

Harry Potter and the Sandy Crack Shack Sandy Crack Shack

June 12, 2005
St. Barthélemy
Eden Rock Hotel
Beach House Four

Angelina Weasley nee' Johnson sipped a mug of tea while watching the sun rise over the sea. She smiled as a pair of arms wrapped around her waist and pulled her backwards. She offered her neck to his kisses.

George Weasley had truly enjoyed his honeymoon.

"Our last day here," George Weasley said.

"The two weeks have gone by rather quickly." Angelina agreed.

"Do you still want to go down to that starkers beach today?"

"Why not?" She smiled naughtily. "It might be my last chance to see what a naked man who isn't a red head looks like."

"Oh really? Well I guess it would be my last chance to see birds with really big heaving baps."

"And why would you need to see those?" The newest Weasley wife asked dangerously.

"So that I could feel sorry for them, knowing that they would never be able to match your classic beauty."

"Hmm." Angelina said frostily, her inner voice overjoyed that he already knew better than to tell her the truth... Well trained already. Mum and Gran would be so proud of her.

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"I don't really see what the big deal is," George lied as a major part of his mind focused on two details, the first being that he probably shouldn't react to any of the abundant female flesh on display. This concern was aided by a little known fact about nude beaches, that being that 90 percent of those who get naked on the beach probably shouldn't from a purely aesthetic point of view. The second thing that his mind was focused on was that, as a rule, freckled redheads don't do all that well in the tropics and he was hoping against hope that he didn't end up sunburned on a particularly sensitive body part that hadn't been exposed to all that much sunlight in its existence...

"Told you so." Angelina smirked. She herself was relieved that so far her own body was one of the best on this stretch of the beach, and had been receiving a fair number of appreciative looks. She was also pleased with the way George's body compared to the other men on beach.

George discovered that problem number two was beginning to become the more important of his concerns. "We've got an hour to burn before we need to head for the airport, fancy a drink luv?" he asked his wife of a fortnight.

She regarded the establishment he indicated with a gimlet eye. "You just want to be able to tell people you had a drink at 'The Sandy Crack Shack'," she laughed. "Come on then, maybe we can steal a glass or two."

Somehow the Sandy Crack seemed larger on the inside that it had appeared to be from the outside. The interior was cool and dark. The bar was decorated in a faux-bamboo with bottles of every size and shape containing beverages of every color lined the wall behind it. Spreading their towels on the bar stools the married pair took their place at the bar and signaled the dreadlocked bar keeper that they would like to be served.

"And what can I get for you folks?" asked a voice seeped in the tones of the east end of London.

Angelina looked up at the dimly recognized voice. "Dean Thomas?"

The startled bar keep blinked as he recognized the pair. "Angelina? George?" A smile creased his face. "Small world init? All the bars in the world, you had to bring her into mine." Dean said with a bad Bogart impression. The impression soared over the heads of the two pure blood Weasleys.

"Damn Dean." George said, trying not to stare. Like his clientele, Dean was naked, except for a short bar apron, a bowtie and a pair of sleeveless

cuffs at each wrist. "Everyone thought you died. After the last battle, no one saw you again."

"Ah, I had to get out of Britain, you know? What with what the bastards did to my Mum and Sister... just too many memories," the dreadlocked wizard produced two tall iced glasses filled with fruit and a blood red liquid and placed them before the couple. "On the house. But you really should get out of here. This place is a tourist trap, designed to bleed you dry."

"We don't care about the money." George said. "It would be great to talk to you, we've got an hour before we've got to leave, can you take a break?"

"It's just me for now, until the kitchen opens at four," Dean said with a shrug.

"That's four hours." Angelina protested. "Four hours without a break?"

"Ah, what can I say?" Dean grinned again. "The boss is an ass."

"Who is he? Maybe we can talk to him."

"You're looking at him. Well, me and my partner" A bright smile lit up the man's face. "Excuse me a minute."

