

# Decisions

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Not long after the first of the year in the new millennium, Hermione was trying to make up her mind about the men in her life. She had feelings for both Ron Weasley and Viktor Krum, but was unsure which was the man for her.

She Floo-called Harry to meet her at the Garfunkel's in Victoria Station so they could talk about her problem. He was the closest friend she had who would understand her dilemma. She just couldn't talk to Ginny about it.

When he arrived, she cast an aversion Charm to keep people from getting too close (except for the waitress), and Harry cast *Muffliato* so they wouldn't be overheard.

"You look terrific, Hermione. I brought your Christmas present, since you didn't come to the Burrow this time."

"I know, Harry. Thank you for not giving away the fact that I was spending Christmas with my parents in Australia. I brought yours, too."

Harry's gift turned out to be a shirt with an Aboriginal design that said, 'Going walkabout.' Hermione's gift was a book about the various fertility rituals still practiced in Eastern Europe.

"Oh, Harry, this is exactly the book I was looking for. Thanks ever so much." She hugged him and pressed a kiss on his cheek.

"This shirt is so cool, Hermione. I have read a bit about going walkabout. I guess I'll have to go investigate Australia sometime. Now what did you want to talk about?"

"I am having a hard time sussing out my feeling for Ron and Viktor. I needed to talk to someone who knows both of them and could give me some insight."

"Well, honestly, Ron still needs to grow up some, Hermione. The fame and publicity from the end of the war have gone to his head. He got an interview with the Chudley Cannons to try out as their Keeper, so I haven't seen him much lately. I think he said he was going to be at Glamis Castle this weekend because the Cannons are running a Quidditch camp in the area and he *is* sporting a new Chudley Cannons jumper. Have you seen Viktor lately?"

"Harry, he asked me to marry him again this past weekend. That makes four times he has asked. I am so confused about all this. Part of me wants to see if things would work out with Ron, and the other part wants to run to Viktor and marry him as soon as possible. You won't tell Gin we talked about this, will you?"

"I think you might be surprised at Gin's thoughts about you and her brother. However, I won't tell her we talked, unless you tell me it is okay. So, what is Viktor doing while you are trying to make up your mind? He is persistent, though. What do you want to eat? The server is coming over."

"Oh, just the fish and chips with tea. I know you'll have a burger and a lager. But we can split the Blackberry Apple Crumble for afters."

Harry gave the server their order and re-focused his attention on his friend.

"The problem as I see, Hermione, is that you are being pulled two ways about Ron and Viktor. I know you have seen Viktor at home in Sofia and away from Quidditch. What was he like there?"

"Harry, you know he is working with the Ministry here and the one in Bulgaria to hunt down the last of the Death Eaters. He supports the reparation projects for the families harmed by the war. He goes out of his way to do work for the various charities set up to take care of the orphaned children. He is the most unselfish man. He is a good man, a caring man. But, do I love him, or am I just swayed by the fact that we share so many values?"

"Good point. Now how about Ron?"

"Ron is trying to make a career out of Quidditch. He makes a very big deal out of being one of the Golden Trio. He calls attention to himself when he shouldn't. He flirts shamelessly with every girl in sight, but hasn't done anything about any of the charities that keep asking him to do some appearances for them. Okay, I see where you are going with this. Maybe I do know which one I really want. You're right, Ron will never grow up. I don't want to have kids with a man who would need babying himself. I guess it was just the whole 'we grew up together' thing that had me actually considering Ron."

"Eat your lunch, Hermione, and then tell me what Viktor is doing this weekend?"

They both attacked their lunch without talking, and then Harry ordered dessert.

As they finished the crumble, Hermione said, "Viktor is doing the Kukeri festival in Sofia. His team and his friends from Durmstrang are going to be the Kukeri this year. He left an invitation for me to stay with his parents and come to the festival. I just have to go to the Bulgarian Embassy to Floo there. You are so sneaky, Harry. You got me to talk about the two of them and made me see that Ron is the past and Viktor is the future. I knew there was a reason you are the best brother a girl could have."

"I'll admit something, Hermione. That book I gave you will tell you all about the Kukeri Festivals. Viktor suggested it to me as a present for you. He was always the one I thought you would choose. Ron may be my friend, but he was never the right guy for you. Give Viktor my best."

Harry paid the bill and kissed her on the cheek before walking away.

Hermione quickly went home to her flat and packed her bag. She took the Tube to the Bulgarian Ministry where she could Floo directly to Viktor's house.

He greeted her with a kiss and asked if she wanted to come with him to the festival. When she answered yes, he *transfigured* her outfit into a traditional Bulgarian costume.

Hours later, back at his house, Viktor and Hermione fixed dinner together. Over a glass of Rakia, she told him the whole story of why she hadn't given him an answer before.

"I know, my loff. It was hard not to push you for an answer, but I knew you would arrive at it in your own way."

"You have always known me better than anyone else, Viktor. I think that is why I fell in love with you. I will marry you, if you still want me. I have no doubts now."

"I think we should send an owl to your parents, loff. My parents will be ecstatic. We could have wedding in just a few weeks. I loff you, my beautiful Nin."

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*I have to thank Blue Artemis for the name Nin. And Muse's prompts were: Viktor Krum/the Bulgarian Embassy/Kukeri & Hermione Granger/Glamis Castle/a Chudley Cannons jumper*