For the first time the whole year, Harry wasn't the first one in the dorm waking up. Not that he'd been there nearly as often as the others to know for sure. Still, it wasn't entirely surprising, because it didn't matter how old Ron got, his excitement for Christmas never wavered.

So, Harry was abruptly woken by the curtains of his bed being thrown open. Ron was smiling like a kid at the candy store as he nudged him awake, "Come on, Harry... presents!" He was rather insistent about the whole thing.

"Alright... alright, I'm up!" Stretching, Harry noticed that the rest of his dormmates hadn't been spared from his enthusiasm either. From the obvious grumbling coming from behind more than one curtain, the rest of them were in no particular hurry to get themselves out of bed. Bouncing to his feet, Harry followed Ron down to the Common Room.

It was beautifully decorated, as was the rest of the school, for the holiday. The tree just brushed the top of the ceiling, it had garland, tinsel, and big bauble ornaments in gold and scarlet. Beneath it were dozens of presents, far more than he'd ever seen before. Suppose that's what happens when damn near the whole house sticks around for the holiday.

Ron pounded down the stairs, loud enough that he wouldn't be surprised if it echoed all the way over to the Ravenclaw Tower. When he made it down, he came up short because there was someone waiting on the couch already, "Oh... morning, Gin."

The youngest Weasley was sitting on the couch reading a magazine. Placing it down on the couch, she looked up at her brother and gave him a smile, "Morning Ron, Happy Christmas!" They shared a brief hug before he was over to the tree.

Ginny didn't mind because she was far too happy to see Harry standing behind him. Getting up, she came over and gave him a hug, and a kiss on the cheek for good measure, "Happy Christmas!" Ron took just enough time away from his present sorting to pretend to gag at the little display.

When he wasn't looking, Harry reached down and gave a little spank to her pajama-covered bum, "Happy Christmas..." Ginny threw him a little wink before she turned away, and, innocently he was sure, she brushed her hip against his crotch as she did it. *Never misses an opportunity to tease*. It earned her a quick pinch of her bum as she took his hand and pulled him back to the couch with her.

Fortunately, there wasn't much sorting that needed to be done. The house elves had kept everything nicely organized in a neat little pile for each Gryffindor. Obviously, some piles were bigger than others, but no one in their house was going without. From the looks of things, they were the first ones down there. Ron raised an eyebrow when he noticed Harry's and Ginny's, it was decidedly smaller than one might expect, but there was simple explanation for that. A good number of his gifts were waiting for him under a different tree a few floors down.

As Ron made to open the first of his gifts, his sister stopped him dead in his tracks, "You know... it might be best to wait for your girlfriend before you start doing that."

He looked torn and just stared at her for a long moment before placing down the first of his presents with a pout. Harry snorted out a laugh as he sulked on the ground while they waited for his girlfriend.

Taking pity on her brother, Ginny went up to the fourth-year girls' dorm to retrieve Parvati and save them from having to suffer his grumpiness. Unsurprisingly, she brought down a rather bedraggled looking group of three witches, Hermione and Lavender were with her too.

Ginny returned to his side, and nestled into the crook of his arm, "Gotta say, the shocking amount of energy really is one of the best things about our little circumstance... because with the exception of Hermione, they really aren't morning people, and even she looks seems a bit put out."

Harry couldn't agree more. The extra time he had each day, seemingly without any real draw back, had been incredibly beneficial.

Parvati went over to her boyfriend, and he asked rather dumbly, "What's wrong?"

The girl huffed, and crossed her arms, "Woulda been nice to get a bit more beauty sleep ... with the Ball, you know?"

"But you always look beautiful," Ron accidentally stumbled into saying the right thing for once, instead of putting his foot in his mouth, "And you can always take a nap before you have to get ready tonight. I mean... presents!" Even though she tried to remain impassive, she couldn't help but smile at his enthusiasm.

Without any further complaint, they got down to it, tearing open the first of their presents. There was the customary jumper from Mrs. Weasley. Hermione and Parvati got some lovely scarves from her. He was unsurprised to find that Hermione had gotten him a book. She never ceased to care about his education. It was thoughtful, and because he knew her so well, he'd gotten her something similar.

His bookish friend was staring at the cover when he turned to thank her, "Harry, where'd you even get this?"