"Dean!" a pair of young women who were quite possibly identical twins called as they came up to the bar. "We leave tomorrow Dean, when do you get off?"

"I'm off at two Tina..." again the bright easy smile appeared on his face. "Far too late if you've got an early flight."

"We do," the other twin said with a pout. "What about Harry? Is he working tonight?"

"Harry?" Angelina asked. "Harry's here too?"

"Harry's working tonight as well Tia," Dean again offered his easy wide smile, "sorry."

"Well, hell," Tina said with a pout, "what are we going to do now?"

"Sorry love," Dean said while wiping the bar in front of the twins and placing a drink in front of each of them, "you'll have to make do with my world famous service. Be back in a few."

When the former Gryffindor returned to his old friends Angelina couldn't hold back any longer.

"You said Harry? Harry's here?"

"Well..." Dean hesitated and then continued in a hushed tone. "Yes he is. He's my partner."

"What?" George asked incredulously. "The two of you just up and moved here? Why didn't you tell anyone that you were still alive? We mourned you with all the others who just disappeared."

"We didn't really have a choice," the former East Ender said quietly. "After Harry finished Voldemort, he heard me moaning from where I fell after old man Malfoy almost killed me. Harry crawled over to me and kept me alive until our magic could pull us back together." His eyes lost focus as his mind returned to that horrible night. "Harry and I were the only two still alive where Voldemort fell you know? The two of us just laid under a tree staring at each other. All busted up and hardly able to move, I think the two of us talked more while we were waiting to die than we did the whole time we were at Hogwarts."

"It took two days for us to find what was left of You Know Who," Angelina said. "So many people were hurt, George didn't wake up for a week, and we lost Freddie..."

"The morning after the fight we woke up still under the tree, still the only living things around. Harry just looked at me and said, 'I've got to get out of here, I can't take it any more. It's going to be worse than it ever was.'" Dean paused and pulled a bottle of water from beneath the bar. He took a long drink and began speaking again. "I needed to get away as well... What they did to my mum and sister... For lack of better options, Harry and I came here to my uncle's home. Uncle Nestor put us up and watched as we spent our time getting drunk pretty much all the time. We had been here three months when it dawned on us that my whole family thought we were a couple."

George smiled for a moment at that thought, but then his expression dimmed. "Why didn't you let us know?"

"Let you know what?" Dean asked. "That Harry was still alive, so that people could come and start all the crap he wanted to get away with? There is no one in Magical Britain who would have given a single solitary fuck that I was still alive. Look, I've got customers to take care of, Harry and I just want to be left alone. It's been seven years now, it's been great seeing you and all, but please, leave Harry Potter dead. If you believe you owe him anything, owe him that."

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It took an hour.

Well, a seven hour flight, an hour retrieving their luggage from the airline's clutches, a few seconds to apparate home, and an hour.

One hour after George and Angelina returned to the apartment over Weasley Wizarding Wheezes, Angelina found herself standing in front of their hearth with a pinch of floo powder between her forefinger and thumb.

She knelt down in front of the fire, tossed the powder into the flames and spoke with an firm voice, "The Grange."

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July 31, 2005
St. Barthélemy
The Sandy Crack Shack

Harry opened the door to the 'Shack and took a deep breath, enjoying the taste of the morning surf on the air. Sundays were usually fairly quiet, what with how many vacationers ended their stays on Sundays. The Airport would be full, but the 'Shack would probably be quiet.

Which was likely a good thing, given that Dean had hooked up with those three girls last night at closing time. Harry shook his head and smiled. Dean sometimes bit off more than he could chew, and tended to be a bit late for his shift after adventures like that. Harry had been unsurprised by the call this morning when his partner begged him to open for him.

Returning to his place behind the bar Harry asked himself the question he had asked himself every day since Dean had served George and Angelina a drink. Would this be the day? Would they be coming for him today?

A shadow appeared in the doorway. Harry looked up and identified the silhouette of the person in the doorway in a split second even after all this time. It was the hair. Yes, today would in fact be the day.

