

Chapter 9: The Yule Ball

"Attention everyone," Professor McGonagall called. "Quiet down everyone!" Everyone fell silent. "Now I suppose you are all wondering what you are doing here? Well as part of the tradition of the Triwizard Tournament we will be hosting the Yule Ball."

"A ball!" A few girls said.

"Yes a ball. Now we will be learning how to do some of the customary dances. Now Mr. Weasley will you please come up here?"

"W-what?" Ron mumbled as he got to his feet.

"Now I will show you the steps." After McGonagall had gone through the steps she told everyone to partner up.

Hermione was Harry's first partner. "So are you planning on asking her to the ball?"

"Asking who?"

"Ginny of course! I know you want to take her."

"And who do you plan to go to the ball with?" Harry shot back.

"No one has asked me yet! I suggest you ask her before someone else does. Oh and you should really talk to her."

"She told you?"

"Not really I kind of just guessed. I thought you promised to tell me."

"I didn't even notice," he defended.

"I'm sure you noticed *after* you kissed the girl! How come you couldn't tell me then?"

"I was confused! I didn't know what to say to you let alone her! I wanted to tell you but I had no idea how to do that."

Hermione sighed. "Well you still should talk to her."

"Change partners," McGonagall said.

Somehow Harry did manage to dance with Ginny. He smiled at her to which she nervously returned him. "How is my dancing?" He asked as he spun her.

"You're doing fine just need to work a little more."

"Well then I hope then I won't be stepping on your feet while we dance."

"We?" She almost squeaked.

"Yes we, well that is if you haven't already accepted someone else."

"I'll go with you!" She said happily her brown eyes bright.

"I'm glad," he said making her spin again. He pulled her closer than he had last time and Ginny seemed very pleased by this.

"Well you'd better hurry up, mate, or all the good ones will be gone," said Fred as he and George came up beside the two of them.

"Who're you going with, then?" Ron asked.

"Angelina," Fred said promptly without a trace of embarrassment.

"What? You've already asked her?"

"Good point. Oi! Angelina!" Fred called across the common room.

Angelina turned from Alicia when Fred called her name. "What?"

"Want to come to the ball with me?"

"All right then," she said turning back to her friend.

"See no problem," Fred said as he and George took off.

"I can't believe that! Are we the only ones around here without dates?"

"Er, well..."

"Well what Harry?"

"I kind of already have a date for the dance," Harry said quietly.

"Who?"

"Me," Ginny said from behind Ron. Ron spun to face his younger sister.

"You and him! You've got to be kidding me!" Ron practically shouted.

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked as she came to stand with the other three.

"Harry is going with *Ginny!* My *sister!*" He practically screamed. "What in the world were you thinking? I mean this is my little sister!"

"Calm down Ron."

"I will not calm down! Next you are going to tell me you have a date as well and that it's Viktor Krum!"

Hermione flushed red. "Well as a matter of fact Ronald I do have a date and it is Viktor!" She snapped before leaving the common room. Ginny moved to follow but Harry stopped her.

"You know Ron you shouldn't get upset at her. She was only trying to help. If you wanted to ask her you should have done it earlier. Grow up Ron," Harry said as he left to go find Hermione.

He was lucky that she was in the library. She was hidden away in a corner, hiding from everyone. "Hermione?"

She looked up and Harry could see the tears that she held back. "He's so selfish! He only cares about himself," she mumbled.

"Yes he is but not all the time," he told her as he sat beside her. "So are you really going with Viktor?"

"Yes I am, you aren't mad are you?"

"Why should I be? He's a pretty decent guy. I'm glad you are going with him."

Hermione smiled and hugged him. "Oh Harry he is a really nice guy. I am sorry about Ron."

A flash interrupted the two. Rita Skeeter stood over them. "Ah young love!"

"Go away!" Hermione and Harry shouted at once. Both were still mad about her previous article about Harry.

"Oh but I only have a few questions for the two of you."

"I suggest you leave," Viktor said from behind her. Rita looked back and forth between the two.

"Alright fine," she said as she left the library.

"Insufferable woman!" Hermione spat out glaring at Rita's retreating figure. "Hello Viktor," she said shyly.

"'Ello Hermy-own. 'Ello 'Arry."

"Hello Viktor. I hope she isn't going to put more things in the paper."

"I have no doubt that she will," Hermione snapped. "Would you care to sit down?" She asked Viktor who nodded his head.

Before long the three of them were talking about countless stories. Ginny had shown up not to long ago and the four of them proceeded to talk about the upcoming events. It was late when they all decided it was time to go to bed. Ginny, Hermione, and Harry slowly made their way back to Gryffindor tower.