"From the Black Family Library... with some help from Sirius, of course." It was a rather esoteric book on the history of the Sacred Twenty -Eight.

"Thanks..." She'd barely even finished saying it before she cracked the book open and started reading it.

"You too," he said with a rueful smile and got back to his pile. "Might want to open the rest of your presents before you get into it though." Hermione begrudgingly agreed and put the book down and hurried through the rest of her pile. She probably won't be much use to anyone until she needs to get ready for the Ball.

There were chocolates from his quidditch teammates, some rather dodgy looking things from the twins that he would have to check before he went near them, a Chudley Cannons poster from Ron, a butterbeer cork necklace from Luna that he put around his neck without a second thought, and then...

"What're those?" Ron asked him, staring at the packet of prophylactic that he'd opened from Sirius. There was a note inside that read. For just in case, you forget the charm. Wouldn't want any Potter sprogs running around so soon, now, would we? I'm much too young to be a grand-godfather.

"The last present ever given to me by a dead man." Harry said in a complete deadpan. Jokes really on him though, because I don't even need the charm thanks to Anya and Orina. Hermione and Lavender,

the only other non-purebloods down there at the moment, snickered as he took out his wand and banished them without a second thought.

"Gag present from Sirius?" Ginny was none the wiser to what they really were than Ron, but she knew enough about his godfather to know that it was likely some sort of prank.

"Yep. He just can't seem to help himself." The genuine gift was a set of cufflinks meant for the Yule Ball that night. According to his godfather's note, they'd been worn by James, and many other Potters for centuries. Given the propensity of his family to be sorted into Gryffindor, it wasn't any surprise to see that they were intricately designed, golden lion's heads.

"Bloody hell, Harry!" Ron was holding a pair of tickets to the opening game for the next season of the Chudley Cannons. He didn't even get a chance to say anything before he was pulled into a massive hug.

While he didn't have any interest in watching the much-maligned team, Ron was incredibly loyal to them and the new season would start in the summer so he'd be able to make it to the game, "Parv, would you wanna go with?" Harry would bet that the Indian witch had pretty much no interest in it, but she was happy that he was excited and agreed straight away.

As Ron waxed poetic about how fun it was going to be, Lavender surprised Harry by asking, "Did you not get anything for Ginny?"

Hermione looked up to quirk an eyebrow at that. He really hadn't been expecting Lavender of all people to notice, but responded easily, "Of course, I did. Just want to give to her later is all." While that was plenty explanation for Lavender, Hermione furrowed her brow before her interest in her new book won out and she looked away.

For the time being, at least for Harry and Ginny, they finished with the presents. Discarded wrapping paper was crumpled up and disappeared when no one was really paying attention. *It's amazing how subtle those house elves can be.* Considering it was still early, much too early if you were to ask some people, no one was hungry enough, except maybe Ron, to go down for breakfast yet.

It didn't take too long for the rest of the house to start making their way down, from first year to seventh. Some people did their unwrapping there in the common room while others went in groups up to the dorms to do it. The commotion of everything gave Harry and Ginny the perfect opportunity to sneak out.

They made their way down the enchanted staircase to a room that had become as common to him as the actual common room. They went inside and were met with some mouthwatering smells. Orina was bustling around the small kitchen whistling away to the Christmas music playing over the radio. And she looked damn cute doing it too, if you were to ask Harry. She was wearing an outlandish green and red apron and had a little bit of flour splashed across her cheek.

Despite being hard at work, she was the first one to notice their arrival, "Merry Christmas!" She came over and planted a firm kiss on his lips before doing the same to Ginny, they both grinned a little goofily at that as she ushered them in, "Come, come, there is tea, and coffee, and some hot coco too." She was looking at them eagerly waiting for them to tell her what they wanted.

"Tea for me," Harry told her, just taken by her infectious joy.

"Coco," Ginny replied.

"Perfect, now go, sit," With that she turned and glided back to the kitchen, though not before giving a little wiggle of her hips, "Ve just need to vait for others and ve can get started."

They were greeted by hugs and kisses from Anya, "She is force of nature, no?"

"She's wonderful." Harry said fondly.

"Vell of course, she is." Anya agreed as she pulled them into their comfy living room, "But she loves Christmas, gives her excuse to bake things she never does rest of year, and it just makes her so happy she can't keep it in."

