

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHARMING PRINCE



Book Seven: THE BOUND PRINCE Series

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Summary, Notes & Copyright

Summary: Harry and Draco have the peace and happiness of which they dreamed. This is an extended epilogue to *The Bound Prince* series with “snapshots” of Harry, Draco and their children's lives in the ten years after book six.

Warnings: Language, M/M Explicit Sex, Anal, Oral, Rimming, Bondage, Dom/Sub, SM, Jealousy, Consensual Non-Monogamy, Foursome, Mpreg, Exhibitionism, Character Death (not D/H)

Notes: *Sayingsorry_bh* and *Slashpervert* wrote the first draft of this volume in the winter of 2008-2009. *Sayingsorry_bh* left the project then, but gave *Slashpervert* and *Brknhalo241* permission to finish writing and editing the book without her. AU from Chapter 24 of HPB. BP books 1-5 written before the release of DH.

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– CHAPTER ONE –

Ball and Chain

"Ron, you're dressed completely in white and you're sitting on the floor," said Harry, bending down to talk to his friend. "If Hermione saw that, she would kill you and then she would kill me for letting you sit on the floor."

Ron groaned. "A bit of dirt is better than me being sick on it," he said weakly.

Harry sighed. "You're not going to be sick," he said.

"Easy for you to say," said Ron, raising his head from his knees. "Your stomach's not Oh, Merlin." He dropped his head again.

Harry was silent for a few moments. He remembered being nervous before his own wedding, but he hadn't been nearly as nervous as Ron was now. "Look, mate," he said, grasping Ron's shoulder. "What's the big deal? Really? You love Hermione, she loves you, you asked her to marry you and now you two are going to do it."

"Yeah, well it all sounds well and good when it's said like that," Ron replied, his voice muffled by his own knees.

"And how would you say it?" Harry asked. "Everything I just said is completely true."

"So what," said Ron. "What if something happens? What if we fight all the time? What if we – if we – if we have – ugly children or something!"

Harry raised his eyebrows. "You're getting married," he said. "There's bound to be something happening. You and Hermione have always fought since the very first day you met and you still love each other. It's just a thing with you two. And there's no way you two could have ugly children. You're both great-looking!" He smiled amusedly at Ron's antics.

Ron didn't seem convinced. "Maybe she's too good for me," he said quietly. "I mean, look at me. I work as a clerk for my brothers. I don't have a real job. Who knows if this broomstick thing is ever going to work? I couldn't even pay for most of this wedding. I'm

using your place and your food and I even bloody live with you. I'm nothing but a big, daft prat. Hermione could be working in the Ministry and travelling the world or something, helping house-elves, and werewolves, and centaurs."

"Ron, look at me," Harry told him. Ron did so reluctantly. "Do you honestly think that anything could stop Hermione from doing what she wants to do?"

Ron shrugged, but then gave his head a little shake no.

"Exactly," said Harry. "Which means she is where she wants to be. And, Ron, you're a hell of a man. You have a job, you're starting your own business and maybe you'll even have your own company one day. That's more than a lot of people can say – hell – that's more than I can say. You two'll be happy. I married Draco Malfoy and I'm happy. If we can do it, how can you possibly think you can't?"

Ron let out a small sigh, and seemed heartened by Harry's words.

"Now get up, brush yourself off, and go get married." Harry smiled. "Or else you are nothing but a big, daft prat."

Ron's lips quirked up at the corners and he allowed Harry to help him to his feet.

Draco had been running since early morning. At least it felt like that. He had had to reset the house wards to allow for an entire list of people invited to the wedding, including a great number of Hermione's Muggle relatives. The house-elves were preparing the food, but he had hired witches and wizards to serve it and do anything that would be seen by the Muggles. And he had had to warn them, strongly, not to use any visible magic.

He had been dressed and ready to receive guests as they arrived both by Floo for the wizarding folk (in a side room because of the Muggles) and the Muggles at the front door. Luckily, Ron had a lot of brothers who were all put to good use as ushers and were leading guests out to the Rose Gardens where the wedding was taking place.

Now Draco stood in front of Ron's room and knocked, wondering in what state he would find the man.

Harry looked round at the door as Ron brushed off his white tuxedo. It was wizard-made, but the style of it was more Muggle, with trousers instead of robes. Harry crossed the room and turned the doorknob, pulling it open to see his husband standing there.

Draco stood in his grey tux, looking almost like a black and white

photograph, except for the colour of his lips as he smiled. "He able to walk?" he teased.

Harry smiled. "Only just now," he said, turning his head to Ron, who still looked rather pale.

"Going to need any potions?" Draco asked, grinning at how delicious Harry looked in his matching dark blue tux.

"Eh, he'll be all right," Harry answered. "Won't you, Ron?"

Ron took a deep breath, examining himself in a mirror as he tried to get the small spot of something from the floor off his bum. He gave up and did a Cleaning Charm instead. "Yeah, I'll – I'll be all right," he said.

Harry looked back at Draco. "See?" he said, grinning as well. "He's fine." He raised his eyebrows.

"Well, most of the guests are here," Draco said. "So everything is ready when he is. I think the bride is getting anxious to have this underway."

Ron took another deep breath at Draco's words.

"Make that all the guests are here," said a voice from behind Draco. Mr Weasley stood there, smiling into the room at his son. "Fred's just seated the last one."

"They're all here?" Ron said, paling a little more. "So we can start then?"

"Yes, we can start when you're ready," said Mrs Weasley tearfully. Harry hadn't noticed her behind her husband. She edged into the room, wearing a dress of the same colour light blue as the bridesmaids, and pulled Ron into her arms. "Oh, I can't believe my little Ronnie is getting married," she sobbed.

Some colour returned to Ron's face as he blushed.

"And Hermione just looks simply beautiful," she continued. "I was just in to see her and – Oh, Ronnie."

"Come now, Molly," said Mr Weasley, stepping into the room as well and laying a hand on Mrs Weasley's back. "You'll drown the boy in tears." He smiled at Ron, his own eyes sparkling with happiness.

Draco grinned, always amused by the way Mr and Mrs Weasley could turn everyone around them into children in their eyes.

"So, if I know Hermione, you had better get your arse down there and be waiting at that altar before she gets nervous," Draco prompted.

Mrs Weasley cupped Ron's face in her hands. "He's right," she told him, sniffing.

"I know, Mum," Ron answered. Mrs Weasley's tears, ironically, appeared to have a slight calming effect on Ron as he stood a bit straighter and took a deep breath.

Mr Weasley grasped his shoulders and rubbed them a few times. "Places then, son," he said with another weepy smile.

Ron nodded and they all made their way out into the gardens, where all the guests were chattering. They quieted down though when they saw who was coming.

Harry could see Sirius struggling to keep a hold on a squirming Valen, Remus's arms laden with a, thankfully, sleeping April.

Seeing that the wedding was about to start, Bill, Percy, Fred, and George all took their places behind their parents, Ron, and Harry and Draco.

The music, played on piano by one of Ron's aunts, began, and Mr and Mrs Weasley started down the aisle. Mrs Granger was already waiting. She and the Mrs Weasley each lit a candle representing their families, leaving a third candle waiting for Hermione and Ron to light. Then they took their seats in the front row and Ron followed after them down the aisle, taking his place at the end. Harry stood next to him, and Draco next to Harry. Bill was after that, followed by Percy and Fred and George, and then the music grew louder as the first bridesmaid began to make her way down.

The girl was a young cousin of Hermione's, and followed by another of her cousins. Luna came down next, staring happily around at all the guests with Fleur following after her, looking radiant in the pale blue. Tonks's hair was the same shade as her dress, and Ginny was the last to come down, her dress slightly different from the others, just as Harry's tux was slightly different from those of the other men. Then the music changed to a beautiful, classical-sounding melody that Harry didn't know, but liked all the same.

McGonagall raised her hands for everyone to stand, and they did so, eagerly looking for the bride.

Hermione came into view then, accompanied by her mother. Harry could hear Ron's swallow. She looked more gorgeous than Harry had ever seen her look. Her hair was pulled partially up, the curls very smooth with tiny little white flowers woven into them. Her

dress was beautiful and full of delicate white lace and ribbon, reminding Harry of one of April's dresses, only even lovelier. It trailed behind her as she walked, her eyes filled with happy tears.

Ron's ears were very red and Harry wondered if he was even going to be able to move.

Draco stood in the garden full of blooming roses and watched his friends. Ron made him want to laugh but, with some effort, Draco managed to keep his amused but calm expression. Until he saw Hermione. Then his mouth actually opened in surprise. He remembered being surprised by her back at the Winter Ball in fourth year. Yet, now, she looked lovelier than he had ever seen her. He knew the woman had intelligence and strength, especially after all they had been through. Now he thought he saw her through Ron's eyes. Draco smiled and looked to his husband then.

Harry smiled back at Draco briefly, before McGonagall asked Ron and Hermione to join hands.

Hermione kissed her mother, who squeezed her hand and went to take her seat. Hermione faced Ron and held her hands out, and it took him a moment to do the same.

Harry smiled, watching and listening as McGonagall said words that were similar to the ones she had spoken at Harry and Draco's wedding. Hermione's vows were well thought out and beautiful, while Ron's were bumbling but very sincere. Harry and Ginny handed the couple their wedding bands, which they exchanged.

"And it is now with great pleasure that I give you Mr and Mrs Weasley," Professor McGonagall intoned. "You may now kiss."

Ron grabbed Hermione eagerly, bringing happy chuckles and peals of laughter from the guests as they applauded.

Draco heard a high pitched cry and looked over to see Remus struggling with a now awake and angry April. Beside him, Valen was bouncing excitedly in Sirius' arms. Draco grinned.

Once Ron had finally released Hermione, who was laughing along with everyone else, she took his arm and began down the aisle with him. There were noises like firecrackers before streamers exploded into the air, no doubt the work of Fred and George judging from their grins.

Harry smiled, offering his arm to Ginny as they followed after the newlyweds.

Draco stepped up and held his arm for his cousin and Tonks winked at him as she took it. Some of the Muggle family members seemed to stare at them disapprovingly but Draco just smirked as he followed his husband and Ginny.

Once down the aisle and away from the crowds of friends and family, Ron and Hermione turned to each other and kissed again. Ron's ears were still slightly red and Hermione's make-up was a little streaked, but they looked perfect. Harry wasn't sure if he'd ever seen either of them so happy. He and Ginny grinned at one another.

Draco smiled, taking his place in the receiving line between Ginny and Fleur as the guests filed past, greeting each person and shaking hands.

As soon as all of the guests were being guided into the ballroom in the Manor, where the reception was taking place, Harry stepped over to Ron and Hermione, grinning still. "Mr and Mrs Weasley, eh?" he said.

"It's so strange, isn't it?" said Hermione, but the way she was beaming suggested that she really didn't think there was anything strange about it.

Tonks laughed. "Hermione, I don't know if I can think of you as Mrs Weasley," she said.

"Mrs Weasley she is," said Ron, smiling as he remained close to Hermione even as she hugged her mother tightly.

"Yes, and now zer are three of us," said Fleur happily as she slipped an arm about Bill's waist.

Draco smiled but rolled his eyes, reaching his arm around Harry and pulling him close to his own body.

"Tell me, Ron," said Fred, leaning an arm on one of Ron's shoulders. "Can you feel the ball and chain already?"

Ron rolled his eyes.

"Just wait until he's got ickle Rons and Hermiones running about. Once the rugrats come, then he'll really feel it," said George.

"Oh, because you two know so much about commitment of any kind," said Mrs Weasley, kissing Ron's cheek and then rubbing the lipstick away.

"Oi, we've got lots of commitment," said George.

"Yeah, loads," Fred agreed, and then in an undertone, "A couple of girls tell us to meet them at a pub in town every week and we go –

faithfully, I might add."

Harry snorted.

Draco smiled. He leant in and whispered in Harry's ear. "Are you my ball and chain? And if so, when do you tie me up again?"

Harry gave Draco a sly smile and a sideways look. "Anytime you like," he replied. "Although I suppose that would be all the time which means we would have missed the wedding." He grinned and kissed Draco lightly.

Draco blushed and grinned happily with the answer.

Tonks snorted. "Suppose we'd better get the photos done before these two start up again."

"Oh, Merlin, you're right!" Fred exclaimed, leaping as if suddenly remembering something important. "We're at a wedding! Do you have the camera, George?"

George did actually pull out a small camera, though Harry was sure it was a joke. He pointed it at Harry and Draco as if concentrating hard. "They're in the wedding party this time," he said. "Maybe they'll do something different."

Harry blushed.

Mrs Weasley whacked both laughing twins on their heads with her handbag.

Draco laughed too. "Maybe later; right now the wedding photographer is waiting to get the posed shots."

"Yes, and you're behaving like utter --" Percy began.

"Children," Fred and George finished with him. "We know, Perce. We know."

Percy looked indignant but marched off with everyone else to get the pictures taken.

Draco didn't mind posing for pictures and did an admirable job not pinching his husband's arse during – well, at least most of the time.

While standing off to the side for a short break as the photographer took shots of only the bride and groom, Harry muttered to Draco, "You know, I think weddings really do turn you on." He raised an eyebrow, grabbing Draco's hand playfully as he felt it inching towards his arse again.

Draco leant over, breath in Harry's ear as he whispered, "Yes. How long do you think we have before you have to give the toast?"

Harry raised both eyebrows at that, but shivered at Draco's breath on his skin. "Do you mean before or after we retrieve our bouncing and screaming children?" He chuckled quietly, trying to resist the lips that were so achingly close.

"*Merde*," Draco sighed, resting his forehead against the side of his husband's head. "I stay hard for you much longer and I won't be able to walk," he complained.

"Ball and chain," Harry teased, though the thought of Draco hard for him was just as wonderfully pleasing as it always was.

"Tease, now you got me thinking of chains," Draco hissed but smiled.

Harry turned to face Draco, arms around his neck as he grinned up at him. "Remus and Sirius would kill us, and so would Ron and Hermione if I were to miss the speech time." He spoke reason, though the longer he looked at Draco, the harder he was getting. He wondered if either of them would be able to walk soon without hurting themselves.

"Promise to shag me as soon as we can?" Draco asked, the desire in his husband's eyes making his heart beat faster.

"I promise," Harry practically purred, and then could see the twins, and several others for that matter, staring at them. He casually pulled away, taking a quiet, deep breath as he watched Ron and Hermione pose together.

Draco blushed but otherwise tried to behave himself. He shifted uncomfortably in the now too tight trousers. He was relieved when the photos were complete and they could move on to the reception.

As Harry had thought, Valen was still bouncing and April was still crying, though not as loudly as before. He scooped her into his arms, rocking her back and forth, the soft frills of her dress swaying with the movement.

Valen screamed "Dada Daco," and held out his hands to the blond. Draco laughed and picked up the squirming boy. Valen proceeded to babble at him, apparently telling him what he thought of everything.

April eventually settled down to quiet little hiccups as Harry rocked her.

"She's going to be quite something," said Sirius, whose hair had been neat but was now very dishevelled – no doubt due to Valen's

hands.

"Going to be?" Harry said with a raised eyebrow.

Sirius chuckled.

"Vroom, vroom," Valen yelled attempting to jump from Draco's arms.

"No broom right now," the blond told him. "My mother told me I was like that," he admitted, gesturing to their daughter, "though I never quite believed her before April was born."

"The calm and collected Draco Malfoy was like April?" Harry asked with an amused smile.

Draco blushed. "A screamer, I was told," Draco admitted.

"Well, I can believe that one," Harry said with another sly smile that Sirius laughed at, even though Harry was usually the loud one and knew it.

– CHAPTER TWO –

Dancing

Ron and Hermione were the last to enter, as they had been having more photos taken, and everyone in the room whooped and clapped as they came through the doors. There was more talking and laughing before everyone moved to take their seats, Harry and Draco situated themselves with the wedding party at the table that was slightly raised above the rest. Draco had managed to get Valen to sit in his high chair and had given him some mashed potatoes to eat. The child quickly began to make his usual mess of them but at least he wasn't trying to climb out of the chair anymore.

The drinks were brought out by the hired staff and then Harry was passed a microphone that had been charmed by Mr Weasley for the Muggles' sake. Harry looked at the mic for a few seconds and then gave Mr Weasley an approving nod, which the man seemed excited about.

Harry was amused to find that Mr Weasley had even charmed the thing to make the noises that microphones made as he picked it up and it squealed loudly. Mr Weasley was practically bouncing in his seat at that and was whispering loudly, "It worked, Molly!"

Most of the wizarding side was looking confused as they wiggled fingers in their ears, but the Muggles didn't bat an eye. April didn't wake and Harry was extremely glad that he had thought to place a Silencing Charm around the cot they had set up for her.

"Well," Harry began as he stood, having to settle the squeaking mic with wandless magic, "I suppose I'm getting rather good at speeches, yeah?" There were a few titters from the tables below, mostly from the wizarding side. Harry smiled as he continued, "It's been eight years that I've had these two as best friends. We've been through it all, and when I say that, I really mean it. I don't think I'd be here without them. As their friend all through school, I can say I pretty much know all that it took for them to get here, and let me just

say, bless Hermione's patience." There were a few more laughs and Harry chuckled as Ron looked up at him with a raised eyebrow, though he was smiling as well. "Honestly," Harry went on, "I don't think either Ron or Hermione could've found better people to fall in love with. I know that they've loved each other for longer than they've even admitted it. You've both done more for me than you could ever know. You're still my friends after all this time and after all that's gone on, and it wasn't easy. I know that. I've seen them endure so much, and I've seen them strive and survive the hardest things. This'll be a cinch for them. So here's to you two and your long, happy lives together, because we all have to see what it'll be like when you're really an old married couple." He chuckled again as he raised his glass to them.

Draco raised his drink, smirking as he sipped his champagne. Then all attention turned to the Maid of Honour for her toast.

Harry passed the microphone to Ginny, taking his seat as she stood. She examined the thing in her hand for a moment, looking at it amusedly, then turned to face the room. "Hard to follow Harry Potter," she said with a grin at him. "But I suppose I'll take a shot at it anyway." She held the microphone a bit more away from her mouth. "You may have been the best mate," she said to Harry, "but I'm the sister of the groom. And I think all us Weasleys can agree that we've probably heard more about Hermione than anybody else."

"Isn't that the truth," said Fred loudly, and Ginny laughed.

"So, we all know how smitten our dear Ronald is," Ginny continued, grinning at Ron's reddening ears, "but I've heard a lot about Ron from Hermione as well. Mostly complaints about how utterly clueless Ron was for the larger part of eight years, but she talked about him all the same. It's been a long road to marriage, and I can't believe it's finally happened, but I'm not surprised by it. I think we all knew all along that it was only a matter of time. You're both brilliant and I love you and I couldn't be more happy to finally welcome Hermione into our family. Here's to Ron and Hermione." She smiled again as she drank from her glass.

Draco sipped as well, his smirk turned to a grin at the descriptions and he smiled at his friends who also seemed to be blushing. Now other guests began to make toasts. After a couple

others, Draco stood up and waited while they passed the microphone to him.

"I am Draco Malfoy, Harry's husband," he said by way of introduction. "I've known these two as long as he has but for the first six years we mostly traded insults, and even a few blows." Hermione blushed at that. "I have to say, as my enemies, they were formidable. As my friends, they are invaluable. But most of all, they are family."

Ron and Hermione both smiled at Draco and Harry did too. It really was an amazing thing that they had all come so incredibly far.

Draco lifted his glass, drank and sat back down. Valen reached for his glass and he had to admonish the child that he was not ready for champagne yet.

After Harry had drunk as well, he laughed quietly at their son and then kissed Draco gently on the cheek.

There were more toasts and Draco continued to sip lightly, amused as some of their friends gulped the champagne (imported from France, of course). He wondered if the point was to get everyone pissed enough to dance.

Mr Weasley was the last to speak and Harry laughed along with everyone else as he recounted Ron as a child. The Muggles there probably thought he was slightly mad when he mentioned that Ron had once spelled all of the water out of the tub when he hadn't wanted to take a bath. He stopped telling this story only when Mrs Weasley tugged on his sleeve. From then on he came up with more and more inventive Muggle alternatives to explain the magic, growing more excited with each one he was able to think up. Then the food was brought out with not a house-elf in sight, and Harry could see that some people were already a little tipsy.

Once the meal was done, it was time to cut the cake. It was large and ornate, magic keeping it up even if it didn't show. Exact likenesses of Ron and Hermione were on top the cake. Draco had arranged it so that Muggles saw the figures holding still but everyone else saw them move, including kissing.