"Come on in Hermione," he called. "The kitchen isn't open, so I can't offer you any breakfast, but I'll see what I can find for you, take a seat while I finish getting the bar organized." He set himself to his morning task of cutting up the fruit that would be needed for the various tourist favorites that were the bread and butter of the 'Shack.

"Why?" she asked.

Harry looked up, she was still silhouetted in the door way, though it was clear by the outlines of her body that she had stripped down to come on the nude beach. "Why what?"

"Why did you abandon us?"

"I didn't think of it as abandoning all of you," Harry shrugged. "I saw it as saving myself. Are you coming in or are we going to shout at each other across the room all day?"

The woman huffed and put her fists on her hips. Then suddenly she seemed startled and turned slightly to the left and crossed her arms over her breasts. Harry fought against the smile that wanted to appear at the sight of his old friend suddenly remembering that she was in fact naked. So much for the rumors that the Granger family were naturalists. Hermione made her way to the bar and stopped directly in front of Harry, while eyeing the vinyl of the bar stool suspiciously.

"Here," Harry said handing her one of the towels that Dean stocked behind the bar for precisely this purpose. They cost the bar about twenty five francs each, even when emblazoned with the bar's logo and the words 'Stolen From' printed on them. They went through about 50 a week, the cost easily defrayed by the outrageous tourist prices the 'Shack charged, and both Harry and Dean considered it to be excellent advertising.

Hermione accepted the towel without words, then laid it over the bar stool and perched delicately upon it.

"So," Harry said after she had settled and crossed her arms over her breasts again, but not before he had gotten a good look, "how have you been?"

That earned him a glare. "Suddenly you care?"

"Just making conversation," Harry explained. "After all, you came to me. Fancy a sangaree?"

"It's 9 am."

"And we're in a bar on a nude beach, and neither of us are dressed." Harry pointed out. "While being naked is part of the job for me, but I'm thinking not so much for you. Besides, it's like three in the afternoon for you and your body clock."

Harry slid the tall frosted glass full of fruit and a dark red liquid in front of his old friend. Hermione stared at the glass for a moment, and then reached out and lifted the glass to her lips.

"Thank you, this is good. Reminds me of sangria."

"More or less the same thing," Harry shrugged.

"Really? I didn't know that." she took another pull on the drink, obviously stalling while she thought up her argument.

"So, did you really come all this way to yell at me?"

"You abandoned us!" she responded.

"I suppose that you could look at it that way," Harry said returning to his morning prep. "Or, you could look at it like a sane person and note that I did what I was prophesied to do, and that after Tommy Riddle assumed the consistency of a bad sea food bisque, my job was done, and as an adult I could go anywhere I wanted without checking out with anyone."

"Harry, you had responsibilities."

Harry sighed. "Have you got any idea what happened to me last Halloween?"

Hermione blinked at the change of subject. "No."

"Nothing. No one tried to kill me or any of my friends, no one threw a huge party celebrating my parent's deaths. It was wonderful. I had Halloweens like that in 2004 and 2003 too. In 2002 Dean and I threw a party at an orphanage. No celebration of my parent's murder then either, and murder attempts on my person were noticeable in their absence. No one has done anything to me on Halloween since I left Britain. Odd, don't you think? A person more paranoid than me might make an association there."

"That is hardly the point," Hermione huffed.

"And you know, I haven't had a single slanderous newspaper article written about me since Dean and I got here, though his aunt and uncle did think we were gay there for a while, but even then, not a word in the papers about it. No politicians coming around trying to get me to endorse any position they might have, no trials on trumped up charges, I haven't been attacked by any dementors or other demons, no obnoxious centaurs have been descending to me and, perhaps oddest of all, I haven't had a single old man lie to me about how what he was doing was for the Greater Good."

"Harry, it wasn't all like that!"