"That was so much fun!" Ginny said happily. Harry smiled and twirled her as they headed down the hall. Ginny laughed and let him spin her.

"It was, he really is a nice guy once you get to know him. Nice job Hermione," Harry said with a smile.

Hermione turned red slightly. "Thank you Harry."

"Oh Harry we *have* to take pictures of the ball! What do you say Hermione?"

"I see she has also told you about her love of photography."

"More like shown me," he said with a grin. Ginny stuck her tongue out at the two of them. Harry grinned and pulled her beside him and slung his arm around Hermione's shoulder.

Harry and Viktor waited patiently in the entrance to the hall. Harry paced back and forth while Krum leaned against a wall. "Vere is Herm-own-ninny?"

"I wish I knew, as well as where Ginny is."

"They are coming," Ron mumbled as he walked past them.

Ginny was the first to appear. When Harry saw her his jaw dropped. Her red hair was pulled back and was curled at the ends. She wore a light pink dress robe. When her eyes met Harry's, he grinned when a blush crept across her cheeks.

Hermione came next. Harry was surprised when he saw her, she didn't look like the same old Hermione. Her hair was now sleek and shiny and twisted up into an elegant knot at the back of her head. She wore a periwinkle-blue dress robe. Both girls were smiling nervously. Viktor now came to stand beside him. "Zey are butiful."

"Yes they are," Harry said as he walked up the steps to greet the two girls, Viktor right behind him. "You ladies look very lovely," Harry said as he offered Ginny his arm.

"Thank you," Ginny said in a low whisper. Harry took the camera out of her hand and slid it into his cloak pocket. The four champions waited patiently around the door, they were supposed to be the last ones inside.

"Everyone ready?" Professor McGonagall asked. Eight heads bobbed in unison. Harry stood just behind Cedric and Cho. The doors swung open and the talking had died down as the four of them entered.

All of them made their way to the table left at the top. Ginny's hand tightened on his arm as they headed down the aisle. "Don't worry you look spectacular," he said

quietly to her. Harry held out the seat for Ginny as they took their seats. When everyone was sitting food appeared. "Did you bring extra film?"

"Of course I did! I knew I would need some," Ginny said as she held her hand out for the camera. Harry laughed as he handed her the camera. The other champions didn't mind in the least that their pictures were being taken, most of them asked for copies of them.

It wasn't long before dinner had finished. The Weird Sisters soon began to strike up music. Slowly all of the champions and their partners got to their feet. Harry led Ginny onto the dance floor, he did pull her a bit closer than was necessary.

"You're doing fine Harry," Ginny said as he swept her around the dance floor. Before long the dance began to really pick up.

Ginny was having a little too much fun with the camera. She got pictures of all the champions together. Harry and Hermione took a picture together as well. Viktor and Hermione took a nice one. Ginny and Viktor took one as well. The four of them had really begun to enjoy the night. It wasn't until later when Ginny pulled Harry out of the dancing. "What?"

"I need a break," she said quietly. Harry smiled and the two went to sit and talk to Percy for a while. Hermione came to sit beside them. "Having fun?"

"Loads of fun, Viktor went to get something to drink."

"You guys enjoying yourselves?" Ron asked.

"Lots," Ginny and Hermione said together.

Ron nodded. "So where is Krum?"

"He's getting punch."

Just then Viktor returned and handed Ginny and Hermione some punch. Harry thanked him as he handed over a glass.

"Come on Harry, lets go for a walk!" Ginny begged of him. With a defeated sigh the two headed out into the cold night air. Harry wrapped his cloak around her.

The moon glistened brightly down into the grounds and the stars were visible. Harry turned to look up at Ginny and his breath caught. She looked absolutely stunning. Ginny turned to look up at him smiling slightly. He lifted his hand to her cheek. "You look *beautiful*," he whispered to her. Her eyes seemed to darken and her smile grew slightly wider. Slowly he leaned down to kiss her softly. This didn't seem to satisfy Ginny as she pulled him closer to her.

He went willingly and kissed her. Her mouth was soft and he liked the feel of her lips against his. Ginny pulled back suddenly and looked at him. "We shouldn't do this," with that she dropped her arms. "You haven't even asked me to be your girlfriend."

Harry smiled and wrapped his arms around her waist, turning to lead her back into the castle. The two bypassed the ball, which was still in full swing and made their way back to the common room. "I'll be sure to see you tomorrow and you do look absolutely stunning." He gave her a long, sweet kiss goodnight. Ginny stood gazing up at him with a dreamy smile on her face. "Goodnight Ginny."

"Goodnight Harry."