Ron picked off a piece of the cake that was slightly larger than he really needed and grinned wickedly at Hermione, who raised an eyebrow and warily opened her mouth. Ron pushed the cake inside purposely, smearing it over Hermione's lips, who took a step back

from him, trying to keep the icing from falling on her dress. Then she decidedly grabbed a larger piece, covering nearly all of Ron's mouth and chin.

Draco stood next to Harry, one arm around his husband and the other holding their son. Harry was holding the, blessedly, sleeping infant, April. Draco let his hand slide down and pat his husband's arse as he leant to whisper in his ear. "Remember what we did with our cake?"

Harry had been thinking of the exact same thing and smiled slyly again. "I did say that I would never look at cake the same way again," he replied.

"Oh, and I will be saving us some for later," Draco purred. He squeezed Harry's arse a bit and licked his ear.

"Mmm," Harry hummed quietly. "Why do I get the feeling that you and I are going to have even more fun than Ron and Hermione tonight?"

"Of course we will," Draco whispered. "We are much kinkier."

"Much," Harry agreed, shifting April in his arms when she wriggled a little.

Cake was served and eaten. Draco made sure to be obscenely sexy about the way he ate his and enjoyed watching his husband squirm.

Harry did squirm, rather a lot, and tried not to let it show on his face how arousing Draco was.

Finally the cake was done and it was time for dancing. Draco had been looking forward to getting his husband in his arms all day.

The first on the dance floor were Ron and Hermione, of course. Everyone oohed and ahed at them as they moved closely together, eyes on each other. Mr and Mrs Weasley joined them, and Hermione's mother danced with one of her uncles. When it came time for the wedding party to dance, Harry was forced to step away from Draco to dance with Ginny. He didn't press very closely to her due to the fact that Draco had made him half-hard.

Draco danced with Tonks, smiling and talking. He couldn't help that his gaze kept straying to his husband. Tonks just laughed. "You two are still as bad as you were at your own wedding, even with two babies," she teased.

"Harry James Potter," Ginny said after a few moments, raising her eyebrows. "Don't tell me you have a stiffy right now?"

Harry flushed deeply. "Not a full one," he muttered.

Ginny looked like she was trying to hold in laughter while also looking slightly affronted. "I knew you and Draco were being perverts," she said.

Draco saw his husband's blush, which made his own arousal even more uncomfortable. He couldn't wait for the song to end.

Tonks grinned at him. "Almost done."

Draco flushed. "I don't mean to be rude," he said.

"Don'cha worry, Draco," she teased. "I understand."

The song ended, Ginny managing to keep her laughter in through most of it, but it burst out of her when Harry stepped back and eagerly scanned the room for his husband.

"Thanks for taking such great joy out of the dance," she said sarcastically, though she was still grinning.

"Sorry," said Harry, blushing a bit more. "Did you see him with the cake?"

That brought another laugh from Ginny.

Draco thanked Tonks for the dance and then strolled up to his husband, trying to look calm. He came up behind Harry, rested his hands on the man's hips and leant in so that he could press his face to Harry's hair and whisper in his ear. "Ready for me?" he whispered.

Harry swallowed and Ginny casually turned and strode over to a boy from Hermione's side who was obviously trying to catch her eye. "And just what does that mean?" Harry asked, spinning to face his husband.

"I thought it was my turn to dance with you," Draco said in a mock innocent voice.

"Well, I suppose I'll let you," Harry said, pretending to think about it. "But I've heard that your hands tend to wander when you dance."

Draco stepped in close, putting his arms around his husband's waist. "My hands are the least of your worries," he whispered, pressing his body against Harry's.

Harry slipped arms over Draco's shoulders, grinning at his comment.

Draco began to sway, feet moving and he led them around the dance floor. "I love the way we fit together," he whispered, looking into his husband's bright green eyes.

"Perfectly," Harry replied, playing with a strand of Draco's hair as he moved with him.

Draco's cock brushed against Harry's as they danced, making him have to clench his teeth on a moan.

Harry did let out a small sound, hands tightening around Draco's neck. "You know," he said quietly, "this has the potential to turn embarrassing."

Draco smiled. "Nothing new there," he whispered. "Only we can't Apparate away like last time."

Harry chuckled lowly. "Do we walk out pressed together?" he asked.

Draco glided them around the dance floor, ignoring some of the rude stares from a few of the Muggles. Finally, he made it close to a door and just kept dancing until they were in the hall.

Once out of sight of everyone else, Harry pressed more closely to Draco. "Why, Mr Malfoy," he said, voice low and quiet, "I do believe you led us out here on purpose."

"Always expecting the Slytherin is doing something devious," Draco teased, but continued to lead Harry down to the study.

"But aren't you?" said Harry with a hint of a grin.

Draco smirked, releasing one hand on Harry to push open the study door and "dance" them into its dark interior.

Harry gripped the back of Draco's neck, bringing their faces inches apart. "What to do now?" he breathed over his husband's lips.

Draco's silver hand stayed in the small of Harry's back, pulling him tight against his own body, while the other slid down to cup his arse, kneading it. "Now you use a Locking and Silencing Charm on the door before I bend you over the desk and shag you senseless," he whispered.

Harry's body warmed with Draco's words and his eyes slid half-closed with arousal. The door, which neither of them had closed, snapped shut with a wave of Harry's hand. He performed the appropriate charms then, but his eyes didn't leave the grey ones before his own.

Draco pulled his husband along with him to the desk, not breaking contact with the other man's body. Pressing Harry back against the edge of the desk and then reaching to grab the back of his lover's hair, Draco bit at Harry's chin.

Harry hissed, his cock hardening further and straining against his trousers.

"Going to fuck you hard, my love," Draco whispered in a dangerous sounding voice.

Harry's entire body shivered at Draco's tone, said tone made all the more sexy by the fact that Draco had sounded like that and called Harry "his love." Harry swallowed, licking his lips.

Draco stepped back and arched an eyebrow. "Turn around, bend over and hold the desk," he ordered in that same voice.

"In my clothes?" Harry asked cheekily, and he thought he might have been able to dent something with the erection he was sporting.

"Yes," Draco said. "In your clothes."

Feeling slightly curious, Harry turned and did as Draco had asked, slowly stretching himself over the polished wood and showing off his arse.

Draco growled at the sight, his own erection having reached a painful level. He flipped up the tail of the tux jacket, grabbed Harry's hips and pulled him so that his arse just stuck out from the desk. Then the blond reached around, unfastening Harry's trousers and pulling them with his shorts down to his knees.

Harry let out an unintentional moan, having not really expected the move. His cock bobbed and he hung his head, breathing a tad heavier. He wondered if Draco had some kind of fetish for formal dress.

"You look so hot, exposed with your pants down like that," Draco said, running his hands over Harry's flesh and squeezing the rounded cheeks of his arse.

Harry smiled slightly, moving into Draco's hands.

"All dressed up so pretty, but I know what you want," Draco purred, spreading the cheeks of Harry's arse and getting down on one knee behind him.

"Oh, fuck," Harry moaned, having not expected Draco to do this either. "Fuck, there's nothing as good as you," he said, voice strained

as it often became while so turned on.

"You know it," Draco agreed with a smirk as he gave a long lick across his lover's puckered hole.

Harry released another moan, louder and deeper than the first. He thought that if he were able to literally melt, he would have done so right then. He rested his head on the desk, turning his face and panting.

"Oh, yes, such a hot kinky thing you are," Draco said in a husky voice before using the tip of his tongue to trace the hole.

"Love your tongue on me, in me," Harry half whispered, shivering again.

"Yes, you do," Draco growled. "House full of guests and here you are spread out begging me to eat your lovely arse." He chuckled deeply and thrust that tongue against his lover's opening.

Harry's body grew so hot with those words that he flushed. "Merlin," he groaned, fingers clenching.

Draco thrust his tongue into Harry, wiggling it a bit each time and loving the way the other man could barely hold still.

"Shiiitt," Harry let out, still panting as he squirmed. "Oh fuck. Oh fuck, Draco, please!"

"Please what?" Draco asked, pulling back enough to ask but then thrusting his tongue again.

Harry jolted, his arse clenching around the slick muscle that was Draco's tongue. "God," he said breathlessly, trying to think of how to answer Draco's question. It finally came to him. "Fuck me," he said.

Draco chuckled against his lover's flesh, giving it one last push with his tongue before standing up again. He quickly got to his feet and unfastened his own trousers, pushing the clothing down to his knees. "Tell me how much you want me," Draco said. "You like that there are guests on the other side of the door, don't you?"

"Want you so much," Harry moaned. "Want your cock in me, fucking me." He moaned again, trying to think of what else Draco had said. "Everyone knows what we're doing. They're all thinking about it right now. So fucking hot."

Draco flushed, grinning as he pressed the head of his cock into his husband's opening. "Yes, everyone knows I am fucking you," he growled as he breached his lover.

Harry arched his back, his heart pounding against the hard surface his chest was pressed to. "Fuck, yeah," he hissed.

"Oh, yes," Draco said, hands gripping Harry's hips and holding him tight while he slid slowly forward, feeling every inch of his lover's body taking him in.

"So good," Harry breathed. "So fucking good. Thick cock." He knew he was babbling, but he figured Draco got the picture.

"Yes, my thick cock shoved up your arse, deep inside you," Draco growled and then began to flex his hips, pulling back and pushing forward again.

Harry gripped the desk harder, spreading his legs so that the trousers around them were stretched as far as they could be.

"Tell me," Draco gasped, thrusting faster. "Let me hear that infamous dirty mouth of yours!"

Harry took in a sharp breath as Draco struck his prostate, and he didn't even hear his words, but he didn't need them for his own mouth to open. "Fuck!" he shouted, his cock dribbling pre-come. "Fuck me so fucking hard, Draco!" He could barely get the words out, as he was having trouble doing anything other than letting his husband thrust into him, yet his tongue continued to fly. "So deep in my arse. Gonna come inside me!"

"Oh, Gods, yes!" Draco cried out, thrusting so hard Harry's hips were pressed against the desk edge now.

Harry could hear the contents of the desk rattling around in their drawers and it only served to heighten his arousal. Draco was fucking him so hard that he was making the large desk move and it was terribly wonderful. Harry didn't even need to press back; his arse was being delightfully pounded right where it was. "Merlin, Draco, fuck!" he yelled hoarsely.

"Oh, fuck, Harry," Draco echoed, his body tightening and Harry's magic crackling now. His fingers were digging into Harry's hips as he pushed himself harder, holding back until his husband came.

All it took to push Harry over the edge was a few more thrusts and he released, spilling himself over the wood, coming so hard that some of it even managed to somehow splatter onto his trousers. His back arched so that he was bent as far back as he could be without

assistance and he cried Draco's name out to the room, his body twitching and spasming.

Draco's scream was loud and wordless, as Harry's magic swept through him. He emptied his seed into Harry, pressing hard into the man as he did.

Harry lay under his husband, panting, and sweating, and still trembling a bit. He felt he needed a few moments to try and remember how to use his voice.

Draco braced himself with his silver hand on the desk, panting.

Harry took a very deep breath, his heart no longer pounding, though it was still beating rather quickly. "Oh, the things you do to me," he said with a slow smile.

Draco chuckled too. "You are amazing," he said. "I just can't be around you without wanting you. Especially when you get all dressed up. It just makes me want to make you messy again."

Harry's smile remained. "I'll keep that in mind," he said.

Draco pulled from his lover's body, looking down at the dishevelled mess. "And you do look a sight," he said with a smirk.

"I can just imagine," Harry replied, turning his head to look at Draco.

Draco's long blond hair had come loose from the ribbon that held it back and stuck to his sweaty, flushed face.

"You look quite a sight yourself," Harry said, straightening his glasses.

Draco looked down and saw how twisted and sweaty the tux had got, his own wet cock sticky under the shirt hem. "Lots of Cleaning and Pressing Charms," he said, nodding.

Harry chuckled. "Who knows what it'll need by the time the night is through," he teased, waggling his eyebrows.

Draco smacked his husband on his bare arse and then began casting charms and straightening clothing.

Harry snorted, pushing himself up on wobbly legs. He stood there and then leant against the desk, his trousers falling to his ankles around his polished shoes.

"Keep that position and we may not leave this room the rest of the night," Draco warned. "And can you imagine what Granger would do to us?"

Harry raised an eyebrow as he grinned, bending to right his clothes. "Not Granger anymore," he said.

Draco laughed. "Surrounded by Mrs Weasleys," he said, shaking his head as he tucked his shirt tails back into his trousers.

Harry smiled. "Probably more to come," he said.

Draco refastened his hair and then reached to straighten Harry's bow tie.

Harry lifted his chin a bit, letting Draco do his work, and then he heard a sound and his brows pulled together. It was like a snicker outside the door. And then came another, quieter sound, this one like the jostling of bodies.

Draco followed his husband's gaze and then frowned, his face flushing. He held a finger to his lips and walked very quietly over to the door, wordlessly releasing the Locking Spell. He didn't bother with the Silencing Spell since the sounds told him it hadn't held. He quickly pulled open the door.

George stumbled just inside the room, managing to catch himself right before falling. He looked up at Harry and Draco and straightened himself. "Evening, lads," he said with a smile, as if he hadn't just been obviously listening to Harry and Draco shagging like mad.

Harry looked past him to see Fred out in the hall, grinning.

Draco arched an eyebrow at the two. "Looking for something?" he asked.

"Us?" said George, looking around at his twin and then back to Draco. "No, not looking for anything. Just having a stroll. It's getting pretty hot in there, you see."

"Yes, quite hot," Fred agreed with a nod, amusement in his expression.

As if to confirm it, Draco flushed. He could never seem to control his face around Fred and George. He gave his husband a long-suffering look.

Harry sighed, colour spreading across the bridge of his nose and onto his cheeks. "You know," he said, "sometimes I wonder if it's really you two that are the perverts."

Fred and George both laughed. "How about we all share the title?" Fred suggested.

"Please tell me you two were the only ones who heard when Harry blew out the Silencing Charm again," Draco said in a pained voice.

Harry huffed.

"Actually," said George, "a few different people walked by."

"One of Hermione's cousins – the blonde one that walked with me," said Fred.

"And Uncle Roderick came by too," said George.

"He's got loads of hair in his ears though," Fred countered.

"It's hairy," George agreed.

Harry groaned quietly.

"A few others too," George continued. "But I didn't really pay all that much attention to them." He grinned.

"You blokes really should've picked somewhere farther from the ballroom," said Fred. "Would've saved you the grief." He shook his head as if he felt sorry for them, but that amusement was still there.

Draco counted his blessings that none of the now three Mrs Weasleys had been among those who heard. He shook his head and then offered his arm to his husband. "Shall we return to the ballroom then?" he said.

Harry took the offered arm, taking in a large breath and releasing it in a slow whoosh. "I suppose," he answered.

Draco led his husband back to the ballroom, doing his best to ignore the laughter of the twins.

Harry's face was still flushed as he walked with Draco back into the crowded room, where several people gave them a number of colourful looks. Why? Why did he always blow out the Silencing Charms?

Draco kept his face looking pleasant and unconcerned, leading his husband through the room to find their children.

Valen and April had been handed off to Mr and Mrs Weasley, most likely Sirius' doing. Mr Weasley was chasing Valen around the table while Mrs Weasley seemed to be concentrating on keeping the infant happy.

Draco snorted at the sight and released Harry, stepping forward and going to his knees in Valen's path, scooping the now giggling boy into his arms.

Mr Weasley nearly ran into Draco but abruptly stopped, panting. "He's a quick one, isn't he?" he said, pulling out a handkerchief to wipe his shining head.

"That he is," said Harry. "How is she?" he asked Mrs Weasley, nodding his head towards April.

"Well," Mrs Weasley answered, "she's certainly herself."

Harry let out a slightly amused breath, reaching for the bundle of blue ribbons.

Mrs Weasley handed April over, looking almost as worn out as Mr Weasley.

Valen immediately began tugging on Draco's bow tie. The blond let him, figuring the main events were over, so it didn't much matter.

Harry smiled and stood next to Draco and Valen with April. "Do you think they want to dance?" he asked, raising an eyebrow.

Draco laughed. "Sure," he said, leading his little family out onto the floor.

April was still tiny, so Harry simply held her to his chest and took one of her tiny hands in his.

Draco settled little Valen against him too, beginning to move in a familiar dance step, swaying with the laughing child.

Harry was delighted that April seemed to like it as well. "I think they'll be quite good when they're older," he said to Draco.

Draco laughed and nodded, dancing up to Harry. He held Valen with his silver hand and reached for his husband with the other, pulling him and April closer.

Harry grinned and kissed Draco on the cheek, slipping an arm about his waist and ignoring the strange stares from some of the other guests. They were two men with two children who looked very much like the both of them. It had to look odd to a Muggle.

It was awkward but fun, dancing with his husband and both their children. Draco led them, dancing and swaying and smiling. Valen leant in and gave his little sister a sloppy kiss on the cheek.

Harry laughed at him and April smiled, as if letting him know that that was okay.

Tonks and her date danced closer. "Hey, that's really cute," she said.

Harry grinned again. "They have their moments."

– CHAPTER THREE –

Serpent's Clutch

Harry stirred in his sleep, feeling Draco lying on his arm. At first it was what he'd thought had woken him – the numbness, but then he heard a soft babbling. He realised he was hearing the baby in the nursery. They had a Monitor Charm that allowed them to hear when the children woke.

He lowered his brows a bit, gently sliding his arm out from under Draco so that he wouldn't wake him. He sat up, surprised that April was awake but not crying for one of her fathers. He sat and listened for a few more moments, thinking about going back to sleep until April did start to fuss, but then he heard another little voice, one that didn't belong to their daughter. Were Valen and April both awake?

Curious, Harry lifted the blankets from his body and stood from the bed. He grabbed his dressing gown, heading for the nursery.

Harry passed through the toy room and opened the door to Valen and April's bedroom a crack to see what the children were doing. He raised his eyebrows in surprise. Valen was not in his cot, but was in April's with her and Harry had absolutely no idea how he had got there.

Valen was petting the little girl's dark hair and talking in that combination of baby talk and words he had developed. "Baba Apil," "good," and "love" were distinguishable in his words.

Harry smiled despite his confusion, watching them quietly from his place. The closest Harry had come to having a sibling while he was growing up had been Dudley. Draco had been an only child. During the months that April had grown inside of Harry he had wondered if his children would be close and come to care about each other. Watching them now, Harry felt a sense of peace knowing that his children would always have one another. The cycle of solitude and loneliness had been broken.

April chewed on her blanket and stared at Valen with her clear

eyes, studying him intently.

"Balén," the little boy patted himself on the chest, then began to hum. Harry recognised the tune as one of the lullabies that Draco sang.

At this, Harry was tempted to go and wake Draco. It was more adorable than he could even express.

April swayed a little to her brother's song. A smile quirked the bit of her lips that could be seen with the blanket in the way.

Draco, meanwhile, woke alone in his bed to the sound of his son's song. He smiled and climbed out of bed, grabbing his gown. He was surprised when he opened the door to the nursery suite and found his husband there. He had assumed the humming was from Harry.

Harry looked round at the sound of the door opening and then gestured quickly for Draco to join him.

Draco cocked his head and arched an eyebrow as he made his way quietly to stand beside his husband and looked through the cracked door.

April was still swaying as Valén hummed. She finally lowered the blanket, smiling fully.

Harry grinned.

Draco slid his hands around his husband's waist, and rested his chin on his shoulder as he watched. "They are amazing," he whispered in Harry's ear.

"Merlin, they are," Harry agreed, lacing his fingers with his husband's.

As she swayed, April stared around the room with her wide blue eyes, then lifted a tiny, chubby hand, pointing to the wall. "*Snake*," she said.

Valén stopped humming, eyes gone wide. His face broke out in a grin. "*Yes, snake!*," he replied excitedly. Valén pointed at himself. "*Brother*," he said.

Harry's eyes widened hugely. How were his two babies speaking to each other that clearly? He whipped his head around to look at Draco, wondering if he was hearing things.

Draco heard his children pointing and hissing at each other. "They are hissing," he said, a possibility occurring to him then that

made his own eyes widen in surprise too.

"Hissing?" said Harry, turning his head back to their children confusedly, but then he recognised the tones and his eyes widened even further. "They're speaking Parseltongue?" he asked in amazement. "How is that even possible?"

Draco shook his head in amazement as the two children continued to speak to each other in those hissing sounds. "Your magic," he whispered to his husband.

"Made them both Parselmouths?" Harry said, shocked, and even more shocked when April patted her brother and said, "*Valen*."

Draco was in awe. "Yes, do you realise how much faster they will be able to learn English this way?"

"They're speaking perfectly," Harry replied. "April said Valen and snake – *perfectly*. She's not even a year old yet."

"You didn't have to learn Parseltongue," Draco whispered, "so they don't have to either."

