

Title: Sex Magic

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Rating: NC-17

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Summary: In Harry's seventh year, an unexpected subject pops up on his schedule. Pre-HBP AU.

Chapter One

"Arithmancy is such a fascinating subject!" Hermione enthused from behind a textbook so large that it hid her entire upper body. "Professor Vector has promised us that this year we'll begin to study how the proper runes, with the aid of an invocation, can work together without the use of a wand to create the illusion of wandless magic..."

Ron cast Harry a pained glance and Harry grinned in response, shaking his head. It was their seventh year at Hogwarts and some things would never change.

"So," Ron cleared his throat loudly, interrupting Hermione. "What new subject did you pick up this year, Harry?"

"Oh yes, you had to pick up a new subject to fill your Divination spot, didn't you?" Hermione dropped the massive book into her lap and sniffed disdainfully. "Good on you for finally walking out of that ridiculous class. Honestly, if that woman is a prophet, then I'm a Krinkle-Horned Snorkak."

"Well," he said. "I put in a request for Muggle Studies. It's required for Aurors, and I figured I could use an easy course this year so I could concentrate on my NEWTs."

Hermione sighed, her mouth turning down at the edges. Harry knew the lecture

by heart. Hermione thought that Harry and Ron should go to magical university, like her, but they both wanted to become Aurors. Hermione was leaving to attend the School of Advanced Arithmetic and Runic Learning in Greece next year. She and Ron had had a great row that lasted half the summer about her moving so far away. Ron had reluctantly backed down in the end, but Harry knew it still bothered him.

“So, er... What time do you have Muggle Studies then?” Ron asked with an odd smile.

Harry glanced at him but Ron just shrugged sheepishly and looked away. Faintly intrigued by the strange display, Harry tore the ribbon from the roll of parchment containing his Seventh Year schedule. Unrolling the crisp, yellowish paper, he scanned the line of familiar courses; Potions, Transfiguration, Charms, until he found a new addition to the list. His eyes bulged from behind their round, plastic frames and his mouth fell open in shock.

“Sex Magic!” he shouted.

Several people in the Gryffindor common room jumped and turned around, seeking out the cause of the disruption. A few people close by gave him confused, yet slightly interested glances.

“What?” Hermione snapped, clearly disbelieving. “Let me see that.”

Snatching the parchment out of Harry’s nerveless fingers she quickly scanned the page, her eyes widening.

“There’s been some sort of mistake,” Harry murmured.

He turned to Ron for support. Ron, however, was blushing furiously and avoiding his gaze. He couldn't have looked more guilty, and Harry knew at once that there had been no mistake.

“Ron...” he prodded in a low tone.

“Honestly, Harry! It wasn’t my idea,” Ron burst out.

“Ronald Weasley!” Hermione gasped.

“It was Fred and George! And I only helped because... Well Harry, you haven’t exactly had a girlfriend. And things went so sideways with Cho-“

“So you just decided to enroll me in Sex Magic!” Harry shouted, astounded by Ron’s peculiar logic.

“No!” Ron denied hotly. “No, that was all Fred and George's idea! They told me they were going to help you meet girls. I had no idea that this was what they meant! The two of them only owled me about the Sex Magic bit before I left for school this morning, and by then it was too late to do anything about it!”

Harry, still dazed from the news, only nodded in response. Hermione, however, wasn’t about to let the subject go, and rounded on him.

"What, exactly, did you do to help those ridiculous brothers of yours?"

Ron swallowed hard before answering, attempting to give her his best doe eyes while he was at it.

“I gave them one of the letters Harry had written me this summer. They said that they needed his signature. I asked them what for but they only said not to worry, that they were going to help Harry get a girlfriend. I never thought they’d go this far, though!”

Hermione rolled her eyes. "The fact that it was the twins, and that they required a signature to procure Harry a girlfriend didn't raise a few alarms in that thick head of yours?"

"Oi!" Ron pouted.

“It’s okay,” Harry said quickly. “Ron, it’s okay, really. Just another good prank by

Fred and George, that's all. I'll go to McGonagall tomorrow and have her switch the class for Muggle Studies. No harm done."

When Hermione and Ron glanced at each other before turning to look anywhere but at him, his stomach lurched disturbingly.

"What?" he asked warily.

"Well," Hermione began, clearly uncomfortable. "You see if they have your signature on the documents, you can't simply switch just like that."

"Why not? You did it! When you dropped out of Divination, you took up Arithmancy," he argued.

"Well, yes, but that was different. That class was elective, and I had more than enough classes to fulfill my requirement. But Sex Magic isn't even technically on the roster. You require the professor to sign a form in order to add or drop the class." Hermione explained.

"How do you know that?" Ron asked.

Hermione ignored him.

"You'll at least have to go the first day," she told Harry.

"So I'll go and ask the professor to allow me to drop their class. What could happen on the first day?" Harry sounded a bit desperate.

Hermione and Ron tried to nod encouragingly but did not end up being very convincing, and Harry began to feel increasingly anxious. He drew his gaze away from his best friends to stare off into the empty fireplace. The warm familiarity of the common room did little to thaw the dread settling into an icy knot in the pit of his stomach.

Not only was he a virgin, he'd only ever kissed one girl. And that single kiss with

Cho had been embarrassing, not to mention highly unenjoyable. After that singularly horrible experience he hadn't been very inclined to go searching for a girlfriend. Harry hadn't even really given sex that much thought. With schoolwork, Quidditch and trying to avoid the seemingly endless attempts on his life, he'd been extraordinarily busy these past six years.

It had seemed surreal when the news had come at the end of last year that Voldemort had disappeared once more. Harry felt a sense of foreboding at the lack of news. He thought Voldemort was gathering power, forces, legions of loyal soldiers in order to come back and strike when least expected. After months of waiting, Harry was on edge. He woke up every morning wondering if that day would be the day.

He had thought that this year would provide a nice, mundane distraction. Now, however, with only a single kiss as experience he was being thrown into a highly sexual form of powerful magic.

Suddenly, Harry felt very ill.

Chapter Two

Harry glanced at his schedule and then back at the door in front of him. According to the paper the location of the classroom for Sex Magic hadn't changed since the last time he checked. Sighing, he tucked the scroll back into his pocket and stepped through the door to the Room of Requirement. Inside his worst fears were proven true for a brief moment and he choked, halting midstep in the doorway. Terribly tacky and distasteful paintings groaned as they moved in lurid ways. Kinky, complicated objects lined the walls, and one nook in particular looked rather painful. After a moment, however, the garish images swirled and faded, the room resettling itself from his horrid expectations back into a perfectly ordinary classroom. Harry let out a sigh of relief and heard someone giggle off to his side.

"Nervous, Harry?" Lavender Brown smiled at him, pointing in a sweeping gesture around the room.

Harry glared at her and took a seat three over, next to Neville, who looked even more terrified than he felt. "What are you doing here?" Harry asked him in a hushed tone.

"My grandmum suggested it," Neville, wide-eyed and shaking, mumbled back. "She said it was the only way I'd ever get married."

Harry winced. Sometimes Neville's grandmother could be a real hag.

Summoning up the courage to look around at the rest of the students, Harry saw that the class consisted of purely Gryffindors, Ravenclaws and Slytherins. He supposed that made sense. Gryffindors were brave and curious by nature. Ravenclaws would be interested in learning absolutely every facet of magic possible. And Slytherins... Well, it was Dark Magic, after all. His gaze narrowed as it lighted on Draco Malfoy, who was snickering over something with Pansy Parkinson. No doubt that the two of them would be paired together. The disgusting thought that he might have to watch Malfoy snogging the pug-faced Parkinson flitted through his mind and he recoiled. Malfoy looked up and grinned

at Harry.

"Whips, Potter?" he asked maliciously, and Harry blushed to the roots of his hair.

Just then the door opened to admit one more person. Harry eagerly accepted the distraction and waited for the room to change, hoping that someone might prove to have worse expectations for the class than he did, but the room stayed the same. A witch in long, loose blue robes walked to the front of the room and turned to face the class. Harry's first impression of her was that she was rather ordinary looking. She had long, slightly wavy brown hair that was pulled back from her face and tucked behind her ears. Her eyes were blue and she wore no spectacles, and she had a light amount of freckles across the bridge of her nose and cheeks. Not the sort of face that you would picture when thinking of a person skilled in the arts of... er...

That thought was enough to jolt Harry into action, and he immediately stuck his hand in the air. The woman smiled at him.

"Please hold all questions until after class," she said pleasantly.

"But Professor," Harry began, only to be shushed by a flick of the woman's hand.

"I am Professor Mason, and I will be your Sex Magic instructor. This class consists of one semester of classroom work and another of independent study, at the end of which you will complete and submit your final projects for my approval. I'm sure many of you are surprised by the briefness of the classroom component, given that you will be learning a very powerful branch of magic, but this is not a subject that requires much study. It is unique to each witch and wizard and their partners, therefore lengthy discussions of the theory behind it when they may or may not apply to you are frivolous. Much of the class will be spent in practical applications of the concepts you'll learn in the first few sessions."

Harry felt the icy fist which had settled into the bottom of his stomach last night plunge even further into his gut at the mention of 'practical applications' of the material. Luckily those wouldn't begin for at least another week which would

afford him plenty of time to corner Mason and tell her about the huge mistake that had brought him into her classroom.

"Sex Magic was brought to Hogwarts by Lerner the Lecherous in the late 1940's," Professor Mason explained. "Some have speculated that if Armando Dippet, being rather feeble-minded, had not been Headmaster at the time the subject never would have been introduced, but here we are. The curriculum focuses mainly on the magic created and sustained during the act of sexual intercourse. Such a meeting of two magical auras can create quite a bit of energy. With enough training, that energy can then be focused and funneled into other things. Under the right circumstances, with the right partner, the magical potential created can be amazingly powerful.

"We've been using this room since the subject was first brought to Hogwarts over fifty years ago. As our needs during the course of the class often change, it is convenient to have a room that adjusts to fit them. Now, if there are no complaints..."

Harry's hand shot into the air.

"...we'll begin. As we have an even number of students, today we will be sorting you into groups of two. These will be your partners that you'll maintain for the rest of the semester."

"What!" Harry squawked loudly.

"Quiet, Mr. Potter." Professor Mason admonished. Behind Harry, Malfoy snickered. "The partners that you are paired with during this course will likely become, at the very least, extremely dear to you for the rest your life. Most students find that they meet their future spouse here in this very room, as the selection method that we use chooses your partner based on a number of compatible elements. I'm sure you're all familiar with the object that we use to pair off students; the Goblet of Fire. The Goblet is a supremely beneficial tool to this course, as it is both fair and unbiased on the criteria which it bases its selection, even though you might harbor such biases towards your fellow

classmates yourself. Do not be surprised if you are partnered with someone you do not expect. The Goblet sometimes makes shocking, yet intuitive choices. When I call your name, please move to sit next to your partner."

Harry fought to keep his breathing at a normal level. He didn't want to be partnered with anyone! He just wanted to leave this frankly terrifying class and never return. He raised his hand once more but Professor Mason had already brought out a rough wooden cup that was crackling and spitting blue sparks and set it on her desk. Small pieces of smoldering paper, knotted together in the middle, began to fly out of it and Harry lowered his hand as she began to read them out loud.

"Theodore Nott and Padma Patil."

Harry watched as Padma rose from her seat with an unreadable look on her cool face and Goyle moved from his place next to Nott to take her vacated chair.

"Neville Longbottom and Lavender Brown," Professor Mason called out impassively.

Lavender squeaked indignantly. Neville hung his flushed head and gathered his things to sit next to an obviously displeased Lavender. Harry imagined one of the other girls in class reacting similarly when their names were called together and felt his ears burn.

More names were read and with each passing couple Harry became more agitated. He was working his third nail down to a stub when he heard the names Gregory Goyle and Pansy Parkinson called out. Swiveling around in his seat, Harry grinned mockingly at Malfoy, who appeared as though he'd just been struck in the face.

"Michael Corner and Parvati Patil."

Harry glanced around the room, noting that most everyone had been paired off already and were either blushing shyly at their partner with pleased half smiles on

their faces, or they looked distinctly unhappy. Then he heard his own name called.

"Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy."

"What!" The two boys shouted simultaneously and rushed to their feet.

"Please, one of you move to take your seat," Professor Mason said coolly, undeterred.

"That's ridiculous!" Malfoy screeched, his eyes wild in his pale face. "I refuse! Put my name back in! I will not!"

"Mr. Malfoy, I believe I told you to move," Professor Mason interrupted, glancing at Neville's empty seat next to Harry.

Her tone had a dampening effect on Malfoy's tantrum and he swallowed and nodded, gathering his books with halting, jerky movements before he slumped into the chair next to Harry and immediately scooted as far away as the table allowed. Harry sat down slowly, staring at his white-knuckled hands on the table in shock.

"Alright then, all finished," Professor Mason said after reading off the last names; Blaise Zabini and Marietta Edgecombe. "You are finished for today. Our first lesson begins on Wednesday with the first chapter in, 'Erotic Craft - Dark Magic or Magic in the Dark?' Please read it carefully and come to the next class ready to begin. You are dismissed."

"Professor!" Two voices called out in unison amid the rustling of students exiting. A few people glanced back over their shoulders, grinning and tittering with their friends as Harry and Draco rushed to the front of the room.

"Me first, Scarhead!" Draco shoved in front of Harry and stood in front of Professor Mason, arms crossed over his chest as he stared at her angrily. "I demand a partner change."

"I'm sorry, that's impossible," she told him dismissively. "Next?"

"What? But, no!" Draco protested loudly, before Harry elbowed him out of the way.

"Relax, Malfoy, I have a way of of this," he told the Slytherin. He turned what he hoped was an imploring look on the woman in front of him. "Professor Mason, there's been a problem with my schedule-

"Thank Merlin!" Malfoy sighed from behind him.

"You see, my friends thought it would be funny to play a practical joke on me and forged my signature onto the register for your class. I actually signed up for Muggle Studies-

"Which Deputy Headmistress McGonagall disputed," she interrupted smoothly.

"What?" Harry asked her, stunned.

"There's no point in you taking a Muggle Studies course when you've lived among them for seventeen years, Mr. Potter," she said. "The spot in your schedule needed to be filled and I had an uneven number of students. When your application came in the mail, the Headmistress and I were both immensely relieved to have both problems dealt with before the semester began."

"But I didn't send in any application! My friends-

"Regardless, Mr. Potter, you are irrevocably enrolled in this class. Have a nice day."

"Wait!" Harry shouted, lunging at her turning back.

"Yes, wait!" Malfoy followed in Harry's wake.

Professor Mason sighed, turning around to face them with an expression of

irritated patience that only professors could manage. "Boys, I've already told you there is nothing to be done for it."

"Why not?" Draco demanded haughtily.

"Because I refuse to revoke any decision made by the Goblet of Fire," Professor Mason gave him a tight smile. "I won't be changing your partner, Mr. Malfoy, and I will not be signing your withdrawal slip, Mr. Potter. Do not argue with me any further or I'll give you a penalty essay to be completed by next class. Together. Now, I believe that dinner has already begun. "

Draco stomped back to his seat and scooped up his books while muttering about when his father heard of this.

Harry felt the beginnings of rage boil up underneath the shock of the situation and turned on him.

"Your father won't do anything!" he screamed at Malfoy. "No one even knows where he is! I know where he's supposed to be, though. In Azkaban, where all Death Eaters belong!"

"Mr. Potter!" Professor Mason boomed over whatever obscenity a white-faced Draco had shouted at him. "That's quite enough. Mr. Malfoy, leave. Now."

Draco swept out the door, sending a venomous glare at Harry on his way out.

"Mr. Potter, I'm afraid you'll be going to bed hungry tonight. If I even see you poke your head into the Great Hall, you'll have detention. Understood?"

Harry nodded, his jaw still tight with anger. The professor left and he sagged, disbelief and horror settling over him. He returned to his seat to collect his things and remembered with sudden clarity his wish for a distraction this year at Hogwarts. He snorted nervously to the empty room. Shagging someone he hated, and more importantly a boy, would definitely prove to be distracting.

Hermione made her way up the steps to the seventh year girls room with an armload of books and a head full of troubling thoughts. Harry had been absent at dinner, along with Lavender and Parvati. Had it not been for the fact that Neville had been there, distant and closed-mouthed as he may have been, she might have thought that their Sex Magic class had run over. When the boys asked Neville how the class had gone he'd ignored them miserably.

Pushing the door open with her foot, Hermione heard muffled sobs coming from Lavender and Parvati's side of the room. Sure enough, both girls were huddled there on Lavender's bed, Parvati rubbing Lavender's back soothingly. It was a familiar scene. Lavender was self-absorbed and liked to be fussed over. Hermione usually ignored it, but in light of the odd behavior of all of the Gryffindors involved in Sex Magic, she decided that feigning interest might buy her some answers.

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked.

Parvati looked up, surprised, but pursed her lips together and answered. "Poor Lavender got paired up with Neville in Sex Magic."

Lavender let out a sob and threw herself down onto the duvet, balling the red material in her fists. Hermione's lip curled. So that's why Neville had been so upset at dinner.

"You silly nit," she scoffed. "There are far worse people than Neville you could have been partnered with. He's a good fellow and you should feel lucky to have him. I honestly don't see what the problem is."

The tear-stained blonde wailed even louder and Parvati sent a glare over her shoulder before attempting to shush her friend. "She's right, you know, Lavender," she said encouragingly. "You could be worse off. You could be in Harry's shoes right now."

"Harry?" Hermione asked, finally feeling like she was getting somewhere.

"Yeah," Parvati grinned and sent Hermione a smug look. "He got stuck with Draco Malfoy."

A loud crack echoed through the room as Hermione's books dropped to the floor.

"She can't do this!" Hermione told a stoic Harry, who was laying on his bed and apparently quite happy to stare at absolutely nothing. "I don't care if she does use the Goblet of Fire to choose names, you didn't put yours in!"

"Yeah," Harry said. "That was really helpful when I told her, as well. Thanks, Hermione."

"That was harsh, mate," said Ron from where he sat cross-legged on his bed.

"Sorry," Harry mumbled.

"It's alright," Hermione sighed. "I can't imagine what I'd be like if I were the one who had to shag Malfoy."

"Not helping," grumbled Harry.

"My point is, Harry, that forcing you to have sex when you don't want to is rape." Hermione continued doggedly. "We'll go to McGonagall right now and get this straightened out."

Harry sat up, favoring her with a sour look. "I suggested that to begin with and you told me that it wouldn't work."

"To be fair, we both thought that Mason would sign for you," Ron told him.

"Hermione's right, though. They can't exactly force you to shag that git."

"I'm afraid Mr. Potter will have to complete the course," Deputy and currently acting Headmistress Minerva McGonagall told the trio that stood in front of her desk.

"What? But Professor," Hermione stared at her incredulously. "Harry never gave his permission to be enrolled!"

"The Goblet of Fire cannot be fooled, Ms. Granger. If Potter had been truly adverse to participating in the class, his name would not have been accepted. Regardless, the point is moot. The Goblet creates a binding, magical contract. Mr. Potter and Mr. Malfoy are legally bound to complete the course together."

The three students in the room seemed to sag all together. The muscles in Harry's jaw flexed as he grit his teeth together. Hermione placed a hand on his shoulder and squeezed.

"Professor? Do you have any way of contacting Dumbledore?" she asked.

McGonagall looked confused by the sudden twist of conversation. "Yes, I do. Why do you ask?"

Harry's head snapped up suddenly and his eyes were hopeful. "Can you ask him for me? If I can drop the class, I mean?"

McGonagall regarded him pitifully from behind her desk, but inclined her head and sighed.

"I shall ask him. I'll send for you in the morning, once I've received a response."

Chapter Three

The look that McGonagall gave Harry when he answered her owl the next morning was not encouraging. He hadn't slept at all the previous night, his stomach burning acidly with a combination of hunger and apprehension. Now, facing down a scowling Headmistress, his hopes were dashed.

"I'm afraid I have bad news, Mr. Potter," she told him tonelessly. "Professor Dumbledore has reaffirmed my feelings regarding the matter, specifically pertaining to the Goblet of Fire. While there may have been foul play involved in your enrollment, your signature was your own. The Goblet made its assessment based on the qualities it found within your character. Had it found reluctance to participate in the class we would not be here. There can be no mistake. I'm sorry."

"But Professor, I don't want to be in this class!" Harry pleaded desperately.

"As do many students after receiving their partners," she told him calmly. "The fact remains that even though you may not wish it now, when the Goblet made its assessment of you it found no objection to the class or the course material."

"What is that supposed to mean? I object! I am sitting here in front of you, telling you that I don't consent to this!"

McGonagall sighed.

"Do you remember in your Fourth Year when we asked underaged students not to give their names to older students to put into the Goblet for Hogwarts Champion?" she asked him. "It would have been pointless. The Goblet makes its decisions based on the magical signature that is specific to each witch or wizard. Having an older student put their name in wouldn't have made a difference. Similarly, for purposes of this class the Goblet was specifically attuned to perceive an applicant's willingness to participate in the course. The Weasleys might have taken your signature from another document and submitted it, but the hand that wrote the signature was your own, Harry. Now I know that you resent being uninformed of your enrollment, and that you dislike your partner. But

unfortunately, you do have to go through with this."

"Just like the Triwizard Tournament," Harry muttered.

"I'm afraid so."

Harry felt the ground begin to shift underneath his feet as he stood up. McGonagall took one look at him and sighed again.

"You'd better go get yourself some breakfast," she said kindly.

Harry swallowed and nodded, walking out of her office and on toward the Great Hall with a feeling of numb detachment.

He was going to have to shag Malfoy. Repeatedly.

Feeling queasy, Harry took his seat next to Ron and stared down at his empty plate until he felt a warm hand settle on his shoulder. He looked up to see Hermione leaning over the table with an arm outstretched towards him and a sad, understanding smile on her lips. He smiled back briefly and turned to Ron, only to find the entire Gryffindor table staring at him expectantly. Apparently news had gotten around. Looking away quickly, Harry picked at a piece of toast until he found his eyes drawn to the one person he most definitely did not want to have to face.

Draco Malfoy was staring right back at him, also waiting for an answer. Harry shook his head. The Slytherin's eyes widened and his mouth fell open. He looked as if the world had just started spinning in the wrong direction.

Harry knew exactly how he felt.

The rest of the day was horrible. Numerous friends offered their condolences, but they failed to make a dent in Harry's foul mood and only seemed to irritate him

further. The only person who Harry felt he could relate to was Neville, who spent most of his time in their room, refusing to go downstairs into the common room lest he run into Lavender. When Harry finally managed to convince him to pinch some Butterbeer from the kitchen and sit out by the lake after dinner, Neville stared miserably out over the water.

"It could have been worse," Harry told him. "At least you got a girl."

"Yeah," Neville muttered back. "I'm sorry, Harry. About Malfoy, I mean. Tough luck."

"Yeah," said Harry, suddenly losing interest in his drink.

"Harry! Neville!"

A familiar Irish lilt carried across the courtyard and the two boys by the lake turned their heads to see Seamus, Dean, and Ron coming down the slope.

"Hey, Neville," Seamus grinned. "Bit of luck scoring Lavender in Sex Magic, eh? I woulda taken it, but I don't turn seventeen for another three months and my mum wouldn't sign for me."

Neville's head drooped and Harry glared at the freckled boy. "Nice going, Seamus."

"What?" he asked, surprised.

"Lavender isn't exactly thrilled to have Neville as a partner," Dean supplied.

"Oh," Seamus murmured. "I'm sorry, Nev. Well, buck up, mate! You could have been in Harry's place!"

Harry groaned and dropped his head onto his knees.

"Yeah," Seamus muttered with a grimace. "Tough luck, mate."

The next two and a half days passed far too quickly for Harry's liking. All too soon he found himself back in front of the Room of Requirement, maintaining a safe distance so that his dark thoughts didn't imprint themselves on the room behind the door. When he heard voices coming down the hallway toward him he shook himself and squared his shoulders. With another conscious effort to keep his mind clear, Harry opened the door and walked into the classroom.

Malfoy was already there and Harry steered away from him, heading toward a table in the back. Neville caught his arm as he passed.

"Read the note," he told him, jerking his head toward the front of the room.

There hovering in the air were the words, "Sit with your assigned partner." Harry heaved a sigh and made his way back to Malfoy's table and sat down, doggedly refusing to look at the other boy. Not long after, Professor Mason entered.

"Ah, good. All present, no tardies. Just what I like to see. Well then, first things first," she said, closing her eyes briefly. Harry wondered what she was doing until he remembered where he was and immediately began looking around the room for changes. "There. You'll find that you're all now sitting on benches instead of individual chairs. I find that works better for today's lesson."

Harry gulped. He didn't want to know. He really, really didn't.

"Today I'll be going over the first chapter in the text. I want you all to pay attention and ask questions freely. However, while I speak I want you to hold hands with your partner."

There were several amused glances exchanged between the students. Harry stubbornly tucked his hands under his legs and absolutely refused to look at Malfoy.

"Come, come! You're in a Sex Magic class. If you can't handle a little hand-holding then I dread how you'll feel about the rest of the assignments!" Professor Mason scolded them.

Harry heard people shifting closer together all around him and wiggled uncomfortably, settling himself more fully on his hands. He could feel eyes on the back of his head. When the silence seemed to stretch unbearably he looked up at Mason.

"Mr. Potter, Mr. Malfoy... We're waiting on you," she said quietly.

Harry looked over at Malfoy to see him staring at a spot on the desk in front of him, a muscle in his jaw twitching. Another five seconds stretched before the blond slowly brought a pale hand to rest on the bench between them. Feeling his gut twist, Harry drew his right hand out from under him and inched it along towards Malfoy's. When his fingers had barely come into contact with the back of the Slytherin's hand, he stopped.

Professor Mason sighed. "That'll do for now, I suppose."

Harry let out a relieved breath and heard Malfoy do the same. The feel of the other boy's skin under Harry's fingertips made him distinctly uncomfortable and he desperately wanted to pull his hand away.

"A large portion of what you'll be dealing with in this subject is control. Control of yourself, your partner, and the magic between you during the heights of physical pleasure. Without self-control there can be no trust. Without trust you will be completely lost in this subject."

Harry snorted involuntarily.

"Mr. Potter, I believe the instructions were to hold Mr. Malfoy's hand," Mason snapped.

Groaning inwardly, Harry hastily laced his fingers with Malfoy's. The other boy's

hand remained limp in his own and when Harry chanced a look in his direction he saw Malfoy was pink-cheeked. Harry found his embarrassment to be oddly somewhat rewarding and squeezed his hand for good measure. With a shocked gasp, Malfoy jerked his head around to glare accusingly at Harry.

"As I was saying," Professor Mason continued. "Control is key. Each relationship is different. In some, one partner will have the majority of the control, and in others the control will be shared more equally. No doubt you've heard terms for this before - dominant and submissive, top and bottom, etcetera. The most important thing to remember is that this does not make one partner any more or less than the other. People are all very, very different creatures. Some feel more comfortable with responsibility than others. If your partner is more demanding or if they are more comfortable having you make decisions, do not be surprised. Try to accommodate them to the best of your ability, while still making your own needs evident."

Padma Patil's hand went into the air and Mason called on her to speak.

"What would happen if both wanted to be dominant? Or submissive? Wouldn't that create problems?" she asked.

"Yes, it would indeed. However, one of the considerations that the Goblet of Fire uses to select potential partners is their desire to fill these roles, or not to at all. You and your partner are as perfectly matched for your preferences as possible with your given choice of classmates."

Harry felt uneasy. Malfoy would almost definitely want to control him. That was just the sort of prat that Malfoy was. Harry realized for the first time the danger of the situation that he now found himself in. He would be vulnerable in the hands of a Death Eater sympathizer who would have the power to hurt him.

"Once you've established your roles, it will be easier to focus on controlling your magic, rather than the situation," Professor Mason continued. "I do not wish for you to strive for any great restraint in your first sessions. We will work on bringing restraint back into the act later, once we have determined your magical

compatibility and the range of your ability with your partner.

"Now, I want you to explore one another's hands," she announced suddenly. "I know how silly that sounds, but a large part of this course will be establishing a level of familiarity and comfort with your partner. Play with their fingers, their palms, their wrists... Just allow yourselves to explore. I think you'll find such a simple act surprisingly intimate. Once fifteen minutes have passed you are free to leave."

Harry choked. Play with Malfoy's fingers? His cheeks flushed with heat as he looked down at their joined hands.

He heard Malfoy groan softly in disgust. For a few minutes neither boy moved, until Mason's gaze settled on them and one brow raised in a silent challenge. Harry felt Malfoy pull their hands apart to run the tip of his index finger down to the base of Harry's thumb. Harry would have left it at that but Mason was still staring at them. Shaking his head, Harry trailed his fingers down over Malfoy's knuckles, the rough pads of his fingers scraping against the soft flesh.

"Peasant," Draco sneered at the calloused state of Harry's skin.

"Snob," Harry retorted, turning Malfoy's hand over in his and running his fingers over the perfectly smooth palm. "You've never done a day's work in your life, have you?"

Malfoy jerked his hand out of Harry's grip. "If you mean mucking around in the dirt like a Weasley, then of course not!"

Harry snatched Malfoy's hand back, tugging it closer with a painful grip. "It shows," he told him, scraping his nails lightly along the soft skin over the back of the other boy's hand.

Draco drew a sharp breath and Harry tried to ignore it. Draco hesitantly ran the backs of his perfectly manicured nails over the underside of Harry's fingers. When he traced the lines of Harry's palm, Harry squirmed and told himself it was

because it tickled.

Harry began to rub his thumb in small circles over the underside of Draco's wrist and wrapped his fingers completely around the fragile bones he found there.

"What are you-?" Draco began to ask, only to fall quiet when Harry drew his hand away to weave their fingers together again. He cleared his throat and swallowed. "Don't go getting queer, Potter."

"I'm only following directions, Malfoy," Harry told him, although he was also deliberately trying to unnerve the other boy.

"Time is up. You all did wonderfully. I'll see you on Friday, and have a nice supper." Professor Mason called from behind the two boys.

Harry and Draco immediately pulled their hands apart and wiped them on their trousers, sending one another suspicious glances before they gathered their things and left.

Outside in the hall, Harry squeezed his hand into a fist and relaxed it several times, trying to dispel the warmth of Malfoy's skin.

Chapter Four

"Harry, are you...?"

Looking up from his Potions essay, Harry gave Neville a blank stare. "What?"

"Into blokes?" Neville asked quietly.

"What? No!" Harry exploded, looking around them nervously to see if anyone was listening. Luckily the common room was nearly empty at this hour. "Why would you ask that?"

"Well," Neville swallowed nervously. "Because of something Professor Mason said. About the Goblet pairing people up based on compatibility."

From the look on Harry's face it was obvious that he'd completely forgotten about that. Neville quickly tried to backtrack. "I'm sorry, I wasn't implying anything. I mean, I know you're not-"

"No, I'm not." Harry growled between clenched teeth, ending the discussion by going back to work on his essay.

Neville looked dejected. He hadn't meant to upset Harry but he'd been rather curious. The other boys were a little too quick to dismiss the Goblet's decision as a fluke, but he wondered.

He was about to turn his attention back to his own dreadful Potions work when he heard the painting swing open and two tittering female voices approaching. Lavender and Parvati were in good spirits. He grinned slightly, happy that he wasn't making Lavender miserable anymore.

Just then she looked up and saw him and stopped, the smile slipping from her face instantly. Parvati gave her a worried look, placing a hand on her arm.

"Lavender..." Neville began timidly.

Shaking off Parvati's hand, Lavender turned and fled the room. Parvati gave Neville a sympathetic grimace before following her friend. Neville closed his eyes and dropped his head down onto his parchment. He felt Harry's light pat on his back and wondered just which one of them had it worse off; the one stuck with another boy that he hated, or the one stuck with the girl that he secretly loved, who hated him.

"Cuddling."

Professor Mason walked between the rows of plush, soft pillows strewn on the floor. Her students were crowded in the back of the room, uncertain about where to sit.

"Today you will establish a higher level of intimacy with your partner. I want you to choose a spot here on the floor and get comfortable while I speak. Sit with you assigned partner and you must be touching them. Now, please."

Everyone moved forward in one rush, taking their partner's hand and pointing to favorable places on the floor. All except for Harry and Draco.

Both boys moved forward a few paces and sat down on separate pillows. Harry looked over to where Neville and Lavender were sitting to see his friend attempting to coax Lavender to lay her head on a pillow he'd placed his lap. When she stubbornly refused he leaned in close and murmured something in her ear. She relented, curling up on her side with her head resting comfortably in Neville's lap. The boy looked over at Harry and smiled before placing his hand on Lavender's shoulder.

Harry looked away, suddenly uncomfortable.

"Misters Malfoy and Potter, we are once again waiting on the two of you," said Mason. "Please do not continue to hold up my class."

Harry and Draco looked at one another, both of their expressions defiant. Neither wanted to be the one to assign themselves the 'girl' role in this exercise.

Frustrated, Professor Mason sighed and snapped, "Mr. Malfoy, place your head on Mr. Potter's shoulder."

Malfoy turned to give her a look of utter revulsion, but she merely leveled him with a dead stare and tapped her wand against her arm impatiently. Grunting something rude, Draco angled his blond head to the side and grudgingly placed it against Harry's shoulder with as little contact between them as possible.

"Today I want to talk about the actual magical part of this class," the Professor began. "The theory of Sex Magic was brought about by Lerner Cunningham, affectionately nicknamed Lerner the Lecherous, in the mid 1930's. He observed the increased amount of wandless magic that appeared to happen when he and his wife were intimate, such as glasses shattering, furniture rattling, or candle flames extinguishing. Based on this he theorized that when a magical person is involved in sexual activity they are not in complete control of their magic. When that person's partner is also a witch or wizard the combined magical energy between them is quite powerful, but unfocused. He thought that if their magic could be brought under control, using their increasing pleasure as sort of a catalyst for the strength of the magic to grow as they reach climax, great things could be accomplished."

Harry felt Malfoy squirming next to him, rolling his shoulders and adjusting his body to lessen the strain on his neck. It looked quite uncomfortable but he was disinclined to do anything about it.

"He was laughed at, of course. After all, the times at which a wizard would need such powerful magic would be quite inopportune for engaging in sexual acts. But Lerner persisted, and indeed he found ways to channel the energy into objects and potions so that they were twice or even threefold as potent than they would normally be. Love charms became irresistible. Healing Potions worked instantly."

When Malfoy's movements became distracting, Harry sighed and turned so that he could get his arms around the other boy's torso. Malfoy startled violently as Harry pulled him around so that his back was pressed against his front. Harry leaned down so that his mouth was right next to his ear and whispered, "Look, I don't like this, either, but we have to do it and we might as well be comfortable."

After a moment Malfoy's stiff, tense shoulders relaxed against him. Harry held his breath as Malfoy settled his head into the crook of his neck and shoulder. His arms were still wrapped around the other boy and it made him feel strange but he refused to move them, it would be too much like admitting that he was unnerved.

He felt Malfoy's heartbeat and the other boy's heat seeped through his robes disconcertingly. He inhaled and noticed that Malfoy smelled pleasantly clean, like soap and fresh air. Harry was surprised. He would have thought that Malfoy would be doused in some atrocious and expensive cologne. He abruptly decided to stop thinking about Malfoy's scent.

"Lerner brought his teachings to Hogwarts nearly a decade after their development," Professor Mason continued. "His understudy, Derrick Spall, took over the class from him in the 1970's when I was a pupil. After I graduated, I studied under him and eventually took his position as professor six years ago. Sex Magic isn't just some perverse, hedonistic practice. It is a legitimate and highly useful branch of magic. Its use is usually limited to parents brewing more effective cold potions for their children, or making for themselves those products that would be expensive if bought in Diagon Alley. But very rarely two people are found who can generate enough magic between them to do amazing things."

Harry squirmed. He was not used to being this close to another person. He could feel every breath Malfoy took. He shifted restlessly, uncrossing his legs and stretching them out on either side of Malfoy's sides. This proved to be a rather unfortunate decision as it put Harry into even closer contact with him, particularly certain parts of Harry's anatomy that he'd rather not have Malfoy pressing into.

Malfoy gave no indication of seeming uncomfortable, and actually appeared to

have forgotten just who he was laying on in the midst of Mason's lecture. Harry glanced at the side of his face and found him staring attentively at the Professor. He appeared blissfully unaware of Harry's discomfort and Harry grit his teeth and looked away.

"That will be all for today. I'll see you next week," Mason said.

Harry gratefully shoved Malfoy away and jumped to his feet. The Slytherin gave him a vaguely confused and insulted look before schooling his expression into one of haughty distaste and rising to his feet. Harry considered the thought that maybe Malfoy hadn't wanted to get as far away from him as possible the moment they were allowed and it sent an odd guilty feeling through him.

"Mr. Potter? Mr. Malfoy? I'd like to have a word, if I could?" Professor Mason called out to them.

The two boys moved over to her, standing on opposite sides and shifting uncomfortably from foot to foot. Harry noticed that Malfoy was staring at the floor.

"As I'm sure you're well aware," Mason went on. "Your own participation in this class will differ somewhat from the other students. I've prepared for you a small handbook with all the information you'll need to know. It is required reading, do you understand? I will not have you hurting one another because you're too proud to learn how to do things properly."

"Yes, ma'am," the two of them muttered.

"Good. Here you are," she handed each of them a small, plain leather-bound book. "You are dismissed, Mr. Malfoy. I want to have an additional word with Mr. Potter."

Harry watched as Malfoy nodded and left the room. The blond's shoulders weren't as straight as they usually were and his head was slightly bowed. Harry felt something indescribable tug at him at the display of obvious humiliation.

"Mr. Potter," Professor Mason said quietly, drawing his attention back to her. "I want to speak with you bluntly, if that's all right?"

Harry nodded, feeling a prickle of unease at the seriousness of her tone.

"I want you to promise me that you will read that book," she pointed to the volume he was currently transferring from hand to hand. "Without the information it holds you most certainly will end up hurting either Mr. Malfoy, yourself, or both of you."

Harry stared at her blankly for a moment. "I don't understand. Why aren't you telling this to Malfoy too?"

Mason sighed. "Because, Mr. Potter, you are going to have to be the one to take control of this situation."

"I am?" Harry asked, surprised but relieved. Although he had a feeling that Malfoy wouldn't be agreeable to this development.

