

Finding Your Grace

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Submitted: July 6, 2006

Updated: July 6, 2006

Ron fanfic. after hermione breaks his heart, ron finds someone new to watch over and take care of. kinda of long, starts with a teaser chapter.

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Chapter 1 - (teaser) have you heard?

2

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"Anything from the trolley, dears?"

Ron jerked his head from the misty train window. He had been watching the dreary gray land past by as the Hogwarts Express sailed towards the castle.

"Harry," he asked, pulling some silver coins from his pocket. "What do you think Autumn would like?"

"Chocolate frogs." he answered without hesitation.

"Are you sure?" Ron was eyeing the octagon shaped boxes with suspicion.

"Yes. Just get her the bloody chocolate!" said Harry, turning back to his game of chess. His opponent was Neville Longbottom, a mousy haired boy with buck teeth. The summer had treated Neville well. Working at a apothecary greenhouse all summer, Neville had shed his extra pounds of baby fat. He was now enough of a muscle to even challenge Crabbe or Goyle.

"Your move," said Neville, politely. Harry went to move his knight to E7.

"I wouldn't do that, if I were you." tutted a blonde girl from behind a magazine.

"Thanks for the advice, Luna, but I can handle this." sighed Harry, bitterly.

"Check!" said Neville.

"Told you..." Luna Lovegood's butterbeer cap necklace jangled as she reached to tie the lace of her combat boot.

"How much longer, do you think?" asked Ron. He was pacing through the compartment. Three steps, turn, three steps to the window, stare moodily, and repeat.

" Not long." accessed Harry."Its almost dark. we should probably get our robes on."

"Firs years, over this way! Firs years, come 'ere!" boomed the deep voice of Hagrid the game keeper. " 'Arry! Ron!" he bellowed as he spotted the pair coming of the train. "That- er- friend o yours is somethin, ain't she? Been singing and dancin all over the castle the past couple o days, she has. She's come to visit me a couple of times, after Tonks introduced us. Quite the nice company, no?"

"Yeah. She's something else."

"Well, gotta get these boats across the lake before the bottom drops out! Drop by soon!" He said, waving his trash-bin sized hand at them as he turned towards the black lake.

"Hurry up, or we won't get a carriage!" shouted Luna as she and Neville darted past them.

Once the group was moving up towards the school in a black carriage, Neville voiced what everyone had been thinking, "I wonder what Autumn's been up to."

They pondered this in silence as the carriage jostled them back and forth. A moment later, they joined the sea of black cloaks moving through the oak doors of the entrance hall.

When they entered the Great Hall, everyone was running from table to table, friend to friend. A few people kept pointing excitedly toward the staff table.

"Oliver?" said Harry. Indeed, there sat Oliver Wood, former Quidditch captain of Gryffindor. Harry and Ron had attended school with him only a few years ago.

"You suppose he took over for Slughorn?"

"I dunno." said Ron absentmindedly. "Where is she?!" He craned his neck to see the far corners of the staff table.

"Well, if it isn't the destructive duo!" sneered a voice from behind. The boys turned to find themselves staring at the smug smile of Draco Malfoy. His greasy white-blond hair hung precariously over his right eye. He had grown as tall as Ron and as muscular as Harry. Considering the untimely fate met by one of his cronies, Goyle, this would probably come in handy.

"What happened to your eye, Drakey? Did that mean old Voldy poke it out with his ickle wand when you were a bad little slave?" mocked Harry.

"I think he's going for the pirateer look, Harry." Said Ginny as she linked arms with him.

"Yeah, nice earring, Drakey." Said Ron

"Well, can't say much, can you?" said Harry.

"Oh, I could spare you two idiots a few choice adjectives." But before things could get ugly, the first years trailed in behind Hagrid and everyone took their place at their House tables.

"So," said asked Seamus Finnagin as Harry and Ron took the seats across from him at the Gryffindor table. "You heard about the exchange student?"

Harry chimed in before Ron could start boasting. "Yeah, what'd you hear?"

"I heard she's a tiny Brazilian sprite that doesn't wear a shirt. You?"

"I- we, we heard that she's American."

"That s quite correct." Said a stately looking ghost as he popped his head in between Seamus and Pavarti Patil.

"Hello, Nick. Nice summer?" said Harry cordially. He nodded. "What have you heard?"

"Heard? I've met the darling. She's beautiful, but, hate to burst your bubble, Mr. Finnigan, fully clothed." Seamus cursed. "Why, did you know she's chosen Gryffindor as her host house? No doubt because of you, Mr. Weasley. She couldn't stop talking about you. You, too, Harry. Told her lots of funny stories. Quite charming, she is." He floated off without finishing the conversation.

"You've met her?" asked Seamus, indignant. "How is she?"

"Well-" started Ron. He was interrupted by Professor Dumbledore quieting everyone. Apparently, the sorting was over.

"Good evening, fine students. Of course, now is no time for a proper introduction, but in hopes of at least some food being digested, I would like to confirm that Hogwarts is indeed receiving some exchange students for this term. They are warming up, currently, for your post-feast entertainment. So, I personal suggest you eat quickly."

As platters of food appeared on the table in front of them, Ron looked at Harry. "*Some* exchange students? As in plural?" Harry just shrugged and kept on eating.

"Sorry I'm late." Panted Hermione. "Had some stuff to take care of."

"Are there more?" asked Ron, desperately.

"More what, Ron?"

"Exchange students!"

"Oh, yes. Two Australian boys. Fourth years, nothing to worry about." She smiled at Ron reassuringly.
"Pass the treacle tart, Harry."