

In Love With My Best Friend

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I don't own Harry Potter, and I do not intend to make any profit of this fic.

A/N: Megans_writing didn't want a Dramione drabble and gave me a few different pairings instead. I chose Harry/Hermione because I think they're interesting, and I haven't written them yet. Megan's prompts were: ghost story, skeleton, Ichabod Crane, carving pumpkins, zombie, eyeballs, crawling hand, homemade costume and Hallow's Eve, and because I'm just not a very decisive person, I used them all (somehow).

Thank you, rules_of_jinx and ashtonb, for doing the beta on this.

Harry was unsuccessfully trying to concentrate on the movie in front of him. It was supposed to be really good, but so far Harry had barely listened to a word that had been said, and the pictures washed by him unseen.

The only thing Harry was aware of was the witch nestled at his side. As usual though, Hermione seemed to be completely enthralled by the movie, unaware of her best friend's discomfort.

Harry suppressed a sigh and surreptitiously wiped his sweaty palms on his trousers. Today was supposed to be the day he told Hermione about his feelings for her. If only he could get the words out.

Exactly when Harry had stopped seeing Hermione as only a friend, he couldn't even say. He remembered telling Ron after they had destroyed the Horcrux at the lake that he thought of Hermione as nothing more than a sister, and it hadn't been a lie back then. He had still been in love with Ginny at the time, and as far as Harry knew, Hermione had had a crush on Ron since approximately third year.

But after the war, Harry and Ginny had never been able to pick up where they'd left off. As Ginny had put it, they loved each other dearly, but weren't in love anymore. They both moved on, although they remained close friends; closer perhaps than they had ever been while in a relationship.

It was Ginny who first asked Harry if he had feelings for Hermione, and although Harry had done his best to deny it, his ex-girlfriend had seen right through his lies.

But Hermione and Ron had still been together then, and Harry would have rather bitten off his own tongue than interfere with the relationship of his two best friends. Hermione and Ron's relationship lasted almost three years, and Harry had already resigned himself to the fact that he could never be with the one girl he truly loved.

Harry had dated several girls in that time, although he never went out more than a couple of times with one witch. His heart wasn't in it, and he felt genuinely bad about leading those girls on. Mrs. Weasley was constantly saying he should find himself a proper girlfriend, and even Ron had hinted that maybe Harry ought to try going on a third date for a change. Harry's feelings, however, remained unchanged, and consequently, he felt unable to enter a relationship with anyone else but Hermione...his best

friend's girlfriend.

Earlier that year though, Harry had noticed that the relationship between Hermione and Ron had begun to deflate, and not long after the Easter holidays, the two of them broke up. They had "lived themselves apart," Hermione had said, and according to Ron, it was better that they broke it off now, before they lost their friendship, too.

What had followed were four awkward months during which Hermione and Ron tried to sort themselves out, but at the end they had somehow remained close friends. Ron had started dating Lavender Brown again, and as far as Harry knew, Hermione had only been out with a co-worker a couple of times. Although, to Harry's immense relief, this connection had not proven serious.

With Hermione being suddenly single, Harry had been at a loss about what to do next. He still felt compelled to stay silent out of loyalty to Ron, and furthermore, Hermione still treated him like a brother...nothing more.

They had always hugged, occasionally given each other pecks on the cheek, and on days like this when they were watching movies together, Hermione had the habit of snuggling up to his side. But that was normal...she had always done that...and while Harry's heart lurched with every innocent touch of hers, he was sure that Hermione felt nothing more than platonic love for him. This was why Harry resolved that things would always stay the same, whether Hermione was single or not. He would not dare to tell her that he was in love with her.

However, he hadn't counted on Ginny. One day in early October, she had cornered him at the Burrow and bluntly asked Harry why he still wasn't with Hermione, even though she and Ron had broken up months ago and both of them had clearly moved on. Harry tried explaining to Ginny that Hermione didn't feel the same way about him as he felt about her, but Ginny wouldn't have any of that.

According to her, Harry had the social skills of a flobberworm and wouldn't know Hermione's true feelings until he asked her about them. Ignoring the flobberworm insult, Harry tried reasoning with Ginny, telling her that it would just be too awkward if he told Hermione about his feelings and Hermione shot him down. Harry honestly didn't think he could take it, hearing Hermione say that yes she loved him, but just not in that way. It was one thing to know the truth, but an entirely different matter to hear it out loud.

Ginny had listened to all his reasoning and fears patiently and then told him to suck it up, be the brave wizard the *Daily Prophet* proclaimed him to be and ask the girl out already. "And if you don't tell Hermione by the end of the month, I will," had been Ginny's last words before she had walked away, leaving a completely flabbergasted Harry behind.

Harry knew that this was no idle threat. Sweet, little Ginny was a force of nature not to be trifled with, and she would make good on her threat...Harry was sure of it. So, he had tried talking to Hermione, hoping that the revelation of his feelings for her wouldn't destroy their friendship. Only every time he got close to blurting out his feelings, his throat tightened up, and he couldn't get the words out. The mere thought that he might lose Hermione was enough to send Harry into full out panic mode.

October had gone by in the blink of an eye, and before Harry knew it, he had only one more day to talk to Hermione or Ginny would. In a last effort to get this over and done with, Harry had asked Hermione if she wanted to spend Hallow's Eve with him, watching some Halloween movies, rather than going out to some party where the abundance of frolicking witches and wizards in homemade costumes would make any private conversation impossible. Harry was hoping that with just the two of them, he'd finally be able to ask her out.