"Yes, you are," Mason told him. "I've been speaking with Headmistress McGonagall about your situation, and I was informed of the long-standing enmity between the two of you. I also spoke to Professor Snape about Mr. Malfoy's personal history. What I've learned worries me. It is likely that Mr. Malfoy will attempt to take control of this relationship with the goal in mind to humiliate you."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "I'd say it's almost certain that he will."

"You cannot let that happen," Mason said seriously. "From what I've been told, he has never had any reason to practice any form of restraint in his entire life. He does not have the self-control necessary to be considerate and empathetic with a lover. He could end up seriously injuring you. You, however, I think I can trust not to lash out at your partner due to past grievances. I don't believe that you will harm Mr. Malfoy, intentionally or otherwise. Am I right? Can I trust you?"

Harry swallowed and nodded. It was quite a bit to take in all at once.

"Yes," he said, meaning it. "I'll read it. I promise."

"Good. Thank you, Harry," Mason said, smiling. "I'll see you at dinner."

When she left, Harry cracked the book open and peeked inside. The contents were fairly straightforward and he began to understand just how important Mason's talk with him had been as he read through it.

Closing the book, Harry picked up his things and made his way down to dinner with a new perspective on things.

Chapter Five

"Today marks the beginning of our transition from theory to practice of the material. You've probably noticed that the room is a bit different today."

Harry had noticed that. Upon first walking into class the row of small booths with heavy purple curtains along the far wall had caught his eye. He found his gaze drawn back to them and apprehension seized him at the implications of what the more private accommodations could mean.

"We'll be starting slow, so there's no need to worry if you're unexperienced. Today you'll only be kissing your partners."

Through all of his many dreadful classes- Snape's humiliating Potions practicals, Umbridge's godawful DADA lessons, Trelawney's rubbish- Harry had never been more sorely tempted to walk out of a class than he was right then.

"Please move to one of the booths with your assigned partner and begin."

Harry didn't need to see Draco to know that he had remained just as firmly rooted to the spot as himself. He avoided looking directly at Professor Mason, prolonging the moment until she would force him to participate. He groaned when he heard her call their names.

"Mr. Potter? Mr. Malfoy? Could you come to the front, please?" she asked, and smiled at their identical scowls as they made their way to stand before her.

"There's no need for those frowns quite yet, boys. I knew you'd refuse to take part in today's lesson and I've arranged something special for you. Follow me."

Harry and Draco shared a puzzled look before falling into step behind her as she made her way to one of the booths. Once all three of them were inside, she drew the heavy violet drape closed and turned to face them.

The first thing that Harry noticed was that the booth, quite like the Weasleys' tents at the Quidditch World Cup, was much larger inside than it appeared from

the outside. It was comfortably furnished with two squashy armchairs and a loveseat. Harry and Draco each took one of the chairs. Mason remained standing.

"One moment," she said, searching through her robes. "Ah, here we are."

Drawing a small vial out of her pocket she unscrewed the cap and withdrew an eyedropper full of clear liquid. Tilting her head back, she carefully squeezed three drops onto her tongue before replacing the cap.

"Testing. My name is Alb- Rosemary Mason," she said awkwardly. "Well, everything appears to be in order."

"Er, Professor?" Harry spoke up. "Is that Veritaserum?"

"Yes, Harry, it is," she told him, walking toward the two boys seated across one another to set the vial down on a table between them. "I feel that you and Draco aren't comfortable enough with one another yet to take part in normal class lessons. Perhaps a bit of honesty will help to ease the problem."

"Doubtful," muttered Harry.

"Three drops, Mr. Potter. On the tongue," she ordered, arms folded over her chest.

Harry sighed and took the vial, letting the drops splatter onto his tongue. Reaching out, he set it back on the table and at Mason's nod watched as Malfoy copied him.

"Good," said Mason crisply. "You have the entire period, one hour, to discuss whatever you wish."

She waited a moment to make sure that they would start on their own, and predictably, they did not.

Sighing, she pulled the curtain back and snapped, "Mr. Potter, why did you jump

away from Mr. Malfoy as though he were diseased after the last class? Discuss."

Harry gaped at the closed curtain for several moments after she had left until the pull of the Veritaserum began to take effect. Gritting his teeth he glanced up through his bangs to see Malfoy staring at him intently.

"Because I was uncomfortable," he said quickly.

"Why?" Draco asked.

"What do you mean, why?" Harry asked, astounded. "I- we- We hate each other, Malfoy! I mean, it's been that way for years and suddenly we're cuddling? It was weird! But..."

Harry immediately shut his mouth with an audible click. The Veritaserum, however, deemed it necessary to answer both honestly and fully and he found himself drawing a deep breath to finish.

"But it wasn't all bad. It was warm," he said, furiously embarrassed.

"Warm?" Malfoy asked.

"Yes. I mean, you were. Warm." Harry said lamely, and felt the rest of it coming before he could stop it. "And you smelled good. And I was uncomfortable because it was you."

Closing his eyes, Harry clenched his traitorous jaw closed and tried not to think about what he'd just revealed. When no scathing retort came from the other side of the room, though, he quickly snatched up the opportunity to return the humiliating favor in kind.

"You didn't seem too eager to get away from me," he remarked, and watched the other boy go pink. "Why was that?"

It was interesting to watch the war waging between Malfoy's pride and the potion

in his system. When, predictably, the Veritaserum won out, the Slytherin released a breath and turned his face away from Harry before answering.

"I've never," he paused, desperately trying to come up with a less pathetic way of phrasing it and failing. "I've never been held."

Harry wasn't surprised. He'd never pictured Lucius and Narcissa as very cuddly. But somehow that revelation seemed monumental in understanding Malfoy. He knew the question hadn't been completely answered yet, though.

"When you pulled me around like that, I didn't know what to do. But after awhile, I started to like it, somewhat. It was warm, like you said, and it was... Sort of nice."

Harry swallowed, feeling a strange tightness in his chest that he couldn't identify and didn't want to investigate too deeply. Hating that Malfoy was becoming more human, he scrubbed a hand through his hair and sighed. "God, I can't stand you."

"Thanks, Potter," the blond muttered.

"What? Don't pretend that you don't feel the same way."

Draco remained quiet and under any other circumstances, Harry might have let it go. If the two of them hadn't ingested a truth-telling potion. It occurred to him that perhaps Draco wasn't saying anything because he hadn't been asked a direct question. "You do, don't you?"

Draco gripped the arms of his chair, obviously fighting the answer, before murmuring softly, "I don't know."

"Malfoy!" Harry jumped in his seat.

"Please, Potter, just leave it?" Draco winced, pressing his fingers to his eyes dejectedly. Ensuring that Harry couldn't probe further, he quickly asked, "Do you think we can do this? The whole Sex Magic thing?"

"I mean, we're going to have to," Harry said, still a bit unsteady from Malfoy's confession.

"Yeah," Draco agreed.

"But do you want to?" Harry had asked the question before he was even aware of wanting to know the answer.

"What kind of question is that? N- I mean, of course n-" Draco sputtered.

Harry's eyes went wide with malicious glee. "You do, don't you?"

"N-! Damn it! I didn't! Not until yesterday! With the whispering..."

"Whispering?" Harry pressed.

"Merlin, you're a sadist, Potter," Draco groaned. "Yes, whispering. In my ear. Last Friday."

"What about it?" Harry asked, genuinely confused.

Draco buried face in his hands. Harry felt embarrassed for him, but he was enjoying this immensely nonetheless.

"Your lips. They were very close to my ear, and your breath was hot, and your voice was pleasant," Draco said in a rush, eager to get it over with.

"You were shaking," Harry remembered, grinning.

"I was no- Oh, hell!" Draco deliberately banged the back of his head against his chair in defeat.

Harry chuckled, and Draco's eyes cracked open to glare at him heatedly. But then Draco was already turning the tables on him.

"What about you, Potter? Pulling me closer? Wrapping your legs around me? Don't tell me you didn't get something out of it."

"I was only trying to keep you from squirming!" Harry exclaimed, thrilled that it was true. "It wasn't my fault that you started pressing back against me! I couldn't help but get distracted."

"Distracted?" Draco repeated with a quirk of one eyebrow.

"Yes, distracted." Harry glared at him.

"Are you sure you weren't enjoying yourself?"

"Ye-" Harry cursed when the potion stopped him and growled instead. "No."

"So you did like it?"

"Yes," said Harry, obviously not liking this game. "Now bugger off, Malfoy."

"I'm only following directions, Potter," Draco smirked, using Harry's own words from the hand-holding lesson against him.

Harry resisted the urge to cross the space between them and knock that infuriating grin off of Malfoy's face.

Unnerved and deeply shaken by the openness that they'd just shared, Harry sank lower in his chair, crossing his arms over his chest. After a few moments, Draco shifted in his seat, the creak of springs loud in the silence.

"Do you really hate me?" he asked quietly.

"No," Harry answered automatically, not knowing that it was true until he'd said it. "I used to. But there's a lot of other stuff going on that's more important."

"Thanks," Draco muttered dryly.

"Don't pout," Harry snapped. "I guess I realized at the end of fifth year that I didn't hate you anymore. I know why things changed for me, but what about you?"

Draco didn't answer immediately. He drew his lower lip partially between his teeth and Harry's eyes followed the movement unconsciously. He thought about the other students in the booths around them kissing their partners, and the fact that he and Malfoy would have to kiss as well at some point. A smidge of anticipation tingled in his belly and Harry forced himself to stop thinking about it.

"I don't think I did hate you until the end of fifth year," Draco said softly, looking straight at Harry. "I was embarrassed when you rejected my friendship our first year. It stung and I wanted to hurt you back. But I don't think I genuinely hated you, because if you'd changed your mind and asked to be my friend I would have forgiven everything."

Harry stared at the other boy in mute shock for several seconds before voicing his thoughts. "You insulted my friends, made fun of my parents, and tried to get me expelled or possibly even killed because I hurt your feelings when we were eleven?"

"What can I say? I'm petty."

Harry sighed, rolling his eyes. "Continue. Fifth year?"

"Well, that all changed when you got my father in jail," Draco paused and made a disgusted sound. "As if it wasn't enough that you had to be so bloody perfect! Better at everything, getting away with breaking rules, the famous Boy Who Lived making the front page of the Prophet every other day... Then you had to go and take away the one thing in my life that made me feel that I had something over you."

He gave Harry a vicious look. "After all, at least I had a father."

Harry snarled. "Even under Vertitaserum, you're still just a snotty, spoiled little

boy who can only feel good about himself by making other people feel horrible."

Draco turned away and fell into a moody silence. Harry's brain nagged at him that he was missing something important.

"Wait a second," he began. "You still haven't answered my question. Why did you say earlier that you don't know whether or not you hate me?"

Draco turned to give him a look of extreme resentment. The muscles in his jaw twitched a bit as he clenched it tightly, but Harry knew that he had to answer whether he wanted to or not.

"I realized that it wasn't your fault," Draco answered through gritted teeth. "My father made a poor decision and got himself caught."

"Good," Harry said. "So you're not completely stupid after all."

"Fuck you, Potter," Draco breathed heatedly.

"No, Malfoy, I don't think that's the way it's going to be." Harry told him, and watched Malfoy's eyes go wide with shock and disbelief.

Both boys jumped when the curtain was suddenly drawn back and Professor Mason's silhouette filled the entrance.

"I've had the house elves deliver some sandwiches. You'll be completing the day's lesson after you've finished eating," she said, beckoning them out into the empty classroom. The rest of the students had left for dinner in the Great Hall.

The boys rose from their seats, glaring daggers at one another as they walked by her. Looking up toward the heavens, Rosemary Mason heaved a great sigh. "Well, that appears to have been productive."

Chapter Six

Rosemary Mason, in her full decade of teaching, had never witnessed two more prickly students than the ones currently sneaking hateful glances at each other in between bites of sandwich.

Sighing, she rubbed her forehead with her thumb and index finger and returned her attention to assessing the day's lesson. She had noticed quite a bit of pink energy coming from the Longbottom and Brown booth... She smiled. Those two would prove to be quite the match; not so much in power, but in true compatibility.

The thought brought her back around to the two boys in front of her. They had such potential. At first, she had imagined that the animosity between them would only fuel the heights to which their passion would take them, but she was beginning to have doubts. None of the initially tumultuous pairings she'd ever taught before had genuine reasons to hate each other. The usual schoolchild teasing, hair-pulling and whatnot, but nothing that couldn't be overcome. These two, on the other hand, were on opposite sides of a war.

Rosemary moved her gaze to Draco and felt her heart clench, as it always did when she dwelt too long upon certain students. She couldn't bring herself to imagine any of them doing the things that Death Eaters did. It seemed impossible for these smooth-cheeked innocents. If she were completely honest with herself she would admit her hope that the pairing between the Malfoy boy and Potter would win him over to the other side. That they would both be stronger for it and it could possibly make the difference between life or death, for the both of them.

The door handle clacked loudly in the silence and Minerva McGonagall entered, sparing a brief smile for Harry before making her way over to Rosemary's desk.

"Rosemary, I tried to get in touch with you earlier, but you were unavailable," she said briskly. "The staff meeting has been moved."

"Oh, alright," Mason blinked, confused. "Why?"

McGonagall didn't answer and her eyes slid to the side, silently indicating the two boys nearby. Nodding her understanding, Mason stood and motioned the Transfigurations professor to one of the booths. A marvelous insight on her part to have made the curtains soundproof.

"We're meeting in the Headmaster's office," McGonagall said in a low voice once the curtain was closed.

"I thought it was sealed up?"

"It was," said McGonagall with a loaded look in her eye. "We have a guest."

"Oh," Rosemary breathed, her mouth open slightly. "I see."

"I'll see you at eight o'clock. The password is lemon drops."

Rosemary smiled fondly and saw its reflection in the other woman. Unexpected guests were a happy occasion.

"It's time, boys," Mason told them, glancing at the clock as she held back the curtain to their booth. "You don't have long, as I have an engagement this evening. In you go."

Harry and Draco dropped their half-eaten sandwiches reluctantly. Moving more slowly than was strictly necessary, they made their way into the tent and turned to face Mason.

"Fifteen minutes, on the lips. No stalling," she told them, dropping the curtain into place.

Harry and Draco eyed one another skeptically in the muted light of the booth. Neither boy moved, most definitely stalling despite Mason's order. Their anger

from earlier seemed a distant memory, having been replaced by dizzying anxiety.

"So, er, do you want to sit down?" Harry gestured vaguely, and he noticed that Malfoy jumped.

"Sit down?" Draco parroted.

"On the sofa."

"Yeah," Malfoy nodded. "Okay."

Harry glanced at Malfoy out of the corner of his eye as they made their way over to the sofa. The other boy appeared quite flustered, swallowing frequently and wiping his hands on his robes. Harry thought back to their conversation earlier and the possibility that Malfoy might actually want to do this.

He looked down at his shoes as he sat down, feeling the cushions sag next to him under Malfoy's weight. If he were honest with himself he would have to admit that one of his main objections to this partnership with Malfoy was his own nervousness and feeling of inadequacy. Since the moment his shock at who he was paired with had worn off, his thoughts had mainly flickered back and forth between fear at what he would have to do and uncertainty at the fact that he would have to do it with another boy. His biggest surprise had come when he hadn't been repulsed outright at the idea of having sex with a boy, but rather terrified at the thought of having sex at all.

"Uh, Potter?" He heard Malfoy call his name quietly, almost fearfully.

"Hm?" Harry murmured distractedly. "Oh, yes. The- the kissing."

"Right. That." Malfoy nodded and looked away.

"Turn toward me," Harry said calmly, surprising himself.

Malfoy gave him a stunned look but otherwise did as he was told.

"Just do it and get it over with, then?" he asked sheepishly.

"That was what I had in mind," Harry agreed.

"Good. Yeah, okay. That's good."

"Malfoy, you're babbling." Harry told him, smiling slightly.

"Oh, sorry. Uh-"

Harry leaned forward suddenly, and Malfoy yelped and flinched back. Harry drew back as well and they stared at one another for a few seconds before a wide-eyed Malfoy swallowed and scooted closer. Harry took a deep breath and moved in again, stopping when their lips were close but not quite touching. He felt Malfoy's breath feather across his lips and looked up into half-closed gray eyes before they drifted down to settle on his mouth. Taking that as a cue, he leaned in.

He could say with utmost confidence that his second kiss differed in every way possible from his first. There was the obvious fact that the second was with a boy rather than a girl, but from there the differences became entirely based on sensation. Malfoy's lips weren't cold and slippery, they were warm and Harry's lips clung to them. He was surprised by the softness of another boy's mouth, something that until then he had attributed only to girls.

For the first few moments, neither of them moved. They sat there, mouths pressed together, awkward and uncertain for an indeterminate amount of time before Harry steeled himself against his fears and began kissing Malfoy properly. Draco drew in a quick breath, frozen in place.

Harry nearly made an involuntary noise when Malfoy's mouth finally began to move over his and provided a pleasant amount of pressure that made his head spin a little bit. He slid a hand into the hair at the nape of Malfoy's neck and tugged his head back. Draco brought a hand up to flutter along Harry's jaw and cheekbone.

Neither boy realized how intense things had become until Harry was pushing Malfoy onto his back. Malfoy fell back without hesitation at first, but tensed when he realized what was happening. Harry felt hands on his shoulders, resisting weakly, so he settled his weight more fully into the cradle of Draco's hips beneath him.

All of the fight suddenly drained out of Draco and his hands slid over the back of Harry's shoulders to tug him closer. Harry let instinct guide him as he swept his tongue out to press lightly against Malfoy's lips. He gasped and flung his head back, eyes wide as he looked up at Harry in shock. Their breathing was ragged and choppy in their chests as they stared at one another.

Draco's eyes flickered from side to side, attempting to read something in Harry's face. Harry held perfectly still, waiting for some sign to continue. Finally, Draco out a shaky sigh, lurched up and pressed his lips to Harry's again.

Harry felt Malfoy's mouth open under his and dove in. Draco made a tiny whimpering noise in his throat and pulled Harry firmly down on top of him. Harry let his trembling arms give out and settled eagerly onto the warm body beneath him, one leg between Malfoy's and the other knee dug into the cushions of the couch. Malfoy arched into him and he groaned, deepening the kiss and thrusting his tongue rhythmically into the warmth of the Slytherin's mouth. Malfoy's hands clenched over his ribcage and his left leg rose to straddle Harry's hip...

"Boys?" Mason's voice filtered through the lusty fog. "Are you finished?"

Harry wrenched his mouth away from Malfoy's and took several deep breaths, his chest pressing tightly to Malfoy's each time he inhaled. "Y-yeah," he responded. Clearing his throat, he reluctantly eased away from the warm body under him.

Malfoy drew himself up on his elbows as Harry settled back onto his side of the sofa. A heavy silence hung between the two of them as they straightened their robes and stood. Harry glanced in Malfoy's direction and Draco looked away quickly.

"So, uh... See you Wednesday." Harry muttered awkwardly.

"See you then," Draco responded tightly, avoiding Harry's eyes, and walked out of the booth.

Harry ducked under the curtain after him and blushed furiously at Professor Mason standing there, looking at him with a small smile on her face. "All right, Mr. Potter?"

"Yes," Harry responded a bit too loudly. "Fine."

Mason watched as the two boys left the room. They took care not to bump into one another on their way out the door. She should have known holding hands, snuggling, and long talks wouldn't work with these two. It would still take some work, she supposed, but judging by the brilliant white sparks that had been crackling above their booth, she doubted very much that they could hide from their feelings much longer.

Harry flung himself face down onto his bed the second he reached his room. The walk back to the Gryffindor dorm had been a highly uncomfortable one. Grimacing, he reached down and tugged on the front of his trousers. All he wanted was to have a wank and a good night's sleep.

"Harry?" Neville's voice called quietly from nearby.

Harry groaned. He did not want to talk to anyone at the moment, most especially not anyone associated with Sex Magic. Leaving his face buried in his pillow, he didn't bother looking up.

"What?" he asked testily, his voice muffled.

"How did it go?"

Harry sighed. He couldn't be cross with Neville. His voice held nothing but genuine concern.

"Horribly," he answered, secretly grateful that the Veritaserum had worn off. The thought that he knew he was lying followed close behind and Harry growled angrily into the pillow.

"Harry?"

Neville sounded worried and Harry turned his face toward him. "Sorry," he said. "It was just... Nevermind. How did it go with Lavender?"

"Great, after I got her to stop crying." Neville answered flatly, and Harry burst out laughing. Neville joined him after a moment and the two of them laughed together until their eyes watered. Harry shook his head and wiped away the moisture on his lashes.

"I'm sure you had it worse," Neville said finally, and Harry threw a pillow at him. Neville laughed and pulled his bedcurtains closed. "Goodnight, Harry."

"G'night, Neville," he returned, flipping over onto his back and removing his glasses. Kicking off his shoes and stripping down for bed he let out a sigh, relieved that his earlier problem had diminished. He really hadn't been looking forward to wanking off over Draco Malfoy.

Chapter Seven

Tuesday evening found Harry poring over Charms notes from the past six years- Hermione's of course- in preparation for an impromptu practice NEWT exam the next day. Covering the pages with one hand and staring at the floor, Harry cursed freely and frequently as he attempted to recite the incantations from memory.

A flash of scarlet seen out of the corner of his eye was his only warning before the rolls of parchment were snatched out of his hands.

"Give those over!" Ron demanded, plopping down into the chair across from him. "I'm so buggered for this test. Do you know how long it's been since I've studied Charms?"

"We'll fail it together, then," Harry groaned, passing a hand over his weary eyes.

Ron snorted in agreement, skimming over the notes in a hectic rustle of paper. After a while, his eyes began to dart between the pages and Harry, sneaking furtive glances at him when he thought he wasn't looking. Harry thought he knew what was on his best friend's mind, and intentionally avoided his gaze.

"Uh, Harry?"

Harry nearly groaned out loud when he heard Ron's unusually timid voice break the silence.

"What?" he asked testily, and hoped that Ron would take it as grumpiness over their upcoming test.

"Er," Ron paused, glancing back down at the notes nervously. "Neville said that you all had to kiss your partners in Sex Magic yesterday..."

"Yes," Harry answered shortly.

"Yeah, so, how did that go? You know, with Malfoy?"

"As opposed to with someone else, you mean?" Harry asked dryly. "How do you think it went? It was horrible. I had to kiss Malfoy."

"Oh, yeah," Ron nodded enthusiastically, making a face. "Disgusting. Right. But, Harry?"

"Yes, Ron?" Harry asked through gritted teeth, snatching one of the note parchments out his hand and pretending to read it.

"You're not... I mean, the Goblet obviously made a mistake when it teamed you up with Malfoy, right? Because you're not, y'know..."

"Gay?" Harry supplied for him, glaring angrily from over the top of the scroll. "No, I'm not. The Goblet made a mistake."

"You're sure?" Ron asked quietly, crinkling the remaining parchments in his hands worriedly. Something which Hermione would later yell at him for.

Anger bubbling over, Harry threw the scroll back at Ron, feeling a bit of satisfaction when it bounced off of his forehead. Pushing himself out of the chair, he stood before his friend with clenched fists.

"I am not gay!" he shouted, drawing the attention of the entire common room. "Furthermore, I still haven't completely forgiven you and your brothers for getting me into this mess! So just shut it, will you?"

"Okay. I'm sorry," said Ron, holding up his hands defensively.

Sighing, Harry ran a hand roughly through his hair, pacing away a few steps before turning back to face his shamed roommate. "I'm sorry, Ron. I didn't mean to... I just need to go for a walk, that's all."

"But it's past hours," Ron said half-heartedly. But Harry was already on his way up the stairs to their room to get his Invisibility Cloak.

Neville had endured Lavender's avoidance, her cold shoulder, her silent treatment, and her outright tantrums during their Sex Magic lessons for the past two weeks. To say that he was sick of it would be putting it mildly. To say that he had reached his breaking point would be more accurate.

Tuesday night found him writing an essay for Advanced Herbology on how the restorative properties of Mandrake Root and the detoxifying properties of bezoars could be combined and used as a highly effective cure for hangovers. He'd likely receive a few curt lines from Sprout about it. He and his semi-mentor didn't quite see eye to eye on the use of the plants that they both loved. She was always pursing her lips disapprovingly at his ideas for the use of powerful herbal remedies for common ailments. He could see the message scrawled in the footnotes now... "Honestly, Neville, Mandrake and bezoars? Would you waste such highly difficult to procure ingredients on the effects of stupidity and personal vice?"

He sighed, laying down his quill and rubbing the ache out of his hand, and glanced around the room sleepily. His gaze lighted on Lavender and he watched her chew the corner of her mouth as she concentrated on her Charms textbook. He smiled. It was nice to see her at ease for the first time since school had started. When she glanced up he gave a small wave. She frowned, her eyes going distant as she froze. Then, with a sudden burst of movement, she snapped her book shut, rose from her chair, and turned to flee.

Neville clenched his jaw and hesitated only a moment before following.

She was moving quickly when he caught up with her at the base of the stairs leading up to the girls' rooms. Catching a loose bit of her robes, he tugged her to a sudden stop. She whirled around with panicked look on her face. Neville thought she looked like a caged animal, her eyes flickering, looking for potential saviors to rescue her from him. He felt another surge of anger rise in his chest. Enough was enough.

"Why are you acting like this?" he demanded.

"Like what?" Lavender evaded, hoisting her book protectively to cover her chest.

"Avoiding me. Not speaking to me. Running away from me. What did I do to you?" he asked, the tether he'd kept on his hurt questions for the past fourteen days well and truly severed.

"Nothing!" she squeaked, her eyes wide with stunned disbelief. "Look, you just have to understand that I'm upset."

"Over what?" he asked, even though he knew.

"Neville, don't take this the wrong way, but I don't want to be your partner in Sex Magic," she told him.

"And that's my fault?" he asked bitterly.

"Well- yes, sort of," she said. "I know you have a crush on me. Have done for years. Maybe you influenced the Goblet in some way."

Neville did his best to keep from throttling her.

"Maybe so," he admitted, and watched her mouth drop open. She'd expected denial. "But either way, short of reaching into that goblet and tying our names together myself, I can't be expected to take the blame any more than you can. Ignoring me is not going to make it go away, and neither is having a crying fit during our lessons together. Have I told you that I'm not fond of that?"

"But I didn't want this!" she protested shrilly, her eyes going glassy with tears. "I wanted to be partnered with someone who was charming and good-looking! Who would give me flowers and sweets... Someone romantic! Who could waltz with me and sweep me off my feet. Someone like... Harry, or, I don't know, maybe even Blaise Zabini-"

Neville laughed so hard that she flinched back, glaring at him fiercely.

"Harry? Harry doesn't have a romantic bone in his body, and his waltzing abilities wouldn't make a lame mule jealous. Let's be honest here, the only reason you wanted Harry as a partner is because he's famous. And Zabini because he's rich. God, you really are as shallow as everyone thinks."

"Wha- I- How dare you?" Lavender sputtered.

"Yet despite that," Neville continued, leaning toward her.

He cut himself off. Despite the fact that he currently had Lavender Brown- the most popular girl in Gryffindor, if not in the whole of Hogwarts- backed up against a stone wall and completely in awe of him, his heart was in his throat and his stomach was near full of butterflies. His bravado had its limits, and the urge to run back to his homework was strong. Still, he stuck it out, looking down on Lavender's beautiful upturned face longingly.

"Despite what?" she asked quietly, and if she was slightly breathless she would never admit it.

Neville smiled. "I can waltz beautifully," he evaded. "My grandmum made me learn when I was eight."

He was pleased to see the shock register in her eyes, and when he turned to head back to his essay there was a smug spring to his step.

Harry hugged the translucent material of his cloak tighter across his chest, though his muttering made being invisible rather pointless.

"I'm not gay," he told the thin air for the sixth time. "Maybe Ron's gay. He was so interested in knowing what kissing Malfoy was like..."

Rounding the corner, he glanced briefly at the stone gargoyle guarding the Headmaster's office. He'd passed it often during his late night strolls over the past year and a half, and his eyes were always drawn to the cobwebs gathered at the base where it met the false wall behind it. They never failed to cause a brief pang in his gut- the disuse of the Headmaster's office somehow depressing to him even though he hadn't forgiven the man for the events of Fifth Year. But time eased all manner of wounds, and his bitterness towards the old man had faded considerably since then.

Tonight, however, the cobwebs were absent and a thick trail of dust extended out past the feet of the statue in a half-crescent. Harry drew up short, his sneakers scuffing loudly on the stone floor. He knew that no one could change the password but the Headmaster himself. So unless Dumbledore had returned, it would still be...

"Cockroach Cluster!" Harry shouted at the impassive face of the stone gargoyle. Tearing off his cloak when it did not move, thinking absurdly that somehow it had prevented his voice from carrying, he shouted again, "Cockroach Cluster!"

When the gargoyle still did not move, Harry shook himself out of his dazed immobility. Approaching the statue at a near run, he slammed his shoulder into its side. "Goddamnit, Cockroach Cluster!"

After several more minutes of shouted curses and inventive, painful ways of attempting to force the gargoyle aside, Harry slid, sweaty and exhausted, into a slouch at its feet. Taking off his glasses to wipe at the sweat stinging his eyes, he stared blurrily at the semicircular trail of dust and broken cobwebs before him. He knew that someone had been inside the Headmaster's office. He knew it!

"Lemon drop," a thin, reedy voice said from above him.

Harry cried out in surprise as the stone against his back moved suddenly and he fell backward. Stunned, he jerked his head up and peered at nothing. The air seemed to be swirling. He squinted at it, only succeeding in making himself dizzy. Fumbling for his glasses, Harry shoved them haphazardly onto his nose in time to

see the shimmering effect of an Invisibility Cloak being removed. Tattered robes around a wizened form appeared, before a wrinkled face surrounded by wild, frizzy gray hair.

"I've lost my taste for cockroach, I'm afraid," Albus Dumbledore explained, tucking the cloak under one arm as he reached the other down to Harry. "A rather unfortunate side effect of sharing a cave with a whole colony of them."

The Headmaster made a ghastly picture, ruined as he was, and Harry hesitantly took his hand, allowing himself to be helped to his feet.

"Come with me, Harry," Dumbledore told him. "I'm sure we have much to talk about."

Nodding mutely, Harry followed him up the winding staircase to his office, which was as oddly quaint as always. Harry had to turn away when Dumbledore took a seat behind his desk, so out of place did the frail, gray old man look amidst the clicking, sighing shiny objects and colorful portraits around him. He might have been a pile of ash against the bright red leather of his chair.

He heard Dumbledore take a deep breath and winced, not knowing if he was prepared to hear the sound of his sickly voice again- or what it would say.

"I imagine my appearance shocks you?"

"Yes," Harry responded, swallowing against a dry throat.

A silence fell and grew between them, heavy and unsettling. Harry kicked at the carpet with the toe of his shoe, suddenly unsure of why he'd wanted to see Dumbledore so badly in the first place. A year and a half of distance, as well as the betrayal of Fifth Year lay between them, and the longer the pause stretched the greater that gulf seemed. Harry wasn't entirely sure it could be breached after all this time, but the quiet was worse, and so he would try.

He cleared his throat. "You mentioned a cave."

"Ah, yes," Dumbledore smiled grimly. "My home away from home these long six months. Before then I'd been tracking Voldemort across the entire U.K. There were many reports, of course, but only a handful of them sounded promising. Due to Voldemort's terrible cleverness, however, those that were genuine were sketchy at best, and morsels of real information were difficult to pick out amongst the gossip. When I found him at last in early spring, I had to be careful to disguise my presence. The cloak helped."

Harry's head reeled at everything he'd just been told. So much information after a year and a half of nothing. Dumbledore knew where Voldemort was, what he was doing... He knew, and once again, he'd kept Harry in the dark.

Sensing his train of thought, the Headmaster quickly added, "I think you know, Harry, that if correspondence had been possible, you would have received news."

"Do I?" Harry asked coldly, the unspoken thing between them now laid out in the open.

Dumbledore sighed, settling deeper into his chair with a look of utter exhaustion.

"I regret nothing more than keeping so many secrets from you when you were younger, Harry," he began, his voice weary and heavy with guilt. "I've given my reasons, but I admit, they did not seem so valid when spoken as they felt to me at the time. I am sorry."

Harry looked away, his jaw clenching as he glared at Fawkes, sleeping peacefully on his perch. When he looked back at Dumbledore with the question that he had to ask on his tongue, his voice wavered.

"What is he doing?"

"Gathering forces, allies," said Dumbledore. "His army is nearly complete, all of his old comrades found and amassed."

"When?" Harry asked, knowing that he would be understood.

"Soon, I think," Dumbledore answered. "Harry..."

He paused, looking grave as he formed his next words. His eyes met Harry's and the younger man felt something inside of him recoil at the grim solemnness in the once twinkling gaze.

"You want me to treat you as an adult, and not a child. I think you have earned it, and so I shall give you honesty at its most complete and ugly." The Headmaster stared at his shriveled hands folded on the desktop. "War is coming. Many will die, and among their numbers will be those within these walls. Teachers, classmates, friends... Some of their deaths you will not be able to prevent, and some you will be responsible for."

Harry stared at Dumbledore, stubbornly refusing to listen to the weakness in his knees suggesting that he sit down. Refusing to entertain the image that wanted to make itself known, of Ron and Hermione, bloody and unmoving, with Harry standing above them, wand hanging limp and useless in his fingers.

"Harry," Dumbledore continued. "Turn him."

When Harry stared blankly, Dumbledore shook his head and turned his face away. "Turn him... if you don't want to have to kill him."

Understanding dawned slowly, and when it did Harry drew a sharp, shaky breath. Draco.

Only then did Harry give in to the demand in his knees, and sat. Dumbledore turned back round to face him and Harry forced himself to look, to see the damage done to the man in front of him, and to feel grateful for it.

"The password will be changed upon my leaving. In case you have need of it, it will be 'Love'. The one force on this earth that our enemy can't bring himself to face." Dumbledore told him, smiling wryly. "See? I have not lost my sense of

irony, at least."

Harry snorted a quiet laugh and watched as the Headmaster rose slowly, wincing at a pain that Harry could only guess at, and made his way around the desk to stand before him.

"I shall be on my way. Feel free to remain here for as long as you like," he said, and Harry felt a strong urge to say no; to grab onto him and force him to stay. Instead he nodded, and the Headmaster slipped around his chair and out of his sight. "Goodbye."

Harry remained alone in the not-quite-silence of the Headmaster's office, surrounded by the snores and sleepy murmurings of the portraits and Fawkes and the whistling, clicking noises of Dumbledore's toys. Dawn broke slowly, gray and then pink and then gold, filling the tower room with a warm glow. Taking one last look around, he left, descending the stairs with a heavy heart and more questions than he'd went in with.

His friends didn't ask questions when he arrived at breakfast with red eyes.

Chapter Eight

Harry was late getting to Sex Magic that day. As he sulked into the Room of Requirement, he noticed the sour expression on Mason's face and immediately dropped his gaze to his shoes. She shook her head and pointed to he and Malfoy's booth.

"In you go, Mr. Potter," she sighed. "He'll inform you of your instructions."

"Yes, ma'am," Harry mumbled, keeping his head down as he pulled back the curtain and stepped inside.

Malfoy sat tensely on the sofa, his knees pressed primly together and wringing his hands. He jumped when Harry entered, his face flickering through a myriad of swiftly concealed emotions. Harry ignored him and made his way over to the opposite end of the couch, slumping down onto it in a haphazard arrangement of limbs. Removing his glasses, he set them on the low table nearby and threw an arm over his eyes.

"Mason says you're supposed to tell me our assignment," he muttered, exhausted from lack of sleep.

"Er, yes," said Malfoy. "We're supposed to, um, do what we did last week... Only more."

"More?"

"Yes," answered Draco.

"What, exactly, does more entail?" asked Harry.

"Uh... The same thing, only in other places," he replied, clearly uncomfortable.

Harry sighed impatiently, not in the mood to deal with Malfoy's evasiveness.

"Malfoy, just tell me what it is we're supposed to do."

"I already told you!" Draco said defensively.

"How about you just show me?" Harry muttered.

He hadn't truly realized what he'd said until he heard Malfoy's quiet "okay", and felt a warm pressure settle onto his lap. Jerking his arm away from his face so quickly that he almost hit the other boy, he stared incredulously up at Malfoy.

"What?" Malfoy protested, immediately attempting to back off. "You said-!"

"I know. It's okay," Harry told him, bringing his hands down to grasp Malfoy's hips. "You just startled me."

"Let go!" Draco ordered, pushing against Harry's hands.

"What? Why?" asked Harry, confused.

"I don't want to anymore!"

Harry rolled his eyes.

"Will you just calm down?" he asked irritably, attempting to get a better hold on the squirming boy.

"I. Said. Let. Go!" Draco shouted, punctuating each word with a shove against Harry's chest.

"Ouch! Damn it, Malfoy!"

Grappling for control, Harry managed to ensnare Draco's hands in a firm grip and hauled them behind his back. Draco let out a very childish sound of frustration and reared back, his unsteady balance in Harry's lap and his own weight carrying him over the edge of the couch. Harry, his hands pulled helplessly along, followed with a startled grunt.

They hit the floor in an ungraceful, tangled sprawl. Harry's nose was smashed against the floor, his hands still caught underneath Malfoy. Draco groaned and shifted, attempting to maneuver around Harry's knuckles pressed into the small of his back.

"Here, lift up a bit," said Harry.

Draco did as asked, arching his back up off of the floor so that Harry could slide his hands out from underneath him. Harry pushed himself into a more comfortable position, turning his head so that his cheek lay against the cool floor.

"Thanks," he murmured.

His breath passed over Draco's ear and he felt the blond tense. Harry grinned, remembering the sensitivity of his partner's ears, and deliberately blew a soft stream of air over the lobe. Draco gasped.

"Get off," he ordered.

Harry chuckled and Draco squirmed, the sound vibrating warmly close to his ear. "That's for next week."

Draco's mouth dropped open. "You've been reading ahead in the lesson plan!" he accused.

"Yes," Harry agreed, leaning forward to nuzzle the hollow behind the other boy's ear.

Draco made a strangled mewling sound and brought his hands up to clutch at Harry's shoulders. Taking it as a cue that they were through with conversation, Harry put his mouth to other uses.

Planting soft, open-mouthed kisses over the firm skin of Malfoy's throat, he worked his way down to his collar and back up. When he reached the highly sensitive earlobe, he drew it into his mouth and ran his tongue over. Draco

gasped loudly and shifted beneath him, his body jerking with each lap of Harry's tongue. Too pleased with the reaction he was getting out of his partner to stop, Harry added a gentle nip. Draco fairly writhed underneath him, his chest heaving with shaky, stuttering breaths.