They weren't the first ones there. Daphne was burrowed into the corner of the couch and let him come to her to get her kiss, "She's not wonderful, she's torturing me. That's the only way to describe it, pure torture." It was clear that she was just being dramatic, which wasn't surprising.

Sue snorted, "If this is torture, then sign me up for it every day of the week. Merlin, the smells... I don't know if I can think of anything better." she gave a delighted little hum in the back of her throat.

Padma of all people gave him lascivious smile, "I don't know I can thing of something better." Harry winked back at her and leaned in to give both girls a kiss.

"Alright, fair," Daphne conceded, "But it's a close second." She grunted as Ginny sat down in her lap without a second thought, "Well, hello to you too."

Ginny gave her an unrepentant smile, "Sorry, you looked like the best seat in the house. Plus, I'm happy to distract you from the torture you're going through." Daphne blushed as Ginny started playing with the hem of her silk shirt but didn't have any complaints about it.

Carrying a pot of tea, and coco, Anya dropped them on the table and gave Daphne a look, "You know, if you keep complaining, I might just give you none." They all knew she didn't really mean it, but between that threat and Ginny's teasing fingertips, there were no more complaints from her.

Harry ended up sitting on the floor between Anya's legs with her soft fingers running along his scalp and a cup of warm tea between his hands. It felt wonderful, and utterly heartwarming. Orina bent over to get her Christmas treat out of the oven at the same time as the door opened again. Both Susan and Fleur came in giggling about something, they were treated to the same enthusiastic greeting as the rest of them before they joined them by the tree.

Lost in a world of his own, it would be fair to think that it was him and not his godfather who was a dog animagus, since he was enjoying the attentions to his head so much. But he knew there were more important things, at least for the moment. He had two beautiful ladies that needed hugs and kisses, so it was a sacrifice he was willing to make. Quite understandably, Fleur was the only one not in pajamas. I wouldn't want to make the trek up from the carriage in them either.

"Did it take you so long because the house of teamwork and cooperation needed to do all of their gift-giving together?" Harry teased Susan as he gave her a kiss.

From the way she blushed, he had a feeling that he was right on the mark, "It's tradition apparently. I've just never been here for it. You'd think they would've made an exception given the circumstances."

Fleur giggled, and happily leant into him for a kiss of her own, "Seems to me she's just on time. Because I certainly didn't arrive late." The two girls sat on the couch between Anya and Daphne.

"Of course not," Harry smiled against her lips.

Anya joined them then, carrying something he'd never seen before. She placed it down on the table and started cutting it, "This is tikvenik, Bulgarian pumpkin strudel. Normally, ve have it for dessert but, I thought, since ve'll all be busy tonight, vhy not break rules and have it for breakfast." She handed the first piece to Harry.

"You won't hear any complaints from us. It smells bloody divine, so I don't care when you're supposed to eat it." Daphne was reaching out eagerly for her plate, and Anya was happy to give her the next one. Harry took a bite and was instantly reminded how talented his lover was in the kitchen. Perfectly spiced and crispy, it was fantastic.

Very little talking happened as they all devoured the treat, but Orina didn't stop to enjoy her own creation. Instead, she started passing out presents to everyone. None of the piles were particularly big, more than one of them had worked on gifts together for each other.

When they were done with the strudel. Ginny finally got up from her comfy Slytherin seat, and they all tore into their presents at once. Harry found himself more interested in seeing the girl's reaction to his presents for them than opening his own.

Padma was absolutely thrilled with the professional engraving set he'd gotten her, "You know I probably won't need to buy another one for the rest of my life now, right?"

"Well, there'll some things that'll wear out, I'm sure." She just shook her head in disbelief, but with a pleased smile on her lips. And she wasn't the only one pleased with his presents. All the girls seemed to realize how much he wanted to see their reactions, and by unspoken agreement, opened his in turn.

To Daphne, he gifted several rare potions ingredients as well as the seedlings to go along with them. None of them were, generally cultivated in the United Kingdom. Since he knew that she had every intention of taking over her family's apothecary someday, he thought why just buy the ingredients themselves when he could give her them for a lifetime.