"No giants, no trolls, no beetle animagi, no weres. There is a Merfolk colony out in the bay, but they tend to keep to themselves. In short, I have a nice quiet life."

"You didn't have to just disappear, you could have told us you were leaving. You could have spoken with me," the brunette said, tears forming in her eyes.

"Hermione," Harry sighed. "You quit listening to me months before I left."

"What are you talking about?"

"Do you remember our last conversation, the night before the big fight?"

"Of course I do, I remember everything we ever talked about," she huffed with finality.

"Oh? What was the last thing we discussed?"

"What?" she asked distractedly before he eyes went dull the way they did whenever Hermione dug deep for a memory. "We were worried about Ron, and we decided that we would meet up at the Burrow after the battle so that we could all be together while we healed."

"No," Harry said shaking his head, "you decided that. I told you more than once that I had no intention of going to the Burrow, you said I was being silly and that seeing Ginny would put my mind at ease. I told you that whatever I felt for Ginny was long gone and over, and that she understood. You said that once I was 'home' I would change my mind."

"I only wanted what was best for you Harry,"

Harry reached out and took her hand. "I know that Hermione. I truly believe that you wanted what you thought was best for me. But you never really considered what I thought was best for me. I think you got too used to guiding me through school, and you thought that you had to guide me through life as well."

"That's why you left? Because I was trying to control you?"

"I left because other people had been controlling me all my life, and I thought that it might as well be my turn," Harry pulled out a bar towel and began wiping down the top of the bar. "I think I've done alright. So, where's Ron? Couldn't you get him to strip down?"

"As far as I know, Ron's probably in Diagon now, finishing his shift at George's shop, I doubt he even knows you're alive, George hasn't said a word. It was Angelina that told me," she said her eyes focusing on her drink. "We aren't together. We were going to get married, but without you being there, we discovered that we didn't really have all that much in common..."

"Oh," Harry said nodding. "You're welcome then."

"Excuse me?" Hermione asked acidly.

"Come on Hermione, you know exactly what I meant. If I was what was holding the two of you together, then I did you the biggest favor of your life by leaving. Imagine if I had stayed and it took you a couple of years to realize that you had made a mistake. What if you had kids before you figured out you didn't love Ron?"

"They were going to be named Hugo and Rose," Hermione murmured.

"Yeah," Harry said while privately shuddering at the thought of the abuse a little boy named 'Hugo' might receive on the playground.

Hermione shook herself, as if forcing herself to think of something, anything else than what might have been with Ron Weasley. "So, why here? Why did you open your business on a nude beach?"

"Why not here?" Harry laughed. "We came to St. Barts because Dean had family here. We bought the 'Shack because it was for sale and frankly, we didn't think any British Wizard or Witch would ever set foot here. I guess we really should have taken George into account."

"So this is your life now? An endless parade of young girls through your bar and your bed?"

"I don't know if I would characterize the women in my life as an 'endless parade' but I'm happy," Harry looked up from the beer tap he had finished reassembling before moving on to the next. "Is that wrong somehow?"

"Ginny is still single," Hermione suggested hopefully.

"Hermione," Harry sighed, "you weren't listening to me in '98 and you're not listening to me now. Ginny and I dated for three weeks when I was sixteen. That's it. I didn't form any deep undying love for her in those three weeks, at most I was head over heels in love with her.. She was hot, she was interested in me, and she was willing. I was sixteen."

"You only broke up with Ginny to protect her," Hermione protested.

"At first, sure," Harry admitted. "Noble little shit that I was. Then it was back to the Dursleys and reality slowly sunk in. By the time you all came and got me I have moved on from Gin, and was crushing on an entirely different girl."

"What?" Hermione asked in surprise, forgetting for the moment that she was naked in front of her old friend, giving Harry an unobstructed view of her breasts for the first time. "You never said anything."

"I said plenty Hermione," Harry said shaking his head. "Like I said before, you weren't listening to me any longer."