"This is insane," said Harry, watching April and Valen continue to hiss little words at each other. "I didn't know they could get it from me."

Draco motioned for them to step back, gently closing the door so that they didn't disturb the two children. "It's a bloodline trait, remember?"

"I didn't know it was in my blood," said Harry. "I got it that night when Voldemort tried to kill me."

"What happened that night changed you; you absorbed some of his power. And more again when you destroyed him," Draco explained.

"And it's allowed me to pass on Parseltongue when it didn't run in my family before?" Harry asked, raising his eyebrows. He had come to accept that Voldemort had changed him forever but it was hard to imagine those changes being passed down through future generations.

Draco thought about it. "Do you remember when the door to the nursery spoke to you when you first saw it?"

"Yes," Harry answered, recalling quite clearly.

"Didn't the snakes say something about missing talking?" Draco asked.

"Yes," Harry said slowly, nodding.

"It is possible that my ancestors made snakes the common motif in this house," he gestured to snake imagery in other fixtures of room, "because they actually could speak Parseltongue. If that is true, it would have given them a way to actually speak to the house."

"So, you're saying," said Harry, "that it probably *is* in their blood."

"It may have been dormant in the Malfoy line and your abilities reawakened it. It would make sense. My father did claim some ancestry to Salazar Slytherin. Maybe he was right," Draco said, surprised. He had always assumed that was bragging but not true.

"Well, all the pure-blood lines are connected in some way," said Harry, using Draco's usual words. "It's possible."

"Very likely given what we just saw," Draco whispered. "This may be another reason the Manor wanted you to have a child with me."

Harry smiled. "I'm very glad it did," he whispered back, kissing his husband, but then frowned again. "And ... Valen was inside April's cot"

"*Merde*," Draco sighed. "How did he get out of his cot and up into hers?"

"I have no idea," Harry answered. "I can see him maybe able to get out of his ... but I don't know how he climbed in with April."

"He is too young to Apparate," Draco insisted, hoping he was right about that. "You didn't Apparate young, did you?"

"Well, you know I did," said Harry. "Not *that* young."

"They speak a language only you can understand and Valen seems to be able to get around in ways no infant should," Draco sighed, shaking his head. "We are going to have to watch them very carefully." Draco led his husband back to their room, amused to see some of the nursery fairies following him.

Harry shook his head. "At least we've got amazing children," he said.

Draco wrapped his arm around Harry, pulling him close. "Bloody amazing," he agreed. "And it was cute, Valen wanting to be in there with her."

Harry encircled Draco's waist with his arms. "I'm surprised she didn't kick him out of there," he said.

"They could still hear humming and Draco smiled. "He is good with her," he whispered, leaning in to lick his husband's lips.

"Yes," Harry agreed as he smiled and moved forward to kiss Draco. "He's already a very good big brother."

Draco's mouth was busy then, lips and tongue caressing his husband's as he pulled him tight.

Harry fingered the edge of Draco's dressing gown, pressing one hand to the small of his back as he kissed him. "I take it we're not going back to bed then?" he whispered lowly.

"Bed, floor, against the wall, I don't mind any of them," Draco answered with a grin.

Harry moved his hands in a slow slide over Draco's body, taking his wrists and pushing him back. "Against the wall?" he said.

Draco smirked and raised his eyebrows. "Any way you want it," he said breathlessly and let himself be walked backward.

"Oh, that is lovely," Harry purred, reaching the wall and raising Draco's arms above him. "I think I quite want you right here."

Draco smiled and held still where he was placed. "Bind me here, love," he said huskily.

"Of course," Harry replied, sticking Draco's arms to the wall with his magic, "I can't have you behaving badly," He licked Draco's lips slowly. "Or perhaps that's exactly what I want."

Draco pulled experimentally on his hands and gasped at the sensation of being held by Harry's magic. His arousal was tenting his robe in front.

"You're so fucking hard for me," Harry told Draco, dragging his fingertips down Draco's sides, letting just enough magic tingle in them.

"Oh, Gods, yes!" Draco cried out, writhing in his bonds.

Heat flooded Harry's body, his eyes trained on the gorgeous blond before him. "Say my name," he said, using a bit more magic as he moved his hands up yet again.

"Harry Potter," Draco said with a smirk.

"Yes, Harry Potter," Harry agreed. "With whom you are desperately in love." He gave a little smirk of his own.

"Completely," Draco agreed, arching himself a bit to try to brush against the other man.

Harry obliged him, pressing his body close to Draco's and hissing quietly when their cocks touched. "God, I love this cock," he said, reaching under the fabric covering Draco's body.

"Oh, please, yes," Draco encouraged.

Harry delivered a long stroke to the hard flesh beneath his fingers and managed to untie Draco's robe with his other hand, letting it hang open. He kept his eyes on Draco's, his hand moving over his cock in the exact way Draco liked it.

Draco's eyes half closed in delight, trembling. He loved being bound and helpless like this to his husband.

Harry continued to stroke Draco until he could feel his fingers wet and sticky with his lover's pre-come. "Mmm, look at this," he said, bringing the fingers up so that Draco could see the shining liquid. He brought them to his own mouth, licking them clean.

Draco moaned, licking his lips.

"Do you want a taste?" Harry whispered, so close to Draco that he was nearly speaking against the corner of his mouth.

"Yes, please," Draco whispered, eyes focused on the darkened green ones of his lover.

Harry moved the wet digits to Draco's lips, watching them with his own lips parted slightly. He brushed them over Draco's bottom lip and then pulled them away teasingly when Draco leant forward to take them. Harry's eyes glittered dangerously as he shook his head at his husband.

"You only take what I give you, love," he admonished. "Shall we try again?"

Draco pulled back and nodded furiously without taking his eyes away from Harry's fingers which still hovered temptingly between their faces. Harry lowered his hand until he was able to slip it in Draco's robes, once more, and swiped his fingers again over the leaking crown. He could feel Draco's body tremble but he managed to stay still as the hand came back up. Harry's eyes became locked on the lips that waited patiently. His fingers crept closer until they rested against Draco's mouth and Harry could feel the small puffs of air that seemed to hold the fragments of Draco's self-control. He painted Draco's lips with the clear, sticky fluid and smiled at the shaky groan his lover couldn't hold in. Lifting his eyes now, Harry nearly lost his

own self-control when he saw the raw need transforming Draco's face into something that was both vulnerable and powerful. Unable to look away, Harry slid his fingers between Draco's lips and they both sighed.

Draco sucked Harry's fingers into his mouth, tonguing them and moaning. The restraint had cracked and Draco feasted upon those fingers with an appetite that was unrivalled.

Harry felt he could come just watching Draco. He let out a low sound in his throat, breathing deeply against his husband as his erection throbbed and his fingers were quite wonderfully attended to.

With hungry eyes that were now glazed, Draco was moaning as he sucked Harry's fingers the way he would his cock. His head moved up and down while his tongue massaged and licked instinctively.

Harry's breathing sped up and his mouth was dry. "Draco," he moaned, forming a fist with his free hand. "Merlin, Draco, I want to fuck you so hard."

Draco released his lover's fingers. "Please fuck me," he agreed, voice low and husky.

Harry braced himself against the wall with one arm, his chest pressed to Draco's so that he could feel him breathe. He brought the slick fingers down between Draco's legs, searching for his entrance. "I've never known anything as sexy as you," he said. "Never anything."

Draco spread his legs wider. He thrilled at his lover's words. "Only yours," he whispered.

"Only mine," Harry breathed, closing his eyes and taking in the smell of Draco's hair as he finally slid the fingers into him, slicking them further with magic. "I'm only yours."

"Yes, please, yes," Draco said, trembling as his lover's fingers breached him.

"If you only knew all the things I want to do to you," Harry whispered, spreading his fingers inside Draco.

"Oh, do them, do them all to me," Draco gasped.

Harry grinned, kissing and licking the edge of Draco's jaw. "I don't think there's enough time for all of it now, my love," he said, crooking his fingers to rub them against his husband's prostate.

The spark of pleasure made Draco twitch, his cock jumping as he moaned loudly. "Anything," he gasped.

"Merlin, all those pretty sounds you make," Harry whispered, moving to Draco's ear.

Draco made a whimpering noise then. It would have been a lie to say that the sounds were unintentional since Draco knew that Harry intended to elicit as much noise as he could from his lover and Draco was helpless to refuse him.

Harry moaned. "Again," he said, reaching to lift Draco's legs.

Draco was beyond holding back now, gasping and whimpering. He happily wrapped his legs around Harry's waist when Harry lifted them.

Harry had forgotten to remove his robe, so he simply took it away quickly with a spark of power. Pressing Draco firmly against the wall, he reached to position his cock, bringing his mouth to his husband's as he slid slowly into him.

Draco moaned into Harry's mouth, his husband's cock and magic filling him. His whole body shuddered with the intensity.

"Fuck, Draco," Harry whispered, half whimpering. "So fucking good, my dragon."

"Yes, oh, fuck me," Draco encouraged. "My lion, I am yours." It felt delicious being taken like this, trapped and bound against the wall.

Harry panted against Draco's ear, thrusting up into him with small grunts. His fingers dug into Draco's flesh as he held him up.

"Yes, so good inside me," Draco moaned, legs tightening around Harry.

Harry's body pressed into Draco, pinning him even tighter to the wall, loving the feel of being so close to his body. "Merlin, having you like this," he gasped. "Fucking you."

"Pound me into the wall," Draco gasped, arms still tight against the wall and cock twitching between their bodies.

"Oh, fuck," Harry moaned. He loved when Draco talked like that. He loved all the things Draco said during sex. He thrust harder, using any sort of muscle so he could do as Draco said.

"Oh, yessss!" Draco yelled, surrendering completely to his lover's thrusts and just using his legs to hold on.

Harry abandoned control, moaning loudly, gasping and babbling nonsense, shouting Draco's name as if trying to announce to the world the man he loved. He fucked Draco hard, until his body was glistening with sweat and he wasn't even sure if he was breathing anymore.

It should hurt being slammed into the wall like this. But with Harry's cock inside him and magic crackling over him, the pain added to the building pleasure. Draco loved it when Harry let go like this. He was chanting "yes" and "Harry" over and over again, feeling the power building between the two of them.

Harry lowered his forehead to Draco's shoulder, closing his eyes again. "Oh, Draco, I'm coming," he gasped, gripping him tighter as he spilled his seed. Pleasure rushed through him, blinding him.

Harry's power poured from him and through Draco, causing the blond to writhe and scream with pleasure, spilling his seed between them.

Harry continued to move gently, letting out small sounds that weren't quite moans. He delighted in the feel of Draco's come on his body, in the sight of it coating both of them.

Draco kissed the side of Harry's head where it rested on his shoulder. "Fantastic," he whispered when he could talk.

Harry smiled. "It always is," he said quietly, releasing Draco's arms.

Draco's legs were still around Harry's waist, so it was his lover's body pressed against him that held him up as he tried to wrap nearly numb arms around his shoulders.

Harry kissed Draco lazily, passing fingers through his hair as he did. "Oh, Draco Malfoy, you're an incredible shag," he said with a small grin.

"Harry Potter is a great fuck too," Draco replied with a smirk, managing to tug on his hair.

"Mmm," Harry hummed happily. "Shall I let you down now, or hold you all to myself for the day?" he whispered.

"I would be content to have you shag me all day," Draco said. "But I think our children might take issue with that." He unhooked his feet from behind his husband and brought them down as Harry slid out of him.

Harry chuckled, kissing Draco again before taking a step back from him.

Draco's legs were a bit wobbly and his hands clutched Harry tighter for a minute. He smiled at the come that dripped down both his stomach and the insides of his thighs.

"Quite a mess you are," Harry quipped. "No matter how delicious you look."

"You like me a mess, especially when you made it," Draco said with a smirk, leaning against the wall still while he caught his breath.

"I suppose you have me all figured out," said Harry, smiling.

Draco pulled him closer again, gently kissing Harry before whispering against his lips. "Always," he said.

– CHAPTER FOUR –

Playful

"I really can't believe you did that," said Ron, handing his cloak to Leakey. He and Harry were just getting in from an afternoon spent with several people from the Department of Magical Games and Sports, discussing broomstick regulations.

"Shut up," Harry told him, a wide grin on his face.

"Oh, right," said Ron, shaking his head. "It's supposed to be a surprise."

"Yes," said Harry, "it is. So be quiet about it."

Ron was still shaking his head. "All right, all right," he said, sounding slightly amused.

Harry was still grinning as he watched Ron leave the entrance hall. He handed his cloak to the elf as well. "Do you know where Draco is?" he asked.

"Yes, Master Harry," said Leakey. "Master Draco be in the sitting room with Master Valen, Mistress April, and Mrs Weasley."

"Thank you," Harry answered. Even after all the months that had passed, it was still strange to hear Hermione called Mrs Weasley. He tugged on his shirt hem, making sure that it hung down to hide his skin before he left the room and entered into the one that held his husband and friends, as Ron was there now, too.

He made his way over to Draco and kissed his forehead. "Evening, love," he said with a smile.

Draco was sitting on the rug, playing with the two children. He had been rolling a small magical ball and watching while Valen ran after it. April was lying on the blanket in front of him and watched her brother with what looked like envy. Draco leant up to kiss Harry properly.

Harry smiled against Draco's lips, getting to the floor with him. He looked over to see Ron whispering in Hermione's ear. He shot him a quick look and shook his head a bit.

April began holding her little hands out for Harry and making whimpering noises which were usually a prelude to screaming.

"Oh, what's the matter with my baby?" Harry cooed, taking the little girl into his arms. "You want to run too, huh?"

April babbled in response but then began pulling on Harry's shirt.

Harry discreetly held the hem of his shirt again, making sure that April couldn't pull it up. "Okay," he told her. "You can eat."

Draco cocked his head, smiling and watching them. Valen threw the ball and it bounced wildly off a chair and the wall. It was charmed not to break anything. Draco Summoned it to throw again.

Feeding the baby with Ron and Hermione in the room wasn't really a big deal to Harry or his best friends. He did it often, unlike with Valen, whom he had fed away from most people nearly all of the time. It made it difficult to think of how he could feed April without Draco seeing his ... surprise.

April began to squirm and scrunched up her face with anger when she wasn't promptly fed. "*Nom!*" she hissed at her Daddy Harry, pulling even more insistently on his clothes.

"*I'm getting there, baby,*" Harry hissed back at her, giving Draco a little smile before tugging upwards on the shirt. He bent down as far as he could without looking strange and then put the shirt in his lap, effectively covering his right side. He settled April to his nipple, calming her.

Draco threw the ball again for Valen and then arched an eyebrow at his husband. It was odd to hear an infant hiss like a snake. "Better than her screaming," Draco mused aloud.

Harry nodded in agreement. Half the time, the children didn't even know they slipped into Parseltongue. Since April had started, Valen had a reason to speak it and now did so often, even to Draco or other people who couldn't understand the language.

"*Ball,*" Valen hissed, holding it up. Then he tried once again to throw Draco the ball and managed to bounce it off the shield Draco had placed in front of the fireplace.

Harry laughed at the way the little body chased after the ball again before he could Summon it. "It's like playing fetch," he said, seeing Ron shaking his head again out of the corner of his eye.

"I am trying to teach him to throw it back," Draco said, amused.

"But he is much better at chasing it."

"Well, of course," said Harry. "He's much better at Seeking."

"Well, he certainly wouldn't make a good Beater at this point," Draco said and then laughed as the ball bounced off the side of the chair where Hermione was sitting.

Hermione smiled and bent to throw the ball gently back. She glanced at Harry and her eyes trailed to where his shirt covered the top of his trousers.

Draco had missed the looks. He turned to lean in and kiss his husband again, stroking his daughter's hair as he did.

Harry kissed Draco back, but was still aware of the secret he was hiding and made sure not to move the wrong way.

Draco licked his husband's lips suggestively before sitting back again. He smiled at the now sleeping girl in Harry's arms.

Harry hummed when Draco pulled away, already imagining what his husband might think of his surprise. He grew warmer, staring at Draco with soft but slightly darkened eyes.

Draco grinned, wagging his eyebrows at the clearly aroused look his husband gave him. "Shall I put her in the cot?" he asked softly.

Harry nodded, unable to resist giving Draco another lazy kiss before he took April.

"Might as well just throw the ball here as well so I can take over playing with Valen," said Ron with a knowing smile and a raise of his brows.

Harry snorted. Their friends knew them well. He reached over to grab the ball and tossed it across the room, amused when Valen followed it.

Draco stood up and then bent, lifting April carefully from Harry's arms and putting her in the nearby cot. He made sure to cast a Shield Spell on the cot as well so her brother didn't bounce the ball off her. Then he turned back to Harry.

As Draco turned back, Harry was pulling his shirt back on, and it was quite possible that there was something peeking out of the top of his trousers.

Draco frowned, a movement catching his attention. He stepped closer and crouched beside Harry. "What is that?" he asked.

Harry looked blankly into Draco's face. "What is what?" he said.

Draco snorted. "Still a terrible liar, Potter," he drawled, reaching to lift the shirt Harry had just pulled on.

Harry grabbed Draco's hand, raising his eyebrows at him. "It's nothing," he said teasingly.

"Nothing?" Draco asked. "Then why are you hiding it?"

Harry turned his head towards Ron and Hermione. "You'll watch Valen and April for a bit?"

Ron nodded, the amusement having not left his face since Harry had actually got the thing.

Harry smiled. "Come on," he said to Draco, getting to his feet.

Draco was intrigued, a bit annoyed and very curious. He nodded to Harry.

Harry pulled Draco against him and Apparated to their bedroom. He took a step back from his husband, a sly smile upon his lips. "Want to undress me?" he asked.

"I want to see what it is you're are hiding," Draco said, nodding. He was tempted to just spell the clothes away.

Harry walked backwards and lowered himself onto the bed, leaning his weight back on his arms. "Well, come on then," he said.

"Teasing could get you in a world of trouble, Harry," Draco warned, eyes narrowing.

"Oh?" said Harry, raising an eyebrow. "You don't want to see it then?"

"I do, you git," Draco snapped, drew his wand and cast the spell to strip his husband.

"Merlin," said Harry not having expected that.

From where Draco stood, he could see something spread across Harry's right hip. Draco moved quickly forward, eyes focused on his husband.

There was the image of a magnificent-looking green and silver-scaled dragon against Harry's skin. Its wings were open and powerful, its gently swaying tail reaching around Harry's side to where it would obviously just show from his back.

"Fuck," Draco let out in a quiet huff, reaching a hand to touch the image. At Draco's touch, the dragon dipped its head to try and reach his fingers, its eyes sliding half closed. Draco's fingers trembled as he touched his lover's skin, trailing down the image of the dragon.

It felt the same as Harry's skin but there was an added tingle of the magic from the tattoo.

"Do you like it?" Harry whispered, watching Draco's face.

Draco blinked and then swallowed hard, eyes glazed with lust as he forced himself to look away from the image and up to his husband's face. "Yesss," he managed, hand still caressing the image of the dragon.

Harry licked his lips, still watching Draco. "Fuck me," he whispered. "Fuck me and watch it."

"Oh, Gods, yes," Draco answered, his cock so hard now the pressure hurt. He glanced between the tattoo and his lover's face. "Strip me," he said.

Harry pressed hands to Draco's body, removing his clothing and then letting himself fall fully onto the bed.

Draco let his gaze travel over that body he loved so much and then came to rest again on the tattoo and his lover's cock so near. "Spread yourself," he said.

Harry spread his legs wide and then reached down with his hands, grabbing his arse cheeks, panting already.

Draco climbed up between those legs but didn't immediately move to fuck Harry. Instead, he ran both hands up his legs until he reach his hips, watching the dragon as he did.

The dragon looked like it would be purring if it were able. It shivered as the long pale fingers of its owner's lover caressed its scales. Harry shivered as well, his cock twitching.

"Do you feel anything when it moves?" Draco asked.

It took a moment for Harry to be able to speak properly. "It – it flutters there," he breathed.

Draco nodded, licking his lips and then bending his head down to his lover's hip. He used the tip of his tongue to touch the dragon.

Harry moaned as the dragon arched its neck, the fluttering feeling stronger.

Draco chuckled deeply at his husband's and the tattoo's reactions. He began licking along the image of the dragon.

Harry hissed and gasped with pleasure. And when the dragon swung its tail around, trying to get Draco to touch more of it, Harry jumped in surprise and then let out a whimpering moan. The tail,

instead of wrapping around his side as it would be normally, came very close to his throbbing cock. "Fuck, Draco, fuck," he gasped.

Draco laughed in delight. "This is brilliant work," he said, wondering who did the Tattoo Spell, but deciding to ask later. He wondered how long his husband would last if he kept doing this. He smiled wickedly before nipping gently at the dragon's back.