"Potter..." he moaned.

Harry pulled away, catching a quick glimpse of Malfoy's flushed face before he closed his eyes and kissed him.

It wasn't like last time; no awkward mashing of lips. Malfoy hesitated momentarily, then he was kissing Harry back, drawing him closer and opening his mouth to draw in Harry's tongue.

Harry shifted on top of Malfoy so that he settled comfortably between his thighs. He gasped against the other boy's mouth at the feel of the hard line of an erection pressed into his hip. He couldn't blame Malfoy, he was halfway there himself.

Malfoy suddenly tore his mouth away from Harry's and latched it onto the side of his neck. Harry cried out in surprise at the feeling of something hot and slick pressed into his throat. If Malfoy lacked in finesse, Harry didn't mind. The Slytherin's mouth moved sloppily and without any pattern. He licked the line of Harry's collarbone, dipping into the hollow there and sucking hard. Harry moaned, fingers clawing at the ground on either side of Draco's head. Draco grinned against his shoulder and repeated the gesture in various spots all over Harry's neck, seeing which ones produced the strongest reactions. Harry endured it as long as he could before fisting a hand in Malfoy's hair and jerking his head away from his thoroughly laved neck.

Darkened gray eyes stared up at him, and the look in them was something that Harry had never seen before. Hatred, amusement, mocking disdain... Those were looks that he was used to getting from Malfoy. This wild, intense look of hunger and anticipation was new, and exciting.

Harry wrapped his other hand in the front of Draco's robes and tugged him up into a hard kiss. Draco's breath was hot against his cheek and his forehead was feverish and damp. Harry groaned and sank deeper into the pliant body beneath his, pressing the other boy into the floor. Malfoy whimpered harshly, jerking his hips upward. Harry understood, distantly, and pressed back against him.

His abdomen tightened as a spark of pleasure seared down his spine. He wrenched away from the kiss with an audible smacking sound, gasping in air as he rocked steadily against the warm body under him. Malfoy arched up rhythmically, making small, soft noises as he panted. The sound made Harry growl animalistically, and he buried his face in the crook of the blond's neck and shoulder and marked him with his teeth.

"That'll be enough, boys."

Professor Mason's cool voice filtered through the thick, hazy fog of Harry's consciousness. Flinging his head back, he craned his neck up to look at the professor, who stood with arms crossed above the two of them.

"Wh-wha?" Draco asked, utterly disoriented and still making minute thrusts with his hips against Harry.

Harry, on the other hand, felt Mason's presence like a shock of cold water. He clambered off of Malfoy, feeling uncomfortably hot and sweaty, and immensely dissatisfied.

"Too far, gentlemen," she told them. "I understand that it can be hard for the both of you, with this being the first time that you're experiencing these feelings, but I need you to practice some control. You're already far ahead of most of the class."

Harry tugged the front of his robes away from his body, his cheeks burning with embarrassment as he attempted to hide the evidence of just how advanced their assignment had gotten. Draco sat up and hugged his knees to his chest, staring toward the back of the booth miserably. His profile was to Harry, but his hair had

fallen forward, curtaining any indication of what he was thinking.

Mason left quietly, leaving the two of them in uncomfortable silence. Harry took a breath and turned to say something, but stopped as he caught sight of something peeking above Malfoy's collar. A large, deep red mark showed starkly against the pale skin. Harry swallowed, remembering how soft Malfoy's skin was and how it gave under his teeth, how the other boy's sweat tasted.

Pushing himself rather violently to his feet, Harry hauled the curtain back and fled.

Harry felt the warmth and weight of another body settle next to him on the grassy bank of the lake. A bulging napkin was placed in his lap, the hand depositing it giving his knee a squeeze before retreating. He looked up to see Hermione, who smiled before turning away to look at the sunset riding low on the horizon, transforming the lake into a living thing of glittering gold ripples. He unfolded the napkin to find half of a meat pie and a chicken leg and realized for the first time that he was hungry. He'd come straight here after class, avoiding the Great Hall altogether.

"Thanks," he said, lifting the still-steaming pie to his mouth.

Hermione shrugged, toying with a blade of grass. Harry could tell that she wasn't here only because he skipped a meal, and waited until she'd found the proper words.

"Ron thinks you're really upset with him," she began. "He said that you didn't come back from your walk last night, and didn't speak to him this morning, or at lunch. When you didn't show up for dinner, either, he was worried. Really, Harry, he was just curious. He didn't mean anything by it."

"I'm not upset with Ron," Harry said, wiping away a few flakes of crust clinging to the corner of his mouth. "I knew that I was blowing up over nothing, that's why I

went for a walk in the first place. To cool my head."

"What happened on that walk?" Hermione asked cleverly.

Harry paused, twirling the drumstick between his fingers, before asking a question of his own. "Have you had a lemon drop recently, Hermione?"

"No. Why?"

"I had fifteen last night," he told her. "They were very stale."

Hermione stared at him perplexedly for several moments before her mouth fell open in a small circle of surprise.

"Dumbledore?" she breathed, looking around suspiciously.

Harry nodded.

"Here? How? Why now? Is something... did something happen?"

Harry turned to face her. "Voldemort is gathering forces. Tracking down his old allies and mustering up a Dark Army. Dumbledore says his ranks are nearly full. He thinks he'll make his move soon."

Hermione said nothing. Harry had always treasured her quiet contemplativeness in times of distress. He toyed with the corner of his napkin, and wasn't expecting it when she suddenly changed the topic.

"Did you tell Dumbledore about Sex Magic?" she asked.

Harry blinked, thrown, before answering. "I honestly didn't think to bring it up."

"How's that going?" Hermione asked cautiously.

Harry didn't answer, opting instead to stuff a large bite of chicken into his mouth.

Hermione's eyebrows rose.

"That good, huh?" she asked, grinning.

Harry choked on his half-chewed mouthful, and couldn't tell whether his face was more red from lack of oxygen or embarrassment. "Wha-? That's totally- You... how did you know?"

Hermione's brows shot further into her hairline and she laughed. "I was only joking. I didn't know, until now."

If possible, Harry reddened even further. Hermione looked at him rather askance, seeming unable to decide between concern or amusement. Harry laughed suddenly and she shook her head, not understanding.

"I'm not scared," he said bitterly. "Of Voldemort, his army of Death Eaters and Dark Creatures, the war. None of it really frightens me. But this... this thing with Malfoy. It terrifies me."

"Well, I'd imagine that being forced to shag one's nemesis would unnerve most people," she said.

"No," Harry shook his head. "It's because I'm liking it."

If one thing could be said about Hermione, it was that she handled such things with grace. Whereas Ron would have exploded at such a revelation, she merely sighed and looked genuinely disappointed.

"Look, Harry," she began, her tone serious. "You're a seventeen-year-old boy. Any... physical intimacy is bound to be pleasurable for you. It doesn't have to mean anything. It doesn't say anything about you."

"I know. It doesn't have to," he agreed. "But it does."

Harry drew his arm back, letting the chicken leg bone fly in an arc across the

dusky pink sky. It landed with a soft sploosh on the surface of the lake, and a long tentacle reached out to snatch it. Swallowing against a sudden tightness in his throat, Harry buried his face in his hands and sighed. Hermione scooted closer, wrapping her arms around him, and sat with him until he stopped shaking.

Chapter Nine

"So, everything's all right, then?"

To the casual observer, Ron Weasley, out on his nightly rounds of the fifth floor's deserted halls, would appear to be speaking to thin air. And if two sets of footsteps sounded in the quiet of the sleeping school, it could be put down to echoes within the drafty corridors.

"Not everything, no," said Harry, his head bowed beneath the fabric of his Invisibility Cloak. "I mean, I'm still snogging Malfoy, aren't I? And enjoying it. But between us? Yeah."

"Good," Ron sighed with relief. "Is there anything I can help with? Not that I want to hear about what you and Malfoy get up to, mind you..."

"No, Ron." Harry shook his head and the air rippled with the shifting fabric. "I've got to figure this out on my own."

"All right, then."

They came to a cross in the corridor and Ron paused. "You coming?"

"No, I think I'd like to walk on my own for a little while. You mind?"

"Nah," Ron smiled. "See you back at Gryffindor?"

"Sure," Harry nodded, even though he knew Ron couldn't see.

With a wave, Ron departed, choosing the hallway to their left. Harry glanced between the remaining two, and started down the one leading to the stairs. He supposed that mindlessly browsing the armor gallery might help him to think.

Taking the stairs in a slow, loping gait, Harry thought about his current situation. He'd pretty much come to terms with the fact that kissing Malfoy was rather

pleasant. He'd also decided that whatever questions that raised about his sexuality could wait until after the sociopath who wanted to kill him had been dealt with.

But there still remained the issue that Harry was a virgin, and he wasn't certain that he wanted his first sexual experience to be with someone he didn't even like. Not that he had a choice, he reminded himself bitterly.

Left to his resentful thoughts, Harry didn't notice the figure rounding the doorway of the trophy room until it was too late. He collided with something hard and pointy and it squawked.

Harry stumbled back a few steps and looked up to see Draco Malfoy standing a few feet in front of him, dazed and rubbing his rapidly swelling nose. He raised his wand and waved it about defensively, his eyes suspicious and a little scared.

"Who's there?" he demanded, as though he expected an answer.

Harry smirked behind his cloak, remembering their Third Year, when he'd frightened the piss out of Malfoy in a situation much like this one. Intending to simply step around the other boy and continue with his walk, he was surprised when Malfoy followed the sound of movement and shouted, "Accio wand!"

Harry gasped as his wand flew from his pocket and the momentum behind it carried the cloak with it. Both objects flew smoothly into Malfoy's outstretched hand. Caught fair and square, he shoved his hands into his pockets and waited for Malfoy to start talking, which would undoubtedly be soon.

"So, Potter," Malfoy drawled, wrapping the fabric of Harry's cloak around the fingers of his left hand. He tucked Harry's wand into the side of his trousers, while keeping his own wand trained on Harry himself. "Out after hours? And caught with a forbidden magical object, no less. Perhaps I should inform Mr. Filch?"

"Give me back my cloak, Malfoy." Harry said tightly. The sight of such a cherished object in Malfoy's hands sent an uncomfortable skitter through his stomach.

"Oh, I don't think so." Draco smirked. "You know, I've always wanted an Invisibility Cloak. I think I'll just take yours."

"Give it back, Malfoy." Harry took a threatening step forward, and drew up short when Draco pointed his wand at his chin.

"Stay back, or I'll be forced to hex you. I think you'd be surprised at the array of spells that Professor Snape has authorized Slytherin Prefects to use against students... especially Gryffindor students."

"I just want my cloak," Harry began, trying to reason with him. "You can keep my wand, and report me to whomever you like, but just give me back my cloak."

"Make me," Malfoy smiled nastily.

Harry hesitated, the wand in his face a tricky thing to maneuver around. Malfoy must've mistaken his silence, however, because in the next moment his smile turned into a look of disgust.

"Ew! Not like that, Potter!" he said loudly.

"Not what?" Harry asked, genuinely confused.

"That's disgusting!" Malfoy continued, as if Harry had the slightest clue what he was talking about. "Look, whatever I may be forced to do with you in class-

"I didn't say anything like that, Malfoy," Harry told him, annoyed.

"No, but you were thinking it!" Draco accused.

Harry rolled his eyes. "Oh, I was n- Look, just give it to me!"

Harry lunged for his cloak, taking care to dodge to his left to avoid the wand pointed in his direction. Draco wasn't expecting him to move so suddenly, and tried to bring his aim back around. He only succeeded in whacking the side of

Harry's head with his forearm. Harry caught a corner of his cloak and tugged, forcing Malfoy to stumble. Overbalancing, Draco grabbed onto the other end of cloak for support.

"Let go!" Harry shouted, heaving backwards.

"No!" Draco shouted back, tugging back.

"Careful, you're going to rip it!" Harry warned, his eyes wide and distraught behind his glasses.

"What do I care?" Draco sneered, and shrugged.

And that's when Harry caught sight of it. The same purple mark from earlier, there, just above Malfoy's collar. He could barely see it peaking above the stiff white fabric of Malfoy's undershirt, but it was there, and Harry stared.

"What...?" Draco asked cautiously, craning his neck to try and catch a glimpse of what was holding Harry's interest.

Harry looked up from his preoccupation with Malfoy's neck and drew a deep breath. The cloak was held limply in his hands, nearly forgotten, as Draco looked back at him. Both boys fell into silence, and whatever squabble they'd been having was no longer important. Harry felt as though smoke were filling his lungs, hot and choking. Draco swallowed, his eyes doing the thing where they flicked from one side of Harry's face to the other, as though he was weighing his options. Harry felt the insane urge to kiss him, and took a step forward...

"Don't!" Draco nearly shouted, backing away hastily.

Harry stopped, feeling frustrated and angry. Draco was staring at him with a pleading look on his face, silently asking Harry not to bring this thing between them here, out into the open, where it would be more real somehow. This wasn't class, nothing was expected of them, it wasn't okay to do this here.

Cursing, Harry turned on his heel and walked a few steps away, dragging his hands through his hair. Turning back around, he stalked forward and watched as Malfoy shrunk back from him. All he could see were wide, anticipating gray eyes and inviting lips. Clenching his teeth, Harry snatched his cloak out of Draco's nerveless fingers, yanked his wand from the waistband of his trousers, and turned back the way he'd come. He wasn't in the mood to look at suits of armor anymore.

He heard Draco shouting at his back in a high, trembling voice, deducting the maximum points possible as a Prefect from Gryffindor.

Parvati Patil's perfectly executed carrying whisper, entirely unique to teenage girls, flew over the Gryffindor table the next morning like a very annoying bird.

"Lavender, are you reading what I think you're reading?"

Lavender Brown colored, shooting her best friend a challenging look over her copy of Witch Weekly, before continuing to read.

"'Fifty Ways To Please Your Wizard'?" Parvati read the article's title aloud.

"Lavender, I hope you're only reading that for theoretical educational value."

At that, Lavender turned an even deeper shade of pink.

"Lavender! You're not thinking of-"

"So what if I am?" the blonde girl asked, tilting her chin up defiantly.

"Not with Neville? Oh, really, Lavender, please! I know that you have to do things with him in that class, but you don't have to... to make sure he likes it!"

"What if I want to make sure he likes it, Parvati?" Lavender asked, closing her magazine and carefully setting it aside.

"Why would you want to?" the darker girl asked, her nose scrunched up in distaste.

"Because he's not a bad bloke!" said Lavender defensively. "He's not like other boys. Neville Longbottom is a gentleman."

Sniffing huffily, Lavender resumed her reading, leaving a very bewildered Parvati Patil staring at her breakfast.

Across the table, Hermione smiled. "Remind me to ask Neville what he did to knock some sense into that girl's head."

Ron snickered, and Harry said nothing as he continued to stare at the cover of Lavender's copy of Witch Weekly. On it was a witch and wizard, caught up in each other's arms and smiling, obviously caught in a moment of lover's silliness. Next to the photo read the caption, "Want to know what he really likes? We polled fifty wizards on their favorite things a witch can do in the bedroom. Read more inside!"

When the time came for the Gryffindors to make their way to their first classes, Harry walked a few steps behind Lavender, his eyes fastened on the corner of the glossy magazine sticking out of her bag. Glancing around to make sure he wouldn't be noticed, he whispered a quick, "Accio!" and the magazine flew smoothly into his hand.

Tucking it discreetly into his bag, Harry turned to Ron and Hermione and joined in the discussion about NEWT exams.

Chapter Ten

Harry read the intriguing - and rather sexist, in his opinion - subtitle of the Witch Weekly article again. Glancing furtively at the closed curtains around his bed, he tentatively poked at them with his wand to ensure that the locking charm was still in effect. Surely enough, they resisted the gentle nudge with the tenacity of marble. Feeling slightly better now that he knew that Ron wouldn't be throwing open the curtains anytime soon, Harry read on.

"I really like it when my girlfriend sucks on my toes." - Adam Lambert, 23, Liverpool

Ugh, no, thought Harry.

"I love being teased. Little outfits, stripteases, being tied down..." - Jacob Bruns, 32, Perth

Definitely not, Harry decided with finality.

"Surprise blowjobs are the best." - Bailey West, 27, Cork

Harry's eyebrows shot up. He hadn't really thought about that. He had read ahead in the syllabus, yes, but only to the part about manual stimulation. He didn't really have a problem giving Malfoy a handjob; it was like masturbating, only in reverse. But putting his mouth on another bloke's equipment...

Shaking his head, Harry pushed those thoughts aside and concentrated on the article once more.

"I have very sensitive ears..."

Harry perked up at that, glancing at the name.

"Well, Calvin Numaker, twenty-five, of Derby... tell me more."

Reading on, Harry's face split into a very wicked sort of grin. Tomorrow's lesson would be fun.

"For today and next Monday's lessons, you are free to do anything you please. You may continue on as you have been doing, try something a bit more advanced, or simply talk to one another. However, I ask that your skirts, trousers and underthings remain undisturbed. You are free to begin."

So Professor Mason had told her assembled students when class had begun twenty minutes ago, and yet somehow Harry and Draco had wound up on the sofa, both of them shirtless and out of breath from a heated bout of snogging. Malfoy half-sat, half-lay on the sofa, one arm braced on the cushioned end, the other draped over Harry's shoulder as he clutched at the back of his neck. Harry knelt over Malfoy's torso, his hands digging into the other boy's scalp as he clenched his fingers in his hair.

Harry broke away and Malfoy's hand tightened around his nape, trying to tug him forward again. Harry shook his head.

"I want to try something," he murmured huskily.

Without giving Draco time to answer, Harry dipped his head and licked a long line along the shell of Draco's ear. Just as last time, Malfoy stiffened, and a small sound of distressed pleasure escaped his mouth. Harry took his time, circling the hard ridges and soft lobe of Malfoy's ear. Several of the men in the article had stressed anticipation and teasing.

Taking a deep breath, Harry stretched his tongue out into a firm point and dipped it into the very core of Malfoy's ear. The blond boy yelped and jerked under Harry, both hands coming up to clasp onto either side of the Gryffindor's ribcage. Harry grinned as best he could with his mouth stretched wide, and repeated the gesture... over, and over, and over.

Draco panted, his entire body arching further and further off the couch with every thrust of Harry's tongue. Harry noticed that even though Draco was very much enjoying having his ear tongue-fucked, he didn't seem very disposed to making much noise. He'd always assumed that Draco would be as loud during sex as he was at any other time... Not that he'd thought about it. But, he decided, the small, almost desperately restrained sounds that Draco did make were incredibly hot all the same.

Sliding his tongue down Malfoy's jawline, he looked up and caught a glimpse of his face. Draco's eyes were closed and his mouth gaped open in a silent scream.

Leaning up, Harry caught Draco's lips in a kiss; one that was enthusiastically returned. Acting impulsively, Harry let his hand glide down from Draco's shoulder, over his chest and stomach, until his fingertips brushed the rough edge of his trouser's waistline. Draco stopped kissing him, pulling away with a look that was muddled with desire and uncertainty.

Harry popped open the button of his fly.

Draco took a deep breath, moistening his lips with the tip of his tongue.

"We're not supposed to," he said breathlessly.

Draco was shaking like a leaf under Harry. Harry's fingers lay tantalizingly close to the tip of his erection, and Harry could feel that the moment rested on a knife's edge. Yet, true to Gryffindor form, he played precisely the worst card possible.

"Mason said we could do anything we want," he told the other boy.

And like that, concepts like 'want' and 'choice' were thrown like a gauntlet, and Draco reacted accordingly.

Pushing Harry away, he scrambled back onto his hindquarters, squatting awkwardly on the arm of the sofa.

"Well then, we don't have to do anything then, do we?" he sneered icily.

"No, I suppose we don't," Harry returned.

Draco stood and walked over to one of the armchairs, fastening his fly and shooting a glare over his shoulder at Harry as he went.

Harry sighed, reaching down to adjust his own discomfort as he sat back onto the uncomfortably warm and moist sofa cushions. The room smelled like sweat, saliva and the musky scent of two aroused teenage boys. At his wit's end, Harry screwed his eyes shut and willed a wall into existence between himself and Draco. He heard the other boy's startled shout cut short, and knew that the Room of Requirement had obeyed his wishes. He opened his eyes to see an indistinct white wall dividing the booth neatly in two.

Reaching hastily to undo his trousers, Harry drew out his neglected erection with a sigh of contentment. Pulling himself off in slow, lazy strokes, Harry wondered if Draco was doing the same right now. Concentrating on the wall, he tried to will a tiny hole into it, wanting to hear some indication of what the Slytherin was up to. However, no matter how hard he tried, he could not succeed in making so much as a dent in the barrier.

Which meant that as much as Harry wanted to know what Draco was doing on the other side, Draco must not want Harry to know even more.

With that thought in mind, it didn't take long before Harry was pulsing into his own hand.

Draco was startled when a wall suddenly materialized between himself and Potter. For several moments after Potter had isolated himself, Draco stood at the wall, shouting demands and threats to take away House points for its immediate removal. Frustrated and a little insulted, he'd given up, flinging himself into a chair dejectedly and wondering why Potter had put the damn thing up in the first

place.

An insistent throb in his pants gave him his first clue.

Glancing with trepidation at the wall out of the corner of his eye, Draco slid a hand over his erection through the material of his trousers. His eyes closed and he sighed as he teased his fingers up and down his own length. Opening his eyes a crack, he gave the wall one last distrustful look before quickly undoing his trousers and sliding his underpants down his hips. Taking himself in his hand, he worked quickly, convinced that Harry would change his mind and make the wall go away any second. Silently, he willed it to remain up just a bit longer, just a bit...

Pulling on his sensitive flesh rapidly, Draco silently berated himself. He'd been so close to having someone other than himself touch his dick for the first time. Even if it had been Potter... Potter's hand... almost touching... almost... Oh!

Rosemary Mason was lazily observing the swirling blue-green clouds above Padma Patil and Theodore Nott's booth when she heard the sound of hot, electric snapping from behind her left shoulder. Whirling around she saw what was essentially a heat lightning storm above the Potter/Malfoy booth.

Daft boys, not again! She cursed them silently, and quickly cast a Divining charm to discover the activities inside the tent. She was surprised to find that the boys were separated. A grin spread across her lips when she saw the magical barrier between the two of them, and what each of them were up to.

Well, well, she thought with a chuckle. It would seem that even when apart, the two of them were solely focused on each other. Giving the fading, crackling lightshow one last glance, she shook her head and turned to face the Longbottom/Brown booth, where a warm, orange-tinged pink aura gave off a swelling radiance.

Some strength, she thought, lay not in power but in endurance.

Neville laughed nervously and lifted one hand to rub at the back of his neck.

"It's silly," he said dismissively. "It'll just end up in the growing pile of my ideas that Sprout tosses out."

"No! It's really quite brilliant, Neville." Lavender assured him. "How is it that you're so terrible at Potions? You understand the ingredients and their properties so well!"

"Only the herbal ones," he corrected her. "And being able to tell what does what in a potion and actually being able to brew it properly are two different things."

He shook his head. "It's a hangover remedy, Lavender. It's not like there aren't hundreds of others out there."

Lavender waved a hand imperiously, dismissing his humbleness. "Those other remedies either don't work very well, or don't work at all. And the charms are either too difficult or leave side effects of their own. This sounds like it might actually work."

"Professor Sprout is right, the ingredients are too expensive and rare to waste."

"Who said it would be wasteful? Imagine how many tardies and call-offs in the workplace it would cut back on. It would only increase productivity. Besides, let me tell you something... Do you have any idea how much I pay for my face cream?"

Neville shook his head warily.

"Fifty Sickles a jar," she told him with a slightly embarrassed smile.

"Fifty Sickles? For makeup?" Neville asked, as though it were the most ridiculous thing he'd ever heard of.

"Face cream isn't makeup," she corrected him offhandedly. "But that isn't the point. The point is that it works. I'm willing to pay more money for it because it does wonders for my skin. This potion of yours... It may cost more, but if it works, the public will be willing to pay for it."

Neville's brow creased in contemplation for a few moments before responding. "Why do you act so ditzy all of the time? You're smarter than you let people believe."

Lavender shrugged and gave him a smug smile. "It's like having a secret identity. I like being mysterious."

He laughed and without thinking, she leaned in and kissed him. He raised one hand to cup the back of her head and kissed back softly. When they pulled apart at last, they were both still smiling.

Chapter Eleven

Harry was strongly reminded of the staring contests that he and Dudley would sometimes engage in when they were children and irrationally, he found himself just as unwilling to be the one to look away first.

Malfoy sat, arms tucked tightly across his chest, legs crossed and one foot tapping against the leg of his chair. He glared heatedly back at Harry, somehow cluing into the point of the Muggle game, and refused to break eye contact.

There had been no impromptu snogging this time. Mason had said that they could do whatever they wanted, and Draco had made it clear that he did not want a repeat of their last lesson together.

Clearing his throat loudly, Harry watched Draco give a little jerk of surprise, and opened his mouth to speak.

"So, er... Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw next week. Who do you think will win?"

Draco glared at him suspiciously for a few moments, before asking, "What is this, Potter?"

"It's called small talk, Malfoy," Harry responded. "I figured that since we'll be spending quite a bit of time together-"

"No, we won't," Draco fired back. "We will be attending class, shagging when required, and leaving. After the year is over, I don't plan on spending another minute in your presence, if at all possible."

"What about what Mason said? About partners becoming attached to one another?"

Draco scoffed. "And how do you think that'll work? What with my working for the wizard that wants to kill you, and all."

"Do you mean that?" Harry asked, his eyes narrowing.

"Of course I do," Draco told him firmly. "And I don't care that you know, either. As far as I'm concerned, you can go running to McGonagall and tattle on me if you like. I've toyed with the idea of leaving school early, anyway. In fact, why don't you go right now? If they kick me out, it'll save me from having to snog you anymore."

"I can't believe you're still planning on being a Death Eater. Not after all we've-

"What? So we're boyfriends, now?" Draco interrupted. His voice was high, and his cheeks were beginning to tinge pink. "I'm supposed to give up my future because I've snogged the Boy Who Lived a few times?"

Harry shook his head and looked away. "Whatever, Malfoy. Can we just go back to not talking, please?"

"Fine by me, Potter."

Draco crossed his arms over his chest again and huffed angrily. Harry caught him giving him furtive glances from the corner of his eyes, and wondered if Malfoy was perhaps gauging his reaction to this little revelation. Harry sighed and sank deeper into his chair, ignoring Malfoy entirely. He wasn't surprised by the news that Draco still planned to become a Death Eater, but it was discouraging nonetheless. He would have to, as Dumbledore put it, turn him.

The only problem that remained was how, though Harry thought he had an idea. And so, he decided, tomorrow would mark the beginning of his seduction of Draco Malfoy.

It was impossible to sleep that night, with his brain running through a list of ideas for how to bring Malfoy over to the right side that was more conducive to wanking than sleep. The next night Ron's snores and Harry's impatience reached a

crescendo, and Harry, hollow-eyed and grumpy, snatched up his Invisibility Cloak with more force than was necessary and went for a walk.

Without meaning to, Harry had blearily made his way to the seventh floor corridor. He ran his fingers along the stone wall, visibly swaying with exhaustion, and his fingertips encountered a familiar doorknob. Looking up, he saw the door to the Room of Requirement, already manifested. It was enough to startle him awake.

As quietly as possible, Harry slipped his cloth-covered hand over the doorknob and turned it ever so slowly. As the door cracked open, flashing lights of blue, pink and gold washed over the thin fabric of Harry's cloak. He stared in astonishment as he stepped inside, face tilted up to watch the swirling, glittering vortexes of magical energy dancing above dark peaks of purple velvet.

It was the Sex Magic classroom!

Pieces began to puzzle together, and Harry grinned as he worked out that a few of his fellow classmates had snuck out after hours to continue their class work.

'This must be what Professor Mason sees,' Harry thought, awe-struck. Looking around, Harry attempted to remember which booths belonged to which couple. There was Theodore Nott and Padma Patil's booth, with a gentle, rippling pool of blue and green swirls. Goyle and Parkinson's booth had a violent pink glare above it, and Harry winced and turned away with a grimace of distaste. And there was...

Harry's grin spread. Neville and Lavender's booth was illuminated by a pulsating gold-tinged rose globe. He didn't know what that meant, but the sight of it warmed and soothed him, and so he could guess at the activities going on inside.

Yawning widely, his drooping eyes stinging from the assortment of lights, Harry turned to his and Malfoy's booth, sitting dark and unused in the corner. An idea began to form, and Harry made his way over and stepped inside. Ron's snores couldn't reach him here, and Harry could wake up early and make his way back to Gryffindor tower under the cover of his cloak.

Snuggling deeply into the cushions, Harry pressed his face into the fabric and inhaled deeply. He let it out on a muffled moan, and didn't know if Malfoy's scent lingered there naturally, or if the room put it there because he willed it there.

And then he was asleep.

Harry awoke to the sound of shuffling feet and low voices outside of the booth. He fumbled around for his glasses, clumsily knocking them onto the floor. As quietly as possible, he leaned over the edge, wincing at the creak of the couch springs. His fingertips had just grazed the plastic of his frames when recognized one of the voices, and bolted upright.

He waited, his heart hammering against his ribs, as he listened to the goings on just outside the door to the booth. The voices rose, obviously in heated argument, and Malfoy laughed disdainfully. He heard him taking points away from every house but Slytherin, and then Lavender and Padma's angry protests. Neville remained silent, but Harry knew he would be glaring.

Goyle and Parkinson chortled, issuing a smug goodnight to Malfoy before leaving the room. Lavender shouted something very rude at Malfoy before the door slammed shut again. Harry didn't move, straining his ears to hear anything more in the hushed room outside. After several seconds had passed, he expelled a relieved breath.

Too soon, it would seem.

The flap to their booth lifted and emitted a slender pale form. Harry stared in growing apprehension at Malfoy for several moments, weighing the possibility of reaching his Invisibility Cloak before the other boy's eyes adjusted to the dark. No chance. If he moved he'd be heard, and Malfoy knew about the cloak.

So he watched instead as Malfoy blinked several times before focusing on Harry on the couch. He jumped, obviously not expecting to find anyone else in the

booth, but a slow grin quickly replaced his expression of shock.

"Well, well, Potter," he drawled, twirling his wand lazily. "That'll be fifty points from Gryffindor, I think."

Harry sat up slowly and searched the surrounding area for his wand and glasses.

"What are you doing here, Malfoy?" he asked tiredly.

"Catching students out of bed, what does it look like?" Malfoy asked, as though the answer should be obvious.

"No," Harry corrected. "I meant what are you doing here. In this tent. There was no magical energy above it. For all you knew, no one was in here."

Finding his glasses, Harry slipped them on in time to see Malfoy's look of surprised irritation. 'Caught him out, didn't I?' Harry thought smugly.

"I was checking every booth, just in case." Malfoy told him.

Harry chuckled and shook his head. Malfoy was such a terrible liar. "And started with ours? I'm not convinced."

"That'll be another twenty points from Gryffindor," said Malfoy, and lifted his wand to point in Harry's direction.

"Fine," Harry shrugged, and plucked his own wand from the table. "Expelliarmus!"

Draco's wand immediately zoomed out of his hand as he flew back against the tent-like wall of their booth. The purple velvet seemed to be enchanted, however, and remained as firm as brick. A startled grunt escaped Malfoy's lips as he bounced back slightly, and gripped the wall behind him with both hands to steady himself.

"How dare you, Potter!" he snarled. "I'm a Prefect!"

"Take away more points, then." Harry told him with a shrug, pocketing Draco's wand. "So, why are you really in here?"

"I told you-"

"And I told you that I don't believe you." Harry told him, walking closer.

Malfoy's lips compressed in a thin line and he glared at Harry. He didn't answer.

"What were the other students doing in their booths?" Harry asked as he advanced.

"What do you think they were doing, Potter?" Draco asked, rolling his eyes.

Harry suppressed a grin. Malfoy was doing his best not to let his nervousness show, but with every step closer that Harry took his expression grew more apprehensive.

"Were they snogging?" Harry asked.

"Obviously," Draco responded, but then his face screwed up as though smelling something unpleasant. "Although Pansy and Goyle were doing quite a bit more..."

Harry thought about the harsh pink glare above their booth, and quickly dismissed it from his mind. Thinking about Pansy and Goyle was counterproductive to his goal at the moment.

"Is that why you came in here? Were you hoping-"

"No!" Draco shouted too quickly, red-faced.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "I was going to say 'hoping to escape'. You must've needed to sit down for a few moments, after witnessing those two molesting each other."

If possible, Draco blushed further, realizing how much his reaction had given away. "Oh," he said quietly. "Yeah. That was it."

Harry let his forehead draw together in a look of confusion. "But earlier you said you were checking every booth?"

When Malfoy's mouth worked silently for a moment, and the blond's eyes strayed to where Harry held his wand with a look of desperation, Harry knew that he'd won. He took the final step closer that brought him chest to chest with the other boy.

Malfoy gasped, drawing back to flatten himself against the wall. "Back off!"

"You want to know what I think?" Harry asked, deliberately invading Malfoy's personal space and enjoying watching the other boy sweat. "I think you came in here because you wanted to. Because you couldn't help not to."

"That's- that's-" Malfoy made a scoffing sound to cover up the fact that he was slipping.

"I think you were hoping that I'd be here." Harry told him, leaning closer, so that his cheek pressed against Draco's and his words were murmured into the curve of his jaw.

Malfoy's reaction was instantaneous. His left arm came up to shove Harry away at the same time that his right hand made a grab for his wand sticking out of Harry's pajama pocket. Harry was anticipating the move and captured both wrists, forcing them back against the wall. Draco struggled, swearing profusely as he tried to twist out of Harry's grip.

They were nearly equal in height and weight, but Harry had the advantage of having wrestled with Dudley for over half of his life, and managed to restrain the other boy. After several minutes, Malfoy finally gave up his struggles and they paused, panting and sweaty, Harry's forehead resting against Malfoy's.

Harry leaned in and kissed him, moaning as he did so. He hadn't had this for nearly a week, and he hadn't known just how much he craved it until Malfoy's lips were under his again. Malfoy was unresponsive and tense. There was a lot to be said for pureblood pride, Harry realized, as he licked at the Slytherin's lower lip and felt a swelling hardness against his thigh. Malfoy obviously wanted this, was clearly enjoying it, and yet he wouldn't give in. Harry could almost respect that, if it didn't frustrate him so much.

Sliding his mouth away and along a sharp jaw line, Harry collected the thin film of perspiration that dewed Malfoy's skin on his tongue. Pressing open-mouthed kisses on his throat, Harry released Malfoy's left hand and slid a hand up his thigh. Malfoy gasped tremulously and jerked against him. Harry cupped his erection through his trousers as he worked the clasp and fly open.

Draco groaned unevenly, the fingers of his right hand twitching in Harry's grip. He seemed torn, his ego and the demands of his body at war. When Harry began to pull his hand away, however, Malfoy quickly snatched it up with his free hand and shoved it unceremoniously down his pants.

Harry squeezed the cock pressing into his palm, sliding his hand up and over the head, smearing the wetness there down the shaft. Draco's face averted from him, hiding his flush of shame as he allowed Harry to pull him off with slow, tight strokes. Harry revelled in the way that Draco's hips jerked into his hand, seeking a faster rhythm that Harry wasn't ready to provide just yet. Draco whined and reached down to grip Harry's wrist, attempting to force his hand to move faster along his cock. Harry stopped entirely.

"Potter..." Draco gulped, and turned to face Harry with a look of confused desperation.

"Want me to finish you?" Harry asked, giving the blond's cock a tiny squeeze.

Draco nodded fervently, tugging on Harry's wrist and thrusting his hips forward.

"You want me to make you come?" Harry continued, taking care to make sure he

had Draco's complete attention.

Draco took a deep, fortifying breath before answering.

"Yes," he said, looking Harry in the eye.

Harry's victorious smile was more of a possessive snarl as he leaned forward and muttered against Draco's lips, "Then don't ever pretend that you don't want this again."

Draco sighed shakily against Harry's mouth as Harry kissed him fiercely, forcing his head back against the wall with a dull thud. His hand flew up and down the blond's cock, and Draco's breath started to hitch as his hips began to buck. Harry thrust his tongue into Draco's mouth just as he felt the pulses under his hand that signaled the beginnings of orgasm.

Draco made a muffled, 'mmph!' sound against Harry's mouth as he came. Harry continued to pump him slowly, until the last of the pulses died out and Draco slumped back against the wall bonelessly. Harry pulled his hand out of the front of Draco's trousers, taking his wand from his pocket and using it to spell his hand and then the inside of Malfoy's trousers clean. Draco mumbled something that could have been thanks, and reached for his wand in Harry's pajama pocket. Harry thought briefly about stopping him; envisioned himself catching Draco's hand and pulling him forward for a kiss. But instead, he simply let the other boy pluck his wand from his pocket and took a few steps back, giving Draco space.

"I'll see you in class tomorrow, Potter." Draco mumbled, looking at the floor the entire time, before he pushed the flap back and was gone.

Harry sighed and ran a hand through his sweaty hair before looking down at his own neglected member, pressing insistently against the cotton of his bottoms. With a shrug and a mutter about ungrateful prats, Harry walked over to the sofa he'd left not long ago and set about dealing with the problem himself.

Chapter Twelve

Wednesday's lesson arrived, and Harry was fairly bouncing in his seat next to Malfoy, who merely looked resigned. Today they would begin some of those practical applications that Professor Mason had mentioned.

"Each of you please take out a coin and choose who will flip and who will call." Professor Mason instructed as she walked through the aisles. "The person who calls correctly shall be on the receiving end of today's lesson. If the caller is incorrect, than the flipper shall be the recipient instead. Today we begin practicing manual stimulation, involving the utilization of one partner's fingers to caress the other's genitalia. Boys with female partners, do not be discouraged if your partner does not reach climax. This sort of thing takes practice."

Reaching the end of the row, Mason turned and faced her students with her hands clasped behind her back.

"Once you have determined who is doing what, please move to your booths and begin the lesson." She dismissed them with a nod of her head, and turned to sit at her desk.

Harry smiled as he drew a Sickle out of his pocket and turned to face Malfoy. Draco looked at the silver piece and scoffed in disgust, producing a Galleon from his own pocket instead. Harry's smile disappeared as he slipped the Sickle back into his jeans. Malfoy smirked triumphantly.

"Call," he ordered, taking the coin between his index finger and thumb and flicking it into the air.