Hermione had readily agreed and had brought movies and popcorn with her. Now if he could only say the words...

"Harry, are you even watching the movie?" Hermione interrupted his musings, eyeing him critically.

"Of course I am," Harry assured her. "It's about some ghost story."

Hermione turned back to the screen. Harry tried to watch the movie as well, but found that he had completely missed the first 30 minutes or so.

"Who is this guy again?" he asked when he saw some guy in period clothing faint.

"Ichabod Crane," Hermione explained exasperatedly. "He's only the main character of the movie."

"Oh."

"Harry, are you okay?"

"Yes, why wouldn't I be?" Harry replied, staring at the screen, so he wouldn't have to look at Hermione. Hermione just huffed, but let it go. She continued to watch the movie, and Harry let out a relieved sigh. He still didn't know how to tell her.

Harry only noticed that the movie was finished when Hermione sat up and asked him how he'd liked it. Confused, he looked at the screen again, seeing the credits rolling down.

"It was great," he assured Hermione, "Awesome. I really like Brad Pitt."

"Good to know," Hermione replied, shaking her head. "Only that was Johnny Depp, not Brad Pitt."

"It was?" Harry blinked. He really hadn't seen much of the movie, having been lost in his thoughts the whole time.

"Harry, are you alright?" Hermione asked again.

"Of course I am." Harry assured, doing his best to look convincing. Hermione didn't look like she was buying it.

"Look..." Harry started, heart hammering in his chest. He swallowed convulsively, trying to get rid of the lump in his throat. "I wanted to ask you if you'd like to..." Harry trailed off while Hermione looked at him expectantly.

"If I'd like to do what?" Hermione finally asked when Harry didn't continue.

"Er... watch another movie with me," Harry finished lamely, watching his shoes intently.

"Harry, you didn't even watch the first movie," Hermione said exasperatedly.

"Sure I did," Harry lied, although he knew that Hermione didn't believe him.

"Harry..."

"What other movies did you bring?" Harry asked, refusing to look at Hermione. He heard her sigh, and then she moved to get her bag, which she had discarded on his living-room table.

"I only had this one scary movie, but I borrowed some more from Ron," she explained, dumping several DVDs in Harry's lap. Harry looked through the movies distractedly, trying to find something to watch. Ron, unfortunately, was particularly fond of horror films, and when Hermione had asked him for some Halloween movies, he had given her a few of his favourite flicks. When Hermione had been dating Ron, she had often regretted introducing him to Muggle cinema, as he had constantly dragged her to

movies that frankly scared and disgusted her.

"Here, let's see this one," Harry said, selecting a DVD at random from the pile in his lap.

Hermione looked at it sceptically. "Skeletons In My Closet," she read. "My, my, what an original title."

Hermione put the DVD into the player and settled back on the couch, drawing Harry's arm over her shoulders. Harry tried focusing on the TV in front of him, but once more Hermione's body cuddled to his side made it impossible for him to concentrate.

Hermione didn't seem to see much of the movie either, although that was because Harry had unintentionally chosen one of Ron's most horrid splatter movies. By the time the crawling hand of a zombie was poking out the eyeballs of its victims, Hermione had her head burrowed in Harry's shoulder, refusing to watch the bloody carnage. Harry's heart was hammering in his chest again, though the gory debacle on screen had nothing to do with that.

"Next Halloween we're going to carve pumpkins or go trick-or-treating," Hermione mumbled. "Do something that doesn't involve watching a massacre." Harry tightened his arms around her.

"You wanna stop watching the movie?" he asked Hermione.

"If you don't want to see it anymore," Hermione said. Harry reached for the remote and halted the movie, and Hermione straightened up a bit, though she stayed in Harry's embrace.

"Harry, why did you ask me to come over tonight?" she asked.

Harry cleared his throat, but the words still wouldn't come. *Maybe, Harry thought, I should talk to Ginny once more. Convince her that telling Hermione is a bad idea.*

"Harry?" Hermione asked, and Harry realised that he still hadn't answered her question.

"Just didn't feel like going to a party," he explained.

"You sure?" Hermione looked at him sceptically.

"Yeah, 'course I am," Harry said, careful not to look Hermione in the eyes. She could always tell when he was lying just by looking at him. Hermione sighed. Harry swallowed hard, trying to convince himself that not telling Hermione was for the best.

Suddenly, Hermione leaned closer, brushing the corner of his mouth with her lips. Harry froze.

"What did you just do?" Harry asked, completely perplexed.

"You know, Harry, if you can't recognise a kiss by now, I really need to have a word with Ginny," Hermione replied teasingly.

"Er... but why?" Harry still looked confused.

"Well, you've been sitting here for three hours now, trying to come up with a way to ask me out. I figured I'd save us some time," Hermione explained.

"How did you know? Did Ginny tell you?"

"Harry, she didn't have to. *I know* you," Hermione replied.

"Oh," Harry said. And because he still didn't quite know what else to say, he pulled Hermione closer, pressing his lips to hers. Hermione reciprocated his kiss, tracing the shape of his lips with her tongue. Harry pulled away before she could deepen the kiss.

"So, are you going to go out with me?" he finally asked.

"Yes." Hermione smiled. "Now, was that so hard?"

The End

A/N: The first movie Harry and Hermione watched was Sleepy Hollow, the second one was entirely made up by me. While I'm sure that there are plenty of movies out there where crawling hands of zombies poke out eyeballs, I certainly wouldn't watch them. I dislike horror movies even more than Hermione does. ;)