

# Waiting for the stars

by Melacka

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Chapter 1 of 1

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AN: the closest I'll ever come to writing a Harry/Ginny fic. Let me know what you think.

Disclaimer: own nothing, just taking them out for a spin.

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The sky lit up with a crimson glow, the last few moments of light and warmth to be savoured before the sun surrendered to the moon. It was stunning, breathtaking, awe inspiring and absolutely bloody brilliant. But he hardly noticed. For the young man sitting alone, mind caught up in memory and face drawn in sorrow, the sunset just didn't make a difference. Harry Potter glared at the sun, then glared at the hand he raised to shield his eyes from the light. Harry didn't care about the sunset. He had seen a thousand other sunsets just like this one. The beauty of the colours, the amazing contrasting shades, the lazy movement of the clouds, the gentle rustling of the leaves and the faraway sounds of animals settling in for the night, had absolutely no affect on him. There are those that would call it the beauty of creation, sighing to themselves about the sweet mystery of life. Harry considered it to be more of an unwelcome intrusion.

Harry knew that he was supposed to be inside, enjoying the festivities like everyone else. Bill and Fleur's wedding had been a sight to behold, and The Burrow was currently caught up in a form of subdued celebration, mindful of the situation they found themselves in. But Harry was not in the mood for celebrating. Everywhere he looked he saw couples, happily paired off, in one way or another and ignoring their problems as best they could. Bill and Fleur: married now and almost revolting in their affection; Lupin and Tonks: smiling and holding hands; Mr and Mrs Weasley: beaming proudly; Fred and George: obviously looking for ways to cause trouble which wouldn't result in Mrs Weasley yelling for the better part of an hour; and Ron and Hermione: embarking on something that clearly terrified them both, but something they looked determined to do nevertheless. Everywhere he looked, his friends were having a good time. Harry was happy for them, all of them. Over the course of the day, he had even almost managed to convince himself that he was not thinking about what he would be leaving behind the next day.

Ginny.

He had spent the entire wedding focussing on his friends to avoid having to focus on her. He had taken notice of every little detail as soon as he saw her, before promptly ignoring her for the rest of the day. She acted like she didn't know he was there, either that or she didn't care. At one point during the ceremony, Harry couldn't help staring at her. She was so beautiful. She looked up and caught his eye. She smiled, that same mischievous smile that he remembered. And for that moment, as their gaze held, he knew he could have loved her. He knew he would have loved her, if given the chance.

"Stop it! It's your own fault."

"What is?"

Harry jumped up and turned around, wand pointing wildly at...

"Luna? What are you doing here?" Harry lowered his wand only slightly when he noticed that hers was, as usual, tucked behind her ear.

"Just visiting. My father is going to Paraguay for a few days and I'm staying with Ginny."

"Oh, right." Harry had absolutely no idea what she was talking about, but accepted it. He was too tired to do anything else. He sat back down and looked up at the sky.

"What are you doing out here?"

"Waiting for the stars," Harry lied.

"Oh, I like the stars." Harry didn't know what to say to this, so he remained silent. "You're leaving tomorrow, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Someone has to do it."

"Do what?"

"Leave it all behind, fight for what you believe in."

"Some people don't have a choice." Harry said this so quietly he almost hoped Luna missed it. But Luna just stared at him with her large unblinking eyes.

"There's always a choice, Harry. Not always a good one, but there is always a choice."

"Strangely enough, that isn't a great comfort. I'm so glad it's all about choices, Luna. That means, what? Tom Riddle chose to turn into Voldemort, Peter Pettigrew chose to betray his friends and I chose to let him live. Dumbledore chose to trust Snape," he said the name as if its very existence disgusted him, "and Snape chose to kill Dumbledore. You know what else? I chose to leave--"

"Ginny. You chose to leave Ginny," Luna finished for him.

Harry looked down at his hands. "Yes."

"Do you regret it?"

"I--" And then he stopped. Harry thought of all the time he had spent with her, of all those years where she was nothing more than Ron's little sister and the sudden change in the past year. He thought about the determined look on her face and her quiet acceptance of his decision at Dumbledore's funeral. He thought about her smile during the ceremony. "I don't know."

Luna look thoughtful for a moment and then said solemnly, "You run the risk of being hurt if you let yourself be tamed."

"Yeah... what?"

"Nothing."

"Oh. Okay." Harry looked back up at the sky and brushed absently at a moth passing his ear.

"Wrackspurt?"

"What?"

"Wrackspurt. Maybe that's what's got you so confused." Harry stared up at Luna, and Luna stared placidly back. Harry suddenly smiled. He was glad that Luna Lovegood was still the same, even while all those around him were rapidly changing.

"Yeah, Wrackspurt, that must be it." Harry scooted over on the bench he'd been sitting on for the last hour. "Sit with me?"

Luna looked down at him and tilted her head to one side. "I'm not the one you want to sit with, Harry," she said as a slow smile spread across her face, "but I'll sit with you anyway."

And so she sat, and together they waited for the stars to come out.

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AN: A little weird and out of the blue, I'm still not sure if I'm happy with this one but that's just the way it goes. Cookies for anyone who can guess where I got the idea for the 'being hurt/taming' line from. Please review.