

Redemption on the Installment Plan – V

by Amita

The quality of redemption is not strained.

Chapter 1 of 1

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"What are you drawing?"

He looked up at the girl casting a shadow over the parchment. "I don't know. I'm trying to figure it out."

"Mind if I look?" she asked.

He shook his head no, and she placed her lunch tray on the table, sat, and examined the parchment. Once she was out of the glare of the sun, he recognized her.

"I can't figure it out either," she said. "What's it from?"

"Nowhere," he said.

"Alright, be secretive. I bet it's from your father's shed. Fred and George bragged about it. Percy was too embarrassed. Be like Percy then."

"I'm not like Percy," said Ron.

"Okay, then this Saturday, you can show me the shed. I've been dying to see it," said Penny.

She took a bite of her sandwich and mentioned she'd be here for lunch tomorrow. He thought about his boring life and nodded yes. He compared it to spending time with the girl-who-was-always-right and smiled and nodded yes.

That evening, the return owl from his mother positively screeched. How did he know Penny wasn't a spy trying to get the goods on his father, especially since she was probably still angry that Percy had broken up with her? He wrote back that she had left Percy as hard as that might be to believe.

Meanwhile, lunch became the high point of his day.

That Saturday, with Molly peering anxiously from the kitchen window, Ron escorted Penny to the artifact storehouse. He was planning how to spirit her away before his mother obliterated her.

Penny shrieked when she spotted the object he had been sketching. "It's a pinball machine."

"A what?" he asked.

She enthused about a working model: the flippers, the bumpers, the lights, the sound effects. He looked puzzled. She said it was still early and they could travel to London

and she could take him to a pinball parlour and it would be lots of fun.

"Right now?" he asked.

"Well, if you'd rather stay home with your mother," said Penny.

They made a detour to get a bag of non-wizard coins and hit the arcade. Ron was certain Penny thought too much about strategy when she was playing, but it was fun watching her concentrate, and she cheered him on when he took his turn.

"I want to build one of these," said Penny.

"Do you think that would be cheaper?" asked Ron, alarmed by how fast they were going through the bag of coins. He looked more closely at her. "No, you think it would be a challenge."

"You're a very perceptive person, Ron," said Penny. "Maybe we could introduce pinball to the wizard world."

"The wizard world already has a joke shop," said Ron. "I don't think we could compete."

"But it's only a joke shop, a practical-joke shop," she said. "How many times can one turn oneself into a canary and puke before it gets old?"

Ron admitted that acquiring skill with the silver ball was addictive, but they didn't have any of that stuff that made the machines run.

"Electricity," said Penny. "But we have magic."

He was still glowing about being called perceptive when he mentioned his father might be able to help. The next weekend, they brought Arthur Weasley to the arcade. He agreed the most difficult part would be the active bumpers.

Several Saturdays later, in the first test of active bumpers using repelling spells, the silver ball ricocheted around the setup faster than their eyes could follow it until the multiple collisions cracked the framework.

"That was impressive," said Molly.

After dinner, Ron and Penny were sitting on the porch swing. Penny moved closer. They were holding hands. She got up to refresh his tea, and when she returned, she sat beside him. He could feel her warm thigh. He nearly went off his nut. He was telling himself she was too old for him when her hand began massaging his neck. The relaxation spread through him, and when she mentioned they should take a day off to rest and she could fix him lunch at her flat, he yawned.

"I'm glad you're so excited by my company," she said.

"You're company is very relaxing, and I forgot my manners," he replied. "I'd love to have lunch at your flat."

The next day after lunch, he admitted that Penny was right. They had been working hard on the contraption every weekend, and they needed a break. He stretched out on the rug in front of the sofa. He was half asleep when he noticed that Penny had stretched out alongside him. He could feel her softness, her breath, her silky hair. He hoped she didn't notice his member was growing.

Penny was cuddling closer with her leg extending over him when she discovered his erection. *That better be for me.* She left her leg in contact. She resisted the urge to grab it. As she fell asleep in his arms, she was fantasizing about her touch making him unload in his trousers.

That Monday, his head full of modified repelling spells and ramp angles and visions of Penny, Ron was waiting in the lunch room when Hermione seated herself at his table.

"I haven't seen you for a long time, Ron."

"I've been helping my father with some projects," he said, and when he noticed her glaring at him, he added, "Penney Clearwater's been helping, too."

"I wanted to tell you that I've agreed to spend the holiday season with Andromeda Tonks," she said. "She hasn't had much company."

"I thought her family had taken her back," he said, "and wasn't there a big fight at the manor?"

"She still needs company," said Hermione, "and the supposed fight was just a mix up."

"You need to be careful around them, Hermione."

"I'm always careful, Ron," she said as she left.

"What did Hermione have to say?" he heard Penny say behind him.

"He turned. "She's going to be at the Tonks this year for the holidays."

"Well, you sound like you're going to miss her, and I'm sorry I'm bothering you with my stupid pinball machine," said Penny, turning and striding away.

Ron figured his Penny pinching days were over before they had begun. Then he decided not to give up so easily. He dashed after her. When he caught up with her, she was leaning against the gate. Was she crying?

"Penny," he said.

She straightened up.

"Are you going to have lunch with me?" he asked.

He took her hand and they walked back and ordered their sandwiches.

Wednesday noon, he mentioned that his parents were visiting relatives that weekend, but he would still like to see her although he didn't know what they could do. His world had been so filled with pinball design that he had trouble imagining another life.

"Perhaps your world has been too filled with me, and you would like another life," said Penny.

"No, I think about you all the time," he said.

"You say the nicest things, Ron."

Her face lit up in inspiration. "I know. We can go to London. They have lots of pinball arcades there."

He looked startled and then saw the twinkle in her eyes. He laughed. This girl was good company.

They decided they would meet at his flat on Saturday. By then, something would have occurred to them. As he was walking her back to work, they came to a quiet spot. They embraced. Quite some time passed. She dashed into the office, late for work. Ron found that flattering.

That Saturday, Penny arrived at Ron's flat. She sipped tea and talked of possible places to go and things to see while Ron stretched out on the rug. He looked comfortable enough that she joined him.

She felt his hand on her waist. It was comforting. Her fingers were running through his hair; they were tracing the lines of his face. Surely, he liked it. She was moving closer. Her lips were grazing his. He pulled her closer. She liked it. She more than liked it. Her kisses were devouring him. He wasn't moving away. She no longer worried that her breasts were only modest; she only wanted to feel them against him. She was moving them against him. She didn't know she was moaning. His hand made its way from her waist to her blouse. She held it and guided it to her rising mounds. *Do you like them, Ron?* He seemed to like them. *Let me show you, Ron.* She fumbled the buttons open. His hand wasn't enough. She pulled his lips to them. As his hand traveled back down, she placed her leg on him. His hand traveled farther down, down across her skirt, back up under her skirt. Penny unfastened her bra and rolled over on her back. Ron's lips were on her nipple, and his hand was gliding up the inside of her thighs. She opened her legs. His hand adventured over her cotton-covered roundness. His lips were on hers, and his fingers on the dampest part of her knickers. Her tongue was poking between his lips as he poked the special nub between her legs. She didn't know it could feel this good. She didn't know it could become this unbearable. Her body jerked. She held him.

Penny was still giddy as she unbuttoned his trousers, pushed her knickers off, and pulled Ron inside her. This time was even better. This time her sweetheart went wild, and his body jerked before he collapsed on top of her.

He didn't leave. He lay beside her and held her as she floated.

She asked if he wanted a tea. When she brought it to him, she asked if he wanted anything else.

"I want you to spend the night with me," he said.

"Yes," said Penny.