

# Reflections on a Forced Future

*by phoenix*

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## Reflections on a Forced Future

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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**A/N:** This was initially written for the Sycophant Hex The Sky Is Falling Festival Prompt XVI, Get Out of Your Box (since I don't really write Weasleys), but as I brought it to a close I saw that I could expand it and also fulfill Prompt VI, Most Original Place. I hope you enjoy this look at what might have been that I came up with before DH was released. :D

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The sky was dark and the rain pouring down around the Hogwarts Express set an ominous mood for the upcoming school year. The fact the train was half empty and much quieter than usual added to the somberness. Wizarding Britain was at war, no longer able to ignore the presence of You-Know-Who.

In the front car sat a ginger young man, staring absently out the window.

Ronald Weasley, Head Boy and Quidditch team captain. While he had seen it in the Mirror of Erised first year, he had never thought it would come to pass. After all, Harry Potter was his classmate, youngest Seeker in a century and far brighter in class.

Of course, thinking about this caused Ron to remember why it had come to pass: Harry had not returned to Hogwarts. His best mate was searching for Horcruxes and a way to defeat Voldemort.

Ron had wanted to join him, but his mother had firmly planted her foot down that he would return to school. The argument that he was of age fell on deaf ears. She already had two children who had not finished school, and she would not have a third.

After listening to his mother's tirade, his father had pulled him aside.

*"Ron, I know you want to help Harry. We all want, no need, him to succeed. And I know that you have been there for him in the past, but this is something he has to do on his own. Besides, your mother and I would like you to look out for Ginny. While Hogwarts is about the safest place you can find, it's not impenetrable. And Professor McGonagall needs all the support she can get."*

*"With you and Hermione returning to the school it should encourage others to do the same. Hogwarts has never closed, and we can't allow that to happen now. You need to return to school. Do you understand?"*

*"Yes, Dad. I do, but everything that Harry has done has been with our help..."*

*"We are talking to him, trying to convince him to return to school. He made his decision in the heat of the moment. Remus, your mother and I think we can get him to return."*

Upon reflection, Ron realized this was the first time his father had treated him like an adult. As he stared out the window, he began to wonder if his family was trying to protect him and not Ginny. His brothers, save Percy who still wasn't speaking to the family, had all told him how important it was for him to finish school.

The more he thought about it, the less he begrudged his mother for her actions. After all, four of his five brothers were working with the Order of the Phoenix. He was scared of losing any of them, but he realized there was a chance they could all be killed, and his mother surely could not bear to have her children killed. If she could do anything to protect any of them, she would. And that was why she had insisted Ron return to school, even though he was of age.

Hermione had offered to Harry that she and Ron could conduct research from Hogwarts' vast library. It was the least they could do. Reluctantly Ron had agreed. While research was not his forte, it was the only contribution he could make at the moment.

Hermione entered the compartment, but he hardly noticed.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked gently as she took the seat across from him.

Shifting his gaze from the window to her, he asked, "What good is an education going to do if You-Know-Who wins?" When she gave him a puzzled look, he continued. "You are Muggle-born and I come from a family of blood traitors. Do you really think he will let us live? Especially since we are Harry's best friends. We shouldn't be at Hogwarts; we should be out there with Harry. If I'm going to get killed, I want to make sure I take a few of them with me."

She winced at his words. "Ron, killing isn't the answer. Didn't you learn anything from Dumbledore? If we go about killing the Death Eaters, we are no better than they are. School is the best place for us. Look at the library. We can find spells for Harry, look for information on artifacts that belonged to the founders, there is no end of ways we can be helpful. Besides, we won't be completely cut off from the Order. Professor McGonagall is still here, and with Elphias Doge teaching Defense, we have another member here. I think we'll learn a lot this year and be able to help Harry even more. After all, the search for the Horcruxes isn't going to end tomorrow or anything."

Ron slumped back in his seat. "Fine, that may be true, but I still feel useless and helpless. I'm no good at research. Harry's going to be out there risking his life to find the Horcruxes, and I'm going to be managing a Quidditch team. Seems a little frivolous, don't you think?"

She switched seats so that she was now sitting next to him and placed her hand on his knee. "It may seem that way, but it could be useful. I hate to say this, but look at how people's flying abilities improve playing Quidditch, not to mention their reflexes. It's much more than what we learned in our first year flying class. Those types of skills could be very useful. In fact, I think you should recruit and train backup players this year."