Harry's eyes rolled back and he couldn't stand not touching Draco any longer. He brought a hand up to grip blond hair and arched, the dragon arching again as well.

Draco continued to nip and lick at the image of the dragon on his lover's skin. While he did, he slid a hand up the inside of Harry's thigh.

"Oh, fuck, please," Harry babbled. "Please, Draco, please don't stop," he begged, even though Draco technically wasn't doing too much of anything besides licking and touching his skin.

Draco was trembling, he was so aroused. He tried sucking on the dragon now.

The dragon threw its head back as Harry did, tiny sparks of actual magic shooting from its nostrils. Harry hooked a leg around Draco, pulling his hair.

Draco's eyes widened and he growled at the sensations. His hand between Harry's legs wrapped around the man's cock even as he began to suck and nip harder at the dragon tattoo.

"Oh, God!" Harry shouted when the tail reached far enough to wrap around the base of his cock as Draco took hold of it. The little sparks continued to shoot up.

Draco's cock was leaking and twitching, each bolt of magic making his body shiver. "Oh, yes," he said, biting into the scales of the dragon.

"Draco, I'm gonna come!" Harry told him, panting heavily and moving restlessly, trying to hold back. He cried out when Draco bit him, the feeling sent up his cock through the tattoo almost enough to push him over the edge.

Draco hummed, biting and licking harder, his hand moving faster and he could feel the energy building.

Harry simply couldn't help himself. He came very hard, shooting come over his stomach and chest, a bit of it even hitting his neck. He

screamed Draco's name, clutching the parts of him he could reach with both arms and legs, his body spasming.

The magic flared out from Harry and over Draco, so that the blond screamed too. He came hard, the hot liquid coating his hand, Harry's cock and the dragon tattoo.

Harry panted and gasped, his chest heaving as the dragon slowly and gently unwrapped its tail, seeming to calm down as Harry did.

"Oh, Gods," Draco managed, still panting hard. He was curled over Harry, his face pressed just above his lover's hip on his belly and his hand still holding Harry's cock.

"I have never," Harry said between massive breaths, "come so hard from a wank before in my life."

"Maybe the first time," Draco said, chuckling deeply. "You know that wasn't normal behaviour for a tattoo, even a magical one."

"It can't be," Harry agreed. "Or else everyone and their grandmothers would have one."

"Your tattoo acts more like your Patronus," Draco whispered, slowly releasing his lover's cock.

"Maybe it has to do with my magic," Harry said, twitching. "And that it's a dragon."

"Yeah, you do seem to have a way with dragons," Draco teased.

Harry smiled, fingering a strand of Draco's hair. "I wonder if it would be the same for you if you were to get one," he said.

"I don't have your power," Draco said, lifting his head to look up at Harry. "But it might play for you. A lion to match?"

Harry hummed, intrigued. "Would you want to get one?" he asked.

"If it did that, I would," Draco laughed.

"I think it would look sexy," Harry said, giving his eyebrows a waggle.

"And we both know that's what it's all about for you," Draco teased, climbing up his lover's body to kiss him.

Harry grinned as he lifted his head to meet Draco's lips. "Is that a complaint?" he asked.

"Never," Draco whispered against his lips, licking them. "My lion can have his way with me forever."

"Mmm, good," Harry said with a quiet sigh. "Because I believe I

will take you up on that."

– CHAPTER FIVE –

Hands Full

Valen and April were handfuls. It wasn't news to anyone; they simply were. Harry wasn't sure if Valen ever actually sat still, and it seemed that April never went without screaming for longer than an hour. But little Chris Weasley, with his large, pale, innocent-looking eyes, was quite a handful as well, and Harry was not to be fooled.

The minute Bill and Fleur had dropped him off at the Manor, as they were taking a dinner date with one another, Chris was into all sorts of things. He was nearly as fast as Valen on hands and knees and, apparently, dearly loved to rip paper. Some of the library's books had suffered his wrath.

As Harry stood for just a single moment, watching the little boy rip the *Daily Prophet* into shreds on the floor, April squirming in his arms, and Valen attempting to climb onto the coffee table, he wondered why exactly he and Draco had agreed to watch Chris. Bill and Fleur's original plan had been to leave Chris with his grandparents, but no - "It would be lovely for the children to play with one another. They always behaved so well" – when there were other adults to keep eyes on them.

Harry had thought that Ron and Hermione were going to be home as well, but Ron had gotten a Floo call from some high up official in Broom Regulations and had had to dash off. Hermione had gone with him. So Harry and Draco were left with their own children – who were both quite enough to be getting on with – and Christophe, who was just as wild as the other two.

"Draco, Valen!" Harry called, even though it probably wasn't necessary to let Draco know that Valen was in danger of falling on his head.

Draco's hair was a mess, having been pulled by three sets of small hands and he made a dash to grab his son before the boy took a jump off the coffee table. "You just think you bounce," he told him.

"Sometimes I think he believes he can fly," said Harry, handing Chris another section of paper when he reached his small hand up.

Draco frowned at the mess Chris was making. "Sometimes I think he can fly," he said in exasperation.

Harry chuckled darkly. "Does your mummy let you do this?" he asked Chris. He supposed she did though, because the boy seemed to know what he was doing. "If April could crawl we'd be going mad," he said to Draco.

"If?" Draco huffed, blowing a stand of hair out of his eyes. "Ok, maybe having a third next year wouldn't be a good idea, after all," he mused.

"Merlin, is that what you've been thinking of?" said Harry, dropping into the nearest chair. He looked over at Draco with astonishment on his face.

Draco blushed, not having told Harry that was exactly what he had been thinking.

"I think I'd like a little time for my nipples to recover properly this time," Harry said with a bit of a wry smile. They had been pretty much continually abused since Valen, and now April had teeth.

Draco wagged his eyebrows. "Don't know if I can ever guarantee someone won't be chewing on them," he said.

Harry snorted. "I don't mind you so much," he said, and then looking down at their daughter. "April's brutal though. Worse than Valen even. I've had to heal blisters!"

Draco thought he should feel guilty, but he didn't. He loved their little family and the fact that Harry could feed the babies like that. Valen yanked on his hair, apparently unhappy with the lack of attention and Draco frowned at the boy. "Someday someone is going to do that to your hair," he warned him.

Harry laughed. "April's already got him a few times," he said.

Draco laughed, shaking his head. "That girl is going to drive us all mad," he said.

"Eh, she's all right," said Harry, smiling as he kissed her little forehead.

Chris abandoned his paper then and crawled over to play with one of the toys that had been laid out in the room. It was, of course, the loudest one out of the bunch.

Draco winced, getting up and taking Valen back to the centre of the room to start his rampage over again.

April began her squirming once more, reaching a little hand out towards her brother. Harry sighed, pushing himself back out of the chair and setting April on the floor with the toys.

Draco walked up behind his husband and put his hands on Harry's hips, kissing the side of his face.

Harry smiled, feeling the tingle of the dragon under his shirt move automatically towards Draco.

Draco felt the ripple of Harry's magic responding to him and rubbed his cheek against his lover's. Valen shrieked and Chris cried, startling Draco.

Harry looked down at the two small boys. Tears were gathering in Chris's eyes, and in Valen's hands was the noisy toy that Chris had been playing with.

Draco huffed, releasing Harry and walking to crouch beside the boys. He took the toy from Valen who squawked unhappily at him. "A good host shares with his guests," he told the baby.

Harry raised an eyebrow, moving next to Draco. "Yes, they do," he agreed.

Valen began crying and Chris seemed to join him but whether it was from the toy being taken away or in sympathy was unclear.

April whimpered, watching the two crying little boys and obviously thinking about joining them.

"Merlin," Harry muttered. "Look at all these toys," he said, grabbing some of them. "There are so many for you both to play with."

Draco caught on and began piling toys between the children.

Harry pulled the tail of a stuffed monkey and it began to do some sort of weird dance. It was one of the toys from the twins – the monkey's name was Percy. It seemed to take Chris's attention, and he ceased his crying, reaching for the animal. Harry gladly handed it over.

"I think the twins are actually evil in disguise," Draco said, rolling his eyes at the obnoxious toy.

"They don't really try to disguise it too well," said Harry with a small laugh. "And Chris likes it all right." He ruffled the little boy's

golden-red hair.

Draco scooted closer to Harry, watching the small children and putting an arm around his husband. Valen and Chris seemed intent on just throwing everything and then chasing the toys.

Harry leant into Draco's touch, content with him as he always was. Now it had been nearly two years since they'd been married, even though Harry still found himself wondering sometimes over the fact that he was married at all. They were only nineteen. But he was sure he was so much happier than a 'normal' nineteen-year-old, whatever that meant. As long as he had Draco. As long as Draco Malfoy was by his side, and loved him, and raised their children with him, Harry couldn't imagine he could want much else.

He remembered what else October had brought them the previous year, but mostly, he always tried to put that out of his mind. It had been a little harder lately, for obvious reasons, but having a beautiful blond man in his bed every morning and night helped Harry to forget.

Draco sighed contentedly. His hair and clothes were a mess and he was sure there were dribble stains. And he was very happy. So happy he was worried about bringing up the mail he had received the previous morning. "So Chris and Valen are so close in age, I wonder if they will be close when they get to Hogwarts?"

"I suppose probably," said Harry. "Valen will be there a year by himself though. Houses could play a part as well, though I think it's quite possible to stay close to someone in a different house." He smiled and kissed the space under Draco's ear.

"I know, I was always close to my year mates in Slytherin," Draco said. "We used to pull all kinds of pranks on each other and on other people."

"Yeah, you've said so before," Harry replied. "I guess I was too busy fighting evil to really do much of anything but stick with Hermione and Ron most of the time. We had fun though."

"Theo and I once managed to fill McGonagall's office with mice," Draco said.

The name Theo, not Nott, obviously made Harry think about what had happened between the man and Draco. It also made him think of when the two had been together in school. While it certainly

wasn't as disconcerting as it was before, it still brought Harry slight discomfort. He doubted if the jealousy would ever completely go away. "That was you?" he said, giving none of his thoughts of Theo away. "The twins would be proud."

"Yes, got away with it too," Draco laughed. "The two of us couldn't stop laughing all the way back to the dungeon, I was shocked we didn't get caught."

Harry smiled. "I remember the wonderful amount of homework we all got that week."

"I always wondered if she turned into a cat and ate them," Draco said.

Harry chuckled. "She probably would've liked to Transfigure the student responsible and then eat them," he said.

Draco laughed. "That was back in third year, when things still seemed so much simpler," he sighed. "I had my friends and I didn't know the monster was back."

"He wasn't yet," said Harry, thinking back to his own third year and remembering that things had never been simple. "Not really anyway." He was silent for a few moments. "That changed everything," he said quietly. "Him coming back, I mean. I suppose that's obvious but it really did." He went silent again. "Do you think you'd still be happy?" he asked. "If things had turned out different?"

"You mean if he never came back?" Draco said, tilting his head so he could see Harry's face.

Harry met Draco's eyes. "Would you have kissed me if you hadn't thought you were going to die?"

"Wanted to," Draco said, smiling as he reached a finger out to touch those lips. "Dreamed of you," he whispered.

"I know," Harry whispered back, wondering if it was strange to be thinking of how Voldemort had, in a way, brought Harry and Draco together. There were so many different outcomes that might have occurred if Draco hadn't been afraid and desperate. It scared Harry to think that some of those outcomes didn't include the pair of them together.

Draco gently kissed Harry, feather light, and pulled back. "Theo didn't create the problem last year," he whispered.

"No, he didn't," Harry said with a sigh. He still couldn't help

thinking that Nott certainly hadn't helped the situation any but Harry did understand the feelings behind that. "I know that."

"I love you; I love our life together," Draco said cautiously. "But sometimes I miss my friends too."

Harry smiled without much humour. "First off, I'm not going to hit you or something," he said to Draco's tone. "And second, I can understand that. I would miss Ron and Hermione."

Draco blushed at the comment about hitting, but nodded. "He wrote me," he said.

"Nott did?" Harry asked, raising an eyebrow. "When?"

"Yesterday," Draco answered, watching Harry carefully.

"What did he want?" Harry asked casually. "To see you?"

Valen managed to throw the ball against Draco's back and he winced but then continued. "He didn't ask for anything," he said. "He told me where he is and how he is doing. He wished us both well and congratulated us on April."

Harry nodded, not entirely sure of the words to say. Nott had always been the quiet Slytherin that Harry hadn't ever paid any attention. He hadn't really had an opinion of him at all until that night in *The Three Broomsticks*. He hadn't even truly had an opinion of him even after that. Harry hadn't given the man any more thought. Not until Hogwarts. Not until the stuff with Draco. "Do you miss him?" he asked quietly.

Draco glanced away, closing his eyes.

Harry let out a quiet sigh, reaching to adjust April into a sitting position when she fussed. "You do," he said.

Draco nodded. "I do," he admitted in a whisper.

Now Harry wasn't sure what they were talking about. He knew they were talking about Nott of course, but he didn't know if Draco missed Nott's friendship or if he missed other things as well. It hurt to even think of that and Harry didn't know why he did, though from some of the things Draco had said before it seemed he might not have as big a problem as Harry did with being romantically involved with more than one person. Harry looked to his knees, concentrating on them as if they were interesting. "I'm not going to stop you if you want to see him," he said finally with a slight shrug.

Draco looked back down at Harry and sighed. He reached his

right hand then to cup his lover's chin and tip his face up, looking into his eyes. "I am not going to do anything that risks us," he said firmly but quietly.

Harry looked back up into Draco's eyes. The truth of Draco's words was so very evident and Harry knew that anyway. He wondered if he was completely mad to think some of the things he thought. But sometimes the things that Draco had told him last year in October, whether he'd said them on purpose or not, rang in his head. That time was still confusing. He still didn't really know if Draco had meant what he'd said, even though things had been going brilliantly since then. Harry knew that he wasn't really scared of what Draco might do; he was scared of what Draco might feel.

"I know," Harry said.

"I would just go out for a drink or something," Draco said. "Just to talk to him. See how he is. You could come if you want."

"Oh, yes, I'm sure he'd love that," Harry said. "I would probably make it awkward." As much as Harry would have liked to jump on the offer he knew what he'd said was more than likely true.

"I know he would accept you being there," Draco said carefully. Then he shrugged, "And yes, maybe it would be awkward."

"Maybe?" said Harry doubtfully. "You'd be sitting with two men who both technically tried to kill each other."

"Technically the person who came closest to killing me is sitting with me right now," Draco said, rolling his eyes.

"I never tried to kill you," Harry said, frowning.

"And neither did Theo," Draco said.

"I didn't say that," Harry replied. "You can't deny that Nott tried to kill me. And ... I don't know what I would've done if I'd ... got hold of him in the dungeons. I'm saying my presence would probably make for an unhappy meeting."

"So how do you want to handle this?" Draco asked, dodging another thrown toy, this one from Chris.

"Well, what do you want?" said Harry. "If you want me, I'm there, but I can stay home as well."

"First time, let me go meet him somewhere public," Draco said. "If I think it will work, being friends again, then we will talk about it and see what happens next."

"Whatever you want, love," Harry agreed, pulling Draco down to kiss his hair and then his lips.

Draco kissed him gently but thoroughly, only pulling back when Valen landed on his back and pulled his hair. "Dada!" the boy yelled.

Harry smiled and pulled away from Draco, looking at their son. "And just what do you want?" he asked him.

"Dada Daco!" the toddler yelled, yanking so hard on Draco's hair that it pulled his head back.

"Hey!" the blond complained.

"Be nice," Harry told their son, pulling Valen into his arms and away from Draco's head.

– CHAPTER SIX –

Lion

Spending a few hours away from Draco was something Harry could deal with. They did it sometimes – shopping or whatever it may be, but Harry was not used to Draco going out with old flames, who were potentially dangerous. Okay, so he didn't really think that Nott was too big a danger, but it didn't stop him from feeling nervous all afternoon.

"Oh, stop fidgeting," said Hermione from where she sat on the sofa with a book. "He'll probably be back any minute now."

"I'm not worried about that," Harry lied, making his leg sit still and throwing Hermione an annoyed glance.

She rolled her eyes but didn't protest.

Harry sighed, going back to watching Valen literally bounce off the walls on his tiny broomstick, hitting the protective charms surrounding the room. Harry moved April's cot over with a wave of his hand when Valen came close to hitting it.

Draco stepped out of the Floo, dusting off as he did. He was in a fantastic mood and smiled happily when he heard the sound of Valen's laughter from the sitting room. He walked over and stood in the doorway, watching.

After a moment, Harry went back to bouncing his knees, unable to help it.

Hermione sighed and, without looking up from her book, nodded towards the door.

Harry looked around. "You're back," he said when he saw Draco standing there. His voice was perhaps a little too enthusiastic.

Draco arched an eyebrow. "What? You thought I ran away to Cancun?" he asked as he walked into the room.

"Probably," Hermione said, still not looking up.

Harry rolled his eyes at her. "No, I did not think that," he said, getting to his feet.

Draco raised both eyebrows and studied his husband. "Been driving Hermione around the bend while I was gone?" he asked.

Harry let out a disgruntled huff.

A small smile twitched Hermione's lips. "As you can see," she said, "Ron's already left the room. Perhaps the house."

Draco smirked. "Can I leave the children with you for a bit?" he asked, gesturing to the girl in the cot and the boy careening off the coffee table.

She nodded. "Yes, take him," she said, that little smile still on her face. "He's been absolutely dying without you."

Harry rolled his eyes for a second time, stepping over to Draco.

Draco took his husband's hand and pulled him from the room, hardly waiting until they had cleared the door before pushing him against the hall wall and kissing him.

Harry gasped, closing his eyes. He wondered if it was strange that Draco still gave him butterflies, because his stomach was full of them. He sighed, pulling Draco closer once he'd regained control of his hands.

"Missed me, eh?" Draco whispered, biting his husband's lip.

"Must you ask?" said Harry, feeling the tingle in his tattoo. He released a low throaty moan at the bite.

"Don't suppose I should shag you here?" Draco asked, smiling at his husband's moan.

"I don't know, but you better shag me somewhere," Harry told him, lunging forward for another kiss.

Draco allowed himself to be practically swallowed by his husband. He moaned into his mouth.

Harry threw an arm about Draco's shoulders, tracing his lips with the tip of his tongue before slipping it inside. He moved his hands down to Draco's arse, pulling him forward so that they were pressed completely against one another.

Draco always forgot everything else when Harry was aggressive like this. He moaned and thrust his hips against his lover's hip.

Harry broke the kiss to gasp again, letting his head rest against the wall, his neck arched and pulsing with his rushing blood. He looked at Draco through dark lashes feeling as if his lust for his husband was something alive that radiated from within him.

"Take me, my lion," Draco whispered. "Take me wherever you like and do whatever you want. I am yours."

Harry Apparated with him then and appeared in their room. He immediately reached for Draco's shirt, pulling it off him before removing his own. He used the tip of his tongue over the tendons in Draco's neck, running hands down his back. "I am going to make you come," he whispered, voice as smooth as velvet. "I'm going to make you come so hard you won't be able to think of anything else."

Draco had no doubt about that. And that this possessive streak was a response to his lunch with Theo. He moaned, cock hard already. "Yes, please," he begged.

"I'm going to suck your cock," Harry said voice still very smooth, "and eat your arse, and then fuck you into the mattress. In that order." He stroked Draco's cock through his trousers while speaking. "And I have a feeling you're going to like it quite a lot." Harry dropped to his knees in front of Draco, tearing at the front of his trousers and then yanking them down. He went for Draco's cock and then stopped abruptly, his mouth falling open in surprise.

On Draco's hip – his left hip – a beautiful lion with gold coloured fur was blinking back at him. It twitched its tail in disguised excitement as Harry touched it before looking up at Draco, the fluttering feeling of butterflies in his stomach making a full comeback.

Draco laughed at the pole-axed look on his husband's face. "Sorry I was so late getting back," he said, smirking. "Had another appointment."

"You – I didn't know you –" Harry spluttered. He'd been worrying while Draco had been getting a lion tattooed on him.

The lion on Draco's hip rolled, appearing to rub against Harry's hand where it rested against his skin. Draco's cock twitched.

It brought Harry back to where he was and what they were doing. He grinned. "Feels good, doesn't it?" he said, stroking the lion with a finger.

Draco shivered, knees nearly buckling at the combination of touch and magic that shivered up his spine. He gripped Harry's shoulder with his silver hand and his hair with the other. "Yesss," he managed.

"Lie down," Harry told him, using only the tips of his fingers.

Draco pushed down and then kicked off his trousers and shorts, moving to lie on the bed.