As Harry watched the twirling gold piece, he remembered Fred and George had once told him.

"Galleons always land Ministry side up. So when you're calling a coin toss, always choose 'Goblin'. That way, when they flip it over, it'll be Goblin side up. The pricks at the Ministry weighted down that side when they made the cast, so that if

someone ever lost their coin, when they found it the first thing they'd see is the Ministry emblem. Dad told us it's supposed to inspire good faith, or something. Really, it just makes blokes like us more lucky in our bets."

Harry jerked his chin as he called out, "Goblin!"

The coin smacked heavily into Malfoy's palm and he whipped it onto his outstretched forearm with more show than was strictly necessary. When he lifted his palm, there was the engraved image of Gringotts with a crescent moon of numbers above it, indicating the Goblin who had cast the coin. Draco made a quietly outraged noise before snatching the coin back into the pocket of his robes. Giving Harry a cross look, he stood.

"Coming, Potter?" he asked, and then winced at his unintentional pun.

"Not yet," said Harry, unable to resist.

"Oh, clever," Draco grumbled, turning and walking over to their booth.

Harry followed, going over in his mind every possible scenario he'd imagined for today. Malfoy resentfully giving him a handjob while Harry grinned smugly at him... Himself giving Malfoy another handjob while the other boy gasped and pleaded...

He was getting hard already, just thinking about it. Once inside their booth, he immediately fell onto the sofa and slouched down into a casual sprawl. Draco approached warily, still scowling. Harry grinned at him and reached for his fly.

"This works out well," he told the blond. "You owed me one, anyway."

"Wait," Draco told him.

Harry ignored him and unbuttoned his fly, and was reaching for the zip when Draco's hand settled over his. He looked up in surprise, and found Draco leaning over him, his face pinched into a look of seriousness.

"I said wait," he said, and drew his hand away. He sat down next to Harry. "Last night, you said you didn't want any more pretense, so listen."

He had Harry's attention, and he turned to face Draco on the couch. Draco looked back at him with a faint flush on his cheeks, but his eyes level and direct.

"You've run this little freak show up until now, and until now I've let you because I didn't want to participate," he began coolly. "If I did, then it would say something about me that isn't what I'd like or even entirely true. I don't like boys."

"I never said you did," said Harry.

"No, Potter, snogging you does." Draco told him with a bit of an eyeroll. "Liking it..."

"Do you?" Harry asked.

Draco sighed, and turned away to look at his hands. Moments passed, as he seemed to be weighing his words. Harry had noticed that Draco made a habit of that. As if he mentally ran through lists of ways to phrase what he wanted to say, searching for the one that would reflect the best upon him.

"Suppose that I am willing to admit that I enjoy our... sessions together," he relented grudgingly, turning to stare at Harry once again. "I'd want something in return."

"What could you possibly want? Money? You've got that. Sex? You'll be getting that, too, shortly enough."

"Assurance," said Draco. "If I agree to stop fighting this, if I admit that I like it, I want your word that you won't try to continue it past this term."

It was strange, Harry thought. Malfoy offering to give up, yet somehow gaining control of the situation at the same time. It was just like him. Harry felt his chest tighten at the thought of Malfoy gaining the upper hand.

There were two choices that he could see. He could decline, and continue in his seduction efforts, which may or may not prove to be successful. Or he could agree to Malfoy's terms and try his damndest to win the Slytherin over to their side in the short months they had left.

In the end, he decided that rocking Malfoy's tiny, pureblooded world would be much simpler with his cooperation.

"Fine," he said.

Malfoy gave a short nod and extended his hand. "Shake on it," he demanded.

Harry clapped his hand into Malfoy's outstretched palm and gave it a hearty shake. The Slytherin used his grip to tug Harry closer and kiss him. Harry blinked, moaned, and closed his eyes. A cooperating Malfoy was definitely a much better Malfoy.

He let himself be pushed onto his back, and felt Malfoy's hand at his zip. The other boy fumbled for a minute, cursed against Harry's mouth, and pulled away to look at his shaking hands as they finally managed to work the zipper down.

"Nervous?" Harry asked.

"Shut it, Potter," Draco snapped. "This is new for me, all right? But judging from your performance last night, I'd say you were a regular pouf."

Harry smiled derisively and shook his head as he snaked a hand around Draco's shoulders to pull him closer. "Malfoy?"

"Yeah?" Draco swallowed.

"Just wank me off."

Draco's eyes narrowed briefly before he nodded and squeezed them tightly shut, slipping his right hand into Harry's trousers. Harry focused on Malfoy's expression,

watching with fascination as the other boy's eyelids fluttered nervously and he drew his lip in between his teeth as his hand finally grazed over the rigid length of Harry through his pants.

Harry let his eyes fall shut as Draco's hand began to slip up and down. He settled deeper into the cushion and pushed his hips up in demand. Draco acquiesced, tugging the waistband of Harry's pants down over his hips and sliding his hand inside.

Harry felt himself go stiff, suddenly unsure. He'd been so focused on winning over Draco up until this point that he'd forgotten about his own apprehension regarding his virginity. Forcing himself to relax, he let his hand slip from Draco's nape onto the edge of the sofa.

Draco took a tentative grip at the base of Harry's cock and began to pump it cautiously. Harry cracked an eye open to see Draco staring down at him intently, watching for a reaction. He cleared his throat and said hoarsely, "Faster."

The Slytherin nodded, and Harry felt his hand speed up, gripping just a bit tighter. He breathed in sharply as the first jolt of pleasure hit him, and reached down to grip Malfoy's wrist. Guiding Draco's hand encouragingly, he urged him to grip higher, and then harder. He made a strangled noise as Draco obeyed and the palm of his hand slipped over the damp head of his cock. Draco quickly repeated the motion, and Harry squeezed his wrist so hard he felt the bones shift under his fingers.

Palm slickened, Draco moved his hand faster over the shaft, occasionally making sure to slip his thumb over the head. Harry panted, hips moving ever so slightly in time with Draco's pulls. Feeling the tingle begin at the base of his spine, he let go of Draco's wrist and threw both arms above his head, gripping the end of the sofa. Draco instinctively sped up, gripping just that tiny bit tighter that would send Harry over the edge.

Harry came with a small moan, and felt Draco's hand slip down to the base of his cock, still pumping minutely but careful not to get anything unseemly on himself.

When the last throb died away, Draco removed his hand, wiping it on Harry's pant leg to remove any traces that might've gotten on his skin.

Harry breathed deeply with his eyes closed for several minutes. Unlike Draco the night before, he felt like relishing his first other-person-induced orgasm. When he forced his heavy eyelids open at last, Draco was staring down at him with painful expectation. Harry realized that he was waiting for a reaction. Well... for a secondary reaction, anyway.

He opened his mouth to say something, but somehow 'good job' just didn't seem appropriate. A thank you, maybe? Somehow he didn't think Malfoy would appreciate that.

Making a decision so impulsive that it would've made Gryffindor proud, Harry took it upon himself to thank Malfoy in another way. One that didn't involve talking. Reaching down, he shoved a hand up under Draco's robes and gripped the outline of his cock through his trousers.

Draco made a gurgled noise of surprise, but thrust down into the cup of Harry's palm almost at once. In less than a minute, Draco was gripping the back of the sofa and biting his lower lip. Harry sensed that he was close, and hasily undid the zip of his trousers, grasping him through the moist fabric of his underpants.

Malfoy's eyes were squeezed tightly shut, and he didn't see Harry's left hand slipping between his splayed legs where they knelt on the sofa. Doing just as the magazine had suggested, Harry cupped Draco's balls first. The other boy gasped sharply, and his eyes peeked open in curiosity. Smiling, Harry pushed two of his fingers behind Draco's scrotum, and gently stroked the flat skin there in a hooking motion. Draco hissed through his teeth and his eyes squeezed shut again, his features taking on a pained expression. Soon he was jerking his hips erratically into Harry's hand, and came crying a vague, heavily vowelled word.

Harry stared at the darkened patch of material before letting his hand slip away, and Draco's robes fell back into place to obscure it.

"What... the bloody... hell..." Draco slipped onto his back, his chest rising and falling heavily.

Harry contemplated telling Draco about the magazine for all of two seconds before deciding against it. He wanted to maintain the upper hand as much as possible.

"What? You've never done that to yourself?" he asked, attempting to sound surprised.

"No, most definitely not." Draco snorted softly, and gave Harry a look. "But it is interesting to note your inventive wanking habits."

Harry chuckled and unthinkingly ran a hand up and down Draco's ankle in a casual caress. Draco sobered immediately, drawing his leg away to swing into a sitting position on the sofa. Harry knew a moment of disappointment before it was forcibly squashed.

"We're done, right?" he asked, clearing his throat to make his voice sound deeper, more forceful.

Draco merely raised an eyebrow at Harry's limp member in reply, making Harry blush scarlet and zip himself back up in embarrassment.

"Are we doing the same thing next class?" Draco asked him, and if there was a hopeful note in his voice, Harry told himself he imagined it.

"Yeah, for Monday's lesson as well," he told him. "Why don't you ever read the syllabus Professor Mason gave you?"

Draco shrugged. "I can't bring myself to. If I know ahead of time, I start to think about it, and..." He gave an exaggerated shudder. "I dread these classes enough already."

Harry's expression went dark and he noted Draco's look of surprise when he

turned around to face him.

"What happened to admitting that you like this?" Harry asked in a low tone.

Draco's jaw clenched and he looked away before speaking. "Sorry. Old habits."

Harry continued to glare as he sat up and pushed himself off the sofa. He couldn't explain the sudden flare of angry hurt, but it made his stomach burn nonetheless.

"Looking forward to having you wank me off on Friday, Malfoy," he said coldly.
"And I'm not too sodding proud to admit it."

Hauling back the flap to their booth, he stalked away from the Slytherin without looking back to see his look of self-loathing regret.

Chapter Thirteen

Over the course of the next two lessons, Harry became increasingly impressed by the ingenuity of the Room of Requirement. Far beyond conjuring mere walls, the Room could also reproduce places, sounds and even scents with amazing accuracy.

He'd been surprised at first, when the Room began to shift and melt around him; colors and textures fighting to manifest whatever vague fantasies danced around in his or Malfoy's head.

On Friday he could have sworn he heard Mrs. Weasley's voice calling him down to breakfast as he inhaled the scent of bacon and pressed a bright orange pillow over his face to muffle his moans. When it was Draco's turn, Harry wrinkled his nose at the sudden odor of potions ingredients and rotten wood. He thought it was quite odd that Draco got off while surrounded by newt's eyes and other assorted pickled body parts, but whatever worked.

They hadn't spoken about it. They merely began each lesson, eagerly awaiting whatever secret desire would be fulfilled that day.

It was now Monday, and Harry lay on his side next to Draco, fisting his cock roughly and licking figure eights around the shell of his ear. He nearly yelped when Goyle's voice filtered through a suddenly green-canopied bed.

"Malfoy, supper. You coming?"

"Soon!" Draco choked in reply, and Harry snickered into his shoulder.

This turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, and Harry was swiftly rewarded with steely fingers clamping around his wrist and fingernails digging pincer-like into the soft skin above his pulse. When it was over, Harry pulled his hand away and wiped it on the sheets, examining the crescents left in his flesh with lazy interest.

Draco chuckled huskily and waved his wand vaguely in the direction of the mess. Once clean, he turned onto his side and propped his head up. Harry glanced his way and ran his eyes slowly down the other boy. Draco might not have known it, but he'd struck an alluring pose with one leg tucked up and bent at the knee, modestly covering himself but making his arse curve in a very enticing fashion...

Draco studied Harry with an unreadable look for several moments before speaking.

"So, what'll it be today, Potter?" he asked, as though asking what Harry would like for dessert.

Malfoy was breaking their unwritten rule, and talking about the fantasies they shared in. He considered playing dumb but quickly dismissed the idea, realizing that it wouldn't last long, anyway, and he was better off just playing along so he could get Malfoy's hand on his cock sooner.

"Er, I'm not sure," he said, looking away and shrugging.

He didn't need to be looking at Malfoy to know that a grin was spreading on his smug face, nor to feel the hand sliding slowly along his waist. Fingers dipped below his beltline and Harry gasped and closed his eyes. The bed shifted, and Harry heard the sigh of sheets as Draco moved closer. His jeans were unbuttoned and pushed down his hips along with his pants. Cool air rushed over his twitching and steadily growing length, and Harry swallowed as he waited for Draco's next move.

"The curtains are still green," he heard Malfoy say, as he felt a hand sliding along his semi-erect length.

Harry cracked his eyes open and looked around before nodding and mumbling an affirmation. Draco's palm squeezed him tighter, pulling him slowly and seemingly purposefully. Harry got the vague impression that Draco had a plan, but he didn't care as long as that plan involved keeping his hand moving.

"So, Potter, you fantasize about doing it in my bed?"

Harry had half a second to contemplate that before the idea went straight to his groin. He pictured Malfoy writhing beneath him, biting his lip in a struggle to keep silent as his housemates moved around just outside the curtains...

Harry moaned, his eyes falling shut again as he arched into Draco's touch. He hadn't known until then that a smirk could be delivered telepathically, but he was learning much in this class.

Draco began to move his hand faster, and Harry heard other sounds. The familiar sounds of boys readying themselves for bed, but the voices were different. He heard Crabbe and Goyle bickering over a magazine, and Blaise Zabini's irritated voice announcing that he was trying to study for a Transfiguration exam the next day.

Harry was grunting softly with every other pull now, his heart beating erratically with the thought that they could be discovered at any moment. Crabbe and Goyle's fight was getting heated, and Crabbe brushed heavily against the bed curtains from Goyle's hard shove. Harry made a sharp sound and pushed his hips up, thrusting into Draco's hand.

He came undone when Zabini called out a goodnight to Draco, and Malfoy responded, "Night, Blaise!"

Harry dug his heels into Slytherin sheets and came onto his stomach, letting out a harsh sigh of release. Draco's hand slid down to his balls, rubbing them lightly, and Harry made a small noise of protest and pulled away, the touch too much for his sensitive nerve endings.

"I should have guessed that you'd have a public kink, Potter. After all, there hasn't been a day since you were eleven that the Wizarding World hasn't watched you-"

"Stuff it, Malfoy." Harry hated himself, because it sounded too much like a contented sigh.

"What? I'm just saying that it comes as no great surprise, is all." Malfoy couldn't seem to stop grinning.

Harry turned to look at him with the sweetest smile he could conjure on his face and mimicked him with sugary tones. "Soon!"

Draco's eyes went wide and then narrow, and just as he opened his mouth to hurl something back at Harry they were both startled by the sounds of an uproar just outside. Throwing on clothes and robes in a hurry, they stumbled out of the flap of their booth to see Rosemary Mason in a temper.

"Mr. Longbottom, would you care to explain why a ball of pink energy just flew from your tent and straight through the side of Mr. Goyle and Ms. Parkinson's?" she raged.

"Uhm, no?" Neville ventured.

Lavender huddled behind Neville and blushed to the roots of her hair, attempting to make herself appear very small. Pansy glared venomously at her, and Harry could have sworn that she looked jealous. Goyle appeared to be staring at Neville as though seeing him in a brand new light.

Draco sniggered into his hand and in the process attracted the rather unpleasant attention of a wrathful Professor Mason.

"I wouldn't laugh, Mr. Malfoy," she began. "The lightning storms dancing above your and Mr. Potter's booth for the last two weeks have come alarmingly close to setting the woodwork on fire."

The entire room went silent and Harry swallowed hard in the face of all of the awed expressions before him. He glanced at Draco out of the corner of his eye and saw him flush angrily. He would have laughed, had it not been for the fact that Mason's comment reflected upon him as much as it did Draco.

When he turned to give her his best disapproving glare, however, she'd moved

on, and Neville was looking at him strangely.

Out of sheer restlessness, and to escape Neville's curiosity, Harry decided to pay the Headmaster's office a visit that night. After whispering the password and beginning to climb the narrow, winding steps, he thought he heard voices coming from the top of the stair. He took the next few steps as quietly as he could and pressed his back against the wall near the door hinges.

Peering through the crack he saw McGonagall and Professor Mason sitting in front of the fire, seemingly deep in conversation. Another, deeper voice came from the direction of the fireplace, and Harry leaned to the left in order to see Dumbledore's flaming green head sitting in the hearth.

"I feel horrible about it," McGonagall was saying.

"I don't know, Minerva," replied Mason. "At first I felt the same as you, but in the last few weeks I've seen something between them that makes me believe that... Oh, I don't know. It was wrong to force Potter, you're right in that, at least. But it may turn out well in the end."

"Regardless of how it turns out, Rosemary, we still forced a young man into a sexual situation against his will," McGonagall snapped. "Albus, Merlin knows I trust you, but I very nearly couldn't do it. I felt ill!"

"Minerva, I understand your feelings," the disembodied head of Dumbledore soothed. "But Mister Malfoy is a pivotal player in this war. We must have him on our side!"

"Why?" Mason asked, looking genuinely confused. "The boy isn't dim or untalented, but I have yet to see anything truly spectacular from him."

"I agree, Albus. Young Malfoy is an average student, with no exceptional magical qualities. I don't see what he could possibly bring to our side that is worth all of

this."

Dumbledore's head shook, but with no neck it looked a bit strange. "It is not his tactical qualities that are of use to us, ladies, but his influence. You've seen the way the other Slytherins in his year defer to him. Where he goes, they will follow. If we can convince him to stay, the others will be no mean task. We cannot afford an entire generation of Death Eaters to swell Voldemort's ranks!"

"You mean if Potter can convince him," McGonagall's lips pursed disapprovingly.

"Whatever it takes, Minerva." Dumbledore sighed. "Whatever it takes."

Harry breathed harshly through his nose all the way back to Gryffindor Tower. Dark and bright spots danced in front of his vision, and he realized that he was hyperventilating without much care.

He felt used. Used and uninformed, just as he had back in fifth year. He was a tool. A bargaining chip that Albus Dumbledore would use again and again.

'Not anymore,' Harry vowed, throwing open the portrait of the Fat Lady.

He was two steps in before he heard Ron's voice.

"Lightning? Really?"

Shuffling back into the entrance, Harry let the portrait fall most of the way closed and crouched behind it, listening.

"That's what Professor Mason said," Neville's voice replied. "I don't know much about how this branch of magic works, but I'd wager a guess to say that lightning requires quite a bit of... well, anyway. It seems odd, doesn't it? On the first day of class, I could've sworn that Harry was as nervous as I was. And then when he got paired with Malfoy, he nearly shot through the roof! Now they're

making lightning bolts together?"

Ron made a disgusted noise and Harry heard the muted thud of a book falling heavily shut.

"It makes sense, actually," he heard Hermione saying. "Whenever Harry's confused or afraid of something, he throws himself into it. He tries to understand it by confronting it head first. Why should this be any different?"

"Because it involves shagging Malfoy!" Ron retorted, as though the answer should be obvious. "I don't know, Hermione. Lightning? That sounds like he's going a great deal more than understanding to me."

Harry didn't stick around to hear more, and let the portrait fall shut behind him with a bang.

He shouldn't have been surprised that he wound up at the Room of Requirement. After all, his options were limited as to where he could go. But the sight of familiar purple tented booths only seemed to fuel his anger. He paced up and down between the rows of desks, swearing under his breath and cursing meddling minds and wagging tongues. He'd just managed to work himself up into a frothing rage when a sound behind him and to his right drew his attention. Whirling around, he found himself facing-

"Malfoy."

The word was growled and barely audible, and Harry hoped the other boy felt all of the pent up wrath behind it in his bones. Malfoy, however, seemed happily oblivious to Harry's mood, and regarded him almost shyly as he took a few steps forward. The flap to their booth was swaying slightly, and Harry realized with a hot stab of anger that Malfoy had just come from inside.

"Oh, hi," he said quietly. "What're you doing here?"

"I could ask you the same," Harry returned.

"Rounds," Malfoy answered quickly.

Harry didn't need to see the flush in his cheeks to know that he was lying. He'd come here and waited, hoping that Harry would show up. Hoping for a repeat of last week.

"Liar," Harry breathed. "You were here hoping I'd show up, weren't you?"

"No!" Malfoy retorted. "Well, okay, maybe. Look, we agreed not to... I said I wouldn't fight anymore, right? And what we do is fun. I thought-"

"You thought I'd come here, and we'd have a hot little wanking session?" Harry asked viciously.

Malfoy's expression flashed from uncertain to angry, and his voice was quietly furious when he spoke. "You seemed to be enjoying it up until now."

"Shut up!" Harry roared. "Just shut it, will you? I'm sick of being used! I'm tired of playing the predictable, reliable buffoon! He can shape me and mold me into whatever weapon he pleases, and I'll think it was me the whole time! I'll think it's real when it's not!"

"Who-"

Harry's wand hadn't been in his hand, and then it was. He wasn't even aware of reaching for it. Draco's mouth snapped closed as he backed away, and Harry saw his hand inching for his own wand. Harry advanced on him, feeling vengeful and hateful toward the other boy. Draco was his weakness, one that Dumbledore had exploited, and Harry wanted gone. Right now.

Draco's eyes went wide, and Harry looked down to see the tables he passed vibrating. He willed them to clatter more forcefully, and the blond jumped and pushed himself flat against the wall of their booth.

"You didn't- It wasn't- It was him! But you made me want it!" Harry was screaming at him incoherently now. He knew somewhere that it wasn't Malfoy's fault. He was just a pawn, like him. But at the moment, he was too angry to think of that.

"I don't know what you're talking about!" Draco shouted at him desperately.

Harry let out a wail of rage and the tables bounced even more heavily against the flagstones, the sound almost deafening.

"Stop it!" Draco cried. "Christ, Potter, what do you want from me?"

"I want you to GO AWAY!" Harry screamed.

In the next instant the tables exploded into tiny splinters that sent Harry ducking to the floor and covering his face with his hands. When the rain of wood chips slowed, a few bouncing off of his hunched back, he stood slowly and tried to peer through the dust.

"Malfoy?" he called, waving a hand in front of his face and coughing.

When the last of the sawdust settled, Harry found himself alone in the silence. It was then that he remembered where he was, and why it was a bad idea to wish people would disappear.

Chapter Fourteen

By the end of the next day, Harry was fully convinced that Voldemort had complete control of the Daily Prophet, and for the past six years had been using it to slowly wear down his sanity like a quill tip.

The story had finally leaked onto the headlines. Confidentiality contracts were worth bugger all against the wagging tongues of vindictive Slytherins.

"Boy Hero Exposed In Gay Tryst!"

This reporter has it on good authority that Harry Potter, who survived the Dark Lord's killing curse at the tender age of infancy, and who more recently made public his personal vendetta against You-Know-Who for the brutal murders of his beloved parents, has been involved in a scandalous love affair with another male student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Even more shocking, Potter's lover has recently disappeared. The boy, Draco Malfoy, son of Narcissa and Lucius Malfoy (the latter of whom was accused of being a supporter of You-Know-Who fifteen years ago) did not return to his dormitory late yesterday (Monday) evening. As of yet, Hogwarts and Ministry officials have been close-lipped about the issue, but unidentified sources have revealed to the Prophet that Potter himself is under suspicion...

Harry thumped his head against his headboard.

The article, of course, had prompted the swift and glorious descent of Narcissa Malfoy upon Hogwarts. Harry would gladly endure the Cruciatus curse before ever again being on the receiving end of her wrath. He thought even McGonagall had appeared frazzled during their meeting earlier in the Headmaster's office. He might have relished her discomfort, if he hadn't been under attack at the time. He hadn't forgotten about her involvement in his situation with Malfoy.

Hearing halting footsteps outside of the door to the Seventh Year boys' dorm, Harry groaned. He didn't know if he could handle any more well-intentioned

sympathy speeches from his roommates. Therefore, he was surprised when he heard a female voice through the door.

"Harry?" Hermione called tentatively.

Screwing up his eyes, Harry gave his head another good thump before answering. "Yeah, come in."

Hermione slipped into the room with the universal awkwardness of someone entering a messy, emotional situation somewhat against their will. Leaning against the door, she pressed her palms flat against the wood and it shut with a muted thud. Harry watched as she took a deep breath, drew her shoulders back, and pushed away from the door. She took a few steps toward where he was sitting on his bed. She was the first to speak, and he was sure she resented it.

"Do you want to talk?" she asked.

"All I've done today is talk," he responded bitterly.

Hermione nodded and looked away. Harry plucked at a loose string on his pillowcase.

"Look Harry, I don't know what happened, and if you don't want to tell me, that's fine. It's none of my business." She paused, her mouth moving silently once before she continued. "But, from what you've told me, it seemed that things were going... well. And then Neville said-"

"Yes," Harry cut in acidly, "Neville said."

Hermione had never been slow and, after a second or two, realization replaced the blank stare she'd been giving him.

"Oh," she said softly. "I see. I thought I heard the portrait close. I wondered..."

Harry sighed, the tension leaving his body and he slumped forward. "It wasn't just

you."

He went on to tell her about Dumbledore, McGonagall and Mason. She gasped when she heard how deep the plot to force him together with Malfoy went. After several minutes of contemplative silence, during which Harry could see the wheels of thought turning inside of her head as easily as her teeth gnawing her lip, she finally looked up at him.

"It makes a kind of sense," she said.

Harry gaped at her. "Sense? Are you mad?"

"No. I mean it's horrible, obviously," she continued, in the same tone that scientists use to defend experimentation on bunnies. "I certainly don't agree with what they've done. But the ability to take an entire generation of Death Eaters away from Voldemort... Harry, surely even you can see the good in it?"

"Yeah, of course. What was I thinking? How selfish of me to want to win a war without the expense of my being raped!" Harry glared at her.

Hermione sighed heavily. "Oh, Harry! I know it's awful! I'm not making excuses for what's been done, I'm just trying to imagine this from Dumbledore's perspective. Choices like that; over what and who should be sacrificed for the greater good. It's got to be difficult. He made the wrong choice, this time. It was bound to happen sooner or later."

She sighed, and went on. "But it's not as if he forced the two of you together. He simply refused to allow you to drop the class once it had happened. He saw the opportunity there and took it. The Goblet put you with Malfoy, Harry. Not Dumbledore. Don't throw away what you've got going there because you're bitter over being betrayed. It's not worth it."

Harry moped silently. He didn't like Hermione sometimes - particularly when she was at her most rational. He sighed. "I hadn't thought of that."

"So what are you going to do?" she asked, coming over to sit next to him on the bed.

"I don't know. Narcissa Malfoy is breathing down my neck. She can be bloody frightening, you know. McGonagall is threatening me with expulsion if Malfoy isn't found. And the sodding Daily Prophet-"

"Expulsion? Oh, Harry..."

Leave it to Hermione to think that being expelled was the worst of the three options. Harry closed his eyes and leaned his head back against the headboard. He honestly didn't know what to do. He hadn't the slightest clue where he'd sent Malfoy, as he'd repeatedly told everyone who asked.

"You're sure you didn't specify a place, Potter? Even unconsciously? The Room of Requirement can pick up on even the slightest unspoken desire..."

"No! I've told you, I just wanted him to go away."

"Stupid child," Narcissa hissed, looming over him like a vengeful Veela. Harry half expected her to sprout wings and a beak.

Shaking himself out of his reverie, Harry realized that Hermione had been speaking.

"Uh, what?" he asked.

Hermione's mouth pinched with disapproval. "I was saying, why don't you just go to the Room of Requirement and wish Malfoy back?"

Harry blinked. It was the sort of suggestion Ron would make. Hermione's contributions normally included complex spells, potions, riddles or bafflingly boring bits of history.

"Hermione," he began slowly. "I don't know. I mean, I have no idea where I even

sent him."

"But the room knows," she argued reasonably. "Besides, it couldn't hurt to try."

"Why do I feel like those words will come back to haunt me?" Harry asked as he slid off of the bed and began lacing up his trainers.

"I wish for Draco Malfoy."

Silence answered Harry's feeble request.

"I want Draco Malfoy, right here, right now."

The silence seemed to snicker back at him.

"Please?"

Nothing. Harry huffed and fell back against plush pillows. He spared a glance at the familiar sheets, and shook his head. Typical. He'd walked by the Room of Requirement three times, concentrating on a simple aim. *'A place where I can find Malfoy...'*

The room had supplied him with the Sex Magic classroom instead.

Squeezing his eyes tightly closed, Harry tried to concentrate. He sensed that in order to get Malfoy back, he'd have to want him here as badly as he'd wanted him to go in the first place. He tried to bring back the feelings that he experienced during classes with Malfoy, here in this room, in this bed...

His only results were burning cheeks and a semi-interested twitch in his pants. Sighing loudly, Harry crossed his arms behind his head and settled in for a long night of waiting. He was tired, irritated, and he had a headache from being talked at all day. He just wished Malfoy would hurry up and get his arse back from wherever he'd disappeared to so that he could go to sleep.

Several things happened at once.

Something heavy landed on the bed beside him, accompanied by a startled yelp that Harry was fairly certain hadn't come from him. Before he could turn his head to look at the other person, he heard a sickening crunch that originated from the general area of his nose and pain exploded behind his eyes.

Cupping his damaged face in his hands, Harry threw himself off of the side of the bed and landed hard on the floor. Hearing the bed springs creaking above him, he rolled under the bed just in time to see a pair of booted feet swing over the side. Scooting out from the other side, Harry rushed to his feet and pointed his wand at Draco's back.

"Expelliarmus!"

Malfoy's wand smacked into his outstretched hand, and the outraged Slytherin whirled around to face him.

"You bastard!" he rasped.

Before Harry had time to recover, Draco had vaulted across the mattress and flung himself headlong into Harry's gut. The heavy thud of impact vibrated through him and Harry instinctively turned on his heel, sending Malfoy sprawling onto the ground. With a growl, the blond was back on his feet and driving his shoulder into Harry's throat. They toppled onto the bed, Harry on his back and clutching at his bruised Adam's apple.

"I'll kill you!"

Malfoy was cursing hoarsely above him, and Harry flung his hands up to ward off the steady blows falling on his face and shoulders.

"Stop it!" he shouted.

Malfoy responded with attempts to punch harder. Harry managed to catch one of

his flailing wrists and twisted it painfully. Draco grunted and pulled back, allowing Harry to use his own momentum against him to reverse their positions. Quickly capturing Draco's other hand before it could resume hitting him, Harry hauled both of Malfoy's arms over his head and stared down at him.

"Christ, Malfoy! What the hell is wrong with you?"

As soon as the words left his mouth, Harry realized the stupidity behind them.

"What's *wrong* with me, Potter? I've just spent days floating about in some great, black abyss of a hell that you wished me into!"

Harry winced, and then realized what Draco had said. "It wasn't days," he told him. "Not even twenty-four hours, yet."

Draco opened his mouth to retort, snapped it closed and glared.

"Well, it felt like days. I think time passed differently there. And there were *things* in the dark!"

Harry stared dumbly at him for several moments before clamping down hard on the laughter that bubbled up in his chest. He clenched his teeth and closed his eyes, trying to shut out the petulant look on Malfoy's face, but it was too late. His breath left him in a huge whoosh, and he laughed.

"You're making this up."

"I am not!" Malfoy retorted hotly, but his cheeks were flushed and his eyes darted from side to side. Draco was a terrible liar.

"You're such a drama queen," Harry told him, chuckling.

Draco responded by bucking up into him in renewed struggle. Harry continued to laugh as the boy squirmed beneath him, his wrists and hands moving beneath his fingers in a play of tendons and bone like bird wings.

"Come on, quit it," he told the furiously twisting snake underneath him. "I'm sorry, okay?"

Draco stilled momentarily, only to glare hotly back at him. "You think that matters?"

"Well, yes," Harry told him. "Look, I didn't mean for anything to happen. It's not like I knew that the Room was capable of something like that. And anyway, I brought you back, didn't I?"

Draco looked away and huffed out a breath through his nose. Harry shifted and relaxed his grip on Draco's hands, settling himself more comfortably. The other boy rolled his shoulders, turning to face Harry with a perplexed look on his face.

"Why are you still on top of me?" he asked.

"Er, just making sure you don't start hitting me again," Harry responded intelligently.

"Well, I'm not going to, so would you get off, already?" Draco demanded haughtily, giving Harry another little shove with his hips.

Which gave Harry other ideas.

But, considering the foul treatment he'd given Draco over the past twenty-four hours, he thought it best not to push his luck, and rolled over onto his back next to the other boy. Draco stayed put, but brought his arms down to rest comfortably on his stomach. He sighed heavily and stared at the ceiling silently for awhile before speaking.

"So, what did happen last night? You weren't making any sense." He was trying for bored curiosity in his tone, but couldn't quite accomplish it.

Harry grunted and brought a hand up to scrub at his aching nose before answering. It came back crusted with blood, and he pointed his wand between his

eyes with a muttered, "Episkey!" After the pressure and dry, scabby feeling in his sinuses eased, he turned his head to stare at Malfoy's profile.

"I was angry. I'd gotten some bad news, and I took it out on you. I've apologized once already, but I am sorry."

Draco nodded and made a soft noise of agreement, looking down at his hands resting on his stomach to study his nails.

"Who knows about it?" he asked.

"Everyone," Harry winced. "When you didn't come back to the dorms that night, your friends fed the story to The Prophet. We made the front page-"

Draco groaned.

"Your mum came. She's rather frightening, isn't she?"

Draco overcame his pained embarrassment for a moment in order to laugh.

"Yeah, she can be. Once when I was five, I dressed all of the house elves in her best dress robes and spelled her makeup all over their faces. Well, you can imagine that my aim wasn't very good back then. As much of it got on the robes as where it was supposed to. Apparently a few of the shades had been discontinued, too. She was so furious, she turned white."

Harry came very close to giggling. "I thought that was a natural complexion for you Malfoys."

"Shut it," said Draco, elbowing him in the ribs. "I'm hungry."

"Yeah, and I should probably go tell McGonagall that you're back."

"Yeah."

The two of them lay in silence for a few moments more before slowly getting to their feet.

"So, uh, I'll see you in class tomorrow?" Harry asked.

"Sure," Draco nodded.

An awkward moment passed, with much averted glances and shuffling of feet. Harry felt as if there should be more to this, that he was missing somehow. He'd already apologized, though.

"Well, uh... bye, then," he said, and fled the booth.

Draco remained behind, waving feebly at Harry's retreating back. Once he heard the door to the room clack shut, he sat back down on the bed and rubbed his hands across his face. It was greasy. So was his hair. He desperately needed a meal, a shower, and a bed. In that order.

He was disappointed in himself for not staying angry with Potter longer. Instead, he'd ended up sharing a laugh with him over a childhood anecdote. Even worse, the strange urge to roll over and stretch out closer to the Gryffindor had been present throughout their exchange.

With a muffled curse, Draco pushed himself to his feet again and stalked to the flap of the booth. He was pathetic. Nearly a whole day spent in purgatory, and all he could think about was why Harry Potter hadn't given him a goodnight kiss.

Harry might have dismissed the things he'd said last night as angry nothings shouted in the heat of the moment, but Draco had not. Two specifically came to mind as he contemplated their Sex Magic lesson tomorrow.

"I'll think it was me the whole time! I'll think it's real when it's not!"

"It was him! But you made me want it!"

'Oh, Potter,' Draco mused. 'A million conspiracy theories floating around in that lion's mane of yours, but you can't even see what's right in front of your face.'

Draco was tired of playing the reluctant victim. He'd gone searching for Potter last night for that very reason. Tomorrow's lesson would be very interesting.

Chapter Fifteen

Rosemary took her position at the front of the class, hands clasped before her, and calmly surveyed her students as their personal conversations dwindled to murmurs and then to nothing as all eyes came to rest upon her. She smiled. It was the little things that made teaching such a joy.

Such as seeing the outright shock and disappointment on a student's face when one announced a lesson that was altogether unsatisfactory. Whoever said that teachers weren't sadists?

She was expecting such a result at today's announcement.

"Today you won't be working in your booths," she told them.

A few groans, a few exchanged looks of poorly hidden disappointment, and Rosemary was struggling to hold in her grin.

"As you all remember, earlier in the year I said that we would work on getting the basics down first, establishing your compatibility with your partners, and then work on bringing a measure of control back into your activities. Now that you've all gotten comfortable in your roles, and confident in your abilities, we will begin to bring the tactical aspect of Sex Magic into the classroom."

Rosemary smiled as a few of the forlorn expressions were replaced with ones of attentive hunger. She noted, with interest, that Draco Malfoy was not among their number. He looked downright sullen.

"For many of you, this class is a way to have sex outside of the Astronomy Tower. Don't think that I am unaware." She smiled smugly at the titters. "For others of you, this is exactly what you signed up for. A chance to learn a rare and exhilarating new branch of magic. Congratulations, you alone won't be disappointed in the weeks to come.

"Before each pair of partners, you will find a small, round stone. Your objective

for today is to place the stone between your and your partner's hand, and attempt to change its color. It can be any color, but for better results it would be best if you and your partner decided on one together. Begin!"

The familiar bustle of activity followed, and Rosemary watched as Malfoy turned to face Potter with a scowl. She smiled. This was a new development. Two weeks ago, and either of these boys would have been thrilled with a no contact assignment.

Progress was a beautiful thing.

Draco sighed as he turned to face Potter. The other boy was looking a little lost and gazing at the stone resting by their knees as though it might bite.

"Well, let's get to it, then," Draco said.

Taking up the small, flat, gray stone in his right hand, he held it up about chest level. Potter scooted closer, crossed his legs and fiddled with the fabric of his trousers where it bunched at the knees. Draco rolled his eyes.

"Your hand, Potter?" he asked impatiently.

Harry looked up, confused for a second, and then gave a soft: "Oh."

His left hand joined Draco's right, and their fingers entwined around each other. They spared one another an awkward, unsure glance, not sure of how to proceed. Draco looked around at the other students for inspiration, and when he glanced back at Potter, he found him biting his lip and staring at their hands intently.

"Uh, I think we're supposed to... will the rock to change, or something," he said.

Draco gave him a dry look. "Yes, obviously, but *how*? And what color?"

"Red," Potter decided automatically.

"Merlin, no," Draco replied, wrinkling his nose in distaste.

"What's wrong with red?" Harry wanted to know.

"It's a *Gryffindor* color, that's what's wrong with it," Draco stated, as though it should be obvious. "I like green."

"Of course you do. It's a *Slytherin* color."

"Why no, Harry, love. I like it because it matches your pretty eyes," Draco told him in a sickly-sweet tone, batting his eyelashes at him coyly.

