

First Kiss

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Chapter 1 of 1

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This is it. This is the day I'm going to kiss her.

I've been planning to do it all summer, and I'm on a time crunch. Today is the final day of July, and Lily will leave for a month-long summer camp tomorrow. This is my last chance to do it before she leaves and I'm plunged into a month of crippling loneliness. It's now or never.

As I've said, getting to this point has been a long process... one I've been planning all summer. On the final day of school, I had planned to kiss her in celebration of our freedom. It was like a rite of passage, after all. We were finally finished with the prison that was Muggle school. In September we would board the Hogwarts Express and travel across the country to surround ourselves with our own kind. We were no longer children of the Muggle world; we were about to become Hogwarts students!

As we left the Muggle school that day and began the long walk home to Spinner's End, a plan began to form in my brain. I would wait for the ancient, gnarly tree under which Lily and I liked to sit and read, and I would find an excuse to stop. An untied shoelace, perhaps. And once we had paused under our tree, I would move in for the kiss. Yes. That was the perfect plan.

Not far from school, a gaggle of girls approached us. They didn't notice my existence, of course. They never did notice me, but they surrounded Lily. The lot of them chatted for what felt like ages, about their plans for the summer and trivial things like clothes and that ridiculous lip paint women tend to wear. I will never understand how a brilliant girl like Lily can be so interested in such nonsense.

I shuffled my feet as I stood at the side of the road, waiting for the girls to leave so Lily and I could continue our walk home. I kicked at stones. I picked up a stick and wrote rude words in the dirt. I climbed a tree and swung from a limb. Finally the girls left, but not before shooting one last round of dirty looks in my direction.

We continued the journey and finally reached our tree. When I was in precisely the right spot, I quickly bent, untying my shoelace before Lily could even notice that I had stopped. I retied it and then stood directly in front of her.

"I've told you to do a double knot," she said. "That way you won't have trouble with it."

Lily can be so bossy at times. Honestly, what trouble is it to her if I have to retie my shoelace from time to time? That didn't matter now, though. The moment had arrived, and all I could do was stand before her, trembling like a freezing person.

My brain screamed. MOVE, FOOL! My body did not comply. I was a bundle of nerves.

Suddenly, a voice rang out in the silence. "Severus!"

I must have jumped a mile. Lily looked alarmed.

"Mum!" I said. Dammit.

"Why are you so late coming home from school? I was starting to worry!" My mother grabbed me by the arm and pulled me off in the direction of home. Lily waved as the distance between us grew.

I wasn't that late. Bloody control freak, my mother is.

This is a pattern that has continued throughout the summer. Over the following weeks we were interrupted by Lily's father, my mum again, the boy down the road who likes to beat me up (Russ Peters, the tosser), the near drowning of Lily's sister (I dived into the river and saved the ungrateful bitc—girl), and a swarm of bees.

Which brings us to today. Here we stand, behind the hedge at the end of Lily's driveway. Her dad is packing her camping gear into the car. Time is running out, and my palms are sweating profusely.

Lily is chatting away, claiming our time apart will fly by, that we'll be together again before I know it, and promising to write me every day. My lips pucker, and I lean in ever so slightly. Don't chicken out now. This is your LAST CHANCE. Everything is riding on this one moment. But no pressure!

"Lily! Time to go, sweetheart! Say goodbye to Severus, now."

And that's that. As grateful as I am for the contact as Lily throws her arms around me and squeezes me tight, I can't ignore the intense feeling of disappointment I'm experiencing. Sadly, I watch her bounce off, heading towards her father's car.

I turn away and look at the ground. Absently, I bend over and pick up a few rocks and an interesting leaf. I don't want to watch the car back out of the driveway. I don't want to wave as she leaves, abandoning me here to the boredom and the bullies of Spinner's End for the next month.

Just as I'm about to start the long trek home, I feel a hand on my shoulder. A small hand. I know who it belongs to, even as I turn around.

Lily looks into my eyes for a long moment and then her lips meet mine. What can only be a few seconds feels like a lifetime. My head swims, but I am acutely aware of the smell of her, the placement of her hand on my chest, and the feel of her chapped lips on mine. Slowly, she pulls away.

Smiling, she says, "I've been planning to do that all summer, but I've never found the chance." And then she turns and climbs into the backseat of her father's Muggle automobile. A moment later, she's gone.

I begin to walk home, replaying the moment in my mind, over and over again. Somewhere along the way, I come upon an empty Pepsi can, and I kick it for a long while. The muscles in my jaw grow sore from the cheeky smirk plastered on my face.