Harry followed after him on hands and knees, very much like the lion depicted on his lover's skin. He got up onto the bed and crawled to Draco until he was in the same position Draco had been in when Harry had come home with the dragon. "Tell me what you feel," he said, breathing over the 'living' ink.

Draco gasped, fingers clutching the bedspread. "The magic of the tattoo ... it responds to your magic," he whispered.'

"So then this must feel very good to you," Harry said in an almost thoughtful tone, still touching the lion with fingertips. He wondered what would happen if he were to push magic into his fingertips.

"Gods, yes," Draco managed, his cock so hard it hurt and he felt like his skin was moving under his lover's hand.

Harry bent his head and kissed the lion, touching it gently with his tongue. He willed it to do as his did, which meant the more sexual the contact, the better it felt. He didn't know if it would work, but he definitely had to try.

"Oh, yes, oh, that's amazing," Draco moaned, toes curling at the sensation.

Harry smiled. "Oh, yes, I know," he said, reaching to trail fingers, loaded with a very gentle Heating Charm, down Draco's chest and stomach in circles. His tongue continued to stroke the lion's mane.

Draco's moan was loud and long, arching his hips up. "Devour me, my lion," he gasped.

"I plan to do just that," Harry whispered against Draco's skin, nipping it as had been done to him. He trailed the magic lower, his warm hand making contact with blond curls at Draco's belly button.

"Oh, please, yes," Draco said, magic making his skin tingle and his cock throb.

"I was right," Harry said, voice deep, between licks and small little bites. He encircled the base of Draco's cock with thumb and forefinger.

"Right?" Draco asked, unable to even think what Harry could be talking about. He arched his hip up, trying to encourage more direct contact.

"This looks incredibly sexy," Harry elaborated, kicking the charm in his hand up a single notch. He sucked Draco's skin into his mouth, laving it with his tongue.

"Ahhh," Draco gasped, bringing one hand up to grasp Harry's hair. "More, please," he begged.

Harry stroked Draco's cock slowly and firmly, releasing the skin in his mouth. "More where?" he asked, licking along the lion's back.

Draco moaned in both pleasure and frustration. "You ... said ... gonna ... fuck me!" he gasped.

"Ah, you want me to fuck you," Harry said in that smooth voice, letting go of the hard flesh in his hand after another stroke. Without bothering to let up on the Heating Charm, he quickly lubed his fingers and nudged Draco's legs open with his elbow. He traced his husband's entrance with those wet fingers. "Oh, Draco, I want to fuck you," he said quietly. "Want to hear you and watch you when I'm buried so fucking deep inside you." He nibbled again at Draco's skin.

Harry said the hottest things in bed. It always drove Draco mad and he loved it. And those wet warm fingers tingling with magic ... Draco was moaning incoherently, spreading his legs wider and trembling.

Harry pushed a single finger inside his husband, moaning softly with him. "Mmm, and then I'm going to come inside you. Fuck, do you know how much I love that?" His mouth vibrated Draco's skin. "Coming inside you, knowing that it's in you, watching it run down your legs. Fuck." He worked another finger in.

Draco swore if he got any more turned on that his brain would melt. He moaned and arched up onto Harry's fingers. "Yes, fill me," Draco moaned. "Fill me so hard and so much it spills out of me."

"Fuck, yes," Harry whispered, letting the last finger slip inside. He pumped the three, extremely turned on himself. He removed the rest of his clothes with magic, as the trousers had been getting very uncomfortable. "God, and I want to watch you shoot it out," he continued. "I want it on you and me. Fuck, I want you."

"Now, please now," Draco begged, pulling on Harry's hair. The lion image on his hip was writhing and batting at Harry's hands.

Harry withdrew his fingers, raising himself up to get situated

between those open, pale, long limbs. Fucking hell, that glistening entrance was so unbelievably inviting, so completely asking for it. He grasped his own cock and pressed forward until he was sure he could get it in with another push, then he lowered himself over his husband, not yet touching completely yet. "I can already feel it," he gasped. "They're not even touching yet and I can already feel it." He was referring to the tattoos. His own was filled with a renewed tingling, and unless he was imagining things in his lust-crazed mind, the dragon was trying to get to the lion below it, just out of reach.

"Oh, Gods," Draco said, glancing down between their bodies. He could feel the magic of the tattoo and would have sworn in that moment he felt fur caressing his hip and cock as it moved against him. "Yes, please, fuck me, fill me," he begged.

Harry lowered his body completely, moaning loudly at the burst of sensation when the tattoos touched and as he slid inside his husband.

Draco threw his head back with a groan as his husband's cock filled him, magic roaring over him and their skin feeling like it was moving against the other. He felt the claws and scales and fur as the magical images entangled themselves with each other.

Harry's head spun with pleasure. He pressed himself so completely against Draco there wasn't a bit of space between them. Only so much skin, so much hot skin, all together, so convincingly entwined at their hips. "Draco," Harry moaned, moving inside him and on him, his mouth open against his neck.

"Yes, yours, my lion, take me," Draco growled, wrapping his legs around Harry's hips.

Harry was panting, his breath coming in sharp intakes every time he slid in again. Draco's growl sent new pleasure through Harry, the grip of his legs maddening in its perfection. "Oh fuck, Draco, yes," he gasped. "Fuck, Draco, oh, yeah, yes." He couldn't stop voicing the pleasure of it.

Draco grabbed hold of Harry's hair with both hands, pulling and kneading as he arched up into the man's thrusts. "Harry, yes, fuck me, fill me," he growled again, his skin felt on fire from Harry's touch. Magic that swirled around the area where his cock was pressed between their bodies. "Take me, claim me, fill me," he growled.

Harry was utterly drowning in the act of fucking Draco. He felt his body so in tune with his husband's it was like he could read what Draco wanted without him having to actually ask. Of course, he didn't know if it was really like that, but he could swear he could feel it. He sped up, his thrusts more powerful, deeper.

Harry didn't just fuck his body, he fucked him inside and out. Touch fueled magic which moved over and around them, making Draco writhe with the intensity. For Draco, this was paradise. He would have happily lain there in Harry's arms without the added power. With it, was rapture.

Harry cried out with each thrust, gasped as he pulled back, and then cried out again as his cock filled his husband. The warmth of Draco's body was unlike anything else, and the new feeling of being inside him in more than one way was almost too much to put into words. No – it was too much to put into words. Harry would never be able to describe sex like this to anyone, and only Draco would understand it. It thrilled Harry, spurring him on until he was right on the edge, tempted to stop for a moment so that it would last longer, but he knew that was virtually impossible right then.

"P-please," Draco begged and moaned, clutching Harry hard as his body trembled on the verge of orgasm.

Harry toppled over that edge, plunging into the feeling that scorched his body. "Draco!" he shouted at the top of his voice, stilling before he thrust wildly, coming inside Draco as he had so wanted to do. "Draco, Draco, Draco, Draco," he said with each spastic movement of his hips.

Draco's face contained that burst of pain and pleasure so profound it couldn't be put into words. The magic that roared inside him felt scalding hot and he cried out, responding to Harry by calling his name in return.

Harry buried his face into the space where Draco's neck met his shoulders, still breathing in gasps. He pressed his lips against the skin in front of them, his heart thudding madly, his body still weak with sensation.

"Yes, that was fantastic," Draco sighed, petting Harry's hair with his hand and holding him tight with the silver one. "I guess you forgive me for being late?"

Harry smiled. "You're entirely forgiven," he said breathlessly, lifting his head.

"Good," Draco said, gently pushing a strand of black hair off Harry's face and kissing his chin.

"How was it then?" Harry asked after few seconds. He didn't really want to move away from Draco, as his hip was still tingling pleasantly where it touched his husband's.

Draco continued to play with Harry's hair, smiling softly. "It was nice to see him," he answered. "He is doing well. Has a job at the Ministry."

"Really?" said Harry. "That's nice. It went well then." He had made up his mind that he was going to try his very hardest to tolerate Theo Nott and prove to Draco that he was not a control freak.

"Yes," Draco answered, knowing how difficult this was for his husband. He could still read Harry so well. "So, I was thinking it would be nice to chat with him again."

"Well," said Harry, "there's nothing stopping you. I'm glad it turned out all right. I don't ... want you to have to give up friends for me."

"Actually," Draco said, hesitating, "I was hoping you would try to get to know him too."

Harry stared at Draco for a moment. "I'm not saying that I won't," he said slowly, "but why? Does he want to get to know me?"

"He is my friend," Draco said. "How can I have anyone in my life who doesn't know you?"

Harry shrugged and then sighed. "All right," he said. "I suppose I can agree to try it out."

Draco smiled, and kissed him gently. "You might actually find you like him," he whispered.

Harry doubted that, but didn't say it aloud. "Maybe," he said with a small smile at his husband.

Draco shifted, sore and sticky but very content. He sighed and closed his eyes, fingers still carding Harry's hair.

– CHAPTER SEVEN –

What You Deserve

Harry had taken particular care in dressing that day. He would never admit it to Draco, but it was to show up his 'competition,' whom Harry and Draco were meeting at a new restaurant in Diagon Alley. Honestly? Harry knew it was stupid. There wasn't any real competition at all, but he couldn't help himself. But, hey, he was going, right? Okay, so he actually wanted to go with Draco. He didn't like being without him for very long and he liked it even less when Draco would be going out with someone that Harry disliked, but he had to sit there and play nice and try not to picture Nott's lips on his husband's, or that stupid smirk the man had worn while looking at his husband. Harry had to take a deep breath even then. He would have much preferred to be there watching instead of part of the actual party, but he was going to do this for Draco, and he wasn't going to get angry. No. He wasn't. Because Draco was his and Nott only wished that he could No. Not going to get angry.

Harry looked at Draco and gave him a smile, wondering for how long he'd zoned out. They were already sitting at their reserved table and only waiting for Nott to arrive. Harry picked his glass of water up, clinking the ice cubes inside.

Draco nearly laughed at the play of emotions across Harry's face. He always wondered if the man was as transparent to everyone else as he was to him. He tried not to roll his eyes or make any other faces that would upset Harry. How could the man seriously think he would ever choose someone else over him? Just then he spotted Theo at the door and the Maitre'd escorted him to their table.

Harry spotted Nott as well and tried to arrange his face, like Draco could. He had no idea what the end result was though. He was going for polite.

Draco tried not to laugh at his husband, knowing it would just upset him. Instead, he stood and greeted Theo.

Theo smiled and took his seat at the table. Slytherin, he did not show any misgivings he had, but greeted Harry. "Good evening," he said, seeming to hesitate on whether to add Potter or Harry to the greeting, before doing neither.

Harry stood as well, just to prove that he really didn't want to be childish about any of this, and nodded. "Evening," he returned, still going for polite.

Theo shook his hand and then patted Draco's arm before sitting. He smiled. "I hope I wasn't late," he said.

"No, we only just got here," Harry answered, taking his seat as well.

Draco picked up his menu, glancing between the two men. "So have you eaten here before?" he asked Theo.

"No, I have been meaning to," Theo answered, arching an eyebrow and picking up his menu too.

"Friends of ours said it was rather nice," said Harry. He was talking about Bill and Fleur, who had eaten at the restaurant recently. It felt very odd sitting there. So ... formal almost. It wasn't company that Harry was used to, but then again, he wasn't sitting with an old friend. How else was it supposed to be? He sighed very quietly, reaching for his menu as well. Of course. French restaurant, French menu. He couldn't read it, but for some reason that he wasn't completely sure of, he didn't say anything, even though Draco knew Harry didn't know French.

Draco sighed and leant over, pointing out a couple of items that he thought Harry would like and using the move to gently touch his husband's side.

Theo seemed to make his selection quickly and then sat impassively while Draco conferred with Harry.

Feeling only slightly disgruntled, and still not really knowing the reason for it, Harry nodded, but felt better when Draco touched him. He chose a dinner called Pot-au-Feu, which was something beef, so it was fine.

When the waiter came, Draco ordered for both of them and then nodded his head to Theo who also ordered in French. Draco ordered wine too, both because they had a good selection and because he hoped it would help Harry relax.

Feeling a prickle of annoyance at the French leaving Nott's lips, Harry sighed and shook it off. So much for trying not to let anything childish get to him.

"So, Theo, how is the new job?" Draco asked, trying to start the conversation on what he hoped would be safe ground.

"Well, I am through the probation period now and really getting into it," Theo asked. "At least, it is never boring."

Harry looked across the table at him. "What is it exactly you do?" he asked. Draco had never said and Harry hadn't asked before.

"Oh," Theo said with a larger smile, "I work in the Magical Accidents and Catastrophes Department."

"Mmm," Harry replied, shifting a little in his seat. "Must have a lot to do there."

Theo nodded, clearly warming to the topic. "In training, we actually had a section on you," he said.

Harry raised both eyebrows. "Oh? What was it?"

Draco blushed, shaking his head. He had a pretty good idea why.

"You gotta know that you are in all the books now; not just one, but two magical pregnancies. And the first one, at least, an accident?" Theo said, grinning.

"Oh," said Harry, flushing a bit himself. No wonder Percy's girlfriend always seemed so interested in the pregnancies. "Yes, I suppose that would be a study in your department."

"Yes, I am fascinated by magical accidents," Theo explained. "They actually tell us a great deal more about the potential of magic than you might realise."

Draco smirked, agreeing with Theo but also a bit embarrassed at the "nature" of most of their accidents. Few people knew just how many they had had in their relationship.

"Yes, they can reveal some rather strange aspects of magic," Harry said, thinking of his and Draco's accident before April, which made him think of why that had been a problem for them anyway. The incident in October. He took a breath through his nose, but once again, tried not to show anything on his face.

Draco reached under the table and patted Harry's leg. He could feel Harry's magic flare with his emotions and tried to soothe him.

"Yes, and it's too bad we can't convince Draco here to work with

us. Do you know how rare someone like him is?" Theo asked, seeming not to notice.

"Very rare as far as I've heard," said Harry, rubbing Draco's hand on his leg. He realised Theo was referring to Draco's ability as a Sensitive to magic. "You've tried convincing him?"

Theo snorted and rolled his eyes. "This one never did like anyone else in charge," he said, waving a hand at Draco.

Draco didn't control his blush fast enough, thinking that Theo had no idea how much control he ceded to Harry and liked doing so.

"Right," Harry said with a nod, simply to nod. He knew Nott probably wasn't saying what he was saying on purpose, but it felt like a jab at Harry controlling Draco, because that had been what he'd thought before, right? Draco didn't like people controlling him, so they had thought that it had been magic doing it. Did he still think that?

Theo's eyes widened slightly at Draco's blush, but he didn't comment. "I wish I had his gift," Theo said, shaking his head. "Wasted on all that business stuff."

"Well, it's hardly a waste," Draco drawled. "I like what I do, the Ministry has very little say in my life and I have time for my family."

Harry shifted again. He didn't do much of anything. Ron worked with Fred and George and was fighting to develop his broom line. Hermione had dozens of contacts in the Ministry and could enter into it any time she wanted, and Draco did do all of his business stuff, most of which Harry had no idea about. What had Harry done in nearly two years besides give a few speeches? Theo Nott had a job in the Ministry. Harry'd had two children and lived off Draco's money. He shifted yet again, feeling the frown trying to pull his lips down.

Draco could feel Harry's discomfort but not the why of it. Before he could puzzle it out, the waiter arrived with their food. He was given the wine to sniff before it was poured and then swirled it in his glass, nodding. Once everything was settled and the waiter left them again, he held his glass up. "To a prosperous future," he said.

Theo nodded and took a sip, smiling appreciatively.

Harry sipped as well, but his mind was still focused on his own troubling thoughts. All of his friends from Hogwarts had moved on

and were making their own places in the wizarding world. Harry wasn't sure what he contributed anymore other than things that were now in the past.

"Well, if you two ever want to break your silence around those accidents of yours, you let me know," Theo said. "I would love to write a paper on it."

Draco nodded. They had had a lot of requests from both journalists and researchers alike for details about both the binding and pregnancy accidents. They had chosen to keep their privacy instead. "People already know too much about us as it is," he said. "And it's not like the study could be anonymous."

Harry looked up again. "Far too much," he agreed with Draco. "And they're ... personal matters that are hard to understand anyway. Not normal magic."

"I'll bet," Theo said, smiling as he ate. "So, Harry, what have you been doing these days?"

Harry's fingers tightened slightly on his fork. "Raising children, I suppose," he said lightly.

"Saw the article in the *Prophet*," Theo said. "Congratulations. Two kids in just over a year. Must be a lot to handle."

"They can be ... quite something," Harry said with another nod. He felt even more uncomfortable, as if Nott somehow believed that was the only subject he would be able to discuss. Even though he knew he was being ridiculous and defensive, it felt as if he was being patronized.

Draco frowned. Usually, Harry liked to talk about their children. The blond sipped the wine, thinking. "Valen is wreaking havoc on the furniture. We gave him one of those toy brooms. We had no idea the uses he would put it to."

Harry couldn't suppress a smile at that. He really did love sharing stories about their children. "The entire household has got very good at Cushioning Charms," he pointed out.

Theo laughed in delight. "After the two of you at Hogwarts, I can imagine," he said.

Draco nodded, smiling fondly at memories of playing Quidditch with Harry. "We still play games at the Manor these days," he said.

Harry nodded like Draco. Merlin, he had to try to relax, or at

least to pretend like he was relaxed. "I beat him most of the time," he teased. It was a lie though. He and Draco were pretty evenly matched.

Theo raised both eyebrows and Draco smirked, not verbally disagreeing with his husband. "To the only man to ever beat me," Draco smiled, waggling his eyebrows as he lifted his glass.

Harry chuckled quietly, taking a sip of wine before kissing Draco's cheek. "To you for putting up with me," he said, taking another sip and then kissing Draco again.

Theo blinked, looking away but drinking as well.

Draco kissed his husband back, hoping Theo would get used to it.

Harry went back to his food, picking at it. He'd noticed the way Nott hadn't looked as he and Draco kissed, and had honestly not kissed Draco for that purpose. It was an automatic thing, but he did feel a tingle of vindictive pleasure. It wasn't very strong though. He wasn't entirely sure why.

Draco sighed, wondering if his ex-lover and his husband would ever feel comfortable together. He supposed they didn't have a lot in common except Draco, and that was a sore spot for both of them.

The rest of the meal had gone by quickly enough, along with the expected small talk. Harry and Draco had parted with Theo with words of possibly making more plans. Harry had to admit, it hadn't been horrible, but he still didn't especially like Nott. They weren't exactly fast friends. At least they hadn't fought with one another.

The dinner had definitely brought up things Harry hadn't really been thinking of before. Mostly, that he hadn't done anything in two years. What had ever happened to wanting to become an Auror? Oh, right. The fact that he'd had enough of that. But had he? And it wasn't as if that were the only option anyway. He could do something else, right? Something? He sighed, handing the appearing house-elf his cloak as usual.

Draco handed his over as well, and cocked his head looking at his husband. He reached out and slid his arm around Harry's waist, waiting to see what the other man would say.

Harry looked up at Draco, absently raising a hand to touch his hair. "It wasn't so bad," he said.

"Well, neither of you tried to hex each other," Draco drawled. "So, I guess it was a success."

Harry snorted. "I told you I could handle it," he said.

"And you did well," Draco said, amusement in his tone. He reached up to run his fingers through Harry's hair.

Harry sighed quietly with the touch, leaning his head slightly into it. "We should go and get Valen and April," he said after a moment, pulling back again and taking Draco's hand.

"It's late. They are probably asleep by now," Draco answered, but took his husband's hand, leading them down the hall to check on their children.

They were asleep, and Harry and Draco carried them each up to bed after thanking Ron and Hermione. Harry didn't know what they would do without them. It was hard to imagine what it would be like without their two friends living with them.

Once in his and Draco's own bedroom, Harry sat down on the edge of the mattress, thinking again.

Draco slowly undressed himself, watching Harry carefully and waiting until the other man was ready to voice what was going on.

"Draco?" Harry asked after a moment, staring intently at a spot across the room and then slowly looking to his husband.

Draco was naked now, still wearing the silver hand. He put his hands on his hips and arched an eyebrow. "Yes, love," he asked.

Harry stared at the lion on his skin for a few seconds. "Do you think I'm ..." He paused as he tried to think of the best words to convey his problem. "Do you think I'm a moocher?" He sighed. "Maybe not that," he said. "Do you think I just ... sit around here all day? That's all I do."

Draco almost laughed, a small snort escaping before he realised it. He stepped close to stand in front of Harry and tipped his face up to look at him. "Where is this coming from? You gave birth to and are raising two very spirited children and you think that isn't enough work?"

