

“What’s it like?” Harry’s question was barely louder than a whisper, and he couldn’t bring himself to elaborate. Luckily, George seemed to get what he meant.

“I’d imagine it’s about the same as being in love with a girl,” he said slowly. “I’ve not been with many guys. If you want to talk logistics, that’s a very different conversation.” Harry shook his head quickly, feeling like he was going to burst from all the blood rushing to his cheeks, and George snorted. “Maybe after you’ve read the book. But without getting all mushy on you, being able to be honest about it, being *myself*... it’s like finally putting on shoes that actually fit, after ages of wearing three sizes too small.”

Harry knew what that felt like, quite literally. His whole body *ached* with the need to feel that way. Was it really just that simple? “Hey, George,” he said tentatively.

“Yeah?”

“Thanks for the book. I think it’ll be really informative.” He sounded like he was thanking him for a book about Herbology!

“You’re welcome, Harry.”

*Come on, Potter*, he told himself. *Gryffindor courage*. “And... George?”

“Yeah, Harry?”

“I... I like boys. I’m gay.”

There. He’d done it. George’s eyes went wide. Harry realised his hands were trembling.

“First time you’ve said that out loud, innit?”

Harry nodded, wondering why his heart felt like it was about to hammer right through his ribcage. It was just two little words! George quickly moved across the gap, sitting beside Harry, and drew him into a tight hug. “I’m proud of you, kid,” he murmured. “It’s gonna be alright, you’ll see.” George held him for a long moment. Harry focused on remembering to breathe. “You’ve got loads of people on your side, whether you choose to tell people or not. Because you don’t have to, if you don’t want to. I won’t even tell Fred.”

“No, it’s okay,” Harry assured. “I don’t mind family knowing. I just... don’t want the whole world to know, yet.” As much as he liked to pretend it wouldn’t be a big deal, he knew better. He was Harry Potter. He couldn’t sneeze without making the front page of the *Prophet*.

“Don’t blame you, mate.” George had his chin propped on Harry’s head, and he pat him on the back gently. “I’m gonna let go now. That alright?” Harry nodded, and they separated, George offering him a grin. “Thanks for trusting me, Harry.”

“It’d be dumb not to when you’d already figured it out,” Harry pointed out.

“I didn’t know for sure,” George insisted. “I just... had a feeling. And regardless, even if you weren’t gay, it’s good to offer all sorts of information. The spells in that book should be taught alongside the usual contraception charms. Well, maybe not *all* of them,” he added,