how worth he thought it was.

The End

A/N: Reviews are love.