"It's not like I do it on my own," Harry replied, frowning a bit. "You're their other parent and Ron and Hermione help all the time too."

"And the giving birth part?" Draco asked, arching an eyebrow.

"It wasn't even that big a deal with April," Harry mumbled. "And it wouldn't have been with Valen if we hadn't been taken. And I don't even have to deal with the full nine months."

Draco continued to stroke his lover's hair. "Harry, I don't work at a job either," he said.

"Yes, but you do things," Harry countered. "You're writing things all the time. And you meet people. And you deal with the stuff from the *Prophet*." Draco owned the *Daily Prophet* but kept that a secret from the public.

Draco cocked his head. "You haven't seemed bored," he said.

"I'm not bored," Harry said, sighing. "I just ... I don't know. I'm like a house-wife, only without more than half the work because there's usually an available babysitter and I have an army of elves to cook and clean."

"Sounds good to me," Draco smirked. "And lots of time to fuck your husband a couple times a day."

"Well, maybe that sounds good to you," said Harry with a small half-smile. He grabbed Draco around the waist and pulled him closer. "But how does it sound to people when they ask what I'm doing? Oh, just hanging around a mansion, shagging the day away."

Draco petted his husband's hair, sighing as he held him. "I know you don't want to hear this," he began cautiously, "but I think I know where this is coming from."

Harry looked up at Draco, thinking he already knew what he was going to say.

"It sounds like something your uncle would have said," he said softly.

Harry made a face, having not expected that. "My uncle?" he said, raising his eyebrows.

"Yes, you told me he always made you feel like you didn't deserve to be fed or clothed, let alone anything else. Made you work and still treated you badly," Draco said, frowning and trying not to get angry with a dead man.

Harry frowned as well. And he'd been thinking Draco was going to say something about him being jealous of Theo Nott. He didn't know what to say.

Draco waited, petting Harry. "You have done more than anyone

should ever have had to do, no matter what age," Draco continued. "Anyone who thinks you don't deserve to do whatever the fuck you want now is an imbecile and I would gladly teach them a lesson," he added fiercely.

Harry smiled a strange sort of smile at Draco's protectiveness. "Maybe you're right," he said quietly, trying to work it out in his own head. It was true that Harry did feel a strange sense of guilt at knowing he could relax and spend his days with the ones that he loved. Most people didn't have the luxury of that choice and those that had died in the war never had the opportunity to make that choice.

Draco gently slid to his knees so that he was now looking up at Harry's face. "If you find something you *want* to do, I will do anything you want to make it happen," he said. "But never, ever feel like you haven't earned every happiness you have."

"I still can't believe I have you," Harry said softly, cupping Draco's cheek.

Draco's smile was full of all the besotted joy he felt when Harry said such things to him. "You think *you* can't believe it?" he teased.

Harry chuckled. "You make me feel better about everything," he whispered as he leant down and in to kiss Draco softly.

"Now that is my *real* job," Draco grinned, still on his knees in front of his husband.

"Oh, then you should be the richest man in the entire universe," Harry said wistfully, smiling.

"Oh, I am," Draco agreed, his body trembling just at the touch and smile of his lover.

"Shall I punch the clock for you?" Harry asked. "I think it's almost time for your shift." His smile spread into a grin.

Draco frowned, not getting the reference. "Punch a clock?" he asked, brows drawn down.

Harry laughed with real amusement as he realised Draco wouldn't understand the Muggle reference. "Never mind," he said, kissing Draco again.

Draco hummed happily into the kiss, completely forgetting anything else.

"Why are you beautifully naked while I'm still clothed?" Harry

whispered, kissing to Draco's ear. "And why are you on the floor while I'm on the bed?"

"Worshipping you," Draco whispered, panting at the feel of Harry's breath against his ear.

"You should be worshipped," Harry continued quietly, though his heart fluttered with Draco's words.

"I like kneeling before you," Draco replied. "I think that is something no one else will ever understand. Binding or no binding, this is where I always wanted to be."

"But I want you next to me," Harry told him reverently. "You're my equal. Merlin, if not more than that."

Draco smiled, getting to his feet and pulling Harry up with him. "Better?" he asked, arching an eyebrow.

"Yes, since you're a bit taller," Harry said, teasing lightly. He felt a strange, incredible sense of happiness right then.

"Strip for me," Draco whispered.

Harry's clothes were gone in the next second. "Anything for you," he whispered back, truly meaning it.

Draco gasped, delighted by the spark of magic and the feel of his husband's now naked skin against his own. "You thrill me like no one and nothing else could," he whispered.

"Is it selfish that I love that?" Harry said quietly, sliding an arm over Draco's shoulder.

"Yes," Draco smirked, "but as I said, you deserve to be selfish."

One side of Harry's mouth quirked into a smile. "Whatever you say," he whispered, pressing a kiss a little bit under Draco's jaw.

"Now I want to be selfish," Draco said, voice dropping deeper as he rubbed his now hard cock against his lover's body.

Harry bit his lip at the powerful wave of arousal that swept through him. "If I deserve to be, you certainly do," he said huskily.

"Anything I want?" Draco asked, an edge in his voice.

Harry took a deep breath to keep his knees from buckling at that. "Yeah," he said breathlessly. "Anything."

"Good, because I want to tie you up again," Draco said.

Harry had to take another deep breath. "Yeah," he said again. "Be selfish for me, Draco."

– CHAPTER EIGHT –

Not Terrible

Draco stepped back with an intense expression on his face. "Move to the foot of the bed and spread your arms between the posts," he told Harry.

Looking into those steely eyes, Harry had no idea what was in store for him. He backed away from Draco, panting quietly through his nose as he stretched his arms out to either side of himself.

Draco smiled wickedly and cast the Rope Spell, his breathing hitched as the magical ropes slid out, entwining his husband's hands and feet, pulling him spread between the posts of the bed.

Harry gasped, skin flushing with heat as he stood bound, still watching Draco through half-lidded eyes. He could feel the dragon tattoo on his hip begin to move.

Stepping up to his husband, Draco licked his lips at the sight of the bound man. He was amused to note that not only was his husband's cock rising quickly, the dragon on his hip was looking expectant as well.

Harry was very turned on. He could feel Draco so close to him and wanted to move his body to touch him, but he held still, waiting. The dragon looked slightly restless, twitching its tail and shifting its weight around.

Draco was amused to feel the lion on his own hip stir, lashing its tail in response. The tattoo never behaved that way except when he was with Harry. He arched an eyebrow. "So what wicked things shall I do to you?" he purred, tapping his chin. "Shall I blindfold you so you don't know until you feel it?"

"Anything you want," Harry said in a voice deep with approval.

Draco lifted his wand, flicking his wrist and casting a silent spell to blindfold Harry. Then he stepped beside their bed, reaching into the drawer of toys they kept there.

Harry's breathing picked up speed as he listened, his heart

speeding up as well. His other senses began to compensate for the loss of sight by strengthening in power. Every nerve ending just below Harry's skin quivered in anticipation of Draco hands, his mouth, even the moist heat of his breath. Harry's tongue darted out furtively and slid over his lips in the hopes of tasting Draco. He could smell his own arousal which gave off scents of want and desire as they mingled with the scents radiating off of Draco. It was a perfume that intoxicated him like nothing else ever could.

Draco sauntered over to his husband and stood watching for a minute, letting the tension build. Then he reached and gently ran his fingers up Harry's shaft.

It was impossible for Harry to hold back the groan, even from such a light touch. His cock twitched and he rolled his shoulders.

Draco gently slid the cock ring over his husband's cock and balls, tapping it with his wand to tighten it.

Harry gasped again. "Merlin, Draco," he let out with another groan. The dragon was definitely restless now. Harry could feel it fluttering on his skin.

"You won't come until I release you, do you understand?" Draco said. He knew that despite the ropes and cock ring, Harry could get out of any bondage with wandless magic.

"Yes," Harry answered quietly, his body releasing a shiver. He could never describe to anyone else how it felt to give up all control and let Draco take charge. It freed Harry to immerse himself into the sensations and close off all of his thoughts. Each tiny tremor that ran through him was a reminder to Harry of just how good it felt to shut out the world and submit.

Draco loved the way Harry trembled, hard and eager for him. He reached out and ran a hand gently down his lover's chest, following the path of dark hair but stopping before touching the man's bobbing cock.

It was as if Draco's hand left a trail of fire in its wake. Harry shivered again and could feel the dragon trying to reach Draco's fingers.

Without warning, Draco reached his other hand up and quickly pinched Harry's already aroused nipples.

"Ahh!" Harry cried, the lack of sight rendering Draco's move

even more unexpected. His entire body twitched forward.

"Oh, did you like that?" Draco purred and reached for a new toy he had bought.

"Yeah," Harry breathed, skin literally crawling at his hip, most of the rest of it slightly flushed.

Draco pinched one nipple with the tip of his fingers and pulled the flesh taunt before securing a nipple clamp to it.

"Oh, fuck," Harry whimpered, the pressure at his nipple making him feel restless now. He knew it wasn't Draco pinching him anymore, but being blindfolded, he wasn't sure what it was, though he wasn't complaining. Everything Draco did to him was thrilling.

Draco moved to the other nipple, repeating the procedure and smiled as he watched Harry squirm. "I read that they go numb after a bit," he said as casually as he could make his voice with his own arousal. "But when they are released, all the blood will rush back in. It is supposed to hurt so much that people can come just from that," he added.

Harry swallowed, clenching his hands over the ropes holding his wrists. Come from pure pain? Pain so strong it felt good? It sounded very appealing. He felt bound all over the place. His cock, his limbs, and his nipples, unable to touch himself at all. God, it was hot.

Draco then picked up the whip that Harry had used on him before. He had been practicing in secret with a pillow so he had the aim down. He stepped back and cracked it in the air, so that the sound was loud.

Harry's eyes widened beneath the blindfold. He remembered when he'd used the whip on Draco, how Draco's eyes had teared up from the sting. Harry's heart sped up even more. He had an urge to get out of the way, to flinch back, but also didn't want to move a single inch. "Fuck," he whispered, holding tighter to the ropes.

"Yes, that frightens and excites you," Draco purred, noting the way Harry flushed and his cock twitched, dragon on his hip fluttering its wings.

Draco was very right, it did frighten and excite Harry at the same time. He nodded, his toes curling, his shoulders rolling again.

As his eyes narrowed, Draco shivered with excitement. He pulled back and brought the tail of the whip down, laying it across his

lover's chest.

A stunned cry tumbled from Harry's mouth and he was left gasping in its wake. He writhed against the ropes, pulling at them to instinctively lessen the pain in his chest. He didn't know what the dragon did then, but the skin at his hip felt like it burned with almost as much intensity as the mark.

The dragon writhed too and Draco was glad the tattoo couldn't leave the flesh, as it looked fearsome. He grinned and moved slowly around so that he was to the side of the bed, where he then laid another stripe across his lover's lovely arse.

Harry cried out again, even louder, and tears did come to his eyes from the sting. His blood rushed so quickly he felt almost high, the pain grounding him and sending him off somewhere else at the same time. He could feel his skin heating up and Harry moaned as he clutched harder at the ropes and let his head fall forward.

"Yesss," Draco hissed. "You look fucking amazing like this. I love the way you thrash in the ropes. You can't wait for more, can you?"

Harry felt like begging and telling Draco to stop. He felt the pleasure of it and the pain. He still felt scared and excited. Harry's voice reflected the contradictions inside of him when he murmured in a tone that was both husky and high, "C – can't wait."

Draco was actually so aroused he didn't know how much longer he could wait. He walked back to stand in front of Harry and reached to trace the welt on Harry's chest with his finger tips.

Harry growled through his teeth, wanting to get away from his touch and wanting to press into Draco's hand.

"Oh, yes, my pervert," Draco whispered, reaching the other hand around to trace the second welt at the same time. "Are your nipples numb now?"

As Harry hadn't been thinking about them, he realised right then that they were. He shivered with more fear and excitement, nodding.

"But you can't come yet," Draco purred, face close enough to Harry's that his breath blew against Harry's ear as he spoke. He continued to tease the welts on Harry's body as he did.

Harry hissed and groaned, his cock so fucking hard. "Please," he breathed, leaning his body into Draco and holding his arse slightly

away from him at the same time. Not that it made any difference. Draco could reach him easily.

Draco ran his hand in over Harry's arse, moaning at the feeling of that muscled flesh. He squeezed gently but firmly. "Please what?" he asked hoarsely.

"Please, let me come," Harry implored him. "Do something to me – anything." His voice was strangled, his hands still pulling. Harry's body was a trembling mass of expectations with the sting of the lash still imprinted on his skin and uncertain if there would be more while his cock seemed to consider the pain an aphrodesiac that had it pleading for release.

"Oh, I like the begging," Draco said, cock twitching and tattoo writhing. He considered the options before him. There were so many ways he wanted Harry. He sank to his knees and then leant forward, running his tongue along the swollen flesh of his lover's bound cock.

Harry sucked in a sharp breath, letting out a moan so loud it was almost a cry. "Oh, Draco," he said, his head lolling forward as he drew the words out.

Draco's chuckle was wicked and he continued to lick up the shaft and then swirl his tongue over the head. The dragon responded by curling around the base of Harry's cock.

Harry whipped his head back then, knowing he might have come if not for the cock ring. "Fuck!" he shouted. "Fucking hell, fuck!"

Draco loved this and, eyes glittering with mischief and arousal, he slid his lips over the glistening head of his lover's cock, tonguing him as he did.

Harry could feel the heat in his body, could feel everything wanting to spring out of him. "Dammit!" he cried, arms straining so hard against the ropes he was surprised he didn't pull something or dislocate his shoulders.

Draco chuckled around the flesh in his mouth, sucking. Harry's magic flared again and he wondered if the man would keep his promise and not break free. The blond lifted his head and looked up at Harry. "Beg me," he whispered.

"Please," Harry said at once, unashamed of the pleading note in his voice. "Please, fuck me, suck me, wank me off, something, but let me come." His head dropped forward again. His condition wasn't

being helped by the sparks of pleasure shooting up his cock from the tattoo.

Draco sat back with a grin, and gently reached fingers to pet the dragon on Harry's hips as he contemplated how best to satisfy both of them.

"Ngggghggh," was the strange sound Harry made, twitching powerfully forward again.

Draco knelt, his face positioned so that his breath still caressed the crown of Harry's cock. Then he picked up his wand and cast a spell, removing the blindfold, nipple clamps and the cock ring at the same time.

Harry screamed, feeling the pain Draco had mentioned in his nipples and the sudden release of pressure below. He came hard, writhing in the ropes again, not sure if he called Draco's name or if he babbled something completely different. He wasn't even sure which language he spoke as he rode out the conflicting sensations of ecstatic agony.

Draco felt the rush of magic and Harry's hot come spattering on his face, opening his mouth so that he caught some while the rest coated his lips, cheeks and chin. He came too, spilling his seed on the floor between Harry's legs.

Harry panted and let out small sounds at the same time, thighs quivering. "Merlin, Draco," he whispered.

Draco grinned up at him, his face covered in Harry's seed.

"Oh, fuck," Harry groaned as he watched it drip down Draco's face. He thought he might come again just from that. He pulled at the ropes, wanting to go to him, feeling that same urge he'd got before to lick it away. He had no idea why it did that to him.

Draco lifted his wand and arched an eyebrow. "Ready?" he asked.

Harry groaned. "Yeah, let me go," he breathed.

Draco grinned and released the ropes with a flick of his wand, then held his hands up for Harry.

Harry stumbled but managed to catch himself before falling. He sunk to his knees, all but throwing himself into Draco's arms. He started at Draco's chin with the tip of his tongue, letting out a quiet sound of pleasure.

Draco trembled, pleasure tingling down his spine again as Harry

licked his face. His hands reached to hold Harry's shoulders. "Oh, yes," he whispered in delight.

"Mmm, so pretty," Harry whispered as he licked along Draco's skin slowly, trailing his tongue across his perfect lips.

Draco was so sensitive it was almost painful, but deliciously so. He gasped, mouth opening. He had just come but he swore that Harry was going to keep him hard this way.

"Mmm," Harry let out again, voice low and quiet. He licked Draco's tongue and then sucked on it just barely, reaching down to gently stroke the lion tattoo.

Draco shook, fingers tightening on Harry's shoulders and he moaned into Harry's mouth as the man sucked on his tongue. Draco's cock managed to twitch at that, the lion rolling against the base.

Harry smiled, giving Draco's tongue another slow stroke with his own. "You're like my drug," he breathed into his mouth. "I can't get enough of you." He licked more of himself up from Draco's cheek.

"Yes, devour me," Draco whispered, trembling.

"You want my cock in you?" Harry whispered back, scratching nails lightly along Draco's skin. He scooted closer, sliding legs over Draco's thighs and stretching them out behind him so that he could pull him against his chest, touch their hardening cocks together.

"Oh, fuck, yes," Draco begged. "Please, Harry..."

Harry rubbed himself against Draco, holding him close and scratching nails down his back again. "Get hard for me, love," he whispered into Draco's ear. Merlin, that word sounded so appealing to him at times. "So hard for me."

"Yes, hard for you, always for you," Draco whispered, feeling the magic stir as the lion tattoo seemed to encourage just that. His cock had half softened but it was filling again.

Harry continued to rub himself against Draco, both of their tattoos reacting much the same way, as if trying to help them along. "Mine," Harry whispered, laying little but long kisses along Draco's jaw, his neck. He sucked there, feeling so hot.

"Very yours," Draco agreed, arching his neck to open himself to Harry.

Harry ground himself against Draco until his heart was pounding

again, his cock throbbing with it. He backed off of Draco but pulled his husband with him to his feet. "Lie down and let me lick you," he told him.

Draco lay down, spreading himself across the bedspread and looking up with silvered eyes at his husband. "Yours to do with as you like," he whispered.

Harry licked his lips, following after Draco, lowering lips to his collarbone and letting his groin down to press against Draco's as well. "You're so perfectly beautiful," he said, rubbing again, feeling the wetness of pre-come from both of them.

Draco moaned and arched up against Harry. "Yes, I love the way you touch me. I love your tongue and your cock and your arse" Draco babbled, thrashing his head.

"All yours," Harry told him, sliding down Draco's body, licking him as he'd said he would. "I could make you come with my tongue, but I'll fuck your tight little asshole." He had made it all the way down Draco's body, in between his legs. He paused to lick at the lion and licked away a few drops of pre-come that had dripped onto Draco's skin.

Draco thrashed his head, his flesh still so sensitive from coming recently. He spread his legs as wide as he could, hands gripping the fabric under him.

"Oh, Draco," Harry moaned deeply, tonguing his balls gently, using his fingers to reach and gently stroke his entrance. He knew Draco's body so well and yet every time still seemed like the first time as Harry explored the perfect body beneath him.

"Yes, Harry, yes," Draco encouraged, Harry's desire making him feel beautiful and loved in a way that nothing else could.

Harry licked and licked until he was lapping at that puckered opening, moving his fingers to use them to spread Draco apart instead.

The blond moaned and bent his knees, using his hands to hold himself open as far as possible.

Harry moaned quietly, circling Draco's entrance with gentle, little licks, almost teasing. But then he slid the wet muscle inside, pointing it to get in as far as he could go.

"Oh, Gods, yes, please yes," Draco rambled, opening to his lover

and his cock bobbing in response.

Harry thrust his tongue in and out of Draco slowly, watching him from beneath lowered lashes. He lifted up slightly and kissed the skin under Draco's balls before trailing his tongue right back down and kissing his husband's hole as well.

"Oh, yes, please Harry," Draco begging, loving every touch.

Harry sunk his tongue in as far as it would go again and hummed against Draco, even did a strange wiggling movement with his mouth against Draco's arse to try to please him as much as he possibly could. His own cock was straining again, hard and heavy between his legs.

Draco moaned, head thrashing so hard his hair was covering his face. Both hands still gripped his legs, holding himself open for Harry as he surrendered to the pleasure his lover brought him.

Harry began moving upwards again, licked Draco's balls once more, licked up his shaft and licked the writhing lion. He painted a straight line of saliva up his chest and laved each nipple with affection before he was licking Draco's neck and below his ear, reaching down to position his own cock.

Draco's right hand came up to plunge fingers into thick black hair. "Oh, yes, my love, please fuck me," he gasped and wrapped his legs around his lover's waist.

Harry slid into Draco, gasping as their tattoos touched, entwining like they seemed to do. He kissed up from Draco's neck to his face, little kisses around his lips as he rocked back and forth with his hips. The urgency from before had dissipated and evolved into something achingly sweet and slower but no less satisfying.

"Oh, yes, fuck me," Draco moaned, kissing back and pulling his husband's hair. He arched into each thrust, body spasming in pleasure each time Harry's cock pressed in again.