Harry grimaced as though in pain. "Don't make me sound like a girl."

"You *are* a girl," said Draco.

"*You're* the girl," Harry retorted childishly.

"Boys," a cool voice interrupted. "If you don't mind, I think I'll choose a color for you."

Both boys looked up to see Professor Mason standing above them where they sat on their cushions on the floor. They wore identical scowls of frustration, and she smiled benevolently.

"How about blue? It's a neutral color, and easy to form a clear image of in your minds."

Harry nodded. "Thank you, Professor."

Draco whipped his head around to glare at him. He waited until Mason had walked away before mimicking him. "*Thank you, Professor!* Bloody suck up."

"Shut it," Harry sneered at him.

Draco was impressed. Potter had actually executed a passable sneer.

"Blue, then," he said, and closed his eyes.

Without looking to see if Potter had done the same, he tried to focus on a clear picture of the color blue. He envisioned the sky on a good day for Quidditch. The color of his mother's eyes, and the dress robes she wore last Christmas.

He didn't know what he was expecting. Heat, a tingle along the skin pressed to the stone wedged between his palm and Potter's. Or simply the intrinsic knowledge that they had succeeded. He felt none of those, and peeked one eye open to glance at Potter. A moment later, the Gryffindor sighed and opened his eyes.

Both boys slowly unwound their fingers, opening their palms and turning them face up. The stone lay in the crease between their hands, still gray and unchanged.

"I think it looks a little blue," said Harry hopefully.

Draco gave him a dry look.

"Just along the edges," he grumbled bitterly.

"The stone is not even the slightest bit blue, Potter," Draco told him in a clipped tone. "You must've done something wrong."

Draco didn't know why he was being so nasty today, considering his newfound purpose the evening before. He put it down to disappointment at today's lesson. It would figure that just when he'd drummed up the nerve to beat Potter at his own seduction game, he'd find himself thwarted.

"I didn't do anything!" Harry denied hotly.

"Exactly," Draco drawled.

Harry huffed an angry sigh.

"Let's just try it again," he said through gritted teeth.

Draco said nothing, and closed his eyes again. He allowed himself a minute to clear his mind and take steady breaths before bringing what he wanted into focus. He tried to concentrate on the color blue. His mind felt fuzzy and unresponsive, and after a moment of trying to identify the source of this distraction, he registered warm breath and the scent of skin. Potter had leaned closer to him, and from the feel of things, his mouth was only a few inches away.

Draco quashed down hard on the urge to lean forward. He thought harder on the stone to distract himself. Blue, blue, blue, damn it.

It was useless. Potter's breath was warm and moist, puffing out over his cheek. He smelled inviting and familiar, and Draco felt himself swaying forward unconsciously. His lips brushed Harry's cheek, and he heard him gasp. Squeezing their fingers tighter together, he used his grip to pull Harry closer, and angled his head so that their lips met on the next try.

The kiss was unhurried, mouths closed but pliant as they fit over one another. Draco's chest felt full, hot and aching. He sucked in a deep breath through his nose, inhaling the comforting scent of Potter's skin. He was losing himself in the kiss when he felt a searing pain creeping into his consciousness. It spread out from his palm and made him flinch away.

"Merlin's balls!" he grunted angrily, waving his burnt hand in the air futilely.

The stone dropped onto the floor between their knees, blue as a robin's egg and smoking slightly. The two boys looked up at one another with equal parts surprise and satisfaction.

A low murmur from their left drew both boys' attention, and they looked over to see Pavarti leaning in close to Michael Corner and speaking to him in hushed tones, both of them staring directly at them. Draco looked around the room to

see similar reactions amongst their classmates.

"Oh, hell," he muttered.

"Congratulations, boys." Professor Mason stepped forward and smiled down at them. "You are the first two to complete today's lesson."

"Oh, bloody hell," Draco repeated, and slumped forward to stare at this shoes.

Between the Prophet article, and yesterday's Sex Magic lesson, Draco was getting stares and snickers all around the next day. He endured them as best he could, scowling his way through one class after the next, until dinner finally crawled its way into existence. Another hour, and he could slide between the sheets of his four poster and pretend that articles in sordid news rags and amazingly-good-at-kissing boy heroes didn't happen to Malfoys.

"So, Draco," Blaise drawled from the other side of the table. "How's Potter?"

Draco's eyes narrowed to the point of near blindness. "How would I know that, Zabini?"

"Well, you two seem pretty close lately." Blaise smirked.

"Too close, if you ask me," Pansy chimed in.

"Thankfully, no one did," growled Draco. "Nor ever will."

Pansy made an unattractive snort of disgust that only reinforced her pug-like demeanor, and turned away. Draco brought his attention back to Blaise, who was still smirking into his fork.

"I mean, take last afternoon, for example," the dark, handsome boy continued. He looked around, ensuring that he had an audience. Draco recognized the tactic; it

was one he had invented himself. Blaise was gearing up to make him lose favor in the eyes of his peers, and wanted to make sure the spotlight was on himself when it happened. Draco caught his eye and glared.

"Blaise," he warned.

"The rest of us were innocently practicing a new bit of magic, no touching or snogging required," Blaise made sure to point out. "And the next thing we know, Draco leans over to Potter and starts kissing him. They were going at it like they were in love, or something!"

"Blaise..." Draco hissed through gritted teeth.

"So, what would something like that say about them, I wonder?" Blaise asked, looking directly at him.

"As I completed the lesson first, I think it would say that I'm a better wizard than you." Draco strived for his father's tones, delivering the challenge with icy precision.

Blaise leaned forward, bracing his elbows on the edge and folded his hands elegantly one over the other. It was a pose Draco had effected many times before, one to imply calm and control. For the first time he realized what Blaise was trying to do here, and it made his stomach clench with fear.

He was threatening Draco's position.

"You know what I think, Malfoy?" Blaise asked quietly. "I think you want to fuck Potter."

Gasps rung out around the table, and Draco felt all eyes on him. The pack turning to their Alpha, waiting to see if he could manage to hold onto his rank. Their gazes felt hungry on him, watching for an opening, a weakness. He couldn't give it to them.

"You'd be wrong," Draco returned coolly. "And one would think that you would be the last person at this table to throw around accusations of promiscuity. How is your mother, by the way?"

Blaise's pretty eyes went hateful. Draco thought for a second that Blaise was about to hit him, but mean-spirited cackles rose up like hyena laughter around the table and he turned away, shamed for now. Draco had managed to hold onto his position by the skin of his teeth, but he wasn't stupid. More threats would come, and he'd have to be better prepared for them. He'd grown too comfortable in the role he played, and vulnerable with it.

He'd have to be on his guard from now on.

Harry slumped up to bed, his feet dragging the stone steps with the dull scuffing sound of rubber. He hadn't gotten much sleep the past two nights, and today's lesson in Sex Magic had taken quite a bit out of him. Wandless magic was like that. If you weren't ready for it, it sapped you dry.

He entered the room he shared with the other Gryffindor seventh years, and began stripping off layers of his uniform. He'd just shrugged off his sweater and unbuttoned his undershirt shirt when a muffled giggle came from within Neville's closed bed curtains. Harry was quite certain Neville didn't giggle. He was also highly certain that he didn't want to change into his pajamas with a girl in the room.

"Lavender," he called.

Silence stretched for a few moments, and then Harry could hear movement inside of the swaying curtains. A blonde head poked out, flushed pink and grinning shyly.

"Yes, Harry?" she said, and promptly burst into another bout of giggles.

Neville pulled the curtains back, hair mussed and a distinctly smug grin on his face as he swung his legs over the side.

"Sorry," he said to Harry. "Didn't know you'd be coming up so soon."

"Don't worry about it. But, um..." He indicated his bare chest.

Neville nodded. "Out you go, Lav."

Harry raised an eyebrow and mouthed: *Lav*? Neville shrugged and his grin stretched farther. Lavender got off of the bed with a little hop, and smoothed her skirt down her thighs with her palms. She turned to give Neville a quick goodnight kiss, and Harry respectfully turned away and coughed into his fist.

As she walked by him, she managed to catch his eye and give him a wickedly assessing glance. Harry swallowed. Only bad things ever came from that look. He should know; he'd known the Weasley twins for seven years. Upon reaching the door, she placed one hand on the doorknob and turned to look at him over her shoulder.

"So, Harry," she began. "About that kiss with Malfoy this afternoon..."

"Goodnight, Lavender," Harry told her meaningfully.

She laughed, and blew another kiss to Neville on her way out the door. Neville chuckled and turned to Harry, looking more relaxed and self-confident than Harry had ever known him to be.

"So, Harry," he repeated. "About that kiss."

"*Goodnight*, Neville," said Harry, and turned away to unbuckle his belt.

Neville laughed and twitched his bed curtains closed again.

Harry changed quickly and slipped between his Gryffindor red- a color he didn't

see anything wrong with, thank you very much- sheets with a long sigh. His mind felt slow and fuzzy. The past two days had left him with too little sleep, too much information, and a difficult decision to make.

He knew he had to tell Malfoy. If he didn't, he'd be no better than Dumbledore, Mason and McGonagall. But he was worried about what Draco's reaction would be. In all likelihood, it would be one similar to his own. A dull ache began between his eyebrows and Harry closed his eyes. He felt like he was destined to continually stand at a fork in some dry, desolate road somewhere, forced to choose between two possible destinations that looked equally bleak.

In the end, he decided, he didn't have a choice. Malfoy had to be told, and Harry would have to suffer the consequences. As the popular saying went: 'What else is new?'

Chapter Sixteen

October came and went, and with it any illusion of warmth or sunshine. The weather turned blisteringly cold and windy, and Harry discovered the private pleasure of Draco wearing a scarf. Something he'd seen before, but he didn't remember ever before having the urge to bury his nose into the loosely-coiled fabric that would smell like him, and press his mouth to the warm skin underneath.

Over the course of the next few weeks, Sex Magic lessons remained much like the one with the stone. Control and transfiguration were the primary focus, with occasional branches into spell amplification. Harry and Draco had more successes than failures, but their results were as varied as the other students' in their intensity and completeness. Professor Mason assured everyone that each set of partners would find weaknesses and strengths within their shared magics, and that the lessons were designed to uncover them.

One lesson in particular had pairs of partners attempting to levitate themselves off of the ground by focusing on their breathing. Harry had silently amused himself with the memory of fairy dust and happy thoughts. The sound of Draco's breathing had been a steady, comforting presence in his mind, much louder than it should have been. He vividly recalled the sensation of dizziness and swirling open air beneath his folded legs as he gripped Draco's hands tighter.

One thing was clear from these lessons: they worked. The two of them were doing magic beyond what they could do alone.

Harry's mind whirled with possibilities of amplified protection charms for the upcoming war, and Draco came to class wearing a smug grin every time the death of a Muggle family was reported in the Prophet. It made Harry scowl and look away every time.

Another sleepless night, another night of Harry showing up at the Room of Requirement for a few hours of fruitless waiting. It had taken him three nights to realize that the reason he came here was hope that on the off chance Draco might show up. The last few weeks in Sex Magic had been interesting, sure. Enlightening, certainly. But in the mind of every teenage male enrolled in the class, it'd also been a complete buzzkill in the physical intimacy department.

Also, there was the matter of telling Draco about the manipulation of the Headmaster and Professors Mason and McGonagall. He needed to get Draco alone to do it, and Sex Magic was the only time they'd ever been able to have privacy together. Of course, Harry could always owl him, set up a meeting somewhere, but he preferred to believe that he'd confess once Sex Magic lessons got back around to being held in their booths. After all, that involved telling Draco later rather than sooner, which was much more appealing.

He wondered why Draco hadn't been driven here, as well. The other boy had been acting strangely lately. He hadn't been this open about his prejudice for Muggleborns since fourth year. It was becoming distressing. Harry found himself torn between punching him in the mouth and kissing him until he recanted his evil, Muggle-hating ways and begged for forgiveness. And that was truly distressing.

A sound outside of the booth alerted him to another person entering the room, and Harry immediately leapt to his feet. Drawing the flap at the front of the booth back, Harry stepped out into the dark and quiet of the room beyond, a small, hopeful smile on his face.

Draco stepped out of the shadows, smiling back at him.

"Draco," Harry said, his voice soft and almost tender.

Draco's smile turned nasty, and three more figures emerged from behind him, stepping forward into the light so that Harry could identify their faces. Crabbe, Goyle and Zabini all leered back at him.

"Told you he'd be here," Draco told them smugly.

Harry's jaw and fists clenched, and he fought the desire to surge forward and drive his knuckles into Draco's jaw. The Slytherins laughed maliciously, stepping up to give Draco thumps on the back.

"Congratulations, Malfoy," Blaise Zabini drawled. "You've tamed the Boy Who Lived."

Harry hexed him hard enough to leave him drooling for the next few hours.

"Not quite," he told them coldly, and stalked out of the room with rigid shoulders and wounded pride.

The next day's Sex Magic lesson was another exercise in control, which Harry found himself immensely lacking. He sat facing Draco, palms pressed together and fingers laced as they attempted to create a Silencing spell around them without their wands. Harry glared coldly across at Draco, his concentration nonexistent. He waited with the sixth sense that students have for the presence of Mason at his back to fade away before opening his mouth.

"You bastard," he seethed.

The corner of Draco's right eye flickered in a minute flinch before he smirked. "Still smarting, Potty?"

Harry crushed Draco's fingers beneath his, satisfied when the blond drew in a painful hiss of breath.

"It's not my fault you went and fell in love with me," Draco told him cruelly. "You were acting like an idiot. Someone had to snap you out of it."

Harry growled and lunged forward, using his grip on Draco's hands to push him

onto his back. Draco made a surprised grunt when Harry's chest collided with his, and his eyes widened until they filled all of Harry's vision. Pressing his nose against the Slytherin's cheek, Harry leaned in until his mouth hovered an inch above the other boy's ear.

"Sooner or later, Malfoy, we're going to be back in that booth," he promised in a whisper made husky with repressed emotion. "And when that happens, I'm going to make you pay for last night."

Draco's body rippled with a little shudder where it was pressed against Harry. He took a deep breath and let it out in a laugh that wasn't nearly as confident as he probably would have liked.

"You wish, Potter," he said weakly.

Harry leaned back until he could see Draco's face, and grinned. He watched Draco's throat as he swallowed and had the sudden urge to lean forward and clamp his teeth over it.

He became aware of shouting, and felt a concussion like a pillow hitting him with great force against his left side. He rolled off of Draco and looked up to see Professor Mason waving her hand in front of her as though in pain. She met his eyes through what appeared to be a bubble of static electricity surrounding he and Draco, her expression one of slightly fearful awe.

Stretching out one hand, Harry's fingers brushed something solid. Blue tendrils snaked around his fingertips, and he traced the lines of crackling energy curiously. The barrier thrummed against his skin, and he had the absurd thought that he was looking at the physical manifestation of pure sexual frustration.

"Today, you will be working in your booths," Rosemary Mason announced on a blustery November Friday afternoon. "Next week you will be incorporating further methods of lovemaking into your studies, but for today you will pick up

where you left off."

Harry's grin was nearly feral, and he was instantly on his feet and making for he and Draco's booth in the corner of the room. Upon reaching it, he drew back the flap and waiting for Draco to pass by him. When after several moments he remained alone, he turned and looked over his shoulder. Draco stood where he'd left him, staring back at him with a blank look on his face. Harry suspected that Draco thought he looked indifferent, but he would be wrong. Draco, like his father, could not keep emotion from showing in his eyes. And right now, they reflected fear.

Harry almost felt sorry for him, but then he remembered Zabini's mocking laughter and held the door flap open wider. Draco shook himself, squared his shoulders and stalked forward purposefully. He passed Harry without a flicker of hesitation, and into the darkness of the tent beyond. Harry followed, and let the door flap close behind him. When his eyes adjusted, he wasn't surprised by what he saw. He'd already had the destination in mind.

The musty smell of old wood and dust irritated his nose and the array of pickled and fermented things that lined the walls reflected the low light of a single, dust-caked lamp. Draco turned in the narrow aisle to face Harry, his expression confused and slightly anxious.

"This is one of your favorite fantasies, isn't it?" Harry asked him as he walked forward. "Fooling around in Snape's storeroom?"

"You did this for me?" Draco asked skeptically.

"No," Harry told him, and stopped directly in front of him. "For me."

With that he shoved Draco back into low wall of shelving. It rattled precariously, the jars tinkling as their contents sloshed around.

Harry stepped up to him and took his chin in hand, slamming their mouths together hard enough to hurt. He violated Draco's mouth, determined on the

most passionately hard snogging Draco had ever had. He wondered for a moment that he shouldn't be doing this; that he should be telling Draco about Dumbledore and the others now that he finally had him alone. But Draco was breathing hard, breaths puffing against Harry's cheek, and he pushed those thoughts aside.

Snaking a hand up into Draco's hair, Harry tugged hard, and Draco made a noise of startled pain. The long curve of his throat lay exposed and Harry devoured it, sucking on his Adam's apple and nipping at his pulse.

Unable to slow down, Harry shoved a hand down between them and fondled Draco's cock through his pants. He'd meant to draw this out, but the noises Draco was making were hell on Harry's month-long celibacy, and that wish was short-lived. But he did intend on taking some measure of Draco's control away from him. Teach him a lesson about playing games. Glancing at a jar on the top shelf, Harry was struck by a sudden inspiration.

Leathery, shrivelled tentacles slithered out from the murky liquid of the jar. Harry tracked their progress as they crept down the lines of shelves before hovering over Draco's shoulders. Keeping Draco distracted with his hand on his cock, Harry brought one of Draco's hands up above his head and pinned it to the shelf there. The tentacles were quick to respond to Harry's will, and one wrapped itself tightly above Draco's wrist in the space of a blink. The other shot out and snatched the other hand from where it had laid on Harry's shoulder. Draco yelped, his eyes flying wide as his arms were hauled above his head.

"What the hell?" he demanded, looking above him at the wrinkled remains of some aquatic creature wrapped around his wrists.

"I believe there was talk of someone being 'tamed?' What better way than with restraints?" Harry asked, unbuttoning Draco's shirt as he spoke.

"Fuck you!" Draco howled.

He tugged at the tentacles that held him, but their grip proved strong for something that was likely centuries-dead. Potter's smug chuckle galled him, and he seemed to remember something about turning the tables. He quailed at the thought, remembering Blaise's attempt to deface him in public. But the Slytherin gossipline didn't extend here, behind closed doors. He could do whatever he liked here, and no one but he and Potter would know.

Draco relaxed, letting his hands go slack in his bonds and tilted his hips forward. Harry moaned low in his throat and dipped his head, laving Draco's collarbone with his tongue. Once they were done with his shirt, Harry's fingers continued their work on his buttons, dropping to the fly of his trousers and working them open. Draco gave a little moan of encouragement and pressed himself into Harry's hands. The darker boy jerked his head up, a look of stunned pleasure on his face at Draco's cooperation. Draco smiled and then leaned in for a kiss, watching Harry's eyes drift shut on a quiet groan.

Harry kissed him like a drowning man coming up for air. His hand was motionless in Draco's pants, what he'd been doing forgotten in the midst of their kiss. He was lost in him. There was power in this, Draco thought. He could make Harry do what he wanted by pretending to go along with him. By submitting.

Then Harry seemed to remember what he was supposed to be doing with his hands, and unbuttoned his own trousers, drawing out his cock and pressing it against Draco's. He wrapped one hand around both of them and stroked. Draco's breath hitched as sensation shuddered through him. He couldn't help the small spasm of his muscles that caused him to jerk on every upstroke, when Potter's fingers would glide over the moist head of his cock.

"Like that?" Harry asked, his voice just an octave too deep to be anything but sensual, and it made Draco's toes curl.

Harry brought the palm of his other hand up and rubbed it in small circles across the heads of their cocks. Draco rose up on his toes, whimpers escaping him on every exhale. He was dangerously close to begging Potter to stop, hurry up, do it harder, anything. But Potter kept up the maddening massage, even though it was

clearly driving him insane too. He drew it out, watching Draco through half-closed lids as he bucked and gnawed at his lip, screwing his face up in contorted expressions as it all became too much. His muscles trembled like a fly-bitten horse, and he felt wetness on his cheeks.

"God, Potter, stop!" he ordered hoarsely.

Mercifully, he did, and gripped their shafts tighter, bringing them off together in a few well-timed strokes.

Every muscle in Draco's body felt languid. His mind felt heady and drunk, and when Harry allowed the tentacles holding his wrists to release, his arms dropped like lead weights onto the other boy's sweaty shoulders. He allowed Harry to take his weight, to ease them down onto the floor and position Draco's exhausted limbs more comfortably. His breathing slowed and he felt his heart beating fast and strong beneath his breastbone. He felt Potter's thumping against his shoulder. Harry dropped a lazy kiss onto his neck, and he realized that he'd missed this.

God help him, Potter held power over him, too. And there was nothing he could do about it.

Chapter Seventeen

Blow job.

Harry's mind buzzed with the two words. He was going to get a blow job today.

His palms were sweaty and his pulse was beating loudly in his ears. The doorknob was warm and greasy in his hand as he entered the Room of Requirement. Draco was already there, sitting at their seat with a distant expression as he stared at everything and nothing. The fingers of his right hand traced aimless patterns on the table top. Harry watched him for a moment, feeling that undeniable tug of something more he'd felt with increasing frequency lately. Shaking the feeling off, he walked over to their table and joined him.

Draco looked up briefly and then turned away, his eye movement jerky and hovering from one place to the other without really seeing anything. He was clearly anxious and Harry smiled, resisting the impulse to reach out and touch him in some way.

"Nervous?" he asked instead.

Draco turned to him with a glare and opened his mouth to make some nasty reply, but hesitated and swallowed instead. He nodded.

"Aren't you?" he asked.

"Yeah," Harry told him. "I mean, it's not like I've ever done this before. With a guy, I mean."

"Neither have I!" Draco shouted defensively.

"I didn't say you have," said Harry. "I'm just saying, it's okay to be nervous."

Mollified, Draco nodded again and went back to staring blankly at the tabletop. After a minute, he took a deep breath and spoke without looking at Harry.

"We were having a conversation, just now," he said cautiously.

Harry regarded him for a moment before answering. "Yes."

"That's happened a few times," Draco continued. "It's weird."

Harry smiled and said again: "Yes."

Draco nodded and didn't say anything else. Mason entered the room with her usual briskness, and set a thick stack of books down on her desk before facing the class.

"Well," she began, and clasped her hands before her. "I think you all have somewhat of an idea of what you're supposed to be doing today. Oral sex. Just like last time, flip your coins to decide who will be receiving first and then move to your booths to complete the assignment. I'll see you all in an hour."

Harry saw movement out of the corner of his eye and turned to see Malfoy drawing another Galleon out of his pocket. His breathing sped up as he stared at it, realizing that he was moments away from having someone's mouth wrapped around his...

In his nervousness, he started to call the toss before Draco had even flipped the coin.

"Gob-"

"I'm calling today, Potter," Draco told him, and slapped the coin down on the table in front of them.

Harry looked at his face, trying to read something in the bland expression. Looking away, he slid the coin off of the table and into his hand.

"Alright," he said, and cleared his throat. "Call."

Harry flipped the coin, and watched it spin with a hard lump in his throat. He hoped Draco would call Ministry just to be defiant. He felt the coin smack down into the center of his palm and flipped it over, pressing the cool metal into the back of his other wrist. He looked up at Draco, waiting, and watched the other boy smirk.

"Goblin," said Draco.

Harry winced and removed his hand. There staring up at him was the image of Gringotts. Sucking his teeth, Harry stood up and tossed the coin into Malfoy's lap. He refused to look at the Slytherin's face.

"Fine. Let's go," he said, and walked away toward their booth.

Draco was following him, he knew that. He could feel his presence at his back. His head felt heavy and his chest felt tight as he threw back the flap and stepped inside. He walked a few paces before he heard the flap close behind Malfoy. Harry stopped and stood still for a moment, taking a deep breath and steadying himself. His stomach clenched nervously as he turned to face Draco. The other boy was standing closer than he had anticipated and he took a step back automatically.

"Okay, Malfoy," he began, but before he could say another word Draco closed the distance between them and kissed him.

Harry made a few noises that ranged between surprise and protest. He had wanted to set some ground rules first, but Draco didn't let him pull away. He'd placed his hands on either side of Harry's head and tangled his fingers in his hair. Harry let his eyes drop closed and his spine relax as he leaned in, kissing back.

And like that, the nervousness melted away. This was familiar; the scents and sensations and the closeness. They'd been doing this for months now. For a moment, Harry was overwhelmed with relief, the anxiety replaced by confidence. And like that, the hurdle was leapt. Giving a blow job wasn't intimidating, it was exhilarating. A challenge. Harry was a Gryffindor, and everyone knew what they did with challenges.

Harry turned them and walked Draco backward. He undid the clasp of Draco's robe and pushed it off of his shoulders, the heavy fabric falling to their feet. He felt Draco's calves bump against the couch and pressed forward, bearing Draco down under his weight to sit on the couch. He knelt on the triangle of cushion between his thighs, still kissing him, letting his hands roam through hair and over skin. He went to work on his tie, the buttons of his shirt, baring his throat and chest by degrees until a long stripe of pale skin lay open to him. Harry slid off of the couch to the floor on his knees.

His heart was pounding in his throat as he kissed and licked at Draco's chest, his stomach. Draco made soft gasping noises above him, his body twitching every so often as Harry found a ticklish spot. His fingers slipped under the flaps of his shirt, gripping his sides to hold him still. He nipped at the soft ring of skin around Draco's navel, dipping his tongue into the crevice and making Draco hiss and jump. He worked the button of Draco's trousers open and pulled down the fly with care, avoiding catching any sensitive bits in the process.

As Harry slipped his hand inside, he noticed with a thrill of triumph that Draco was incredibly hard.

Draco gave a little moan of encouragement as Harry worked his palm up and down through the fabric of his pants. His other hand was clenched in the hem of Draco's trousers at his hip, bunching them in his fist and dragging them down slowly. Draco lifted his hips readily, and Harry's knuckles brushed the smooth skin of his arse as he pulled the rest of his clothing down and off. He pulled away to take in the effect.

Draco looked thoroughly debauched, sitting there with his tie loose and thrown over one shoulder, his white button-down gaping wide to expose a pale chest dotted with red marks. He was naked from the waist down, his thighs splayed wide open and his cock jutting out between them. Harry's heart stopped a little before he took a deep breath and bent down again to the task at hand.

Most formerly heterosexual turned reluctantly-bi-curious men would like to say that they hesitated the first time they sucked another man's cock. Harry didn't. He dove right in. Draco made a strangled gagging noise as Harry sucked half of him

into his mouth at once, and Harry didn't know if that was good or bad, but he kept going anyway. The weight of Draco's cock in his mouth was foreign and strange at first, but Harry quickly learned his way around the curves, bobbing his head and using the flat of his tongue against the underside. After a while he remembered his hands, and wrapped one around the base of Draco's cock, pulling minutely with every dip of his mouth.

Draco's gasps made his chest heave above Harry's head, and Harry knew that he was close. He contemplated what he should do about that. He knew he didn't want to swallow. Not yet, and possibly not ever. So he decided to pull off, wanking Draco fully and using his tongue on just the head of his cock. Draco tried to push Harry back down with a hand on the back of his head, but Harry shook his head in the negative and swirled his tongue with more force. Draco grunted, and threaded his fingers in Harry's hair. He made a few, soft noises before his fingers tightened and Harry jerked back as Draco came onto his chest, painting the long stripe of flesh between the flaps of his shirt.

Harry sat back on his heels and wiped his hand on the back of his jeans, eyes fixed on Draco's face. His eyes were heavy-lidded and his cheeks flushed. His mouth gaped slightly open as he puffed softly, recovering. Harry grinned and his lips felt swollen. Draco looked back down at him and groaned slightly as he sat up and cleaned himself up.

"Guess it's my turn?" he asked as he buttoned his trousers.

Harry's cock gave a little hop, skip and a jump inside of his pants at the thought. Draco leaned forward, sliding down off of the couch to straddle Harry on the floor with an easy grace. Harry swallowed and felt his chest seize up at the lazy, predatory grin on Draco's face. A prickle of unease went through him and he caught Draco's hands with his own and squeezed, taking a deep breath.

"Wait," he said.

Draco stopped and looked puzzled. "Why?"

Harry turned away, wincing at the thought of what he was about to say and just what he'd be giving up. He had put this off too long, though. And he couldn't allow Draco to go any further without knowing.

"There's something that I have to tell you. About us. This..." He squeezed Draco's hands again, indicating their connection.

Draco sat back on his heels, letting his back slide down the sofa until he was sitting on the floor in front of Harry. He studied him critically, and Harry could tell that he was very uncertain about where this was going.

"We're not supposed to be in this class together." Harry said, and waited for Draco's reaction.

Draco laughed, and Harry looked at him stupidly.

"I know. I was there when you told Mason that you didn't sign up for it, remember?"

"No, that's not what I meant," Harry shook his head. "I overheard Mason and McGonagall talking to... someone. They should have let me out of it. The... person, he made them keep me in class."

Draco didn't laugh this time. He sat forward, his brows drawn together. "Who? Why?"

"I don't know who. As for why... I think they wanted us to become close."

Draco was silent. He stared at Harry stonily for a few moments, and somehow Harry got the impression that he'd said too much, even though he hadn't said much at all.

"You're lying. You know who it was. I'm not stupid, Potter. Only one person can give McGonagall an order and she'd actually follow it. *Epecially* if it involved one of her students. It was Dumbleore, wasn't it?"

"No!" Harry didn't know why he was lying for him.

Draco scoffed and rolled his eyes, rising from the couch to walk away with his back turned. Harry stood slowly and watched him warily as he paced.

"Close? Bollocks. They were hoping I'd fucking fall in love with you. They wanted me to come over to their side," Draco ranted as he paced. "Well, that's not going to happen. I don't even like you-

"That's not true," Harry interrupted.

"It is true! We aren't boyfriends, Potter! Don't ever think that this is more than what it is. In fact, I'm through. They think they can manipulate me? They want me to cozy up to their side so bad, they're willing to rape me- and you- in order to do it. Well, fuck that! This... this disgusting little... thing. It's over."

He turned to walk away, and Harry hurried past him, blocking the entrance. Draco tried to go around him, but Harry grabbed his arm. Draco made a low, guttural sound and smacked it away, rubbing at the spot on his arm Harry's fingers had brushed as though it were burned.

"Don't touch me," he warned.

"Don't try to leave," Harry returned.

"Try and stop me," Draco sneered, and bolted for the exit.

Harry felt a painful tightness cramping his belly, and he put himself in front of Draco again, sidestepping his every move. It must have looked ridiculous, but he didn't know what else to do. He'd thought he was prepared for this, he'd even known that Draco would try to leave, but he hadn't anticipated feeling this lost about it.

Draco managed to sweep past him, and Harry panicked, saying the first thing that came to mind.

"You promised!" he shouted.

Draco stopped, his back to him and his fists clenched, and then turned slowly. His face was splotchy, and his eyes overbright. Harry swallowed and took a deep breath, fighting down the panic that had seized him.

"You said you wouldn't-" he paused, pressed his lips together. His voice was unsteady, and he took a moment to compose himself. When he looked back up at Draco, his eyes and his voice were steadier. "You promised me a semester."

They stared at one another for an uncomfortable stretch of seconds. Draco seemed to be waiting for more, some explanation. When Harry stared back at him, resolute, he shook his head minutely.

"You can't be serious. That was before. Now that I know..." He shook his head again. "Don't you see the way out here? We could both just walk away."

Harry looked away. Draco let out a shaky laugh. "My god, you... you actually-"

"Don't!" Harry rounded on him fiercely. "It's not like that. I just want what's owed to me."

"I don't owe you *shit*!" Draco hissed at him.

"You do. You made a deal. You said you'd give me the semester, if I didn't push it beyond that." Harry told him. When Draco still looked ready to walk out, Harry decided to switch tactics. "Look, it's only another month, right? And it's not like you're getting nothing out of this. Fuck, Malfoy, I just sucked your cock not five minutes ago! Dumbledore may have wanted us to be partners in this class so you'd switch sides, but it's not like you have to. I mean, I can't make you..."

Draco looked as though he might be listening, and Harry took a step closer, moving slowly and keeping his voice low. He might as well have been dealing with a skittish rabbit.

"A month of mutually enjoyable sex. At the end of the semester we go our separate ways, and Dumbledore doesn't gain a thing."

Harry finished and waited for Draco's response. The Slytherin glared at him for another moment before resuming his pacing. Harry watched him intently, ready for the slightest indication that he was going to attempt to flee again. When Draco finally stopped pacing and turned to face him, Harry couldn't have said whether that made him more or less nervous.

"Sit down, Potter," Draco commanded, waving a hand at the sofa.

Harry hesitated before obeying, eyeing Draco warily while he moved across the room and slowly sat down with his legs braced, ready to spring back up if need be. Draco followed slowly, and came to stand two feet in front of Harry. He stared down at him for what felt like an eternity before suddenly dropping to his knees. Harry sucked in a breath, stunned at this sudden turn of events, and stared dumbly as Draco undid his belt and zipper.

"I am a Malfoy. I will do the honorable thing, and obey my father," Draco told him as he worked. "If that means joining the Dark Lord, then that is what I'll do."

Harry growled at him and arched his hips when Draco pulled roughly at his trousers.

"But I made a deal, and I will keep my end of it. I will not be called a coward, even if the circumstances have changed," he continued.

Looking up at Harry with an intensity that seemed at odds with the bobbing cock nearly grazing his chin, Draco's nostrils flared as he took a deep breath.

"And Dumbledore will get nothing."

And then he swallowed as much of Harry as he could, and Harry's eyes rolled back in his head and the time for talk was over.

Chapter Eighteen

Harry was very tempted to refer to that November as "The Best Month Ever." Despite its rocky beginning, the last three weeks were incredibly pleasant. Any month where Malfoy was sucking him off three days a week was a good month indeed.

At first Mason had allowed them free reign to learn and explore all of the quirks of this new, exciting step with their partners. Harry learned that Malfoy was ticklish right along the trail of hair leading down from his navel, that he produced an great deal of noise when he was really worked up, and that from the right angle his ribcage went incredibly concave when he was sucking in deep breaths after coming very hard.

It was easy to forget about Dumbledore's manipulation, the upcoming war and Voldemort. For one month they were just two normal, horny teenage boys exploring their sexuality and each other.

"All righ', line up here, all a' yeh!"

They did, huddling together and chuffing their hands as they did so. It was a clear, bitterly cold Tuesday morning and everyone was doing their fair share of grumbling. Harry cupped his gloved hands in front of his face and blew into them, the warm puff of air washing over his cold cheeks. He stared at the green and gray stripes of Draco's scarf in front of him, wishing he could bury his face in it.

Hagrid was talking about some bunny-like magical creature with pure white fur that only came out during the winter months when there was a blanket of snow on the ground. They were going to hunt for it today.

"Yeh can tell 'em by their eyes. Red as rubies, they are. Or blood. Eh... Tha' reminds me, don't go reachin' fer 'em too fast."

More groans at that. Harry continued to stare at the back of Draco's head as a weak breeze ruffled his hair. Draco shivered, and Harry longed to take the one step forward that would bring them into contact. Draco shifted on one foot almost imperceptibly, shifting the minutest bit in Harry's direction. Harry closed his eyes and pictured stepping forward, pressing himself along Draco's back and burying his face in his warm neck, inhaling...

He heard Draco's faint gasp and felt the slightest bit warmer. He hadn't been aware of moving, but suddenly Draco's wool coat was scratching briefly across his chest. He opened his eyes and saw that he hadn't moved. Draco was swaying noticeably, leaning back into him. Harry felt a moment of panic and looked around, but no one else seemed to have noticed. Suddenly aware of something brushing his hand, he looked down and saw Draco's gloved fingers curling around his. Biting his lip and taking another quick peek around, he took Draco's fingers in his palm and gave them a brief squeeze.

Draco squeezed back and took another small step backward. Harry caught his breath and released Draco's hand, where it dropped onto his thigh and he had to fight not to let out a squeak. Warm radiated out from Draco, spreading along Harry's front and making him want to groan and wrap his arms around Draco. Closing his eyes, he took a deep breath, his chest brushing Draco's back for a tantalizing instant.

And then Draco leaned back even further, pressing himself solidly against Harry and letting out a tiny groan as he pushed back into Harry's groin.

That got everyone's attention. Suddenly every pair of eyes was on them, including Hagrid's. Harry felt Draco go stiff and then jerk away as he realized what had happened. He swallowed hard, looking at Hermione and seeing her face slack with shock. He glanced at Ron and saw his expression flicking between disbelief, anger and disgust. Harry's cheeks blazed despite the cold.

It was the talk of the school by lunch that day: Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy

were more than just unfortunate partners in class. Harry kept his head down in the hallways and avoided Ron all day. Draco showed up to class looking pale and preoccupied.

"My mother wrote me this morning," he told Harry as he settled down in the armchair in their booth, instead of sitting on the couch next to Harry.

"So soon?" Harry asked. "Didn't take your friends long, did it?"

"They are my friends!" Draco shouted. "They care about me. They don't want me mucking up my future with some... Muggle-raised, half-blood ingrate!"

Harry clenched his fists and tried to remain calm. "If they were your friends, they'd want you to be happy."

"I'm not happy!" Draco exploded.

The silence afterward was thick and Draco looked close to tears. Harry knew there was more to it, and desperately wanted to know what Narcissa had written to him.

"Then why are you still here?" he asked quietly.

"Because I owe you," answered Draco, giving him a look that said he should know that. "Because I made a deal, and I have to go through with it. But after this semester I won't owe you anything."

"Good, then. You can just tell your mother that." Harry said through clenched teeth, and stood up. "Now get on the bed."

Draco gave him a flabbergasted look before glaring at him, but he obeyed. They stripped off in silence and climbed onto opposite sides of the bed. Draco took his own dick in his hand, working it until he began to grow hard. Harry slapped his hand away and wrapped his arms under Draco's thighs, pulling him roughly forward so that his legs were splayed open and his semi-hard cock bobbed in

front of his face. Draco's eyes dropped closed and his hands wound into Harry's hair as he began their assignment.

Instead of progressing as usual, though, Harry let his lips slip down to Draco's balls. He'd only done this a few times before and Draco gasped and twitched above him. He mouthed them, tickling with the tip of his tongue and slurping messily. Moving one arm out from under Draco, he trailed his fingers over them and through the trail of saliva that led down between his arsecheeks.