As she looked them over in awe, he couldn't help but add, "And I know that they're difficult to raise here for a reason, but I talked to Professor Sprout, and she said she had some ideas that you could test in the greenhouses here, and I'm sure Neville would be happy to help, too."

Daphne grinned, touched by just how thoughtful he'd been, "Of course, you did. I'll make sure to ask her what she thinks."

There was a shocked gasp as Sue opened her present from him, "How'd you even know?"

"You let it slip, once or twice." To her, he'd given a set of four Damascus steel daggers. The grey steel rippled like water in the multi-colored lights coming from the Christmas tree.

Sue had never talked about it in any great detail, but she'd had some hand-to-hand training in her life. On occasion, it would be obvious in their own duels, just from the way she would move. And considering how much she enjoyed dueling, it wasn't any surprise to him that she would extend that to other things as well.

The way she was able to spin the blade between her fingers was incredibly impressive. Satisfied with the weight of them, she absolutely beamed at him, "They're perfect, thank you." He couldn't help but notice that she glanced at his own pile with a hint of nervousness though.

Orina fanned through the leather-bound pages of his gift to her a bit confused, "I don't understand." Because on the front it said quite clearly, *Orina's Delicious Treats!* But every page was blank.

"Oh, sorry, let me explain." He probably should have put instructions in that one, but he'd forgotten, "I want you to think of your recipe for tikvenik and open to the very first page." Doing just that, a second later it was filled with step-by-step instructions to the recipe complete with a lovely little picture on the next page.

It'd taken a great deal of charms work, some of it aided by Professor Flitwick to get it right, "It'll do that with any of your recipes, even if you don't remember it perfectly, and it'll never run out of space." She bounced with excitement, as she turned the page and started filling the book with more and more recipes.

And just like that, it was on to the next one, "You've been talking to Hannah, haven't you?" Susan wasn't remotely upset by that fact as she idly played with an ornately crafted piece of ivory. Sitting on her lap was a masterfully crafted set of wizard's chess that could be shrunk if you planned on transporting it.

"She said you loved to play." Knowing how much she was interested in being a medi-witch, that was his first thought when it came to getting her present, but nothing seemed quite right. So, he'd gone looking for a different interest for inspiration.

"I do... used to play with Hannah all the time until she got tired of getting beat." She gave him a cheeky smile.

"And me." Daphne piped in, nudging her redheaded friend.

"Yes, and Daphne. In fact, she got tired of it first." The blonde nodded her head in complete agreement.

"Well, I'm more than used to that with Ron." Harry never minded his friend's superiority in the game, so he knew he wouldn't mind it with Susan either, "So, if you're ever looking for someone to play against."

"Same here." Ginny volunteered. She and Bill were the only two of the Weasley siblings that would still agree if their youngest brother offered a game.

"I think I might just take you both up on that."

Of all the girls, Ginny was probably the one who had the strongest inkling of just what he'd gotten her. The package was long and rectangular. She tore the paper off and inside was a polished black box with a latch on the front. Popping it open, she just ran her hand along the smooth wood of her very own Firebolt, with her name engraved in gold onto the handle.

He could see that she was torn to some degree, "Harry... I love it, but..."

"But nothing," he cut her off before she could get going, "You're as good as anyone I know, and you deserve a broom of your own. Can't blame me if I wanted to get you the best." He meant it. She shouldn't have to sneak around to fly her brother's old brooms.

He also knew part of her worry was because there was no way that she could give him something of similar value. As though that matters. But in his mind, this wasn't a tit for tat relationship. Any of the girls could get him nothing, and he wouldn't be upset. They made his life better, every day, and he knew that was worth more than any present.

"Just say thank you." Sue told her, not really frustrated, but just pragmatic, "You're chuffed with it. He's happy to see you happy. What is there to be upset about?"

Ginny huffed, "It just seems like too much!"

"He loves us, so nothing seems like too much to him." Padma rubbed her arm, "And it's not as though you're going to take it for granted."

"Never." The redhead said firmly, affronted by the very idea. Padma just gave her a look, and her shoulders sagged in defeat. Conceding didn't come easy to her, but she didn't mind doing it for them it would seem. She gave him the sweetest smile, and said, "Thank you, so much! I really do love it!"

"And I'm going to love watching you fly circles around everyone else."