"The way you take it, Draco," Harry whispered breathlessly. "Merlin, the way you take me. I want to fuck you, and fuck you, and fuck you. Fuck your arse; fill you with me." He trembled, voice cutting off.

"Oh, yes, fill me," Draco agreed. "I always want you inside me."

Harry moved his hips in every direction he could, pressing inside Draco and rotating against him, slow slides in and out right after one

hard and quick. He fucked him thoroughly, alternating even between muttering the dirtiest things he could think of to declaring his undying love.

There could not be anything – anything – better than being fucked like this by Harry. Draco knew it. Knew this was what he wanted more than anything; what he had always wanted. He moaned and gasped and whimpered his pleasure.

Harry's hips sped up without slowing now, his thrusts harder as he reached to grasp one of Draco's legs and pull it higher on his back, changing the angle. "I can't hold back," he whispered urgently. "I'm gonna come inside you."

"Oh, yes, please bring us," Draco cried out, silver hand on Harry's side and right hand twisting in his hair.

Harry pushed inside his husband roughly, grunting as he did. "Fuck," he practically yelped, the last slide inside bringing him to completion as his come coated Draco's passage with evidence of their love and desire for each other. The pleasure that flooded his body was tremendous again and he could hardly believe the incredible sex he had with his husband. There couldn't have been another person on earth who had it as good as he did.

Draco cried out, body shuddering around his lover's cock and the magic shooting through his body like lightning. His seed covered his belly as his legs clenched involuntarily around Harry.

Harry panted atop Draco, stroking his hair with his fingers. "You're too good," he said shakily.

"Glad you noticed," Draco teased, smirking. He was still panting and holding Harry.

Harry laughed quietly. "Seriously though," he said, looking at Draco. "Wow." He grinned.

Draco smiled dreamily up at Harry, grey eyes open and soft with happiness. He could look into those beautiful green eyes forever. "Green fire," he whispered.

"Your fire," Harry told him, rubbing their noses gently.

"Mine," Draco agreed, letting his feet slide down the back of Harry's arse to his legs. He relaxed his hand in his hair enough to pet him now.

Harry sighed, unable to stop the feelings of sappy, gooey love

radiating out from his every part. He laid more little kisses on Draco's face, pausing at his lips. "Kinky to this," he said with a quiet chuckle.

"Kinky and romantic," Draco sighed. "The perfect combination."

"I suppose that would be us," Harry said, smiling.

"Perfect," Draco agreed, leaning up to kiss Harry.

Harry smiled still against Draco's lips, tempted to give him more kisses. He laid his head on his chest, bringing fingers down from his hair to stroke his collarbone lightly. He blushed a little before he asked, "Do you think it sounds stupid? To say that I'm your fire?" He didn't know why he felt the need to ask that or why he wanted to know what Draco thought of it. He supposed he was strange about some things, like with the word dildo.

"Don't think I would ever let anyone else call me that," Draco said. "You are the only one who can say that and ... from you it makes me just feel more loved."

And that only made Harry like it more. "Oh," he said quietly, a smile in his tone.

"But not in public," Draco added, blushing.

Harry chuckled again. "I wouldn't say that to you in public," he said. "You don't call me your lion in front of others."

Draco carded his fingers through Harry's hair. "Oh, but I certainly think it," Draco smirked.

Harry smiled again. "Imagine me growling, do you?" he teased with a suggestive eyebrow waggle.

Draco blushed hard. "You do growl sometimes, my love," he whispered.

"Lounging around on the sofa?" Harry asked with a laugh.

"You make little noises while you are reading your books too," Draco said, smiling.

"I growl?" Harry asked, still laughing. He wondered about all of the little things he did without thinking that Draco had catalogued and memorised in his mind.

"Sometimes and you make little huffing noises," Draco said, nodding.

"I don't notice," Harry said, amused. "No idea I did that."

"No one knows you like I do," Draco smiled fondly, petting him.

"I guess I have always watched you."

"So you've said," Harry replied, before whispering, "I like that. I like that you know me."

"Intimately," Draco nodded, smiling but his eyes serious. "Thank you for today, for earlier. I know it was difficult."

"It wasn't as terrible as I thought it was going to be," Harry said honestly. "I even feel bad, because, really, I still don't ... like him." He gave Draco an apologetic look. "And then it's confusing because ... part of me feels like I shouldn't feel bad at all." He sighed quietly.

"Do you think you would have trouble liking him if he weren't someone I had ... been with?" Draco asked, still caressing Harry.

"I don't know Maybe," Harry admitted. He knew his biggest problem with Nott was indeed Draco and Nott's past. "And then there is that he tried to kill me and almost killed you in the process, but I guess ... it is mostly that he was with you. That he still wants you." He almost said that it was a little scary to think of Draco still wanting Nott in some way as well, but held back, because he knew – really – that Draco loved him – Harry – more than anyone else, wanted him more than anyone else.

"I think Theo has never done anything worse than I have done," Draco said, knowing that wasn't the issue but wanting to put the excuse to rest. "Can we not have friends who are attracted to us?"

Harry knew that Nott being attracted to Draco wasn't the only thing that he didn't like about it. He wouldn't mind if Nott was only attracted to Draco. If that mattered, Harry would dislike Fred and George, who he, on the contrary, liked very much. No, it was something more with Nott, but difficult to put into words. "That's not it. Not really," he said.

Draco smiled up at the man still on top of him. "I love you. I broke up with Theo and chose you," he said firmly.

Harry smiled softly. "I know," he said. "You probably think I'm an idiot, don't you?"

"Not a safe question to answer with you on top of me, is it?" Draco teased, arching an eyebrow.

Harry snorted. "I know I am," he said. "You're too good for me."

"I doubt you could find anyone to agree that Draco Malfoy is too good for Harry Potter," Draco smirked.

Harry kissed under Draco's chin. "None of them know you like I

do," he said.

"I know all about you, Harry," Draco whispered, sighing under his husband's attentions. "And I am where I want to be. Where I always wanted to be. Where I want to be for the rest of my life."

Harry stared at Draco for a few moments. "I know," he said finally, repeating words he'd said many times that night. He kissed Draco gently again. "I know."

– CHAPTER NINE –

The Toy

Time raced by until it seemed that the only thing moving faster was two-year-old Valen, with a mouth to match. April started walking and babbling little words as well, though her temper hadn't settled down at all for the one-year-old.

Percy Weasley married his girlfriend Julie in January and Fred and George opened their second shop, in Hogsmeade. Ron became manager of the new shop, as well as continuing to develop his new broom design. He had plenty of help, with Harry, Hermione, the twins and, even occasionally Draco, making suggestions. Yet, it was Ron's idea and his new broom, now in the testing stage, looked like it would surpass the Nimbus broomsticks in both speed and height.

Harry and Draco raised their children happily, and Harry even learnt to like Theo Nott. Sort of. A little. He was Theo now, at least. He'd become used to the man as Draco's friend and even spent time with him and Draco every once in a while. He was happy and more than content in his own relationship and right then his only worry was having to come up with what to get his husband for his 20th birthday, which was only weeks away. Harry wanted to do something special for Draco that would show him just how much he was loved and trusted. Their rule about birthdays being for sex would still factor in since it happened to be pretty much the only rule that Harry knew he would never want to break. The special day was creeping up fast, though, and Harry still had no idea what to do. He only knew that it had to be perfect.

Harry leant over and kissed Draco's head, smiling, as their children played on the floor of the sitting room.

Ron was looking under cushions for some sort of ... thing ... he'd been working on for his brothers. He had no idea where it had got to and Fred and George were due to arrive and pick it up any minute. "Why put an Anti-Accio Spell on it?" he grumbled, on his knees and

looking beneath a chair.

"Do you want me to help you?" Harry asked, raising an eyebrow.

Ron sighed. "You don't even know what it looks like," he said.

Draco looked up from his book, frowning. "What *are* you looking for?" he asked.

Ron sighed again, more of a huff this time, and sat up on his knees. "It's a ... pre-production ... essay generator," he said, throwing Hermione a cautious look.

She narrowed her eyes. "It's only an object that will be used to dim the minds of Hogwarts students," she said. "Honestly, I can't believe you're helping them to make it. I have half a mind to Floo Headmistress McGonagall and notify her before it even hits shelves." She crossed her arms.

Ron muttered something that sounded like, "A Galleon's a Galleon."

"And what does this thing look like?" Draco drawled, still frowning.

"It's sort of like a ... blue box with red buttons ..." Ron said distractedly, crawling along the floor again. "A bit lopsided though – and a bit small."

"I hope you don't find it," Hermione insisted with a sniff of irritation.

Ron made a disgruntled sound.

"And just how is this box supposed to operate?" Draco asked, becoming more curious now. He had never needed help with his essays in school but the mechanics of it intrigued him and he knew that there were probably many students, including Slytherins, who might take advantage of such a device.

"Well, it's supposed to give you many different options, namely Hogwarts class options," said a voice from the doorway. "Set it to third year essay on Grindylows and out pops the paper." The twins entered the room with smiles on their faces.

"There are still bugs, of course," said Fred. "Like that it keeps mixing Transfiguration with Herbology, but we'll get it."

"And where is our wonderful little blue box, dear brother?" asked George, looking over at Ron with raised eyebrows.

Ron's ears reddened.

Draco closed his book, setting it aside. "And where does this box draw the information from?"

"Interesting, isn't it?" said Fred, leaning over the sofa. "George and I wrote all the essays with memory quills, extracted the memories of the words from the page and inserted them into the generator. Does it mean that people will eventually start having the exact same essays? Well, of course. But it'll last a while and the Galleons will pour in."

"It'll be worth the wrist strain," said George. "That is, if we can find it."

Harry noticed then, that Valen was being awfully quiet. He watched his son for a moment while the others talked.

"You wrote the papers?" Draco said, sceptical. "It's not like you two had high marks."

"Hey," said George, obviously not really offended. "We had higher marks than the average student."

"If we cared enough to do the assignment," Fred agreed. "No need to be rude, Mr Outstanding." He smirked.

"Valen," Harry called. "What have you got?"

Valen hid something behind his back and looked up at Harry with wide green eyes.

Harry beckoned the little boy with one finger. "Come here," he said.

Valen shook his head and backed up.

Harry sighed and got to his feet. "Will I have to take it from you?" he asked, standing in front of Valen and holding his hand out.

Fred and George grinned at each other. "Looks like we've found it," said George.

Valen made a dash for the door, running as fast as his little legs could take him.

Harry dove after him, scooping the little body into his arms just in time. He had to wrestle what was indeed a blue box with red buttons from two small hands.

April laughed at them.

Draco shook his head, grinning as he watched them. Harry was young and still had a Seeker's reflexes but Draco knew it wouldn't be long before Valen would be able to outmanoeuvre both of them.

When that time came, he and Harry would need to work on being smarter rather than faster.

"Mine, mine!" Valen yelled, trying to reach the box and take it back from his father.

"Uh uh," Harry disagreed, holding the device out of Valen's reach. "It's not yours and you know it. That's why you ran." He placed Valen back on his feet on the floor.

"I knew I put it on the table!" Ron exclaimed.

"Valen nicked it," said Harry.

Valen scowled and crossed his arms across his small chest. He looked just like Draco as he did it.

Harry couldn't help an amused smile at the pose. "You're cute, but you can be quite something," he said, turning to hand the generator to Fred.

Valen ran to Draco and hugged his leg. "Want buttons!" he cried, sobbing into Draco's knees.

Draco petted his son's hair. "Not Valen's buttons," he echoed his husband.

"Tins!" yelled April, seemingly just to join her brother. She toddled over and hugged Draco's free leg.

Draco now petted both children but looked up in confusion at his husband. "Surely we can find something with buttons that isn't a prototype of an illegal device," he drawled.

Hermione sniffed, a noise of agreement with Draco. The noise levels coming from the children increased and made it impossible to think or carry on conversations.

Harry strode over to the toys they kept in the room and rummaged through them, pulling out a toy with buttons that made music. He came back over and offered it to his son.

Valen stopped sobbing and looked up with his wet face at the toy. He eyed it suspiciously.

"Go ahead, you can have this one," Draco encouraged.

Valen took it and sat down on the floor between Draco's feet and began pushing buttons. The toy emitted warbling sounds.

Harry sighed, shaking his head a bit at the children.

"Well, no harm done," said Fred, slipping the device into his pocket.

Ron let out a sigh as well, his of relief.

Draco reached down and picked up April, sitting her in his lap, and continuing to pet her dark hair. "So, other than trying to drive McGonagall insane, what have you two been up to?"

George chuckled. "Watching his every move," he said, indicating Ron.

Ron rolled his eyes. "I do fine at the shop," he said.

"Ooh, anyone would do fine with that Samantha working over there," said Fred. "She has got the nicest ti-"

Hermione cleared her throat, eyes narrowed.

"Only joking," said Fred with a wide grin, holding his hands up.

Ron's ears reddened again.

Draco's eyes widened a bit and he smirked, enjoying the twins. April seemed content to lie back against him and cuddle. "And outside the shop?" he asked.

"Eh, just hanging around," said George. "What have you lot been up to?"

"Same thing," said Harry with a shrug. "Hanging around."

"Well, we're all just having loads of fun," said George.

"Fun?" said Ron. "I didn't know the word existed anymore." He stood and dropped down next to Hermione.

She kissed his hair. "You've been doing wonderfully – most of the time," she added with a stony look to Fred and George.

They were only amused.

"We should get a game together soon," Draco said. "We haven't been playing as much as we used to."

"Yeah, that could be fun," said Fred. "We could invite Samantha to cheer."

Harry laughed as Hermione huffed. Harry knew that Hermione liked Fred and George but she wouldn't be encouraging their behaviour.

"She doesn't play?" Draco asked, his tone amused.

"Wouldn't be as fun to watch," said George, winking at Draco with a smirk.

Both twins then laughed and Hermione rolled her eyes, giving up on them.

Ron expertly kept from laughing, but Harry knew that he would

have, had Hermione not been there.

"Oh, hey," said Fred after a moment. "What are you all doing this weekend?"

Draco looked over at Harry and shrugged. "I don't know of anything," he said.

"Nope, nothing planned," said Harry. Most weekends were spent playing with the children and enjoying each other which didn't actually differ much from the weekdays except that Draco always put his work aside come Saturday and Sunday.

"I was going to work some more," said Ron, sounding like he didn't really want to. "But, why? What's up?"

"Well, there's that new club that just opened up in London. You know, Two Worlds?" Fred continued.

"Ocean and land themed," said George with a small eye-roll. "But actually Muggle on the bottom and hidden wizards on the top."

"Why, you going?" Ron asked, glancing at Hermione out of the corner of his eye.

"Was thinking about it," said George.

Draco looked at Harry, arching an eyebrow in question. He wanted to go but wasn't going to push Harry. Draco was sure that Harry would enjoy it but even though time had passed and his husband was more confident, he knew Harry still disliked being stared at and whispered about by the wizarding world when they were out in public. Draco suspected that a club filled with wizards their age would still result in stares but not for the same reasons. Young wizards, dancing and drinking, would stare at Harry because he was hot.

"I've never been to a club before," Harry said to the twins. While Harry had no regrets about his life and would never want to be anywhere else other than with his husband and children, he did realise that he had missed out on things most young people took for granted such as going to clubs on the weekends. Harry might have been nervous about going on his own but being there with Draco sounded like it might be fun.

"It can be a good time," said George with a shrug.

"Want to go?" Harry asked, turning his head to look at Draco. He knew Draco was probably already hoping that they might go and was

waiting for Harry to agree.

"Yes," Draco answered smiling. "Weddings aren't the only place we can dance," he added with a wink.

Harry grinned and Fred and George smirked.

"How about you?" Fred asked Ron and Hermione.

"Yeah, let's go," said Ron with a bit of a pleading look. "I could use a drink."

"Oh, fine," said Hermione. "I suppose it could be all right."

Ron smiled. "It will be," he said.

"Will you dance with me?" she asked, raising her eyebrows.

Ron sighed. "Yes, I'll dance with you."

Hermione looked pleased and Ron couldn't help but smile when he saw that.

"We just have to find someone to watch the children," Draco added.

"I bet Mum'll watch them," said Ron. "It's been a while."

"We can ask her," said Harry.

Draco nodded, kissing the top of April's head where the little girl was now asleep against his chest. Valen was still making odd musical combinations with the toy. "Saturday night?" he asked.

"Saturday night," said George with a nod as he rubbed his hands together. "We've all seen the show you two put on at weddings; can't wait to see what you do at a club!"

Draco only laughed and looked over at Harry who shook his head and smiled back. Silently, though, Harry and Draco both had to wonder the same thing.

– CHAPTER TEN –

Exhibitionist

Saturday rolled around quickly. Mr and Mrs Weasley had agreed to watch their “grandchildren,” which was how they always referred to Valen and April. Valen called Mrs Weasley “Nana” and Mr Weasley “Dandad,” instead of Grandad, just as Chris did. Mrs Weasley had suggested keeping the children all night but Harry wasn't ready yet to wake up to empty cots. He knew he was being overprotective but Mrs Weasley understood. Harry dropped the children off at the Burrow and returned home to get ready. He hadn't been sure what to wear, so Draco had helped him with that.

They set off an hour later with Ron and Hermione, Apparating as near to the club as they could and taking a cab the rest of the way. Harry's impression of the place upon arrival was that it was rather posh. There was a line outside at the door. Lights were flashing in the windows and he could hear the bass when he stepped onto the street. It reminded him a little of the Leaky Cauldron – not the appearance or anything – in that the Muggles below seemed to pay no attention at all to the upper story of the building.

They were supposed to be meeting Fred and George at the club and Draco looked around. He hoped there was a wizarding entrance because he had no intention of standing in a line, with Muggles, no less.

"They said they would be here," said Ron as they all walked across the street after paying for the ride. He craned his neck to see over the crowd.

As they always seemed to do, Fred and George appeared behind them. "Just getting here?" Fred asked.

Harry turned and faltered a bit. The twins looked rather ... well ... good. And then upon a second look he could see thin and faint black around both Fred and George's eyes. He flushed, remembering when Draco had worn eyeliner for him.

"Are you wearing ... make-up?" Ron asked, leaning so close to his brothers that they leant away.

"Oh, do you have eyes?" said Fred, rolling his.

Draco blushed, remembering what Harry had done to him when he had worn eyeliner and privately wondered if he should try that again.

"Weird," Ron muttered. "How do we get in?"

"C'mon," said George, gesturing with his head. He led them over to a door on the side. "Jobberknoll," he said, leaning very close to the glass. The door opened inwardly to a staircase leading up.

Draco reached and took Harry's hand, leading them up the stairs. The blond was dressed in tight black trousers and a grey shirt that looked nearly silver. Both showed off his lean body.

Harry held Draco's hand, but hung back a small bit to watch his arse as he climbed the stairs. Harry himself was in his favourite – fitting – jeans and the green shirt that Draco had picked out for him. The music grew louder as they climbed and they entered into a very large room. It was filled with people, and flashes of light, and loud voices, and music with such a beat that Harry wondered if it was somehow magic. It seemed to flow through the floor and up his legs, trying to make him dance.

Draco smiled, his hand on Harry's tightening as he looked around the room in delight. "Can we find a table?" he yelled over the noise to Fred and George.

They nodded, leading the group over to a large booth situated near the dance floor. There were already two other girls sitting there, and Harry had to assume they were Fred and George's dates.

"Hi, Ron," one of them said happily.

"Sam," said Ron with a nod. His ears might have been red in different light. He held Hermione's hand and pulled her closer.

Harry did have to admit, Samantha's chest was rather ... well ... yes.

Draco smirked. His silver hand still held his husband's and now he reached the other to the women at the table. "Draco Malfoy," he said.

"Samantha Henderson," Samantha said, shaking Draco's hand.

Harry recognised the second girl from somewhere. Ravenclaw, a

few years above him. "Aimee Ross," she said, shaking Draco's hand as well.

"And this quiet one beside me is Harry Potter," Draco added, nodding his head and releasing Harry's hand so the man could shake hands.

Harry snorted, shaking both their hands. He always felt slightly odd greeting new people. Almost all of them, if they were wizards, knew him already. It always gave him a strange feeling of being at a disadvantage until he got to know them as well.

Ron and Hermione greeted the girls as well and they all sat down. Fred was quick to throw an arm around Samantha's shoulders.

Draco pulled his husband down into the booth beside him and slipped his left arm around him.

"So, how about some drinks?" said George. "On me."

"I guess I'll just have a beer," said Harry.

"White wine," Draco added, leaning back and watching his friends and the dancers on the floor was well.