Draco let out a surprised grunt when Harry's fingers brushed over his opening. Harry distracted him by leaning back up to take Draco's entire prick into his mouth, letting it brush the back of his throat in a way that he knew would please him.

Harry remembered the way Draco had pushed back against him yesterday, grinding his arse slightly into his cock. And the way he'd groaned...

He continued to tickle his fingers up and down Draco's crack and over the little puckered hole, circling it with his index finger every so often. Draco made tiny little gasping noises each time he came close to breaching him, his fingers tightening in Harry's hair. Harry grinned around his mouthful of cock. He knew exactly how to make Draco anticipate something until by the time he finally got around to doing it, Draco thought it was what he'd wanted all along.

Harry let Draco's cock slide out of his mouth and dropped down too quickly for Draco to figure out what he was up to and drag him back up by his hair. By the time he'd trailed his tongue over his balls and down to meet his fingers, Draco's eyes had popped open and he'd tried to sit up. Harry tightened his grip around one thigh and used the other hand across Draco's stomach to hold him down.

"Potter, no! That's disgusting!"

Draco's voice sounded high and reedy, and Harry could almost hear that he was blushing. His hands fluttered over Harry's head and shoulders, grasping and pulling, but not too hard. At the first swipe of Harry's tongue, he let out a

strangled groan and his hands flew up to grip the pillowcase above his head.

Harry half-expected Professor Mason to come sweeping in at any second to stop them, but after a few seconds it became apparent that this also fell under the category of oral sex. Harry pressed his tongue flat and began licking in broad stripes.

"S'not right..." Draco moaned, and Harry had to fight not to laugh when Draco's cock twitched heartily in objection and bopped him on the head.

Harry experimented, alternating between licking and sucking, circling the tip of his tongue around Draco's hole and jabbing it in. Within five minutes Draco's hips wouldn't stay on the mattress and Harry was having a hard time keeping his glasses on his face. Frustrated, he reached up and flung them off before diving back in.

"Nnguh! Potter, I need to come," Draco told him, and fisted a hand in his hair to pull him back up to his cock.

Harry obliged, sliding his mouth over the glans and placing his fingers where his mouth had been. Draco didn't even seem to notice the switch until the first finger was in up to the second knuckle. He shouted something unintelligible and pushed his hips up into Harry's face, sliding his cock in deeper.

Harry found a rhythm, sliding his mouth up and down in time with working his finger in and out of Draco. Draco's breath was doing that adorable little catching thing, and Harry opened his eyes to watch his face. He wanted to watch him come completely undone.

Draco's gasps turned into breathless yips, and then his back bowed off the bed as he came spectacularly into Harry's mouth. His cock pulsed heavily against Harry's tongue, and Harry swallowed around it, before pulling off. He carefully pulled his finger out of Draco's arse and flopped down on the bed next to him. His own dick bounced heavily against his stomach and he took it in his hand, closing his eyes as he began to wank.

"What're you doing?" Draco mumbled sleepily beside him. "I'm supposed to do that."

"Sorry," said Harry, and he gladly relinquished his cock to Draco's hand. "This won't take long..."

Draco chuckled next to his ear and slid down to press kisses against his throat as he pumped his hand up and down. Harry bit his lip as he felt his muscles tighten. He hadn't been lying, this wouldn't take long at all. He jerked as the first jet of come hit his belly and Draco moaned against his neck, sucking hard on his pulse until he was finished.

Harry collapsed against the bedsheets, sweaty and breathless. Draco remained curled into his side, still nuzzling his neck. Harry moaned weakly and reached down to squeeze his sticky hand.

"Well done, boys," a muffled voice quipped from beyond the curtain of their booth. "I'll be needing a new desk. I prefer mahogany, please."

Harry's eyes popped open and he jerked around to look at Draco, who looked equally scandalized. Then Draco raised one sardonic eyebrow, and Harry burst out laughing. Draco turned his face to snicker into his pillow and Harry's head dropped onto his shoulder.

Draco didn't even protest when Harry pulled him up for a kiss before they had to get dressed. His face as they were leaving, though, revealed that he had realized his slip in self control. Harry shook his head. He didn't understand Draco's unwillingness to allow himself to enjoy this. And he only had a month left to convince him.

Luckily next week they would begin the next phase of their training. The idea of Draco in such a vulnerable state sent a thrill through Harry that he knew wasn't entirely free of malice. He'd wanked to images of Draco under him, spread wide and pleading for weeks now, and knew that his fantasies often took a slightly violent turn.

He hoped Draco didn't do anything to anger him before Monday evening.

"Oh look, Draco. Here comes your boyfriend."

It wasn't very good in the way of insults, but then it didn't have to be. Draco's reputation was hanging by a thread, and Blaise knew it. He wouldn't waste unnecessary effort in order to secure his position as alpha Slytherin if he didn't have to.

Draco looked over his shoulder and saw that in fact Potter and his friends were approaching the crowd gathered outside of the Potions classroom. Harry was looking at him with that vague, hopeful expression that he'd adopted lately. A quick glance at Blaise showed he'd noticed it too, and he raised one dark, mocking eyebrow at Draco.

Draco tried to think of something cutting to say but nothing immediately came to mind so he opted for cool stoicism instead.

"Hey, Potter!" Blaise shouted with a brilliant smile. "Tonight's the big night, isn't it?"

Harry stopped just short of the rest of the class gathered there. He looked as though someone had punched him in the gut and he was about to puke.

"Shut up, Blaise." Draco hissed.

"Oh, come now, Draco," Blaise simpered. "Don't be shy. We all know you're a virgin, there's no need to put on airs."

The other Slytherins tittered and Draco's face went scarlet. He turned away and bit the inside of his cheek.

"He told you to shut up, Zabini." Harry sounded closer now, and angry.

Draco whirled around and glared at him. "I don't need you sticking up for me!"

Harry glared back at him, and looked on the verge of saying something before Blaise cut in.

"Aw, that's so sweet. Potter's taking up for his blushing boyfriend's virtue."

This drew heartier guffaws from the gang of Slytherins, and Draco's fists clenched at his sides in humiliation. Harry's eyes were back on Blaise, and his expression was murderous.

"At least he has some," he said to the larger boy.

"Shut up, Potter!" Draco shouted. Couldn't Harry see he was just making it worse?

Harry took a step toward him, looking hurt and confused. And angry.

"I'm not the one attacking you, here!" said Harry defensively, and reached out to Draco as though to touch him.

"Fuck off." Draco told him coldly, and took a hasty step back.

Right before he turned away, Draco saw Harry's eyes go narrow and dangerous. Blaise snickered and muttered, "I'm sure he will, later tonight."

The tips of Draco's ears were stinging. The stupid Gryffindor had gotten himself into this, as far as Draco was concerned. He couldn't just leave well enough alone and mind his own business.

Snape arrived and let them into the classroom. Draco took his usual bench with Goyle, and spent the remainder of the class acutely aware of Harry's eyes on him. His hands shook as he tried to prepare the ingredients for their potion. Eventually he set Goyle to doing it while he sat with his forehead in his cupped hands, willing his heart to stop racing.

His mind strayed to the Sex Magic lesson later tonight, and what Blaise had said. He'd known about tonight, and what would happen. He'd tried not to think of it too much, but when he had it sent a tiny thrill of excitement through him. Now he felt sick with anxiety at the thought of what would take place later.

Harry was angry, and even more so Draco had embarrassed him in front of a crowd of people. Harry was bound to be forceful tonight, and when Harry got pushy and dominating Draco became... compliant. Draco didn't like that side of himself, and he hated even more that he could recognize it and still do nothing about it.

Draco had a fleeting imagine of Harry holding him down while he did that thing with his tongue again, and felt himself grow hard. He groaned and buried his face in his hands.

He stood a very real chance of making a complete idiot of himself tonight. Turning to steal a glance at Harry, Draco's stomach turned over when Harry looked up and glared back at him while chopping his Fo Ti root with vicious force.

A very real chance, indeed.

Author's Note from Leo-Draconis: AU after OotP. This fic was originally authored by velvetblood. She wrote chapters 1-18. She is sadly no longer writing this brilliant fic, but she chose me to continue and finish it for all the readers who love it so much. From chapter 19 on the work is mine - I hope you all enjoy the return to this wonderful fic!

Chapter Nineteen

Harry walked into the booth with a gloomy look on his face. Draco stood with half of his body shielded by a high-backed armchair, as though he expected an attack. Harry took one resentful look at him before slinging his bag into the corner and slumping down into the opposite chair. Draco waited, but when Harry didn't speak he took a step out from behind the chair. Harry's eyes instantly snapped to him.

"Stay away from me," Harry told him in a low voice.

Draco stopped, one hand still trailing along the back of the chair. He had expected this scene to play out much differently.

"Well, that will make the lesson difficult," he quipped.

"Bugger the lesson," said Harry.

"Actually, the lesson is bugging. Literally."

"I know what it is!" Harry exploded. "I'm not doing it!"

"But you'll fail the course," said Draco, because he couldn't think of anything better to say.

"I don't care," Harry told him.

Harry pushed himself out of his chair and began to pace the length of the rug in

front of the sitting area. His movements were jerky with suppressed anger and he refused to look at Draco.

Draco remembered his prediction for tonight of Harry being furious and forceful. He had been dreading it because it would bring out the submissive side of himself that he hated so much. Now, faced with the reality of a righteously angry but totally in control Potter, he found himself embarrassingly disappointed.

And so Draco did what he did best; he provoked Potter.

"You know, earlier I was thinking about something you said to me once," he began casually, walking around to perch on the arm of the chair. "I don't know why it came to me, such an odd thing to remember, but I'm glad I did because it allows me to see straight through this doxy shit act you're putting on right now."

Harry immediately stopped pacing, his shoulders going stiff as he turned his head to glare at Draco over his shoulder.

"Malfoy," his voice held a warning.

"You said that Dumbledore may have tricked you into this whole thing, but you said that I made you want it. Want me. Do you remember?"

Harry was facing him with a thunderously furious expression. Draco grinned, knowing that the hook had been set and now all he had to do was pull.

"So don't pretend that insulting your friends has suddenly put you off fucking me, Potter. Because I know, as righteous as you try to appear, that you still want to."

Harry snarled, and Draco felt a shiver of premonition as he anticipated Harry charging at him and throwing him to the floor in a scratching, biting and thoroughly satisfying rutting frenzy.

Instead, Harry turned on his heel and stalked out of the booth.

Or at least, he tried to. It certainly appeared so long enough for Draco's jaw to drop and a sound of disbelief to leave his mouth before Harry was brought up short by whatever spell Mason had put up to prevent students from leaving before they'd completed the assignment. Harry bounced off of an invisible wall a foot from the exit, and Draco couldn't help the snigger that escaped him at the look on his face.

Harry turned his head just enough to glare at him. Draco allowed the smirk to remain on his lips, just to be infuriating.

"Come on, Potter. You know we have to, whether we want to or not," he told him.

"In your case, Malfoy, I'm beginning to suspect that you do," Harry fired back.

Draco rolled his eyes. "What? Want to shag you? Of course. We've already been over that."

"No," Harry said, taking a few steps forward. "I already told you, that's not how it's going to happen."

"Well, you can think that, Potter, but-"

"I know it, Malfoy." Harry told him. "And unless you're completely delusional, you know it too."

Draco made a sound of disbelief, but it sounded weak even to him. Harry grinned and a curious light had come into his eyes. He was still slowly approaching, and Draco squirmed on the chair's arm, bracing himself to get ready to flee.

"So why provoke me, then? Unless you want me to get angry, overcome whatever half-hearted fight you put up, and then fuck you senseless?"

Draco swallowed and stood up, putting one foot behind the other as he backed away from Potter.

"That's ridiculous," he said.

"No, I don't think so. In fact, I think I'm finally understanding something important," Harry said softly. "You've got this fucked-up submissive kink, but you'll put up just enough of a struggle so that you can still claim that you didn't want it in the morning. You won't lose face with your friends but you'll still get what you're dying for. You get to have your cake and eat it too."

Harry stopped and shook his head, laughing. Draco's calves hit the edge of the bed and he sank down onto it heavily.

"Fuck," Harry swore quietly. "I can't believe it took me this long to figure it out."

"You're wrong," Draco said, and it sounded like a plea.

"No," Harry told him, and took the few remaining steps closer that brought him to stand in front of Draco where he sat on the bed. "But now that I know, I'm not going to play your game. We had a deal, remember? No more pretending."

Draco nodded.

"So, that business in the hall before Potions?" he asked. "Was that just to make me mad because you thought it'd make things go easier for you tonight?"

"No," said Draco. "That was about you being completely obtuse and not seeing that you were only making a bad situation worse."

Harry frowned and shook his head. "What do you mean?"

Draco sighed. "Nothing. Forget it. Let's just do this and get it over with."

"No, it's not going to be that easy, Malfoy." Harry crossed his arms. "What did you mean by that?"

"You have no idea what it takes to maintain the position I have, Potter," Draco

told him between gritted teeth. "I can handle what they throw at me, but you make it more difficult when you think you need to rush in and rescue me. You aren't my bloody boyfriend, so you need to stop acting like it. I shouldn't have to keep reminding you of that."

"Boys?" Mason's voice drifted in. "Is there a problem?"

"Er... no." Harry eyed Draco. "We're fine."

"I suggest you begin your assignment, then."

Harry looked down at Draco. "We need to do this. But if you want me to leave you to fend for yourself, fine. I just thought..."

"I know what you thought." Draco's voice was clipped. "You need to accept that your pigheaded stubbornness isn't welcome on my behalf. I... appreciate the sentiment, I suppose, but if you've truly an interest in helping me, then just stay the hell out of it."

"Fine," Harry repeated. He stepped back and removed his robes, then worked his way out of the rest of his clothing systematically. "I'm not undressing you, Malfoy. And I meant what I said – I'm not playing your game, and you're not going to pretend you don't want this."

Draco blinked, hoping Potter hadn't noticed him watching the strip show, and disrobed quickly. "I already agreed to that. How... how are we doing this?"

"I'm going to fuck you."

Draco made a face. "Do you have to be so crude?"

"Hey, you said it earlier. Besides, I didn't think you'd appreciate me telling you that I'm going to make sweet love to you."

"Ugh," Draco mumbled. "Fine, then. Do you... know how?"

"Well, Malfoy, there's very little mystery as to where I've got to put it, seeing as how there's only one hole left that I haven't had my –"

"Stop!"

Harry studied Draco for a moment and his face softened. Draco was clearly afraid of what was to come, and wasn't sure if he could trust Harry to treat him kindly.

He does not have the self-control necessary to be gentle or considerate with a lover.

Professor Mason's words from weeks before rang through his head. Surely someone like that, someone like Draco, would expect no better in return than what he knew how to give.

And there, Harry realized, might be an opportunity to show him a different way.

"Sorry," he said, watching Draco's guarded expression. "I know what to do, Malfoy. I've read the information Professor Mason gave us."

"All right." Draco's tone was questioning, but he remained silent when Harry lowered himself onto the bed.

"Just relax," Harry suggested quietly. "We'll start with some of the other stuff first, all right?"

"Fine," Draco replied stiffly.

Harry slid a palm across Draco's chest and up to curl around the back of his neck. "Come here," he murmured, urging Draco's head closer until their lips could meet.

Draco wasn't terribly responsive at first, but Harry persevered. He knew the rest of the event wouldn't go well if he couldn't even make Draco relax enough to kiss him, so he was relieved when his partner finally began to respond.

Raising his arms to circle Harry's torso, Draco allowed himself to enjoy the kiss. He'd gone from dread to a mixture of curiosity and anticipation when class began, and that had given way to apprehension when actually faced with their task. If he was in charge of matters, so to speak, he'd have likely just gone straight for it and been done before Harry could suggest other activities. He had to admit, albeit grudgingly, that Harry was considerably kinder for showing concern over his well-being, physical as well as mental.

Harry's mouth left Draco's and moved lazily across his jaw and to his ear. As it usually did, Harry's tongue against the sensitive shell drew a small gasp from Draco. He continued to tease the ridges and bumps on Draco's ear, then moved to pull the plump lobe between his teeth and bit down gently.

Draco moaned, vaguely recognizing Harry's hand beginning to toy with his erection as he basked in the onslaught of sensations Harry's mouth was creating. He released his hold on Harry when the boy slid down his body, leaving a trail of licks and nips as he went, and groaned when he felt a familiar suction on his cock.

Harry didn't linger there long. Wondering if Draco would put up another token protest, he licked a broad stripe down Draco's sac and made his way to the small hole.

"Potter..." Draco whined feebly, hand twisted in Harry's hair.

Harry didn't respond; rather, he set to work repeating his actions from their last encounter. He was prepared for Draco's dancing hips this time and followed along, listening with pleasure to Draco's ragged breathing and endearing mewls.

When he thought Draco might be ready for the next bit, Harry sat up and retrieved the bottle of lubrication that had appeared on the bedside table. He coated his fingers and stroked them down Draco's crack.

"What are you doing?" Draco's voice was high-pitched and demanding.

"Nothing we haven't already done. Calm down." Harry slipped a finger into

Draco's already loosened hole and wrapped his other hand around the erection in front of him.

Draco dropped his head back onto the pillow and drew in a breath. "Can't we just... do it already?"

"This will make it better."

"How the – ouch, Potter! What the hell are you doing?" Draco cried.

"Trying to get you ready, and that's why we can't just do it. That's only two fingers, and you know my cock's bigger than that."

"Not much," Draco grumbled moodily. He fisted the sheets at his side.

"What was that?" Harry released Draco's cock and curled his fingers upward experimentally to brush Draco's prostate.

"Ah – nothing!" Draco gasped, hips shooting off the bed.

Harry twisted and scissored his fingers, making sure to stroke Draco's prostate as often as possible. The booklet Mason had given him had stated that plenty of preparation was especially necessary the first time, but Harry wasn't sure how much was 'plenty.'

Draco decided for him. "Potter... stop bloody torturing me!" Draco hissed. "Get on with it!"

Harry glanced up Draco's writhing form to meet his eyes. "Are you ready?"

"Are you deaf as well as blind?" Draco demanded, scowling down at Harry. "Yes, I'm damn well ready!"

Harry nodded, anticipation and nervous energy whirling in his core, and took up the lube. "Er, how do you want to do it? Position, I mean."

Draco furrowed his brow. "Does it matter?"

"I don't know, I just thought we could do what you'd prefer."

"This is fine, then. Just do it."

Harry pushed Draco's knees up toward his chest. "Hold these here, then, yeah?"

Draco complied mutely, watching Harry with an unreadable expression on his face. Harry slicked his erection and positioned himself at Draco's opening. He pressed forward slightly, feeling resistance, and paused.

"Er... here goes," he said lamely.

Draco huffed. "If you have to announce yourself, perhaps you're not qualified to do this, Potter."

"Shut it," Harry mumbled. He took hold of Draco's thighs and pushed in slowly, biting his lip hard to muffle a moan when the head of his cock finally popped through the muscular rings.

Draco's face was twisted as he concentrated on relaxing himself enough to take in the intrusion, and he released a breath when Harry was finally fully inside and had the good sense to stop. "Just... wait."

Harry didn't answer, and when Draco cracked open an eye to look at him he saw that Harry's expression was equally contorted. He wondered if it was uncomfortable for the man on top, too – he hadn't thought it would be.

"What's wrong, Potter?" he demanded. "You look like you hate this. If you –"

"No," Harry rasped. "Don't hate it at all. Just... don't want to... to..."

"Oh," Draco said, realization dawning.

"Need to move," Harry told him, his voice pleading.

Draco nodded slightly. His body had relaxed while he was contemplating Harry's distress. "Move, then."

Harry groaned and pulled out, then thrust back in sharply. Draco winced and opened his mouth to protest, but before he could say anything he felt Harry's cock nudge that spot inside him that had sent sparks flying when Harry's fingers had touched it before and a moan escaped instead.

Draco's fingers scrabbled helplessly for purchase at his sides while Harry thrust again and again, battering his prostate and sending shocks of pleasure directly to Draco's cock. Try as he might, Draco couldn't stop the whimpers that began to escape as his orgasm built, and he finally grasped his erection and stroked it quickly.

Harry watched Draco finish himself with fascination, and the erratic spasming of Draco's hole around his cock snapped the last thread of his control. He came with a groan, fingers digging into Draco's thighs and hips pistoning forward of their own accord.

When he'd caught his breath, Harry pulled out and scooted back on the bed. "Was that... er..."

"If you're going to ask if it was good for me, stuff it." Draco Summoned his wand and muttered a quick cleaning spell, wrinkling his nose at the odd sensation in his lower region.

"But... was it? I mean, I didn't hurt you or anything, right?" Harry added hurriedly.

Draco studied him for a moment. "It was fine, Potter."

"Oh." Harry visibly deflated. "All right. It was for me, too... fine, I mean."

"Right." Draco stood and dressed himself. "I wonder if we can leave now."

"I'm sure we can," Harry said quietly. He followed Draco's lead and gathered his clothing.

Draco did up the buttons on his shirt and slipped into his robes. "All right, well... see you tomorrow, I suppose."

Harry nodded, not meeting his eyes. "See you."

Grabbing his bag, Draco slung it over his shoulder and headed for the exit from their booth. When he reached it he chanced a glance back at Harry and found him looking at the floor. He hesitated for a moment, and then kept walking.

~

Chapter 20

Harry wished he knew why he felt so... well, he didn't know how to describe it, exactly, but he didn't care for it.

"Hey, mate." Ron loped up beside Harry. "Heading for dinner?"

"Er, yeah." Harry glanced up and saw that he was near the Great Hall.

"Great. You, um... you all right?" Ron looked distinctly uncomfortable, as he tended to when attempting to offer any type of emotional support.

"I'm fine."

"Oh. Good. It's just that, you know, Neville came back to the tower a little while ago – looks mighty proud of himself, too," Ron chuckled. "And we know that you had your class and that, er..."

Harry sighed. "Yes, Ron, what's your point?"

"Just that we hadn't seen you, so we were wondering if you were... all right."

"And I've said I am, so can we just drop it?"

Ron shrugged. "Fine by me, but Hermione's already in there and you know she won't let it go so easily."

Harry rolled his eyes. "Yeah, that I know."

"Do excuse us, Potter," said a snide voice behind them.

Harry turned to see Blaise, Pansy, and Draco approaching. "There's very little excuse for you, Zabini."

"How original, Potter," Pansy spoke up.

"Hey, Potter, I was wondering if you've got a cushion or something for Draco here. Though I suppose he could use a charm..." Blaise tapped his chin thoughtfully.

"What are you on about?" Draco snapped.

"Well, I figured that since your boyfriend here surely gave you a good seeing-to in class today... might be a bit painful for you to sit on those hard benches, yeah?"

Draco reddened, and Harry noticed his jaw twitching when he glanced at him. "Not that it's any of your damn business, but it'll be me needing the cushion tonight, not Malfoy."

"Oh?" Blaise raised an eyebrow in surprise. "Well done, Draco."

"Like I need your bloody approval." Draco crossed his arms and looked bored. "If you'd like to stand out here and stare at the Golden Boy and his witless sidekick all night, be my guest, but I'm hungry so I'm going in." He brushed past Blaise and headed into the Hall, Pansy trailing after him.

Blaise watched him go and then turned a malicious smile on Harry. "So the wizarding world is all aflutter about the Boy-Who-Bottoms. What a turn of events."

"Leave him alone, Zabini," Ron hissed.

"So Weasley can speak. Too bad. Well, Potter, I suppose you'll want to get going. Though I have to ask – how did it feel to get fucked by a Slytherin?"

"Absolutely fantastic, Zabini." Harry grinned widely. "But you would know, wouldn't you? As concerned as you are about the state of my arse, it sounds like you know exactly what it feels like afterward."

Blaise growled. "Fuck off, Potter."

"Not until Wednesday, I'm afraid. And I'm sure I'll find myself in the same position then, if Malfoy has anything to say about it." Harry plastered a rueful expression on his face.

Ron grabbed Harry's arm and hauled him toward the Gryffindor table. "You actually let Malfoy... you know... put his... really?"

"Perhaps you should be taking the class, Ron, since you can't seem to come up with the right words. You did know that we were going to be having actual intercourse, yeah?"

"Well, yeah, but I figured you'd be bugging him!"

"Does it really matter?" Harry sighed wearily. "It's not as though there's any shame to either role."

"Well, no, but – it's Malfoy! Who knows where his bits have been?"

"Up my arse, that's where," Harry hissed. "Do you think that topping Hermione makes her weak?"

Ron's face went crimson. "It – no! But it isn't as though I have a choice – she's the girl!"

"And since neither of us are girls things work differently. So perhaps you shouldn't make assumptions on things you know nothing about."

"Sorry," Ron muttered.

"Everything all right?" Hermione glanced between the two boys as they sat down.

"Fine." Harry began to load his plate.

"I wanted to ask you..."

"If it's about Malfoy or the damn class, then please don't. I won't be talking about it."

"Harry..."

"Hermione." Harry clenched his fists. "Look – I know you care, and I know you want to help, but I don't try and involve myself in your sex life so I'd appreciate the same consideration in return, all right?"

"I just wanted to make sure you're all right." Hermione looked hurt. "I don't mean to pry."

"You do, too." Harry gave in and smiled at her. "I promise that I'll talk with you if I need to, all right? I just want some privacy. It may not be a normal relationship, but... it's mine."

Hermione pounced. "So you do see this thing with Malfoy as a relationship, then?"

"I – no! Dammit, Hermione." Harry stood up. "Obviously you can't just let it go, so I'm leaving. It's an arrangement I'm stuck with until the end of the term. Come hols, I'll be finished with it and with him. Happy?"

"Harry –"

"See you later." He glanced up as he turned to leave, just in time to catch Malfoy watching him with a thoughtful expression. For reasons he couldn't explain that only made him angrier, and he stormed out of the Great Hall.

"Thought you'd never get here." Malfoy was lounging on the bed in their booth when Harry arrived to their next class.

"I'm here now." Harry tossed his bag down and frowned at Draco. "What's got

you in such a good mood?"

"What's got your wand in a knot?" Draco returned.

Harry had been in a foul state of mind for days, but he didn't care to discuss it with Malfoy. "Nothing. I'm... it's nothing. Let's get on with it."

"Stop with the romance, Potter, you'll make me swoon."

Harry rolled his eyes. "Like you've ever wanted romance. Like you've ever wanted anything but to get off. The only way this could improve for you is if we were to fuck on top of a pile of burning Muggles."

"Nah, too much heat ruins my complexion." Draco examined his nails. "So why don't you tell me what's up your arse? In fact, why don't we start with exactly that – why did you tell Zabini I fucked you?"

"I..." Harry sighed. "I don't know. I know you're angry about it, and I told you I'd stop trying to help you, but –"

"You did help. Thanks."

"Look, I – what?"

Draco snorted. "Really, Potter, try and keep up. I said thanks. It did get him to back off, what you said. Not for long, I'm sure, but it helped. But your own friends believe it too, I assume, since you said what you did in front of Weasley. Why would you tarnish your own reputation that way?"

"My reputation?" Harry shook his head incredulously. "You're mental, Draco. Truly cracked. You and your Slytherin cronies live in this world where everything's a power play, and it's just not like that to me. We're both blokes, and therefore a cock has to go in an arse to do what we're required to do. Why the hell does it matter which cock goes in whose arse?"

"Because I – I shouldn't be bending over for you!" Draco exclaimed.

"Everything is about power, and you have no hope of winning this war you're in if you can't see that."

"Well, you'd love that, wouldn't you?" Harry snapped. "You're just hoping for me to lose. You'd love nothing more than to see my dead body rotting on the ground while your precious Lord laughs."

Draco shrank back on the bed. "I... stop it, Potter."

"Stop what?" Harry's eyes took on a challenging gleam. "Isn't that what you want? What Daddy wants? You've made it clear which side you're on, and since he and I can't both survive this fight then that means you want me dead. Right?"

"You're mad." Draco's jaw twitched.

"That's all you can say? I want to hear you tell the truth, Draco. Tell me you want me to die." Harry crawled across the bed and pinned Draco beneath him. "Tell me. Say it."

"I –"

"Say it!" Harry hissed. "Tell me you want me to die, because if you want him to win then that's what you want. Tell me!"

"I don't want you to die!" Draco cried. "Get off me!"

Harry stared down at him. "No," he breathed, then captured Draco's lips with his own.

Draco moaned and arched up into him, gripping his biceps and returning the kiss with heat. He shoved at Harry's cloak until Harry broke the kiss long enough to pull it off.

Harry fumbled with his wand and with a muttered spell sent their clothing

fluttering into neat piles beside the bed. He collapsed onto Draco once more, fusing their lips together again while their naked cocks met and ground against one another.

"Want to fuck you," Harry mumbled against the shell of Draco's ear, licking the lobe and drawing a groan from his partner.

"Yes," Draco replied edgily. "Do it, then."

Harry coated his fingers with the lube that was ever-present beside the bed and turned his attention to sucking on Draco's nipples while preparing him. Draco twitched nervously but didn't protest, as he had during their previous encounter.

Finally satisfied, Harry began to press inside and was encouraged by the way Draco's long legs wrapped around his waist. He moved slowly at first but sped up when he saw nothing but tortured want reflected on Draco's face.

They moved together this time, Draco lifting his hips to meet Harry's thrusts. Draco's eyes were tightly closed, but Harry could see each expression that flickered across his angular face and the moment he bit his lip in the way that had become so familiar, Harry reached between their bodies to grip Draco's cock. He fisted it clumsily until Draco came, and as soon as his hand and torso were sticky with Draco's release he let himself go as well.

When he'd pulled out of Draco's tight heat Harry sat upright and looked at his partner, lying flushed and disheveled on the pillows. "That was even better than last time," he ventured.

Draco's eyes snapped open and he scrambled to sit up. "You have some fucking nerve, Potter," he seethed.

"What the – ouch! Fuck, Draco!" Harry covered his smarting cheek with a careful palm and scowled at the fist that had just caused the pain. "What are you about?"

"You come in here and – and –" Draco stood and began to dress hastily. "I

fucking thanked you for what you did, and then you attacked me!"

"I didn't attack you!" Harry said hotly. "It was our assignment, and besides – you wanted it just as much as I did!"

"The bloody sex was fine, but before that – look, we're not on the same side and you can't change that no matter how many times you shove your cock up my arse, Potter. I may not... I may not necessarily wish you dead but that doesn't mean I want you to win, either. My family has values, you know."

"Shoddy ones at that. I know exactly what you value."

"Good, then quit trying to fucking change me!"

"I'm not!"

"Bollocks. I told you I'd keep up my end of this agreement – I'll cooperate with you for the duration of the class. That's it. The war, our families, our beliefs – none of that factors in here." Draco drew himself up to his full height. "We aren't lovers, we aren't in a bloody relationship, and we aren't friends. We're classmates and partners, for the moment. Leave it at that."

"But..."

"Leave it, Potter." Draco's voice held a warning tone. "Or so help me..."

"Fine." Harry looked away. "See you next class, then."

"See you." Draco stepped out of the booth and paused. "Two more weeks and we'll never have to speak to one another again, Potter."

"Great." Harry continued to stare at the wall until Draco was gone, then stood slowly and began to dress. "Fucking bastard," he muttered. "I swear it was different this time. He was different, even if for a moment, but I'll never convince him of anything in two weeks."

A crash from outside the booth made him jump, and he frowned as he picked up his things and entered the main classroom. Professor Mason was staring at a pile of books scattered across the floor with a smile on her face.

"Er... Professor?" Harry ventured.

She looked up and her smile widened. "Harry. Your partner was a little... irritated when he left."

"Malfoy did this?" Harry bent to retrieve the books. "I'm sorry. We argued a bit before he left, but I didn't think he'd have a tantrum."

She chuckled. "A tantrum – yes, it was that indeed. No, I don't think it was your argument. You see, he seemed angry after I mentioned the depth of the energy radiating from your booth. Definitely the most powerful in the class, though it'd be even more so if it were to develop a more... harmonious quality. I saw sparks of that today, but they dissipated rapidly, I'm afraid."

"Yes," Harry murmured. "I think we were somewhat in harmony today, but it was short-lived."

"Still, it's a step."

"Well, again, I'm sorry. I'm sure he didn't like being reminded we actually do work well together when he lets his guard down."

"I'm quite proud that at least one of you is willing to admit that," Mason praised.

"And not surprised that you're the one who finally sees it. However, he didn't seem to be too upset about that – he acknowledged my comments with a grunt, basically – until I told him that I look forward to seeing the progress the two of you make next term."

"He probably – wait, next term? But the class ends in December." Harry furrowed his brow.

"No, the class ends in June. We always leave the second term open in case there's been no progress made in the class during the first term, and if that's the case the students receive a study period for the second term. However, you're all doing very well and now that you've reached this point we're ready to begin exploring new types of magic and rituals, as well as exploring the depths of complimentary magic you can achieve now that you've all become fully intimate with your partners. Failure to attend the second term will result in failure of the class all together, and I don't think Mr. Malfoy was terribly pleased to hear that." Professor Mason looked incredibly smug.

"I'd imagine." Harry's belly clenched as he absorbed the news.

I have months with him now. Months left to shag Malfoy, and months to convince him that he's wrong.

An Author's Note:

Dearest readers - I am on hiatus due to RL issues. I will be back, I promise you, but I don't know when. I apologize as I know you're all looking forward to more, but I'm sure you understand that behind every username is a person and that fanfic cannot always be the top priority. This fic is NOT abandoned, just on hold.

Additionally, there is no mailing list for this fic. I get a lot of requests because the previous author kept one, but I do not. If you would like to follow my journal you are more than welcome - that way you will see when the fic is updated.

Update, 02/2014: Circumstances beyond my control have kept me away from writing, particularly this fic, for far longer than I'd prefer. However, I have begun working on it again - slowly but surely. I will not be posting any updates until I have multiple chapters complete, to try and avoid some of the disheartening harassment I've been receiving thus far, but rest assured that the story is continuing.

Authors Note: ki_rivers is the third official author of this work and takes over from this chapter until the end

Chapter Twenty-One

"June!" Hermione exclaimed incredulously as Harry told her and Ron about his new predicament over dinner. "And they're just now telling you this? Oh, Harry," she frowned sympathetically while looking at him, trying to assess his own emotions on the subject, which frankly, he couldn't even sort out.

"Can you not just... not show up for the second term?" Ron asked with a shrug. "So you don't get any credit, who cares? Isn't that better than having to shag Malfoy for *seven more months*?"

"It's not just I don't get any credit, it makes it to where everything they've made us do pointless," Harry ran a hand through his eternally messy hair and bitterly added, "It's not really up to me anyway, is it?"

"What do you mean? Of course it is," Ron said with a confused look, looking from Harry to Hermione. He still didn't know about Dumbledore's hand all of this, and the Great Hall was the last place Harry wanted to talk to him about it. Hermione seemed to have the same idea.

She looked over at him, resting her hand on his thigh. "We can talk about that later, okay?" Ron nodded, still looking somewhat baffled, but thankfully dropped it.

Later that evening, while Hermione caught Ron up on Dumbledore and Voldemort and the upcoming war, Harry needed to get away. Hiding under his invisibility cloak, he went to loneliest part of the castle he could think of: the second floor. The only thing there besides empty classrooms was the Defense Against the Dark Arts Professor's office, which nobody was likely to be in at this hour. He sat with his back against the wall and his forehead pressed against his knees. He needed some time alone to just *think*.

There was so much expected of him that nobody seemed to stop and think about his feelings and his say in this. Dumbledore expected him to somehow, in only seven months, *seduce* Draco Malfoy to their side. If not, the Slytherins were likely to fight *with* the Death Eaters, not against them. In a sense, the fate of the war rested on Harry's shoulders, and Dumbledore didn't even seem to stop and think about the effect this would have on Harry.

He was angry with Dumbledore, Mason and McGonagall for making him do this, angry with Draco for getting him so addicted to him, with Zabini and the other Slytherins for not being able to mind their own business, and with the rest of the Gryffindors who seemed to have forgotten about his existence now that rumors were being spread about him and Malfoy. When he really thought about it, he was annoyed with pretty much everyone in the castle.

Now, he had to deal with that until June, not just two more weeks. This was going to be fun.

"Hey, Potter," Harry heard Zabini quip before Snape entered the classroom for their Potions lesson. "Want to switch seats?"

"What are you talking about, Zabini?" Harry asked, his voice full of irritation. He really didn't want to have to deal with Blaze's shit this early in the morning.

"I just figured you and Draco would want to sit by each other," he smirked. "Couples usually do that, don't they?"

Draco, who was sat next to Blaze, just rolled his eyes and did his best to keep a stoic expression. Zabini would do everything he could to try and take Draco's power away, and if he showed any signs of weakness, Zabini would pounce.

"You wouldn't know, would you, what with never having been in one yourself," Harry retorted.

"Sounds to me that you just admitted to be Malfoy's boyfriend" Zabini said raising an eyebrow.

"And it sounds to me like you're just jealous of the fact that we're doing better in the class than you ever will. Remind me, how long did it take you and Marietta to levitate, again? Oh," Harry snapped and pointed at Blaze as if he just remembered the answer. "That's right, you never did."

"If it isn't true, Potty, why so defensive?" Pansy asked cruelly.

"It's not," Draco replied lazily, feigning disinterest. "Now, if you have nothing original to say, don't say anything at all; you're giving me a headache." Before anyone could say anything else on the subject, Snape walked in and began that day's lesson.

While walking down the corridor back to the Gryffindor tower after classes that day, he felt someone grab his upper arm and pull him into an empty classroom, closing the door behind them.

"Who is that, what do you want?" Harry exclaimed, looking around the dark room.

It was Draco's voice who answered. "Shut up, Potter, it's just me."

"Malfoy? What the hell is your problem, have you gone mad?" As his eyes adjusted to the dark, he could see the Slytherin's outline an arm's length away from him. His hands seemed to be in his robe pockets.

"I need to talk to you, and this is the best way to do it."

"What about?" Harry asked skeptically.

For a while, there was silence. Then finally, "I'm not going to be doing to second term"

"You- what? What do you mean you're not going to, you have to!" Harry said astonished. He felt like he had just been punched in the stomach; he felt like he was going to be sick.

"I don't *have* to. I promised you the first semester, I don't owe you any more than that, so I'm not going to attend the second term." Draco came to this conclusion over dinner, and it should have been an easy thing to do. His hands shouldn't be shaking nor should his voice be threatening to break. However, that's exactly what was happening. Although he would never admit it, he was going to miss Harry's kiss, and his touch, as well as other certain parts of him as well...