"The three of us were together almost every second from your birthday until the day before you killed Voldemort in June of 1998, are you trying to tell me that you had some secret romance going on that whole time and neither Ron or I noticed?"

"I never said anything about a romance secret or otherwise," Harry said with a grin. "What I had going on was a one sided lust filled obsession. She never knew."

"Tonks? Oh, I'm so sorry Harry, I never even imagined..."

"Tonks?" Harry echoed. "Good lord no. I think that minx would have hurt me. I mean I caught sight of her going through her exercises one morning, I was never that flexible on the best day of my life."

"Then who?" Hermione demanded. "Who was it you left us all over."

"I did not leave over any woman... well Maybe Molly Weasley, but only because I knew she would smother me if she got me in her clutches and I was terrified that I would never escape. I left for me, not for any other reason."

"Who was she?" Hermione demanded again.

"You."

Harry was treated to several seconds of silence as Hermione's mouth worked without making a sound. She finally composed herself.

"Me?"

"Yep," Harry nodded as he started wiping down his glassware. "You have a fantastic arse and smashing baps back then," He leered at her with an evil grin, "and not too shabby now."

The realization that she had her breasts on display caused her to once again cross her arms over her assets. "But you never said anything."

"Oh come on Hermione," Harry said as he leaned forward on the bar. "What was I supposed to say? 'Oh, hey Hermione, I know that you're busy trying to do a topographical survey of Ron's tonsils with your tongue, but if you've got a few minutes would you mind terribly fucking my brains out?' What kind of ass do you think I was?"

"But..."

"You were dating Ron. I'd have cut my own arm off before I came between the two of you..." Harry smiled and took a long drink from a water bottle. "It was a long time ago, and I'm over it. I mean how many people really end up with their school crushes?"

"You left because of me..." Hermione said plaintively.

"And Snape said I was arrogant," Harry sighed. "No Hermione, I didn't leave because of you. Had you shown me the slightest bit of interest I'd have been all over you, and I'd have done my best to talk you into disappearing with me, but I decided I was going to leave Britain fifth year when the

papers were calling me a liar and the Ministry tried to kill me in between bouts of torture. The only reason I stayed as long as I did was the fact that I knew that if I ran Tom would follow me."

"Would you come back for me now?"

"Hermione, it's been seven years, I don't really even know you any more. I'm never going back to Britain. If you go back and tell everyone where I am, if people start showing up wanting something from me, demanding something from me, I'll just disappear again. I've had seven years to make my plans, and if I decide to disappear, no one will ever accidentally cross my path again, and anyone looking for me will be either very disappointed or might never be seen again if they're better for looking than I am at hiding. I am the man who killed Voldemort after all, I know some nasty stuff."

"So that's it then? You're not coming back?" she asked.

"So that's it then," Harry echoed with finality. "I'm never going back. What would I go back for Hermione? Outside of the few friends I made at Hogwarts, what is there for me there? Here I have a life a business, and yes, friends. I'm not saying that I don't want to see you whenever you'd like to visit, or if Ron or Neville, or George or hell, anyone from the DA wants to come out, I'd love to see them, but I'm done being Dumbledore's puppet or the Ministry's bitch."

"You don't mind that I came to see you?" Hermione asked in a very small voice.

"Of course I don't," Harry laughed.

"Oh Harry!" she sobbed, her voice full of more emotion than Harry could ever remember her using. She rushed around the bar and wrapped him in one of the hugs he remembered so well, only this time very very little cloth separated the two of them. "I've missed you so much!"

"I've missed you too Hermione, you bossy girl." He said returning the hug, his hands rubbing circles into her back until she stopped crying. "Better?"

"Better," she nodded against his chest, not meeting his eyes. "I'd kind of forgotten that I wasn't wearing anything."

"I figured. It's a bonus for me though," Harry teased.

"So," she looked up into his eyes. "What's a girl got to do to see you without that silly little apron?"

"Buy me lunch. I may be easy, but I'm not cheap."

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