"It's inevitable now. Gryffindor is going to win every bloody cup until we graduate." Daphne bemoaned, much to everyone else's amusement. Susan didn't look any happier about it.

"That was going to be the case either way." Ginny teased her.

Fleur gasped as she revealed the book that he'd gotten her. L'art de la Fabrication de Sorts by Pernelle Flamel. While Nicholas was famous for his creation of the Philosopher's Stone, Pernelle deserved a great deal of praise in her own right for her spell-crafting. His French witch adored charms, that much he knew, but in talking with Chloe, he learned that she had toyed with the idea of going into spell-crafting after graduation, "'Ow in the world did you get zis?"

"Sometimes, it's a very good thing to know Albus Dumbledore." Harry didn't mention that Pernelle had been happy to give him the book after his involvement in keeping her husband's creation safe, and it'd only been at the headmaster's recommendation that he contacted the centuries old witch.

Fleur was sat in the middle of the couch, and it put her in the perfect position to lean down and press her lips against the nape of his neck and whispered to him, "Zank you it is... amazing. I promise you. I'll treasure it."

That just left Anya, who turned an accusing eye toward her best friend when she opened hers, "Traitor."

"He asked, and I answered." Orina said with a little smirk. Sitting in front of his first lover was a complete art set. There were brushes, paints, colored pencils, watercolors and everything else he could find that he thought she might need.

"Do you not like it?" Harry asked, concerned, "If not, I can return it and..."

"No," she ran her fingers through his hair soothingly. For the first time since he'd met her, she looked shy, "I love it. I just... don't think I'm very good. Seems vaste to spend so much on it."

"Do you enjoy it?" She gave him a little smile and nodded her head, "Then it's not a waste."

"Besides, she's wrong." Orina interjected, "She's fantastic... and much to hard on herself." Anya poked her tongue out but laughed along with everyone else. He gave each of them one more present, though these were slightly less personalized... well somewhat. Each of them received a necklace complete with their birthstones in it.

It was only then that Harry started opening his own presents. The first was a mirror, and he couldn't help but notice that all the girls had one as well. Excited, Ginny started to explain, "So, I got this idea from Sirius after talking to him over the summer. Apparently, him, your dad, and Remus would use enchanted mirrors to communicate with one another." Harry knew that, but the rest of the girls didn't, "And as great as it is that we're all in the same place now, that won't necessarily always be the case. So, I thought we should do something about it."

The mirrors were framed in rosewood that looked beautifully carved and etched with runes in the side. Just looking at them he could guess that this had been a joint effort and he was right, "Padma helped me with the rune work and Fleur, and I worked together on the charms."

"More zan one of zem blew up when we tried to work in ze Impervious Charm." The French witch added with a little smirk.

"That was definitely the hardest bit to work out." Padma agreed.

Ginny chuckled, "Yeah, ruined a whole batch of them because of that. So, all you have to do is say one of our names into the mirror. Oh, and we can even do a group call, too!" It was equal parts practical and thoughtful, and all three of the girls were obviously very proud of the achievement and rightfully so. It sounded like they were an improvement on the ones that his godfather had used.

"Brilliant." Harry told the three of them.

The next gift he opened was from Susan and Daphne, and he really wasn't sure what he was looking at. It was a potion of some sort and a pair of glasses, not dissimilar from his own. They were both quick to explain, with Daphne going first, "So we all think you look great in your glasses. No doubt about that." There were nods of agreement from the others, "But they can be a bit of hinderance, especially with your knack for getting yourself into trouble."

That's fair. Honestly, it's a miracle that they didn't fall off during the first task. "So..."

"So... I brewed a Vision-Correcting Potion." From the obvious satisfaction in her voice, he was going to guess that was no small feat.

"That's a thing?"

Daphne nodded, "Yep... a thing that requires time, patience, and is rarely achieved even by a Potions Master because of the scarcity of one of the ingredients."

"What's that?" Sue was the one who asked, unable to help her curiosity.

"Phoenix tears."

That caught everyone off guard, and Sue followed up, shocked, "How the bloody hell did you get a hold of phoenix tears?"

"Fawkes is surprisingly fond of Harry." Daphne beamed. Orina and Anya had seen the elegant bird after the incident at the Three Broomsticks, while Ginny had met him second year, obviously. His Slytherin lover knew about the incident, because well she'd been curious about the Chamber, and he hadn't minded sharing the story.