"If we don't, we don't get a grade for the first term, it would have all been useless," was all Harry could bring himself to say.

Draco looked Harry in the eye best he could in the dark. "That's a hell of a lot better than knowing that you're being used as a pawn, isn't it?"

The terrible thing was that Harry couldn't argue. Dumbledore was using both of them to try and win a war, against their wills; a war Draco was already adamant about which side he stood on. Harry felt his stomach sink and all he could do was reach out and place his hand on Draco's waist and take a step closer to him.

Draco tensed and whispered, almost as a plea, "Don't... don't touch me"

Harry pressed his lips against Draco's, kissing him slowly and pulling the Slytherin closer to him. Draco was too shocked to try and push him away. Not because Harry kissed him, that he was used to, but because of *how* he did it. The other times, it was always forceful, *sexual*. This was... Draco didn't even know how to describe it. They weren't doing this to finish an assignment, or to turn each other on. Harry was kissing him solely because he wanted to. There was no tongue, no groping, just the emotions they were too scared to say out loud.

Draco's hand found itself resting on Harry's shoulder though he had no memory of moving it. He was losing himself in Harry, and Harry in him. He knew he should pull away and berate Potter for being a pervert, should storm out of the room, slap him again, anything. But he couldn't move. Not with Harry's hand resting on his lower back, holding him close, kissing him with more passion than Draco had ever been kissed before.

When Harry pulled away, he looked at Malfoy who had quickly stepped back, trying to compose himself. "I'm sorry," was all the blond could say as he opened the classroom door and walked out into the corridor, leaving Harry behind.

Chapter Twenty-Two

The next day, masks were back on. Leading up to Sex Magic, Harry and Draco acted as if they didn't know each other. A few times, Harry tried to catch Draco's eye (what he would do if that actually happened was beyond him), but to no avail. Harry knew he messed up. One of their unspoken rules was to not let anything that happened in class happen anywhere but there.

As Harry and Neville made their way to Sex Magic, he felt like there was something in his stomach trying to escape. He just hoped that it wasn't his breakfast. Where Harry was practically moping, Neville was trying his best not to skip to class. He was happier than he had ever been before. Things were working out perfectly between him and Lav, and they were even planning a date for their next Hogsmeade trip.

Once in the Room of Requirement, Neville made a beeline for her and immediately took her hand in his, winning a wide grin and a head lovingly resting on his shoulder. Harry took a seat at the back of the class, knowingly sitting as far from Draco as he could. All he wanted was to delay the awkward. For say, another ten years maybe.

"Mr. Potter, I believe that you should know by now that partners are supposed to sit together." Professor Mason said as she made her way to the front of room.

He had been hoping to not be noticed, but as that was obviously not the case, he had no choice but to do as told. Something that, as a Gryffindor, didn't come easily to him. So, he moved to sit next to Draco who didn't so much as glance his way. Harry knew they would have to talk about last night, and he still wasn't sure how he felt about that.

Draco had a stoic expression on his face, and that may have fooled everyone else in the class, but not someone who knew him as well as Harry. His index finger barely even bounding on his knee, his deep and slow breathing, the way he sat with his back completely straight all indicated his nervousness.

For a moment, Harry felt proud. He was the only one who knew Draco, his mannerisms and his body well enough to see through his façade. Then he

realized that thinking of that now was stupid and he had many other, and more important, things to focus on, so he turned his head to the front of the class to where Professor Mason was mid-sentence.

"-as last week. Today, however, you will be adding to this exercise. You will again be trying to change the color of a stone I will be placing outside each booth for me to observe. Each pair will be assigned a color by myself. The more specific the colors are, the harder they are to achieve. This exercise is for me to see how far each pair has come, as well as for me to see which pairs will be taking the second semester of this class as well."

Harry stopped listening as soon as she called out the names of random pairs, assigning them a color. He was called out of his stupor when his name was called.

"Misters Malfoy and Potter: Apricot." Though in all honesty, Harry couldn't remember the last time he even saw an apricot to remember his color, he nodded, as did Draco.

Once each pair was assigned a color, they were allowed into their booths. They walked a lot slower than say, Neville and Lavender. Immediately on closing the curtain, Draco turned to look Harry in the eyes.

"Why did you do it, Potter?"

"Do what?" Harry asked, knowing full well what, but wanting to stall.

Draco looked at him with a straight face, "Even I know that you're not *that* stupid. Answer the damn question."

"Maybe you could help refresh my memory?"

To that, Harry received a look that very clearly communicated that Draco would most definitely not be refreshing his memory, but Harry figured it was worth a shot.

"It was an accident?" He tried.

"I call bullshit."

"I don't know," Harry said, this time telling the truth. "I just- I don't know- You were just *there*, and I went for it. I didn't think-

What else is new? Draco thought.

"-and I also wanted you to shut up, so I, y'know... kissed you."

"Wanted me to shut up?" Draco asked with a raised brow.

"Your voice is annoying," Harry lied through his teeth.

"You don't seem to mind it when it's moaning your name."

Harry choked on his spit. "I-I don't.. I never said-" he said stuttering idiotically. Draco one, called him out of his lie, and two, referenced Harry making him moan (something he wasn't always all that quiet about doing) while they were... having fun. This resulted in a speechless, red-faced Harry Potter.

"Whatever," Draco said as if he himself wasn't also faintly blushing. "Apricot, remember?"

Harry nodded and there were a few seconds of awkward silence between to them before Harry stepped forward, cupping Draco's cheek and kissing him. And this is what it was like for them. They would fight, yell, ignore and hate, but as soon as they stepped into this room, it was as if all that was forgotten. This time was no different.

Both robes were quickly on the floor and Harry was working on loosening Draco's tie when he felt Draco's lips move from his lips to right below his jawline. The sharp intake of breath Draco received encouraged him only more. With his bottom lip between his teeth, Harry worked on unbuttoning Draco's white shirt. Draco was pulled closer by his waist and he dropped his shirt from his shoulders, moving his lips back to Harry's.

Blindly, they made their way to the bed, and withing seconds, they were in nothing but their underwear. Draco was laid on his back and Harry was straddling

his waist, sucking on the tender skin just below the blond's ear. Their hearts began to beat faster as Harry's mouth moved lower and lower.

A non-committal noise escaped Draco's lips as Harry kissed below his navel, causing Harry to smirk. Only seconds later, Draco's underwear was on the floor and Harry kissed his way even lower until his lips found their way to the Slytherin's tip. Harry slowly sucked whilst stroking Draco as if he had all the time in the world to spare, knowing it would make the other boy impatient. As if reading Harry's mind, he tried to move his hips upward, deeper into Harry's mouth, but Harry held him down with his free hand, who felt that gagging might just ruin the mood a bit.

"Don't-" Draco's breath hitched, "be a tease, dammit."

"Well, someone sounds impatient."

"Potter, I swear-"

"Shut up, Malfoy," Harry said before taking in as much of Draco as he could without choking, using his hands for the rest.

His free hand still controlling Draco's inability to *fucking stay still for a second* as he hollowed his cheeks and used his tongue to make Draco whimper and moan, which resulted in turning Harry on even more.

Harry pulled away only long enough to rid himself of his underwear and glasses and grab the ever-present bottle of lube. If possible, their hearts were beating even faster than before. Though this wasn't their first time, they were still nervous. Or were their hearts beating in excitement? Neither one could tell at this point. The only thing Harry was sure of was that today was the day he wanted to fuck Draco like he meant it.

He wanted Draco to stay, he *needed* him to stay. This was the only way he knew to convince him to do so.

Once Harry felt that Draco was prepped enough for it not to hurt, he looked the other boy in the eyes (which weren't really focusing), silently asking for

permission, which was granted with fast nodding. Harry smirked as Draco held his legs up and bit his lip, trying to keep quiet.

That didn't last long.

"Fuck! Ow, n-no, don't stop-" Draco gasped and moaned as Harry built up speed, sucking on the other boy's neck while also running his hands all over his chest.

Harry inhaled sharply as he felt Draco's nails dig into his shoulders before being dragged down his back. It hurt, but there was no way in hell that he wanted it to stop. The faster and deeper he went, the louder Draco got. Harry couldn't lie, he most definitely wasn't annoyed by the sound of his name dragged out in such a way.

By the sound of the paler boy's shallow breaths and the way the spot below his ribs went concave, Harry knew he was about to cum, and he wasn't the only one. So Harry gripped Draco's hips as he hit his prostate harder and harder, faster and faster, until Draco came. Harry pulled out and did the same, waiting only long enough for Draco to clean himself before collapsing on top of him.

This was followed by soft, slow kisses, and them taking their time in getting dressed. As they walked out of their booth, Harry looked down at the stone placed to the side of the curtain, and knew for a fact that he would never again forget the color of an apricot.

Chapter Twenty-Three

It was Saturday, which for Harry meant three things: he and Draco had had sex two more times (both of which were amazing), he had exactly another week to convince Draco to show up for the second semester, and today was their monthly Hogsmeade weekend trip.

Harry, locating his glasses, shuffled out of bed to wake Ron up. Dean and Seamus were already both up, speaking in a low whisper. Neville's bed, however, was already vacant. Chuckling softly to himself, he made his way over to Ron's bed.

"Wake up, Ron," he said as he unceremoniously shook his best friend in an attempt to wake him.

Ron grunted and grumbled in a way reminiscent of a mountain troll, but eventually got up. As they were getting dressed, he turned to Harry, scratching the back of his neck. "Is it okay if Hermione and I go to the Three Broomsticks today? Just the two of us, that is."

Though not wanting to be left alone at Hogsmeade, Harry nodded nonetheless.

"Thanks mate. It's just been a while, y'know?"

"You don't need to ask me if you and your *girlfriend* can be alone together. I'm her best friend, not dad," Harry said with a soft chuckle, which was returned by Ron.

"I know, but she said to ask if it was okay with you first," Ron said as he stood at the doorway of the dorm, waiting for him.

"Go ahead, you don't have to wait. You know how she gets about us being late."

Ron grinned and turned, saying to Harry over his shoulder, "Thanks again, mate," before walking out.

It was raining.

And not just raining, *pouring*. It was winter as well which made for a less than ideal situation. Students ran into the closest shops, trying to stay dry and warm. Harry, as well as a group of about six other students, ran for the closest shop to them: Tomes and Scrolls.

As it turned out, they weren't the only ones to have this idea. It being one of the closest shops when coming in from Hogwarts meant that practically every student above third year was in the shop. This resulted in Harry feeling like a canned tuna. Not that the shop was exactly tiny, just that it wasn't built to hold the majority of the school. So, with the concept of personal space thrown to the wind, everyone packed in close together with barely two inches between them.

It didn't take long for Harry to realize just who he was stood behind. He knew the shape of that body and small amount of blonde hair peaking out from under a hat all too well. So he decided, *fuck it*, and took a small step closer. This causing Draco to spin around best he could in a crowded room, which ended up being more of a look over his shoulder than the dramatic turn he was planning for.

"Wha-," but as soon as he saw it was Harry, he stopped, giving him a curious look. "Fuck off, Potter."

"It's not my fault the whole castle had the same idea," Harry shrugged. "Unless you want to go out there, we're both stuck here."

Draco made a sour face, but turned back around. Harry could see him inhale sharply when he decided to press his luck and move even closer, pressing himself against the other boy.

"Do you mind?" Draco spat, making no effort to step away though he acted so bothered by their proximity.

"Not at all, you?" Harry replied, leaning closer to speak into Draco's ear.

"Fuck you," the Slytherin said in a hard whisper, though by the goosebumps on the back of his neck, Harry knew he didn't mean it.

Laughing softly, Harry quipped, "Though the rest of the castle may think differently, we both know it works the other way around."

Draco's ears grew pink, and Harry knew his face was as well. With Draco effectively quieted, they both stood at the back of the room, pressed against each other as if this was normal. Harry smiled softly when he felt Draco relax against him, distracted by a conversation between a Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw girl that he was listening in on. Though, because of how they stood, there wasn't much of Draco he could see, he enjoyed the little he could. There were strands of hair that had escaped from his hat and stuck to his forehead, the polar opposite of what his hair usually did. Of course, there was also the beautiful sight that was Draco Malfoy in a scarf.

Leaning close to Draco's ear, Harry whispered, "Unless you're wanting to start something here and now, you may want to rethink the way your ass is pressing up against me."

Draco was just about to remind him that doing in public was Harry's fantasy, not his, when they were spotted in a less than ideal moment. Who spotted them pressed up against each other his Harry whispering into Draco's ear was none other than Blaise. Fucking *Blaise*.

"Can't go 24 hours without the *Golden boy*, can you Malfoy? We all know you're in love with him, so go ahead, admit it," he all but yelled cruelly.

Draco, who was by now a solid two feet away from Harry glared at both him and Blaise venomously. "I'm warning you, Zabini, you do *not* want to start this."

"And what will happen if I do? Your father will hear about it and come for me?" Draco was asked in a mocking tone. "Talking about that, how does he feeling about you coming for your new little boyfriend?"

Draco stood up straighter and said in a controlled tone, "And how does your mother feel about you sleeping with anything that breathes? I imagine she's proud. After all, you *are* taking after her. How much does she charge again? I just might have to pay her a visit during the holiday."

The laughter and "oohs" that Draco heard were just enough to assure him that he hadn't been knocked off his throne yet, though he knew it was bound to happen soon if he continued. If he continued to be paired with Harry, kept letting things like this happen outside of the classroom, and most of all, if he kept enjoying it. So, before Blaise could add up what Draco has just insinuated, he did the one thing he believed would help the situation.

Turning to Harry, he spat, "If you ever put your hands on me again, Potter, I swear I'll make you wish for the same fate as your embarrassment of a father and mudblood of a mother." His face hot and his hands shaking in rage, he pushed his way out and into the pouring rain.

Harry left for the castle not long after the incident with Draco, and spent the rest of the day wandering around under the protection of his invisibility cloak. He didn't show up for dinner, and didn't return to the common room until around nine that night, where he was met by a concerned looking Hermione and an uncomfortable looking Ron who were both waiting for him by the fire.

Harry didn't want to have to talk to them, but wanted Hermione drilling him for information even less, so sat down beside them. "Well don't just sit there, you obviously have something to say, so say it."

Ron looked at Hermione and then at Harry before vaguely stating, "We heard about what happened today."

"And what *exactly* did you hear, Ron?"

"Please don't get like his Harry," Hermione sighed. "All we heard is that Draco and Blaise had at it today, and that you were involved, but there are a thousand different theories as to how. We just wanted to hear the truth from our best friend before we heard rumors from everyone else. It's only fair."

"I was stood behind Draco, we got close, I said something to him, and Blaise started shouting about how in love we are. That's it. Is that enough for you to go telling the whole castle about what really happened, or do I need to go more into

detail about Draco's ass pressed up against me and me whispering sweet nothings into his ear?"

"Harry," Hermione chided in a tone of voice that would make Mrs. Weasley proud. "How *dare* you even assume that that is why Ron and I are asking you this. You are our best friend and he only believed it to be fair for us to hear about what's going on in your life from your own lips, rather than everyone else's first. You are only being stupid if you truly believe that we are asking for any other purpose but to help you."

"If you really want to help, then drop it," was all Harry said before turning around and walking back out. All he needed was a good wank and some peace and quiet, so he made his way to the only place he knew that would be possible.

Harry was lying wide awake on the couch of his and Draco's booth, unable to sleep, when he heard the curtain open and someone walk in. Instantly, the inside appearance of the room changed. The walls turned to white marble and Slytherin Quidditch team decorations adorned the walls. Even the smell of the room changed to something that smelt vaguely familiar to Harry, but he couldn't place exactly what it was. Looking over to see who entered the room, Harry saw that it was Draco.

"Malfoy?" He asked aloud, causing Draco to jump and turn around quickly.

"What the hell are you doing here, Potter?"

"I was tired of my friends riding me about what happened today." Harry got up and walked over to Draco, only stopping once there were almost nose to nose. "About how you broke our deal?"

Draco's heartbeat accelerated and he took a second to respond. "What deal?" He meant for the question to come out a lot harsher, but he could only muster a whisper. He hated that Harry had this effect on him. It made him feel so weak and powerless, but in a twisted sense, he also knew he loved it.

"The deal where you agreed to not lie about liking *this*."

With that, Harry leaned in and slowly kissed Draco on the lips before moving to the corner of his mouth and eventually down to his neck before stopping to suck on the spot below Draco's ear that drove the blond crazy.

Draco's fingers found themselves tangled in Harry's ever unruly hair as his eyes fluttered closed. "T-That only counts in here."

"Bullshit," Harry mumbled against his skin before moving back to Draco's lips. The way Draco was reacting gave away that he enjoyed this. Now, Harry had to just get him to a point where he can't help but want to stay for the second semester.

Harry tugged on Draco's bottom lip before sliding his tongue into the other boy's mouth. Draco whimpered slightly tightened his grip on Harry's hair, pulling him closer. Harry pulled their hips together, leaving no open space between the two. A soft moan from Draco only made Harry want to go even further, but was stopped when Draco pulled away.

"I can't do that out there... not outside of this room, not in front of them." Draco was looking at Harry's chest and not his eyes as he whispered this confession.

"Why not?" Harry pressed.

Draco sighed and took a step back as he tried to word how he was feeling. "None of this is real, Harry. These emotions, this," he motioned between the two of them, "it was forced on us and not something we chose for ourselves. These emotions are just a result of a dark, twisted form of magic. They aren't our real feelings. They *can't* be our real feelings."

The way he said 'can't' sounded to Harry like less of a 'I can't allow this to be our real feelings,' and more like a 'I can't believe this to be our real feelings.' He wanted to say that out loud, to argue, to yell. He stopped himself however, as this was the first time that Draco opened up like this to him, and it was unlikely to ever happen again if he reacted negatively. So, Harry stepped back and nodded once.

"You're right," was all he said before laying back down on the couch, his back to Draco. They remained silent as Draco lay in the bed only feet away from him. Neither of them spoke, though both were awake for the following hour.

Just as Harry was drifting off to sleep, he realized what the scent the room had provided to Draco was.

It was his own shampoo.

Chapter Twenty-Four

"Mione?"

Hermione made a noncommittal noise in response, and looked at her boyfriend over the top of her Ancient Runes book. The two of them, along with Harry, were sat around a table in the common room where Hermione insisted upon studying for their NEWTs, much to Ron and Harry's dismay. Harry had just gotten up to go to the restroom, resulting in Ron speaking up as soon as he was out of ear shot.

"It's about Harry. You don't think he, y'know... is started to get *feelings* for Malfoy, do you?"

"You know that's none of our business Ron."

"That doesn't mean that we can't think about it, does it? We're his best friends, Hermione, don't you think we deserve to know?"

Hermione sighed and set down her book. "If he is, I wouldn't really be surprised." At Ron's surprised expression, she continued, "Being so intimate with someone over a continued period of time is only bound to result in some sort of emotional connection, even if not specifically romantic. From everything that I've read, the primary reason Sex Magic is such a powerful branch of magic, though dark, is due to that intense emotional connection. So yes, I do believe that Harry has feelings for Malfoy. After all, from what I've heard from Lavender, they seem to have the strongest bond in the class. Whether his feelings for Malfoy are romantic or not, though, I'm not really sure."

"You could have just said you don't know," Ron stated under his breath, causing Hermione to roll her eyes and re-open her book. Just then, Harry returned to the table and sat back down without a word.

It wasn't that Ron had a problem with his *male* best friend liking another guy, it was just that... Okay, that was pretty much his problem. He just couldn't get used to the idea of Harry having to kiss or touch or even have sex with, nonetheless being topped by, none other than that ass hat bitch baby Malfoy.

He remembered Harry telling him that homosexual sex shouldn't be put into heterosexual sex terms; in his case, there is no 'woman' and he knew that. But knowing it and being able to wrap your mind around and become comfortable with it are two very different things.

On Monday, Professor Mason found herself looking over her class as she waited for everyone to arrive. She looked at every pair and couldn't help but feel proud of the progress they had all made. Just like every year there were one or two couples that needed a bit of extra help, but that was simply to be expected.

Most of the pairs were holding hands and in the midst of expressive conversation or merely silently sitting close to one another, enjoying their partner's company.

Then there were Harry and Draco.

They were sitting as far apart as they could without being chided for it, not even looking at each other. Though the two of them made the best progress in the class and had astounding chemistry together, there were days when they acted like the other was merely a fly on the wall to be ignored. The energy created around their booth was something that most Sex Magic professors could only hope to see. They would have so much more potential if only they allowed themselves to express how they felt instead of suppressing it. She still held out hope for that day.

Having counted heads to make sure that all her students were there, Professor Mason began.

"As I have previously explained, this class is divided into two semesters; the first being for classroom work, and the second for independent study. What that entails is the following: every Monday, you will all be given an assignment that you have until the following Monday to complete. Some of these assignments you have, to a degree, already touched upon. However, the case may be that others require research to be done or steps to be followed. This will be explained again once the time comes but for now let us talk about what we will be doing today.

In every relationship it is required that the two or more partners in the relationship have mutual trust in one another. Nowhere is this more true than in this class. To establish such trust, where lacking, the tables will, in a manner of speaking, be turned. For most of you that means that for this assignment the females will have full control. For others it merely means the position of dominant and submissive will be reversed." Draco, who was just now realizing exactly what that meant for him, choked on his own spit. Professor Mason continued.

"It is completely normal for this role to feel frightening or unfamiliar. I encourage you to ask your partner questions as to what to do, or what they would like you do. Vulnerability is essential in building trust."

Harry knew she was speaking mainly to him and Draco, though she addressed the whole class while speaking. Despite both their cheeks being flushed pink, they got up and made their way to their booth, as if it was just another day in Sex Magic.

Draco looked at Harry with a look of confidence which he easily saw through. He could see the underlying fear and anxiety in the other boy's eyes, though he was doing his best to hide it.

"Don't think, *do*," was Harry's one piece of advice as he leaned forward, pressing his lips to Draco's, desperate to end the building awkward silence.

As Harry's tongue found its way into Draco's parted lips, Draco ran his own tongue over Harry's before sucking on it and deepening the kiss. It wasn't the first time he had done that, and it drove Harry crazy every single time. The image of Draco sucking on something further south than his tongue turned him on more than he cared to admit.

Harry pinned Draco down on the bed before remembering that the roles had reversed. He flipped them so Draco was now straddling his waist. Harry's arms were propping him up in a half laying, half sitting position. He took in the sight of Draco's tousled hair, pink cheeks, swollen lips and lust-filled eyes.

That look was, however, quickly replaced with one of slight fear. He looked down at Harry's bare chest, all their clothes long disposed of, before looking back into

Harry's eyes, cursing himself for how weak and submissive he was about to sound. "What do I *do*?"

"Me," Harry replied, unable to help himself.

Draco acknowledged that he had walked himself right into that one, but that didn't stop him from glaring. "I'm serious, Potter."

"Well you can't just bloody well shove it in there, so preparation."

"Usually me shoving my fingers up your ass, but vise-versa now." Draco pulled a face and could feel heat creeping onto his cheeks. He definitely wasn't feeling that whole 'mutual trust' thing at the moment. "Well, there was that one time I rim-"

"Okay, that's enough!" Draco said, speaking over Harry in an attempt to block him out. "So do I just-" He mimicked shoving two fingers in the air which made Harry grimace.

"I just read a fucking pamphlet, Malfoy, I don't know," Harry sighed. "Just do what comes naturally, that's what I do."

Draco nodded before taking Harry's face in his hands and kissing him slowly. Harry leaned back to where he was now laying down and Draco sat on his hips, leaning over as to not break the kiss. The kiss got even more passionate as they began to rid themselves of their underwear and Draco leaned over to reach for the lube.

That's when Harry's heart really started to beat against his rib-cage. He had read the lesson plan, he knew what he would have to do, but it didn't seem real until just then. Now that it was only moments away, he was overwhelmed by the urge to push Draco off of him and run away.

"Oh, grow a pair, will you?" Draco quipped at seeing the war Harry's eyes continued to nervously glance at his hands, as if Draco was going to start fisting him with no warning. "Here, just entertain yourself, it helps distract you."

Harry nodded and started wanking as Draco say back and watched, purely to see when his body would relax and allow him to start. He gasped and his body jerked

slightly when he felt Draco's finger enter him. Though his eyes were closed he could *feel* the Slytherin's proud smirk.

"Shut the hell up, Malfoy," he grumbled.

"I didn't even say anything," Draco replied indignantly as finger fucked Harry.

"You were t-thinking it though."

It was that slight stutter that made Draco smirk even more. All previous uncertainty was immediately replaced with a need to do anything he had to in order to get a reaction out of Harry. He wanted to push the limits and see just how much the Gryffindor could take. Having so much power over Draco himself, the blond wanted to see just how much power he had himself.

He could hear Harry's breath hitch as he inserted a second finger into him. There was a slight expression of pain on his face, and Draco relished in it.

"Ow, fuck," was all Harry was able to manage and his back arched off the mattress slightly and he squirmed uncomfortably.

"If it truly hurts, say 'mudblood'"

"I'm not going to say that, M-Malfoy."

Draco smirked, driving his two fingers even deeper. "Then it doesn't hurt enough."

Harry moaned softly and started to grind his hips against Draco's hand, his anxiety edging away as he lost himself in Draco. Pain, however, brought him back to reality. "Fuck. Shit. Stop it, ow." Draco was pushing Harry's limits as he tried to add yet another finger into him.

With a satisfied smirk, Draco pulled his fingers out and sat on Harry's hips, consciously close to his dick. Leaning forward, he started to grind against the other boy, while kissing his neck and running his hands down Harry's chest, toying

with his nipples. Harry's lips parted as he was suddenly overwhelmed with sensation, giving Draco the exact reaction he was hoping for.

He could remember professor Mason telling him that letting Draco top would be dangerous, that he would only try to hurt Harry. He knew that that was exactly what was happening, but it felt too good to stop. Moaning, he instinctively thrust his hips upward.

"What do you want me to do instead?" Draco asked in a low voice before tugging Harry's earlobe between his teeth.

Not wanting to give Draco the satisfaction of an answer (and also sure that if he opened his mouth, the only thing to come out would be another moan), he bit his lip.

Draco repeated the question as he moved Harry's hand, taking his length into his own soft hands. Slowly rubbing his thumb over his wet tip, he maintained eye contact. "What do you want me to do instead, Harry?"

"Fuck me," Harry breathed out, unable to contain himself anymore as Draco began stroking his member.

"Fuck you how, exactly?"

"Hard," Harry growled, tired of Draco's bullshit game.

The blond now had a shit eating grin plastered on his face, quite enjoying himself now. "How hard? Y'know, on a scale of one to t-"

"As hard as you fucking can, dammit." Harry grabbed Draco's face, kissing him deeply and moaning against his lips.

Without warning, Draco thrust his entire length into Harry, causing him to arch his back and call out loudly in a mixture of pain and pleasure. The only sentence he was able to formulate being, "Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck."

Draco placed his hands on either side of Harry to hold himself up, and Harry wrapped his legs around his waist, preventing him from pulling out. Through slightly blurred vision, he watched as Harry slowly came undone beneath him. His body was shaking, his lips were parted (out of which escaped a throaty moan every few seconds), his cheeks and ears pink, and tears forming in the corners of his eyes. The way he would periodically breathe out Draco's name, hardly above a whisper was by itself, enough to drive Draco over the edge.

If he looked even slightly like this when he bottomed he understood why it was that Harry wanted him to stay.

Draco could tell that Harry was close by the way he gasped, his fingers pulled at Draco's hair, his stomach tightened and his arms shook as Draco continued to thrust, deeper and deeper inside of him. Finally, Harry came hard onto his stomach, and Draco had the decency to pull out and do the same.

His arms instantly gave out, and he unceremoniously crashed on top of Harry. His upper arms were hurting and he was shaking, out of breath, and still not thinking properly. With his face nestled in the crook of Harry's neck, he asked, "Do you trust me now?"

Harry chuckled softly and didn't bother to open his eyes. "Not at all."

"Hmm," Draco mused. "I wouldn't either."

Chapter Twenty-Five

The way Draco had cuddled up against Harry had meant nothing.

The only reason he did it was because his limbs had given up on him, his body - used to laying down and taking it, not actually *giving* it; a task that was more tiring than he expected - was left feeling heavy and useless, he was tired, and was still coming down from his climax induced high. Nothing more.

After all, he had gotten back up not ten seconds after not so gracefully falling on top of Harry. If the way he felt secure with Harry's arm wrapped around his back, at extreme peace with his face tucked into Harry's neck, or how his heart swelled at the sound of Harry chuckling had meant anything, they wouldn't have gotten up as fast as they did; they wouldn't have made a beeline out the door like they had. Therefore, it meant nothing.

Or at least these were the excuses Draco told himself the next day.

The idea of him actually fancying Potter was laughable. Having actually laughed in Harry's face at his not so subtle feelings, he should know. Yet the hot-headed Gryffindor had an undeniable power over him that he couldn't understand. He remembered being called out for his "submission kink" with embarrassment.

He had never been able to stand Harry, from the first day they met in Diagon Alley. While he was talking to the boy and trying to be friendly, he wasn't even being listened to. It was infuriating. Then to have his friendship turned down in front of everybody, his ego being publicly torn down like that, only sealed the deal. However, those seven years of pent up anger were forgotten the second Harry put his hands on him, turning him to putty to be molded at will.

He hated it -hated himself- but hated the way he craved that sensation most of all.

"Thinking about scarface, Draco?" Pansy asked in a mocking tone that reminded him of his aunt Bellatrix.

"Piss off," Draco spat venomously as the two of them walked to Charms.

Completely ignoring him, she pressed on. "I know you are. You have the same love-sick puppy look in your eyes, ugh." She mimed putting her finger in her mouth to make her vomit.

"Pansy," Draco warned which only made her smirk more than she already was. "He not pleasing you right? You know I can help you with that," she rubbed her hand up and down Draco's upper arm. He immediately pushed her hand away and scowled.

"Go fuck around with Goyle if you're horny, he's the only one who wants your loose ass anyway."

"Who says he can't join us?"

Draco visibly shuddered at the idea. "I do, now fuck off," he shoved her away as they entered the classroom. She cackled as she went to sit down next to Daphne Greengrass.

Her question popped back into his head as he sat down next to Crabbe. *'He not pleasing you right?'* If only she knew how wrong she was.

Staring at a spot on the wall behind professor Flitwick, he remembered what Harry forced him to confess after attacking him two weeks ago.

"Say it! Tell me you want me to die, because if you want him to win then that's what you mean. Tell me!"

"I don't want you to die! Get off me!"

Just because he didn't exactly want him to die didn't mean he was going to stop supporting the Dark Lord. Even if he wanted to, he couldn't. Though he didn't agree with everything he did, he had a family reputation resting on his shoulders.

Burying his face in his hands and tugging at the roots of his blond hair, he groaned in frustration. For something that he told himself he didn't even have to think about -he was *not* switching sides of the war, definitely not for Potter of all people- it was stressing him out beyond belief.

Just one more day, he thought to himself. *One more day and I never show up for that stupid fucking class ever again. Simple as that.*

What colour are your partner's eyes? Well at least the questions started out easy. For the last day of Sex Magic before holiday, each pair was sat on different sides of the room and told to answer a set of questions about each other. As Draco skimmed the questions he noticed that it started out pretty simple but were slowly asked for more and more detail.

Questions like *What is partner's eye colour, hair colour, dominant hand?* turned into *In as much detail as possible, describe the texture of your partner's hair, hands, lips.* The more questions he answered, the more sexual the questions seemed to get.

Does your partner have a 'sweet spot'? If so, where? What is your partner's biggest, or most frequent, fantasy? What do you believe your partner is best at, oral or physical sex? How does your partner's body react when approaching climax? What would you say your partner's go to move is while intimate (not exclusively during intercourse)?

Draco could feel heat rushing to his face as he tried to answer these questions '*in as much detail as possible.*' This meant looking back on their entire time together, not for the first time, and remember as much about it as he could.

When he reached the final question, it surprised him. He was expecting something along the lines of '*Describe in as much detail as possible one of the times you fucked.*'

Instead, the question was '*What is the biggest thing you have learned about your partner during this semester?*'

After nearly three minutes of staring at his parchment, he dipped his quill in ink with somewhat shaky hands and wrote:

Over this semester I have learned that Harry Potter is not 100% despicable.

Though we will never get along perfectly, I have seen aspects of him that have made him a little more tolerable. They are:

- *He is quick to believe, not just to judge.*
- *It's rare for him to actually think before he acts or speaks, which ends up in him saying things he doesn't mean in the heat of the moment.*
- *He's not immune to acts of kindness, they just weren't targeted towards me before.*
- *He will defend those who he believes need defending, something he never thought I needed.*
- *He doesn't hide any of his emotions. If he hates you, he'll let you know-*
Draco noticed that the shaking in his hand increased as he ended that sentence, aware of everything it implied and not sure if he was ready to deal with it.

-and if he loves you, he'll let you know.

"So what did you, y'know... do today?" Ron asked, addressing Harry and Neville's last day of Sex Magic before Christmas holiday. He looked somewhat uncomfortable as he asked it, quickly adding, "Not that I want any details."

"Get your wand out of your ass," Harry replied, not in the best mood. "We just answered questions."

Ron was visibly relieved as he bent over his bed, searching under it for something. "Now that you don't have to worry about bugging that git Malfoy anymore, I think we should celebrate."

Neville looked at Harry questioningly, not aware of Draco's plans to drop out of the class. Thankfully, he kept those questions to himself and didn't ask them in front of Ron, Dean, and Seamus.

Ron sat back up, this time with a bottle of firewhiskey in each hand, a triumphant look on his face.

"How did you get these into the castle?" Neville asked, taking a swig of the bitter drink before handing it off to Seamus.

"Fred and George aren't the only ones with tricks up their sleeves, y'know." Ron said looking somewhat defeated as he opened the second bottle and drank some himself.

Harry raised a curious brow at his best friend. "This is something we should keep from Hermione, isn't it?"

"Well, okay, so she doesn't exactly know about it, but think about it! You know she'll have a go at all of us if she finds out. I'm protecting all our arses here."

This made them all laugh, and Harry took the bottle out of Ron's hand before staring down at it. He contemplated if he actually wanted to drink or not.

Draco wasn't going to show up for second semester, Harry had failed to change his stance on the war, he failed Dumbledore, rumor had it that he was Draco's bitch, and he had no way to change any of that. So hell yeah he was going to drink.

Raising the bottle in the air and looking at his dormmates, he nodded once and said:

"Bottoms up."

Quiz Answers

I'm not going to be answering the questions that I think the answer to is obvious, but I've added some questions to try and make up for it

Question | *Draco's answer* | Harry's answer

What facial features of your partner's are most prominent?

His square jawline and eyebrows are what I notice first about him when I see him.

His eyes and lips because those are what catch my eye when I look at him.

What is one aspect of your partner that you dislike?

He's moody and always thinks he knows what's best when he doesn't even think before doing something. He also acts like he's better than others just because he's famous. He also thinks he's a better wizard, which he isn't. Also his loyalty to his obnoxious friends.

He'll do anything he can to feel like he's in charge of a situation. He's the proudest person you'll ever meet and thinks he's better than everyone else just because of his family's reputation. He thinks that you aren't worth the time of day if you aren't a pure-blood Slytherin. He always has a smug look on his face that shows he thinks he's better at everything, which isn't true.

How does your partner display affection?

He can be gentle and thoughtful at times. He doesn't immediately force me to do things he knows I'm uncomfortable with. He has also helped me save face in public when he didn't have to.

The main way he shows affection is getting physically close. Leaning against you, nuzzling close, things like that. Maybe it's just because he isn't used to being held, maybe it's because he means it. I'm not always sure.

In as much detail as possible, describe the texture of your partner's hair.

It's softer than I thought it would be., almost velvety. It's also really thick and feathery.

It's thin and usually has a lot of product in it that makes it stiff, but when it doesn't, it's really soft.

In as much detail as possible, describe the texture of your partner's hands.

The mounds of his hands are really calloused after years of having to work outdoors. His fingertips are the most calloused though as his Quidditch gloves don't cover them. The palms and backs of his hands, however, are relatively soft.

His hands are really soft all over, but his fingers more so. They're nice, but kind of like a girl's hand. His fingertips are tougher than the rest of his hand, but still not exactly calloused.

In as much detail as possible, describe the texture of your partner's lips.

They're firm, and usually quite chapped, but nice. Kissable.

Soft, plump, and addicting.

Does your partner have any freckles, beauty/stretch marks, scars, moles, etc. If so, where?

Well, he has a scar on his forehead I don't think too many people know about.

He has more noticeable freckles on his inner right thigh, back of his left shoulder, and a lower back.

How does your partner make you feel when together in this class?

Nervous, confused, sometimes angry, and cared for, but mostly frustrated.

A mix of confusion, eagerness, the feeling of being needed, and irritation.

What do you believe your partner is best at, oral or physical sex?

Physical

Oral

How does your partner's body react when approaching climax?

His stomach tenses, his legs go stiff, and his arms start to shake. His eyes gloss over and his mouth opens silently.

His stomach goes concave, body becomes covered in goosebumps, and he shakes all over. He also gets loud.

What would you say your partner's go to move is while intimate (not exclusively during intercourse)?

Pulling the hair at the back of my neck and messing with my ears.

Sucking on my tongue when we kiss.

What is the biggest thing you have learned about your partner during this semester?

He's just as confused as I am, and have been since before I was. When we had to take veritasium the first week of he class, he admitted that he wanted this. He has never been shown much affection, and now that he is, I think it scares him. Not of the affection, but of who it's coming from. We are on different sides of a war, bugging, snogging, and liking it. Fancying, or at least shagging, someone you've hated from day one and ending up craving that sensation is the most confusing thing.

That confusion is always there in the back of our minds. Knowing that we share that feeling makes me feel like I can actually understand him for once. This semester has shown me that Draco Malfoy and I are not all that different.

Note: Even though Draco answered this question in the last chapter, here it is again:

Over this semester I have learned that Harry Potter is not 100% despicable.

Though we will never get along perfectly, I have seen aspects of him that have made him a little more tolerable. They are:

- He is quick to believe, not just to judge.*
- It's rare for him to actually think before he acts or speaks, which ends up in him saying things he doesn't mean in the heat of the moment.*
- He's not immune to acts of kindness, they just weren't targeted towards me before.*
- He will defend those who he believes need defending, something he never thought I needed.*
- He doesn't hide any of his emotions. If he hates you, he'll let you know-*
Draco noticed that the shaking in his hand increased as he ended that sentence, aware of everything it implied and not sure if he was ready to deal with it.