He had never thought about Quidditch that way before. "That's a very good point."

"Of course it is," she replied, but the softness of her voice held none of the smugness it would have had in years past. "What we are doing is important to the war, just not in a conventional way. And Harry has one of the coins with the Protean Charm on it. He can use it to summon us if he needs us." Reaching into her pocket, she handed him a Galleon. "Keep your broom handy in case we need to leave school grounds quickly. Later tonight Professor McGonagall will teach us how to get through the wards to leave the grounds."

This buoyed Ron's mood. They were finally being treated like adults.

"Just, don't tell your mum. She doesn't know and thinks we will be safely locked in Hogwarts. And Harry left us the Map, too. He wanted to leave the Cloak, but I told him that I thought he would need it more than we would."

He leaned over and wrapped Hermione in an embrace. "Thanks, Hermione. You've made me feel a lot better about this." She returned his embrace, and he couldn't help thinking how wonderful, how right it felt.

"That's what friends are for," she replied.

He pulled away and leaned his forehead against hers. "If we make it out of this..."

"When," she interrupted.

Laughing softly, he said, "When we get out of this, I think we should be more than friends."

"I'm going to hold you to that," she replied seriously.

He knew why she said that, and he couldn't blame her. "Me, too," he replied quietly before kissing her softly on the lips. When she didn't protest, he deepened the kiss, gently prying her lips apart with his tongue. Her taste he couldn't describe it, but it was wonderful and he wanted more.

Pulling her tightly against him, he could feel a stirring in his loins, one he had never felt when with Lavender Brown. He let his hand caress her back, enjoying how she felt. She was doing the same and her touch was electric.

Before he could register what was happening, she was sliding onto his lap and reaching beneath his robes. His passion fully ignited, he was instantly hard at her touch. With one last moment of lucidity, he remembered they were on the Hogwarts Express. "The door," he gasped as he finally broke the kiss.

"Locked," she whispered breathily before reaching lower to cup his balls.

He had never imagined it could feel so good. "Hermione," he gasped.

With her other hand, she reached for one of his and slid it under her robes. "Touch me."

Not one to disobey, he did as she asked and was shocked to find that she wasn't wearing any knickers. She was already damp, as excited and eager as he was. Between feeling her wetness and her touch on his privates, he was on the verge of losing it.

As though she sensed what was about to happen, she flicked her wand. "Better?" she asked between kisses.

"Yeah," he replied thickly. He wasn't sure what she had just done, but he was no longer on the verge of ejaculation.

She stopped teasing him and used her hand to guide him, instructing him on how to please her until he had her calling out his name.

Not wanting her to come without him, he stopped.

"Please, Ron, don't stop," she pleaded.

Kissing her and nibbling at her ear, he said, "Come with me."

"Do you mean?"

"Hermione, this feels so right. I love you. Let's make this day special." He knew this was likely to be the only quiet moment alone they would get until the end of the war. She quickly agreed, and they shed their robes so as not to be encumbered by clothing.

Slowly she slid onto him and they both drew in their breath sharply. Silently he thanked her for the spell. If it weren't for that, he was sure that he would have come right then. Grabbing her hips, he helped her set a rhythm. It wasn't long before they were both panting. The pressure was building, and he was sure he was going to explode. The blood was rushing in his ears, and his vision was blacking out. He needed release and he needed it now.

As best as he could, he thrust up into her, wishing they had chosen a more traditional position. "Hermione," he pleaded, realizing her spell must be holding him back.

"Oh, yes! Ron! Just like that." She continued moaning, getting louder as the movements became more violent. She dug her fingers into his back, trying to pull him deeper into her.

Just before he blacked out, he could feel her muscles clenching him, and he finally felt release. A few last thrusts and he was spent, collapsing back against his seat, Hermione leaning on top of him. "That was amazing," he said once he caught his breath.

"It was. Thank you, Ron."

Now that his brain was clearing, he had to know. "That spell you used..."

"A simple timing spell to make sure that something happened at the same time as something else. I know enough about boys to know that the first time can be over rather quickly."

She was flashing him that smug grin that he had come to love so much. "And it nearly was. You are a wonderful witch. The best," he said before kissing her.

"You're not bad yourself." Glancing at the clothing-strewn compartment, she said, "I think we ought to clean up and get dressed. After all, we have prefects to look after."

Sadly, he was pulled back into reality, but he would hold onto this one spontaneous moment for the rest of his life.