Understandably, Fleur was the most confused, "'ho is Fawkes?"

"The headmaster's phoenix that saved Harry's life from a basilisk in his second year." Ginny explained with an incredible level of nonchalance.

"Zat's... insane. Zis is a school!" She sounded genuinely gobsmacked by what she'd just heard.

Susan nodded sagely, "Yes, but like Daphne said, trouble loves Harry." Fleur didn't look entirely pleased by that explanation but let it go.

"Anyway, since we all still love you in a nice pair of glasses, Susan had an idea." She left it hanging for the redhead to continue.

"They're enchanted. Though, I didn't do it myself," Susan explained, sounding a little self-conscious of that fact after what the other girls had done. Harry reached over and squeezed her thigh, because it was the thought that counted, "They're impervious, can't be summoned, can see through objects, including Invisibility cloaks, though not clothes," Everyone got a chuckle out of that, "And if you touch the rim just there," she pointed to a little silver dot, "they can tell you if something is cursed."

The Impervious Charm on them alone would be extremely useful, and the rest just sounded like a bonus, "They're both fantastic." He assured them.

Both girls beamed, but Daphne warned, "Probably best not to take the potion until tomorrow at the earliest. It does take some time to work, and I don't think you want to be dealing with that during the Ball."

"You can switch the glasses whenever you want. No possibly horrible side-effects, I promise" The Hufflepuff added with a little chuckle as nudged her friend's shoulder.

Opening Sue's gift, he couldn't help but smile at it, "Great minds think alike." There was a short dagger, no more than a foot from hilt to tip sitting inside of a simple box.

Sue looked a little shy as she explained, "I... want to teach you. Some hand to hand, and with the dagger as well. You can't always guarantee you'll have your wand on you, after all. And well, like they said," she gestured to Daphne and Susan, "you have a knack for trouble."

"You just want to get me all sweaty while you kick my bum." Harry teased her. Though honestly, it sounded like a fantastic idea to him. More because it meant Sue could share another part of herself with him than anything. Not that it won't be proper useful in a tight spot, too.

Sue blushed, and bit her bottom lip, "Well... there's that, too."

Giving her one last wink, he opened the second to last of his gifts. This one was just in an envelope. Inside was a ticket for an international portkey to Sofia, Bulgaria in July. Anya couldn't contain her excitement, "We vant you to see our home!"

"All of you." Orina added as the rest of the girls opened a similar envelope. They were an odd little family now, all of them connected, so there was no excluding anyone if they could help it.

"Ve know it might not be so simple for = rest of you. But we vanted the option there if you can make it." Anya assured them.

Harry stared at the paper for a long moment before giving the two women that were responsible for these odd and wonderful twists in his life a massive grin, "I've never been on a proper vacation before. Can't think of a better one to start with."

"You know if you want us all to be able to come, it's going to mean having some... interesting conversations." He knew exactly what Ginny meant, but it was something he knew was inevitable anyway. This just gives me a deadline.

"You can count me in," Fleur assured as she tapped her own ticket, "I 'aven't been to a conclave before. Perhaps I can convince my grandmozzer to come, too." As the girls chatted about the trip and the potential, he opened the last of his gifts.

It was a scrapbook. Opening it, he was surprised by the number of pictures within of...all of them. Some were of one of them by themselves others with them together. Pictures of them in the tournaments or cheering each other on or just sitting in the library together. None of it seemed intrusive, and all of them were taken since the start of term and something about it... just made his heart flutter.

As he sat there in front of the couch, everyone pressed in to watch as he flipped through it. Sue and Padma sat down on either side of him, Orina sat on Anya's lap, Fleur and Ginny were squeezed in the middle, and Susan was on top of Daphne who was munching away at another slice of tikvenik. He glanced around and felt incredible sense of peace wash over him.

It was done quietly, the soft melody of Christmas music in the background. When he came to the end, there was plenty of space in the back for more photographs. It was Padma that finally broke the silence, "Colin really has gotten better since first year, hasn't he?"

"Yeah." He couldn't agree more as he sat there surrounded by those amazing young women. It'd already been the best Christmas he could remember, and they hadn't even gotten to midday yet. By the end of the night, he was sure they'd have a few more memories to add to the pages.