-and if he loves you, he'll let you know.

Chapter Twenty-Six

"Malfoy! Malfoy? Maaalfooy," Harry whined as he stumbled drunkenly through the dark castle after hours.

He didn't know how long he had been out of Gryffindor tower or even where he was right now. After downing a bottle and a half of firewhiskey the only thing he knew was that he needed Malfoy.

The few students who also found themselves out of bed at that time, accompanied by their partner, gave him curious glances before continuing their interrupted snogging session.

"Malfooy," Harry groaned, growing more frustrated by the minute at the current lack of Draco in his life.

Walking straight into a wall after turning a corner, Harry stumbled back and giggled drunkenly. After saying a quick apology to the wall, he resumed his quest throughout the castle corridors.

After what felt to the inebriated mind like hours, Harry saw a figure marching towards him and recognized the silhouette instantly.

"I found you!" Harry gasped excitedly. Draco, however, didn't look near as excited at this fact as Harry did.

Grabbing Harry by the forearm rather forcefully and with a quick use of *alohomora*, Draco opened the nearest classroom door and all but threw Harry inside. Following closely behind, he locked the door and leaned against it, hoping that that would stop anyone trying to get in; the vulnerability this position put him in did not go unnoticed by either of the boys.

"You look angry," Harry commented, making out Draco's features in the dim moonlight.

"That's because I bloody well am angry!" Draco seethed. "Goyle had to come and get me, telling me that you were wandering about the castle, after hours and fully

visible might I add, *screaming my name!* What were you planning on doing if you got caught like this?" Draco motioned Harry up and down with a hand before continuing,

"You know as well as I do that word is going to get out about this. What is everyone going to think?"

Harry, however, was thinking about something a bit different. Taking a step forward he leaned in to whisper in the other boy's ear, "I know you love hearing me scream your name. You can make me do it again if you'd like. I won't stop you."

He could feel the other boy go stiff before pushing him away. Draco was visibly flustered as he shrank against the door even more, trying to get as much distance between the two as he could. Brushing his palms on his robe, he refused to meet Harry's eye. "I don't love- I don't want-"

He was cut off by Harry rushing forward and kissing him suddenly.

The fight in Draco immediately vanished as he moaned into Harry's mouth and grabbed him by the shoulders, pulling him closer. One of Harry's hands tugged at the hair on the nape of Draco's neck, and the other rested on the small of the Slytherin's back, pressing them together.

The strong taste of alcohol on Harry's tongue eventually brought him back to reality. Placing his hands on Harry's chest and pushing him away, he looked at him with a sour expression.

"How much have you had to drink?" he asked, not being one to enjoy the taste of straight firewhiskey.

"Iunno," was Harry's slurred response before moving in to attack Draco's neck.

Harry licked, kissed and bit at the sensitive skin, extracting from Draco the most amazing noises that made it hard for him to control himself.

"Potter," Draco strained, trying to control his voice as he squirmed under Harry's kiss. "Potter, stop, I'm s-serious."

Harry pressed his hard on against Draco, eliciting a soft gasp of surprise from the blond. He drug the pale earlobe between his teeth before slowly licking the outer shell, knowing that this would get him to cooperate and shut up

Though he had no memory of moving, the Gryffindor had Draco's back pressed against the edge of a table. Slowly grinding against him, Harry's lips found Draco's more than eager mouth, instantly parting to take his tongue. As Harry's hand started to trail down his torso, he snapped back into reality.

"Stop, you're drunk," Draco panted; something that he didn't really care about, but was the one excuse he could think of.

Harry groaned and whined like a little kid throwing a tantrum. "Shut up and kiss me."

"I don't want-!"

"Shut the fuck up and let me fuck you."

"You're too romantic, stop it," Draco deadpanned "You'll make me blush."

Harry rolled his eyes. "Bugger romance, that's not what you want anyway. We both know you're kinkier than Lee Jordan's hair."

"Enlighten me then, Potter, what do I want?"

"I know you want *me*," Harry said with a confident smirk as he started to rub Draco's hard outline through his robe.

Draco's breath hitched and all he could do was grip Harry's wrist in what was meant to be protest, but served to be encouragement. Leaning forward and asking in a deep voice, "Why are you leaving me? I know I turn you on."

To illustrate his point, Harry threw Draco's robe off him and slid his hand through the waistband of his trousers, slowly moving his hand up and down the hard, sticky mess. Draco sucked in a sharp breath and strengthened his grip on Harry's wrist. Trying to form coherent sentences, he stuttered:

"Turning me o-on isn't *-nngh-* the p-problem-*fuck-*" Draco pressed his forehead against Harry's shoulder, trying to maintain his sanity as Harry wanked him off faster and faster.

Writhing in Harry's grasp Draco began to thrust into his hand, whimpering slightly and coming undone. He begged him to go faster, grip harder, anything. He tangled his fingers in Harry's dark lion mane and kissed him hard. His tongue exploring Harry's mouth, he stood on his tip-toes, unable to stay still. Harry slid his thumb over Draco's tip slowly, relishing the drawn out moan he got in response.

When Draco finally came, Harry cleaned them both up, but didn't bother taking his hand out of the other boy's pants. Pecking Draco's lips before nuzzling his face in his neck, he whined,

"Don't leave me."

"Why do you want me to stay so bad?" Draco asked in a whisper, finally asking what had been on his mind for a while. He turned to see Harry's face.

The question seemed to take a while to register in Harry's drunk mind, as he stared at him blankly a few seconds before slightly swaying on the spot. When he finally answered, it was vague.

"He said I have to turn you or I have to kill you."

"Dumbledore? And turn me what, gay?"

Harry shook his head and chuckled softly. "You did that yourself," he said with a glance down at his hand still in Draco's pants.

Throwing his hand aside, Draco glared. "Fuck you, Potter."

Harry smirked even more. "Been there, done that."

Draco made a frustrated noise and clenched his jaw. "Well, you're going to have to find some alternative, because you're not 'turning me'. I'm not fucking falling in love with you, *I'm not gay*."

For a split second he felt this heart stop at the way Harry's face fell, the alcohol preventing him from hiding what he felt. Then he remembered that he was supposed to be mad, as the two of them were being played and forced to shag each other.

"Malfoy, please, don't make me- I can't kill you," he pleaded in a voice barely above a whisper.

"I'm sorry," Draco sighed before turning on his heel and walking out, leaving Harry alone in an empty classroom yet again.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Christmas at the Burrow usually felt all too short to Harry. It was usually a time where he felt completely carefree. It was as if all his problems stayed at Hogwarts, allowing him to fully enjoy more time with -in his opinion- the best wizarding family in the world. This year, however, was different. He couldn't stop thinking about how he was going to explain to Dumbledore that he failed him; something Harry felt like he already somehow knew.

When Harry finally found himself on the Hogwarts Express it felt as though a year had passed since he had last been on it. He had seen Malfoy while looking for an empty compartment, both of them looking away quickly upon seeing the other boy, acting as though he were invisible.

Whispers followed Harry as he walked to his seat at Gryffindor table that night at dinner. Word had spread like wildfire about drunken Harry wandering the corridors looking for Draco who eventually found him and locked the two of them in a classroom.

Naturally, when nobody knows the truth about a situation, they make up rumors. Ginny told him that she overheard a Ravenclaw girl swearing that she overheard the two of them making plans to run away together to 'escape from a disapproving world'. Of course, neither boy was going to open up about what truly happened, so they let the rumors spiral.

Monday evening at dinner Harry saw Professor Mason walking towards him with an unamused look on her face. "Tardiness is one thing, Mr. Potter, but not attending class altogether is an entirely different story."

"Malfoy didn't show up either, so what good would me g-"

"Mr. Malfoy was one of the first students to show up this evening, and when asked, said that he had no idea why it was that you did not show up."

"Wait, he showed up?" Harry asked, unable to hide the excitement mixed in with the confusion of his voice.

"As did every other student in the class besides yourself."

"This is strike one, Mr. Potter. One more and you will be given detention. Talk to Mr. Malfoy, he will fill you in on this week's assignment."

When she was gone, Ron and Hermione looked at Harry with a confused look he felt sure he shared.

"Didn't you say he was dropping the class?" Ron asked, dumbfounded.

"I thought he was. At least that's what he told he was doing."

"And you're sure he didn't say anything about changing his mind the other night?" Hermione piqued.

"I wasn't *that* drunk, Hermione, I would have remembered something like that, don't you think?"

"So he just decided to show up without telling you?"

"Did we just have two different conversations with Professor Mason?" Harry asked irritably. "I just heard the same thing you did."

"Oi," Ron said in defense of his girlfriend.

Harry sighed, "I'm sorry Mione, I'm just..." His eyes trailed to where Draco was sat, eating with his head down. "Confused"

"That makes three of us," she commented before dropping the subject.

"What do you want, Potter?" Draco quipped Tuesday morning as Harry pulled him aside after breakfast.

"After all your bullshit you show up to class without so much as telling me. Why?" Harry asked him angrily.

"I just couldn't imagine life without my love," he said in a sickly sweet tone that made Harry grimace.

"Enough jokes, Malfoy. You were so hellbent on not showing up only to make me look like a fool for being the only one not to do so. What changed your mind?"

"Maybe that's why I didn't tell you, maybe it's not," Draco said casually.

"You son of a-"

"And as to what changed my mind, that, Potter, I can happily say is none of your business."

"The Goblet made it my business when it paired us together for this class."

"It has nothing to do with the class and everything to do with my personal life, in which we are not paired together, so once again, it is *none of your business*." He said the last four through a clenched jaw and gritted teeth.

After a stressful few moments of silent glaring, Harry finally spoke up. "Mason said you would tell me what it is we have to do this week."

"Meet me in our booth tomorrow night and I'll tell you then," Draco replied, turning around and walking away.

"What time?" Harry asked his retreating back.

Without so much as looking over his shoulder, Draco responded. "I'll show up when I do." He left Harry even more confused than he was before.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

"Glad you finally decided to show up."

Draco entered their booth after Harry had sat there waiting for nearly thirty minutes. He had half a mind not to leave after five.

"I told you I'd arrive when I wanted to," Draco replied with a shrug. "What, expect me to come running to you with open arms the second I could, did you?"

"Oh, don't act like you're *so* opposed to being here with me. We both know that's true and we agreed a long time ago to drop the pretenses."

"I *don't* want to be here with you, Potter, I'm simply doing what I have to," Draco corrected.

Harry gave Draco a confused look, thrown off by his statement. 'What I have to do,' the hell does that mean? Before he had the chance to ask, Draco changed the subject.

"Our assignment this week is to enhance the healing time and properties of this healing potion," Draco pulled a small vial of an opaque red liquid. "She had then pre-brewed by Snape. Said she didn't want our 'prowess as potioners to conflict with out sexual prowess.'"

"Smart woman," Harry mused, taking the potion out of Draco's hand to inspect it. If the lesson rested on his and Malfoy's ability to brew potions, they were definitely screwed. "How do we do it?"

"Based on the countless times we already have I don't-"

"Not *do it*, do it. The fucking potion, Malfoy," Harry groaned, knowing that Draco was stalling.

"She said it would be like the stone. A magical object just has to be near by for our *energy* to be channeled into it."

"How will we know if it works?"

Draco shrugged, "We'll have to wait until Monday for her to tell us."

Harry set the vial down near the bed and took a step closer to Malfoy with every intention to get in a good snog and shagging out of the night. Draco sensed this and took a quick step back as if it was their first week together all over again. "Now?" Draco asked, his eyes betraying his level voice as they often did.

"What, do you have plans tonight?" Harry asked, raising a brow at the blond boy.

"Yes," Draco lied, jumping at the idea.

Harry shrugged, "Cancel them."

"I can't bloody well just *cancel them*, Potter, some of us actually have important things to do."

"Malfoy, shut the fuck up."

Harry's lips on Draco's prevented his replying. Though the two of them could claim that they had no real feelings for each others or that they were doing this solely for a grade, neither of them could deny the feeling they got at the other boy's lips on their own. It became less of a want and more of a need to get closer, to have every layer between them disappear until there was nothing between them and they were one.

Their robes, shoes and ties lay strewn on the floor, their trousers -tight around the groin- quickly being added to the list. A two week celibacy and the belief that they would never be together like this again had the two boys eagerly -almost angrily- tearing the clothes off the other's body. Draco's shirt wasn't even off all the way, merely unbuttoned and hanging off his shoulders as he lay below Harry, his eyes closed and mouth slightly agape as Harry kissed his neck.

Harry pulled away to properly rid the paler boy of his shirt when he saw something that made him stop. Right there on his forearm was the Dark Mark.

"You *actually* agreed to this?" Harry asked in awe, grabbing Draco's arm.

"You want to talk about this *now*?" The Slytherin returned his awed look. "And don't act so surprised, Potter, you knew as well as I did that I was going to agree."

All that Harry could bring himself to ask was "Why?"

"I wouldn't have to tell you, even if it wasn't as complicated as it is. That's why I'm back. I need something simple and distracting."

Harry ignored his basically being called easy and shook his head. "Fine. I'll bugger you, be your distraction, but don't think for a second that I'm happy about this."

"Your not my mother, Potter, I don't need you to be happy about it; I need you to shag me."

Harry sighed, looking down at Draco for a second before lifting his hips and turning him around, placing him on all fours. Taking off his glasses he spread Draco's ass cheeks, slowly licking his hole with the flat of his tongue. He was pissed at Draco for officially becoming a Death Eater after everything the two of them had been through, that the only thing he could think to do was give it to him so good he couldn't help but join his side.

Draco inhaled sharply at the sensation and brought a hand up to his cock and started stroking. The moans escaping Draco's lips as Harry shamelessly tongue fucked him had the Gryffindor's own cock starting to get hard as Draco was.

The Slytherin's ass moving backwards closer to Harry's face and gasping out of small 'fucks' and 'fuck yeahs' under his breath were driving Harry crazy. He almost laughed remembering the first time they found themselves in this situation and all Draco could say was 's'not right'; look at him now, whimpering softly as Harry pulled away.

Getting up onto his knees, Harry thrust into Draco's ass, holding onto his hips so tight he wouldn't be surprised if it bruised. Draco dipped his back, moaning softly as he gathers the sheets into his tight fist.

Draco's moans growing increasingly louder only served as incentive for Harry to start and trust even faster and deeper into the Slytherin's ass. Draco was still wanking as he moaned out loudly, Harry hitting his prostate mercilessly. The blond boy started shaking, his body jerking every once in a while as he whimpered out and moaned. Sometimes he would just moan, other times he would moan out fractions of sentences or profanities, but what turned Harry on was when it was his own name being dragged out and said with just pleasure and longing that he couldn't help but speed up his rhythm, slamming into the thinner boy making him grow even louder.

"Nngh - y-yees - don't f-fucking... H-Haaaary!"

Within minutes they were both reaching climax, Harry's thrusts growing sloppier and Draco's moans growing louder. Draco released onto the sheets, Harry's name on his lips, the Gryffindor pulling out and cumming onto the paler boy's ass, leaning back down to lick his bright pink hole clean, using his hand to get every last drop out.

Once they had recovered and gotten dressed, Harry stood at the entrance to their tent, looking over at Draco awkwardly, the two just staring at each other, unsure of how to act. Clearing his throat and opening the curtain he nodded saying,

"See you next week, Malfoy," before walking out and hoping that Draco would change his mind.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

The next two weeks were hostile ones. Harry wasn't bullshitting when he said he would be angry about Draco's decision. During their first few weeks of Sex Magic, Draco had mentioned his becoming a Death Eater, that he didn't care if Harry knew or not. Yet there was always a part of Harry that wished he would reconsider. Nobody could just up and un-become a Death Eater: it was a long-life decision that now Draco was forever bound to.

That Monday, Professor Mason asked Harry and Draco to stay behind a moment, causing every head to turn and whispers to erupt as the rest of the students left the classroom.

"Boys. I am not blind to the fact that there exists some anger between the two of you at the moment. The signs are not only right in front of me but are evident in your work as well. Now, I will not have any student of mine getting hurt by a careless, irate partner.

I expect the two of you to sort out any existing tension. I believe you are both familiar with veritaserum by now. Three drops under the tongue. Both of you," she said as she pulled out an all too familiar vial from her cloak pocket and handed it to Draco. After they had both unwillingly done so, Mason motioned them to their booth. "I'll be back in half an hour to check on your progress."

The last time the boys had to take veritaserum at Professor Mason's hand, they were hesitant, not wanting to speak. This time, however, Harry wanted answers.

"Why did you do it?" Harry asked as soon as he felt the veritaserum start to take effect. They were sat across from each other, Draco with his arms crossed over his chest, and annoyed look on his face.

"Do what?" Draco asked in annoyance.

"The dark mark. Why did you accept to become a Death Eater?"

Draco clenched his jaw before the truth pried it open. "My parents are being threatened and I am as well. This is the only way I can keep us alive."

"Oh..." Harry mumbled. He had never stopped to think that Draco was doing it out of anything else but pride or spite.

"And why do you care so much about why I did it, Potter?" Draco asked, raising a blond brow.

"I wanted you to change your mind for me," Harry answered without hesitation before cursing under his breath.

Draco laughed, shaking his head in amusement. "For you? Potter I would-" He seemed to struggle here, but tried again. "I'm not-"

Harry smirked, leaning forward, "What is that? You *would* change your mind for me?"

"That's not up to me," Draco said, avoiding one truth with another.

"And this class... did you really come back just for a distraction?" It was the question Harry had been dying to ask ever since the veritaserum got brought out.

Draco bit his lip, shaking his head in response.

"Then why? Why did you come back after being so adamant about leaving?"

"He told me to," Draco said in a silent whisper, glancing down at his knees.

This took Harry aback. For a moment he didn't know what to say, what to ask. He was too shocked. "Voldemort... he told you to stay in the class? Why?"

At Draco's silence Harry repeated the question in a loud voice. "Why?!" If Draco staying was Voldemort's plan, there was no possibility of it being for any good reason.

Draco swallowed before answering, "Me returning *was* a distraction, just not for me. For you. He told me to return for the second semester, to keep you

distracted; to keep your thoughts on me, not the war. With you distracted, I had the chance to-" He clamped his jaw shut having said too much.

Now it was Harry's turn to clench his jaw and glare. "You had the chance to what, Draco?"

"Figure out a way for them to enter the school," he whispered, squeezing his eyes shut.

Harry's eyes widened as his hands came up to his mouth as he slowly shook his head. "You... You found a way for him and anyone else to *enter the school*?" He didn't even need to see Draco's nod to know he was telling the truth. Suddenly he felt a weight in his chest like a Mountain Troll that had just fallen atop him.

The war was starting. And there was nothing he could do about it.

Chapter Thirty

Professor McGonagall was sat having tea with Professor Mason when Harry knocked feverishly on her office door. Minerva had hardly finished telling him to come in when he opened the door quickly.

"Mr. Potter, what seems to be the problem?" McGonagall asked the frightened teen.

"Why aren't you with Draco?" Mason asked as she set down her tea.

"It's about Malfoy. Professor, It was all a distraction. He's found a way to get Voldemort and the Death Eaters into the castle. They'll be here any day now, we have to tell Dumbledore" He told the two Professors frantically. At hearing the news, bot Professors blanched.

"These are very serious claims, Mr. Potter," McGonagall said. "How did you get this information?"

"Malfoy told me himself just now."

"And you know this is not just another attempt to ruse you how?"

"Minerva," Professor Mason spoke up. "Both boys are currently under the effects of veritaserum; my own doing."

"Professor, you have to tell Dumbledore," Harry pleaded.

Looking at Professor Mason, McGonagall said, "You'll find, Potter, that he already knows."

It took Harry a minute to comprehend this. "But how can he...?" Looking at Mason, his eyes slowly widened. "*You?*"

Professor Mason-Dumbledore stood up, "Hello, Harry."

Slowly things were beginning to come together. "You took the veritaserum at the beginning of the year and you almost told us your real name," Harry recalled.

"Ah, yes. Veritaserum can prove to be a difficult potion to fight, even by wizards as learned and skilled as myself."

"So it's been you this whole time?"

"Not this entire time, no. There is a very real Rosemary Mason who has been a Professor here for quite some time now. She is now, I believe, in her room in this very castle. I would simply take over the class for a day to more closely observe your and Draco's progress."

"Albus," McGonagall cut in. "The war could start any day now, we have to start getting the students back home. I will start writing to the parents, but they should start packing tonight."

"What? No!" Harry protested. "We can't just all leave. I want to stay, I want to fight!"

"Minerva," Dumbledore-Mason said. "Inform the students to begin packing, but that any student who is of age is allowed to stay if they so wish. I will not have any underage witches or wizards getting harmed."

Professor McGonagall turned and left the room, making her way to the Great Hall where everyone was currently gathered for dinner.

"Go be with your friends, Harry. They're going to need you," the Headmaster said, motioning to the door with a nod.

Turning around in the door-frame Harry asked, "Professor... do you think we can win?"

The Professor remained silent for a moment before simply stating, "One can only hope, Harry. One can only hope."

"Harry! Where have you been? McGonagall just said-!"

"I know, Hermione. I was the one that told her." Harry had just entered the Great Hall and taken a seat next to Ron, across from a very worried Hermione Granger.

"You?" Ron asked in shock. "How did *you* know? And you didn't think of telling us?"

"Draco told me not twenty minutes ago. Sorry if going to Dumbledore over you was my first instinct, Ron," Harry replied somewhat shortly.

"Dumbledore's *here*?" Hermione asked in awe.

"It's complicated," Harry said, figuring that at the moment, a Second Wizarding War was just a bit more important.

"Well we're going to stay, right?" Neville piqued.

Suddenly all of his friends were looking at him, waiting for his call and he understood. He finally realized the importance Dumbledore put on Draco's influence over the Slytherins. Harry's friends were all waiting for his call, and would trust his judgement, just like how the Slytherins would trust Draco's.

"Anyone who wants to leave can, but I'm staying," He said with finality.

"Hermione and I are staying," Ron said, Hermione nodding in agreement.

"So are we," Dean said, referencing him and Seamus.

"I am too," Confirmed Neville to Lavender's horror.

"Nev," she pleaded with him in a low voice as the others spoke. "Think about this. This is *war*, people are going to *die*; you could die!"

"Lavender, I can't sit this one out. Maybe I'm not supposed to help people by making just one more hangover cure, but by fighting to save the wizarding world. Plus, nan would never let me hear the end of it if I didn't stay."

"Forget saving the world, save yourself!" Lavender was now fighting tears at her boyfriend's refusal to listen to reason.

"Lav..." Neville said softly, caressing her cheek. "I have to do this. I'm sorry."

"Then I'm staying as well," she stated simply, the words spilling out before she could stop them. "If you insist on fighting, I'll be right there by your side."

Before Neville could respond the sound of the doors to the Great Hall opening and slamming shut with a loud boom caused everyone to jump and turn to see what the source of the boom was. Turning their heads, they saw a frantic Mr. Filch.

"Headmistress," He panted, addressing McGonagall. "Death Eaters, ma'am... they've entered the school."

Chapter Thirty-One

The whole school turned instantly to chaos. Some were crying, others tried to run, but mostly there was lots of yelling. People shouting, asking what they were going to do, saying that they wanted to go home, others claiming that they shouldn't stay in here but go face the Death Eaters. However all of his quieted when Dumbledore entered the room, no longer under the disguise of Rosemary Mason, the real Mason entering behind him.

"Children," He announced, walking to the Professors' table. "That is what many see you as. Just children, not to be spoken to as you would another adult. It is true that many of you are young, but does not mean that the truth should be hidden from you. Death Eaters have indeed infiltrated the school, though how they have done this is still to be determined."

The Headmaster stood in front of the Professors' table and turned to look at the students as he continued. "Underage wizards and those unwilling to fight will follow their heads of house to their respectful common rooms. Those of seventeen years or older who wish to stay may follow the rest of the Professors in search for the Death Eaters."

Harry turned to look at his friends, the severity of the war fully dawning on all of them. Looking from Hermione to Ginny to Ron and their three dorm mates, a moment of understanding passed between them. None of them spoke as there was nothing that needed to be said aloud.

Over the years they had grown so close and been through so much together. They had become like family and they were ready to protect each other like family. Harry nodded, signaling that it was time.

"Lets go get these sons of bitches."

As Harry, Ron and Hermione ran through the corridors, he kept an eye out for Draco but to no avail. Outside the Great Hall a war zone awaited. Death Eaters fighting both Professors and students, younger witches and wizards trying to get

to their common rooms safely. Harry felt himself get light headed when he saw a student's body on the floor, contorted in an unnatural way, eyes open and wand still in hand. They didn't have to check to know that they were dead.

Hermione gasped and Ron mumbled something about being sick, yet they kept running.

"Wait," Hermione said, stopping the two boys. "It'll be more efficient if we split up. That way we can cover more ground at once."

"Have you gone mad?" Ron accused, looking at her in awe.

"No, Ron, she's right," Harry said, catching his breath and nodding. "Besides, we won't be doing any good if we all get killed together. We should split up."

"Fine, but I'm staying with Hermione," Ron stated firmly.

"Alright," Harry nodded once again. He paused a beat before taking off in the opposite direction. turning a corner sharply he ran directly into Draco.

Both boys immediately jumped back and drew their wands, pointing them at the other's throat without pausing to see who it was. He sighed in relief when he saw it was Draco, but immediately tensed up when he saw who he was with. Behind him stood Bellatrix, Narcissa and a furious looking Lucius.

Great, the whole traitorous clan.

"Kill him, Draco" Bellatrix whisper-yelled in her nephew's ear, her hands on his shoulders.

"No," Narcissa hissed. "He's not ours to kill."

"That doesn't mean the boy can't at least have a little fun, Cissy," the darker haired sister cackled.

"You don't have to do this," Harry pleaded, speaking more about just torture and Draco knew it.

"You know I don't have a choice, Potter," Draco said, his hands shaking.

"It's your life, you *always* have a say."

"Do it, Draco!" Bellatrix pushed.

"You're wrong," Draco said, shaking his head and ignoring his aunt.

"Don't-" Harry's voice cracked slightly as he spoke, remembering what Dumbledore told him what seemed like eons ago. "Don't make me kill you, Draco. Not after everything."

Lucius had heard enough. Pushing past his son he loomed over Harry, his usually pale face now red with fury. "There is *nothing* between you and my son, boy!"

"Some of the positions I've had him in would beg to differ," Harry challenged before thinking about what he was saying. He could see Draco practically having an aneurysm in his peripheral view.

"How *dare*-"

"Have you ever even stopped to think about what he wants? About the possibility that maybe he liked being paired with me?"

"You know nothing of what my son likes, Potter" Lucius spat, evading the question.

"He likes it when I toy with his ears. He likes Snape's storage closet," He said with a knowing glance to Draco. "He likes letting others be in control for a change, and being held, and rough hands on his-"

"Enough!"

"Body," Harry finished with a smirk.

Lucius growled furiously and raised his wand with a sneer. "I will not have my family's name tainted by nothing more than a spoiled child! Cru-"

"No!" Draco yelled, jumping in between his father and Harry, his chest heaving. One of his frail hands on Harry's chest and the other pointed up towards his father, separating the two.

He was breathing heavily, his hands shaking and his grey eyes nervously flicking across his father's face. "I stayed in the class for you, I distracted him for you and I found a way to get you inside the castle. Now do something for *me*; spare him for *me*."

"Insolent boy!" Bellatrix chided. "You think that you can defy the will of the Dark Lord?"

Draco swallowed nervously and turned his glance over to his mother. Narcissa's eyes met his before glancing down at Harry's wand which the dark haired boy was holding at his side, and then at her husband and sister. She looked back at her son and offered him an almost imperceptible nod. Draco knew what he had to do.

In a second, Draco had reached behind himself, grabbed Harry's wand in his hand, pointed it and his own at his father and aunt and yelled, "Petrificus totalus!" And took off running, Harry at his heel.

Chapter Thirty-Two

"What the fuck was that?" Harry asked as they ran.

"What the fuck *me?*" Draco looked over his shoulder at him in awe. "What the fuck *you!* Saying things like that to my father of all people, have you actually gone mad?"

"He deserved to hear it," Harry justified, grabbing the Slytherin's arm to stop him so they could talk without running at the same time. "But what does this mean? Are you team Dumbledore now, or just pissed at your father?"

"I-" Draco paused, sighing softly as he hesitated. If he was being honest, he hadn't really thought about it. He just acted without thinking about what it meant for the big picture. "I don't know, but for now I'll go down to the dungeons and try to convince some of the other Slytherins to help, though I can't promise much support. Not everyone is crazy enough to fight their own family."

Harry chuckled softly, even in the midst of war, and nodded. "Crazy is definitely the word for it."

Draco had started to turn away when he looked back at Harry, biting his lip softly. Their eyes meeting he said, "Yes, well.. love will do that to you," before running off to recruit the rest of the Slytherins.

Harry had just met back up with Ron and Hermione , the three of them looking a right mess. Their hair was disheveled, there were cuts and blood on their face, neck and arms, and a wild look in their eyes.

"Harry!" Hermione draped her arms around his neck, pulling him into a tight embrace. "We saw Lucius and Bellatrix in the corridor and Draco and some Slytherins fighting a group of Death Eaters... Does this mean what I think it means?"

"He's on our side for now," Harry confirmed. "He was the one who petrified them before running off to get the others."

"His own father?" Ron asked in amazement. "Even his own son thinks he's twat."

"Yes, well we can thank him later, but now-" Hermione started, but was cut off by a gasp as Voldemort's icy voice entered their minds.

"I know that many of you will want to fight. Some of you may even think that to fight is wise. But this is a folly. Give me Harry Potter. Do this and none shall be harmed. Give me Harry Potter, and I shall leave Hogwarts untouched. Give me Harry Potter, and you will be rewarded. You have one hour."

After defeating the man that killed your parents and had made annual attempts on your life, you'd probably expect to feel relieved or happy. You might even throw a party and get shitfaced.

But Harry just felt tired.

While everyone else had filed back to the Great Hall, Harry still stood staring at Tom Riddle's corpse they hadn't gotten to disposing of yet. Nobody could decide what to do with him, so there they left him: dead on the cobblestones of Hogwarts, nobody even giving him a second look. Nobody mourned him or covered him with a cloth. He didn't deserve it.

This was the man who instilled fear in the lives of so many. The man who had killed his own father and grandparents and didn't stop there. He had killed so many others, including Harry's parents. The man had caused so much pain, and now here he lay, looking no different than any other man.

Harry had half expected for him to explode into thousands of little pieces and vanish with a flash of light or something, but that would have just been silly.

Draco now stood a few steps behind him, watching as the Dark Mark on his forearm slowly began to fade to a light grey. He finally stepped forward and placed a hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Come on," he said softly, reaching down to tentatively take his hand. "Everyone else is inside already."

"I don't want to see them," Harry said in a hollow tone. He didn't want to see the Professors or the students. He didn't want to see all of those they had lost. Lupin, Tonks, Fred...

"One of the downsides of saving the wizarding world is that people will want to talk to you about it," Draco pointed out.

"I can't deal with that ... not now."

"You don't have to. Not now, at least. I'll be right there to tell anyone who tries to talk to you to piss off."

Harry turned to face Draco and offered him a weak smile. "Thank you, Draco."

The blond just nodded and intertwined their fingers, leading him to the Great Hall and to where Seamus, Dean, Neville and Lavender sat in silence. They looked up when the two approached and sat down with them. After everything, neither Neville nor Lavender were surprised to see the two boys holding hands. The same could not be said for the other couple however.

"So you two really are...?" Dean asked the two boys, moving his head off Seamus's shoulder to look up at them.

Draco nodded, no longer frightened by what others may think of him. "Yes. And just for the record, he tops."

Chapter Thirty-Three

"Are you nervous?"

"A little ... but who *isn't* on their wedding day?"

"You have nothing to worry about, everything is going to be fine. We've gone over everything a thousand time, everything is going to turn out perfectly."

"Merlin help me, it better be>"

"He's a lucky guy, y'know, getting married to you."

"I tell him that every day."

"And you're a lucky girl, Lav. Neville's a good guy."

The bride-to-be smiled at her best friend through the mirror as she helped her get into her dress. "Thanks Parvati. He really is, isn't he?"

"Even if it took me a while to see that," her best friend admitted with a laugh and a sheepish smile.

"I'm just glad you see it now. It's probably bad luck or something for a maid of honor not to like the groom."

While the bride was getting ready, the guests were getting seated and chatting lightheartedly. Hermione was in the middle of telling Harry and Draco about her studies in Greece. It had now been three years since the war, and after another huge row over the summer between Ron and Hermione, they had come to a compromise. Hermione wanted to go to a wizarding university, and Ron didn't want her to leave. So, they decided to move in together once in Greece. That way Hermione got to study, and Ron didn't have to be far away from her.

Though she had just graduated a year early, they still decided to live there, at least for now.

Draco and Harry both sat listening politely, nodding when appropriate, but neither fully listening and understanding as she rambled on about all her classes and professors and workload.

After the war, when they had made themselves public, Harry and Draco had tried to start slow. They attempted to start their relationship like any other couple who hadn't been shagging for a whole year before they were even friends. They tried to go on little casual dates, going to quidditch matches with friends, innocent kisses on foreheads and noses in public , lips in private and nothing else.

That lasted nine days.

Though of course they've still gone on hundreds of dates and dozens of quidditch matches over the three years they had been together, and still had plenty of cute, fluffy cuddle sessions, the night always ended in shagging.

Sometimes slow and passionate, sometimes rough and loud. Sometimes in the mornings and afternoons as well. A day couldn't go by without pinning the other down with a smirk, not having to say a word in order for the other to know what they wanted, and they loved it that way.

They loved their little flat and the lazy mornings, the sound of their kettle boiling when the one who woke up first made breakfast. The rainy days they would use as an excuse to make a fort and cuddle all day long. Their drawer filled only with Christmas sweaters from Mrs. Weasley they never wore past Christmas day. The laughter that would fill the room after one of them made a terrible pun, the dinner comprised of takeaway and wine, and the cork board in their bedroom full of tacked on memories. The stacks of letters from Hermione in a box under their bed they never got to writing back to.

They loved the Christmas tree that would finally get taken down in February, just because the other got tired of looking at it and the sound of their cat purring as they scratched it behind the ears as they cuddled. The random calls from Dudley asking how they were doing. The bath already drawn after a long day at work, and waking up with the other being the first thing they saw. But most of all they loved each other, and that was all they would ever need.

Chapter Thirty-Four

"Is it rude to fuck on someone else's wedding night?" Harry asked as Draco straddled him and began to kiss his neck.

The blond chuckled against his boyfriend's skin. "Every night is *somebody's* wedding night somewhere. If that were true, we'd never get laid."

"Mm, and we can't have that," he teased.

"We'd probably die," Draco said with a laugh.

"Speak for yourself, *I* have my left hand," Harry teased with a little chuckle, looking up at Draco who had pulled away from his neck, his hands resting on the pale boy's hips.

Draco tsked playfully and shook his head. "Tops. So easy to please."

"Yeah, it's you bottoms who are so needy. You have to have it up the ass, you've got to wank off at the same time..." Harry listed off playfully.

"Harry," Draco laughed, reaching down and squeezing his cheeks together and puckering his lips. "Shut up, I'm trying to seduce you."

"Yes, sir," Harry mumbled best he could and they both laughed, Draco letting his face go before leaning down to kiss him.

"Much better," he grinned before going back to kissing his neck.

Harry quickly quieted and tilted his head to the opposite side, letting a content hum escape him at the feeling. His hands were now resting on Draco's thighs, squeezing and rubbing them reassuringly.

It wasn't long before their clothes lay in piles on their bedroom floor, their hair tousled and Draco's lips pink and inflamed. Harry was now hovering over him, slowly licking the shell of his ear to watch him squirm and whimper. He loved that after all these years, he still could affect Draco like this.

The paler boy's body was covered in goosebumps, his breathing ragged as the pleasure of Harry toying with his sensitive ears overtook him. He bit down on his lower lip to try and muffle his needy little whimpers, as if they didn't keep a permanent silencing charm around their flat.

"Ready, baby?" Harry asked, his voice an octave lower than usual.

At Draco's eager nods he reached over and grabbed the ever-present bottle of lube from their nightstand. He squeezed some into his palm before rubbing onto his already hard cock. One of his hands was positioning his tip at Draco's entrance, the other slowly sliding up and down the boy's pale chest as he cooed lovingly, knowing Draco appreciated it every now and again.

Draco wrapped his legs around Harry's waist as he moaned out, his head already falling back against the pillows. Harry had slid in up to the hilt and was thrusting slowly, still running his calloused hands up and down Draco's soft chest. His movements were slow and passionate, thrusting deep inside. Bending forward as he moved, he started to suck on Draco's neck, the soft gasps and moans escaping him were like music to his ears.

Draco had his arms draped around Harry's shoulders, holding their bodies close together. His body erupted into goosebumps as Harry continued to touch him slowly. Slow wasn't usually a pace they stayed at for long, but the loving passionate thrusts and kisses were a nice treat to his usually sore body.

Harry finally kept his hands firmly on Draco's hips as he picked up the pace a bit, though still not as hard as usual. He looked down, loving the view of his boyfriend's pale body, rocking with every move of Harry's hips, his hands firmly on Harry's shoulders, his eyes squeezed shut and brows furrowed. His lips were slightly parted, tiny whimpers and moans escaping them every few seconds.

Just as Harry had started to really pick up the pace, thrusting harder and harder into Draco's prostate, making his legs shake and causing his moans to crescendo, the cat jumped onto the bed and lied on Draco's chest.

"Really?!" the blond asked in exasperation.

The cat simply meowed, laying its head on his paws, causing Harry to laugh. He stopped his movements, but didn't pull out. "I think that's cat for 'threesome?'" he translated, causing him to laugh even more.

"There is no room for pussy in this relationship," Draco chuckled with a roll of his eyes, unceremoniously grabbing the cat and dropping it off the side of the bed.

"Who knows, a threesome might be fun," Harry teased. At his boyfriend's wide eyes and confused look, he quickly clarified. "Not with the cat! Are you mad?"

Draco laughed and shook his head in amusement as Harry slowly resumed his thrusts. "You're crazy," he told the dark haired boy affectionately.

Leaning over to plant an affectionate kiss on his lips, Harry quoted Draco from what had felt like ages ago.

"Love will do that to you."

Chapter Thirty-Five

"Will you marry me?"

"Do you even have to ask?"

El Fin