Harry smiled to himself. Draco would get wine. George nodded to what everyone else wanted and then stood to get the drinks. Aimee tagged along to help him carry them back. Harry could tell, even after only knowing the girl a minute, that she was rather smitten with George. He tapped his fingers on the table in time to the music.

"So you work for the disaster twins," Draco began by way of opening to Sam.

She laughed. "They give Ron a harder time than me," she said.

"I'll bet," said Harry with a grin.

Draco found himself watching her chest too. It was like once it was mentioned, he couldn't help it. He blushed and turned his attention to the dance floor.

Fred wagged his eyebrows at Draco discreetly while Samantha turned her face.

George and Aimee returned in a couple minutes with the drinks and handed them out. Harry took a swig of his beer, still feeling the thrum of the music.

Draco's hand slipped down from Harry's waist to cup his arse, squeezing gently.

Raising an eyebrow at his husband, a slow smile began to spread

across Harry's face.

Draco leant in to whisper against his husband's ear, but licked it first. "Want to dance?" he asked as suggestively as possible.

Harry could feel eyes on him and knew the two unfamiliar girls were watching their closeness, but he didn't care. "Yeah," he said, taking another drink first.

Draco smiled and scooted out of the booth, pulling Harry along with him. "We are going to dance," he explained. "Anyone else?"

Samantha looked at Fred, who grinned after a moment. "All right," he said, and she quickly got to her feet as well, looking happy.

Draco led Harry onto the floor, amused by the stares and people whispering when they recognised the famous pair.

Harry waggled his eyebrows a bit before he turned towards the crowd instead of pressing himself against Draco from the front. He pressed his backside against him, taking one of Draco's hands to press it against his hip and hold it there with his own hand.

Draco groaned and began rotating his hips to the music, hands clenching at Harry, just above his hip bones, pulling him closer.

Harry reached and grasped the back of Draco's neck. He was very, very glad he'd learnt to dance. It was an easy way to fulfill one of their shared kinks – sex in front of people – without the very embarrassing aspect of, well, sex in front of people.

The blond felt the beat of the music as if his own pounding heart was in sync with it. He pressed his face against the side of Harry's face, nipping at his ear as he ground against him.

Harry moaned quietly, rocking back against Draco. He encouraged Draco's hands to roam over his body, taking them in his own and trailing them from his hips to his belly to his chest and back again.

"You make me want to fuck you right here in front of all these people," Draco growled in his ear.

"Mmm," Harry let out slowly, nestling his head along the curve of Draco's neck. "You make me want to let you when you say things like that."

Draco's eyes fluttered closed and he nipped at Harry's ear and then his jaw, still moving his hips to the beat of the music.

Harry opened his eyes at the moment Draco closed his to look

down at Draco's hands, but before he did look down, he saw Fred dancing a few feet away with Samantha. He was quite obviously watching Harry and Draco, Sam dancing with her back to Fred as Harry was with Draco. Fred smiled, though, as if he hadn't been watching the way he had been and turned his attention back to his date. Harry found himself flushing slightly.

"Turn around," Draco whispered against Harry's ear.

Harry turned at Draco's request, still moving in a wave-like motion as he did.

Draco's hands slid along Harry's waist as he moved, and then he pressed his thigh between the man's legs, pulling Harry against him. He rocked his hips as he was rutting against Harry.

"Draco Malfoy, you are going to make me come in my trousers," Harry told him.

Behind them, George came onto the dance floor with Aimee.

"Yes, I am," Draco said in a husky voice, nipping at his husband's chin.

Harry's heart sped up. "Fuck," he whispered, letting out a shaky breath.

"That's for later," Draco promised. "Right now I want to make you come while all these people watch."

Harry flushed deeply, wondering if anyone around would be able to tell if he came, because he knew, seriously, that he was going to. "You're so hot," he breathed. "Merlin."

"Yes, hot for you," Draco answered, hips rotating against Harry as his breathing sped up. He glanced around and blushed when he realised how many people were watching them, including George and his date.

George's face was very different from how it usually looked. It was studying almost, and his eyes might have been darker. It was not the same teasing glances that were normally there. It was also evident that both twins were rather good dancers. Never had they danced before, when their mother had been in the vicinity, like they were dancing now.

Draco found the sight of Fred and George dancing as lewdly as they were just added to his arousal and he was panting now, fingers tight on Harry's hips as he fought to keep the rhythm of his

movements in time with the music.

"Close," Harry said, voice slightly strained. He brought his mouth to Draco's, kissing him slowly and wetly. Harry's hands ran slowly up Draco's lean back and one stopped to caress the smooth neck while the other continued on until it had entwined itself in Draco's hair. Using the leverage of his hands, Harry deepened the kiss and moaned against Draco's lips. He could feel the unseen coil tightening within him as his magic began to gather itself.

Draco returned the kiss, the rest of the world forgotten as he felt Harry's magic rising and knew it would be all he could do to stay on his feet when Harry's orgasm brought them both.

The sensations intensified and thrummed in time with the music. Harry was lost within the circle of Draco's arms while the sensuous crash of the wildly beating drums in the background sent Harry soaring. He held Draco very tightly, the loud music drowning out his muffled cry as his movements lost their rhythm but not their speed and he came against Draco's leg, trembling.

Magic flared up and through him, making Draco shudder and rock where he stood, clutching Harry.

"God," Harry gasped, floating on the high as he melted against Draco.

Draco swayed in place, holding his husband close, no longer even aware of anyone or anything else.

Harry sighed softly, more of a hum. He slid his hands down to rest on the small of Draco's back, moving his face to kiss his neck.

Draco pressed the side of his face to Harry's, whispering in his ear. "You make me lose control. I love that everyone knows how much you want me and how much I want you."

Harry smiled. "Mmm, I do want you. Always want you," he answered.

Another voice entered into the bubble that was Harry and Draco's world. "You know, you probably just broke some sort of rule." It was George. The curious look he had worn before was gone, replaced with the amusement that always seemed to be there.

Harry flushed deeply again, suddenly very aware of his state.

"Harry likes breaking rules," Draco smirked and wagged his eyebrows.

"Including having fantastic orgasms on public dance floors?" George asked.

Aimee's eyes widened. "George!" she said, hitting his shoulder.

George laughed. "Should've seen your face, mate!"

Harry's blush, if possible, deepened even further. It was a little strange. Usually Draco was the one nearly dying of embarrassment.

Draco's face flushed too, even his ears reddening. He also felt a thrill at George watching them. "Beautiful face," he agreed.

"What's this over here?" said Fred, coming over with Sam. "Congratulating Harry and Draco on a job well done?"

Harry sighed. He knew they had brought it upon themselves, but still. "Isn't it rather lucky that you got to watch?" he said. "Must you do this afterwards as well?"

"Yes, we must," said George.

"And who says we wanted to watch?" said Fred, attempting to look innocent and failing.

Harry raised eyebrows at him but Fred only laughed and shrugged his shoulders.

Their dates looked slightly disgruntled, if not a bit confused.

The heat on his face seemed to have become a permanent state of being and Draco was unable to look up again. He had just come and the conversation was still exciting him. "I think I will find the loo," he said.

"Well, aren't you going to offer to go with him?" Fred asked Harry.

Harry rolled his eyes, casting silent Cleaning Charms on both himself and Draco without letting the others know. The funny thing was, though, that he had just been about to offer to go with Draco.

Draco stopped, a shiver going down his spine at his husband's magic. He had been about to go to the bathroom to clean up but the silent, wandless magic made it no longer necessary. "Actually, let's go finish our drinks," he said with a smile, taking Harry's hand and tugging him towards the table.

Harry nodded, following Draco. Ron and Hermione were no longer at the table, probably off dancing. Harry was rather hot, so the still-cold beer was nice. "Merlin, they are perverts," he said.

Draco laughed delightedly. "*They* didn't just come in front of

everyone," he teased, sipping his wine.

Harry managed to somehow grin sheepishly and wickedly at the same time. "Did you ... see the way they were watching us though?" he said.

"Oh, yes," Draco said a little breathlessly, blushing again.

Harry cleared his throat a little strangely. "Yeah," he said, scratching the back of his neck. It was still a mystery to Harry, some of the things he did in front of an audience and he only knew that, while it felt kind of wrong, that the wrongness of it was what made it feel so good.

Draco noticed other people watching them and smiled, leaning in to kiss his husband's cheek. He wanted to rest a bit but then he wanted to dance again. Maybe having come already, they could make it through a few songs without getting overly aroused.

Harry smiled at the kiss, leaning back in the booth and sighing.

Draco did manage to pull Harry back out onto the dance floor before too long. It was still exciting to dance with Harry but they were sated enough to keep it to dancing this time. He loved the flushed look and shining green eyes of his lover.

Harry didn't know how long it was that he danced with Draco, as lost with him as he was. He loved the way Draco moved. He'd thought it so many times before but found himself thinking yet again that his husband had to be made of sex. They stepped over to the bar to get more drinks after a while, panting. It was turning out to be a most wonderful night.

Draco sat back down, watching his husband's arse as he walked over to the bar. He glanced around, looking for the rest of their friends.

As if on cue, the twins showed up again, without Samantha and Aimee.

"Where's Harry?" Fred asked, sliding in across from Draco.

"Getting another round," Draco said, nodding his head in the direction of the bar.

"Ah," said Fred. "Tired out?" He grinned.

Draco grinned and shrugged. "No, not at all."

Harry returned and handed Draco his drink, sitting next to him. "Hey," he said to Fred and George. "Where's your dates?" he asked,

noticing they were alone.

"Bathroom," George answered. "For some reason, all the girls we get with find they need to attend the bathroom with no less than one other person."

Draco smirked, knowing what he would do in the bathroom if Harry went with him but figuring that wasn't what it was about for the women.

"You sitting out for long?" Fred asked Harry and Draco.

Harry shrugged. "Why?" he asked.

"Well, perhaps we want a dance," said George.

Harry raised his eyebrows at him.

Draco's eyes widened and he glanced at Harry, trying to gauge his reaction.

"For what?" Harry asked slowly, his gaze shifting from George to Fred.

Fred laughed at him. "What do you mean for what?" he said. "To dance, you dolt. Are you both too glued to each other's hips to enjoy the company of anyone else?"

Harry flushed a little and looked at Draco. They had danced with Fred and George at weddings, but certainly never danced with them in a club-like situation, like this. Harry paused to see what Draco would say.

"I'm game," Draco said softly, looking at Harry.

Harry was still a little cautious, but looked back to Fred and George. "All right," he said.

The twins laughed again. "Merlin, we're not going to bite you," said Fred, and Harry thought that there was something in his voice saying he might be lying.

"Yeah, we're the ones that should be scared," said George. "Who knows what you two'll do."

"Well, do you want to dance or not?" Harry said, raising an eyebrow.

"Ooh, I think that's his warning voice," said Fred. "Harry's not known for his patience."

"Yes, one of us better get him out there before he explodes," George agreed. "Oh wait – he already did that."

They laughed again and then Fred raised hands at Harry's

answering face. "All right, all right," he said. "C'mon."

Harry looked at Draco again as he moved to stand.

Draco shrugged and got to his feet, reaching for the nearest twin.

Draco got Fred, who grinned at him as they both moved out to the dance floor. "Shall I lead, or you?" he asked, arching an eyebrow.

"Your choice," Draco quipped, smiling.

"I suppose you should move a little closer then," Fred responded, moving closer himself. His eyes flicked over to where Harry and George stood a few feet away.

George slipped arms about Harry's shoulders, moving closer to him automatically. "You're not usually this stiff with Draco, are you?" he asked with a grin. "No pun intended."

Harry sighed and tried to relax a little more, hesitantly moving hands to George's waist.

Fred reached out and pulled Draco closer. It was sort of obvious that he was a little wary of Harry's possible reaction, which was kind of funny, since both twins were hardly ever wary of anything.

Draco shivered at Fred's touch, swallowing but moving to dance with him.

"I know you're a good dancer, Harry," George said. "Come on."

"What, saying I'm not doing good?" Harry asked, though he knew he was moving a little awkwardly. Definitely not as smoothly as Draco seemed to be moving with Fred. Harry watched them out of the corner of his eye.

George gave him an amused grin.

Fred grinned at Draco, something smug about his face. He slid a hand slowly from Draco's hip to his lower back, effectively allowing them to move easier together. "Still light on your feet," he told him.

"Thank you," Draco said, swaying with the other man, one hand on his shoulder gripping lightly. Fred was actually taller than him. He was so used to Harry, who was shorter, that it was an adjustment. It felt good to relax and let the other man lead.

Harry sighed, shaking himself a little to loosen up. He could feel some of the tension releasing itself although remnants of it still remained. It was easy to see that George was an attractive man and a good dancer and Harry had always been fond of the twins who never failed to make him smile even when things had been bad. So Harry

knew that the tension wasn't there because he didn't like dancing with George. He suspected it was there because he wasn't sure how to feel if he did like dancing with George. Harry took a deep breath and relaxed a little more.

"There we go," said George, face turning smug like his brother's. "Bit harder when there are restrictions though."

"Restrictions?" said Harry, raising an eyebrow.

"Well, I can't dance with you like I can Aimee, can I?" he said.

The image of George and Aimee dancing together flashed in Harry's mind. He blushed a little, to his horror. "I think that might be a little much," he said quietly. George chuckled.

Fred continued to lead Draco. It was hard to tell if his hands were moving so much because he was doing it on purpose, or if he didn't know he was doing it.

Draco gasped as Fred's hands stroked his back and then slid a bit lower than he expected. He looked up into the man's face trying to determine if it was an accident.

Fred smiled, a flash of white teeth in the blinking lights.

Draco's hand slid over to the back of Fred's neck, his other one on his hip. He smiled back.

"Mmm, a little daring?" Fred asked, his voice strange now, like he was trying to keep it from dropping below his normal tone.

"We're just dancing, aren't we?" the blond asked in a polite voice but with a wicked glint in his grey eyes.

"Just dancing," Fred agreed, and there might have been a shiver slicing through him.

Draco glanced over at his husband, wondering if he was having as interesting a dance with George.

George pressed closer to Harry, who took in a small, sharp breath.

"Harry, relax," he chided, sliding hands down from Harry's shoulders to his chest, stroking lightly. "You keep tensing up like I'm going to pounce on you or something."

Harry couldn't help but also shiver now at the touch on his chest. He didn't know where it was coming from. And he noticed that George smelled good, not like Draco, but good. Everything about him seemed not like Draco but good. It was confusing. "Sorry, it's

just weird with someone else."

George let out an amused-sounding breath. "I don't think it's weird at all," he said.

Harry raised an eyebrow again. Unless he was mistaken, George was flirting with him, which he supposed Fred and George both always did, but something about it felt a tad bit different. It felt more personal.

"They seem to be having fun," Draco said, nodding towards his husband and George. He let his fingers caress the soft hairs at the back of Fred's neck.

Fred glanced over at them, smiling. "If Harry would settle down perhaps they'd have a little more fun," he said. "What is it with him? Well, not that there's anything wrong with him, I suppose." His hand moved again on Draco's back.

Draco smirked. "In his own way, he is still pretty innocent," he said softly.

Fred let out a quiet laugh at that. "I think I actually get what you mean, as funny as it is to think of Harry as innocent."

Draco blushed but nodded. He didn't know if any of the Weasleys knew Harry had never done anything other than kiss with anyone but Draco. "And he can be a bit insecure, especially after what happened at Hogwarts."

Fred winced. "Ooh, yeah, I bet," he said. "Never heard the complete story, but I'm guessing it was bad?"

Draco flushed. "Someone gave me a Love Potion that set me on my ex-boyfriend while we were there," he whispered.

Fred's eyes widened. "Oh," he said, clearly surprised. "That would be ... bad."

"It was, but I think we have got past it," Draco agreed.

"Judging from what we saw earlier, I'd say you're right," Fred said with a grin, seeming to turn the beat of the music back on.

George slid his hand around to Harry's back now. "Just let me dance with you," he said quietly. "Relax, and have fun, and just move." He rotated his hips in a way that made Harry gasp very quietly and flush again.

"There, just enjoy it," George continued.

Harry looked over at Fred and Draco, and they seemed to be

doing all right. "Fine," he said, trying to relax.

"Yes," said George, voice so close to a groan that Harry stared for a moment. He had never heard George sound like that before, even when he was playing around.

He found, though, that once he moved past the fact that he wasn't dancing with his husband and it was still fun and harmless, he did enjoy himself. George was a good dancer, quick and coordinated. He was attractive, yes, but it didn't have to mean that there was something between them. Harry sighed and relaxed even more, smiling to himself.

The four of them danced a little while longer. Fred and George each got a bit more daring before it was over, grinding and rubbing perhaps a little more than they should have been, but it was difficult to determine what the rules were, where the boundaries lay. The twins seemed to push them, but then drew back in just enough time. It was a confusing game they played. Flirting, but teasing as well. Dancing too close, but then a safe distance away. Eyes unguarded and dark, but then light and amused. Yes, confusing.

Aimee and Samantha were both looking bewildered with their dates by the time it was done. Harry didn't know if it was because Fred and George weren't paying sole attention to them, or if it was because they had been dancing with men. That was another thing about Fred and George. They had so many people fooled about them. Or perhaps fooled wasn't the correct word. They could definitely play the field. Yes, that was it, Harry thought. They kept enough hidden that they were wild cards. They could form themselves to fit in with almost any type of person out there.

By the time the entire night was through, it was three in the morning. Harry and Draco parted ways with the twins and the girls they had brought. Harry had a very clear idea what Fred and George wanted to take the girls and do, but he didn't know if the girls were going to let them. Aimee, perhaps. Samantha seemed very adamant about going home. That was probably for the best though. She worked for the twins. Ron and Hermione went home to the Manor and Harry and Draco made a quick detour to the Burrow to pick up Valen and April from a sleepy Mr and Mrs Weasley before they too went home and collapsed into bed.

– CHAPTER ELEVEN –

Embarrassing Proposal

After that first night, Harry and Draco went out with Fred and George a few times more. Each time the twins had different dates – they even brought men with them once – but they still asked Harry and Draco to dance at least a few songs with them. It was always the same teasing, flirty-but-not-quite-flirting game. They were fun to be around, though, in ways that Ron and Hermione just didn't seem to be capable of. They were new fun, even though, technically, they weren't new.

Hermione was wonderful, but could sometimes be a bit uptight. And Ron, no matter how far he had come in the last two years, was still slightly awkward around things that were outside of his comfort zone which included two, or more, men dancing seductively with each other. He was very much at ease around Harry and Draco, as he lived with them and loved them both, but there were still the little things he did, like looking away when they kissed, or making little faces at certain things they said or did. It was nice to – as silly as it sounded – hang around people that were just a little bit more like Harry and Draco were. It was fun, and relaxing, and certainly never boring.

Draco's birthday was coming up quickly now, though, and Harry still didn't really know what to get him. He'd been having ... thoughts, but hadn't yet got up the courage to tell Draco what he was thinking. He'd only been having them for a couple weeks though, so he hadn't actually worked out any details yet. Harry was embarrassed by his thoughts; highly embarrassed, and didn't know if he really wanted to, or if he should, bring them up at all.

It would definitely be something big – something huge – to Harry, at least, if he were to bring it up. He'd actually been a bit upset with himself when he'd first thought of it, and had tried to block out the images and ideas, but he couldn't help it. It all just kept coming

back. And he had a feeling that Draco would ... well ... perhaps he didn't really have any idea what Draco would think. Harry knew his husband would be shocked. Yes, that was for sure. Would he be angry? It didn't seem like he would be. Would it upset him? Harry wasn't one hundred percent sure. He sighed, staring at his knees as he thought.

He was in bed with Draco. It was a lazy morning and they'd had Leakey bring breakfast and tea to them. Their children were apparently content in their bedroom for the moment, neither of them having begun crying yet. Harry could hear their little voices as they spoke to one another in the sometimes strange ways they had of doing so – a mixture of normal words, baby talk and Parseltongue. Most of the time it was Valen teaching April and April copying what her brother said. The Monitoring Charm on their bedroom allowed Harry and Draco to hear the children while keeping their own conversations private.

Draco set his empty tea cup aside and smiled, lying back with his hands behind his head. He watched Harry, waiting. He could always tell when something was up with his husband. He could practically see Harry building up the nerve to talk about whatever it was.

It was another full minute before Harry could even open his mouth. He got that far, looked at Draco, and then closed it again.

Draco sent the finished breakfast tray back to the kitchen and then cocked his head. "Come here," he said softly.

Harry's eyebrows sunk down a little, but then he closed the short space between Draco and himself, looking at him.

Draco reached to stroke Harry's hair back from his face, fingers combing through it. "Going to talk to me about it?" he asked.

Harry sighed. "Am I that obvious?" he said.

"Only to me," Draco assured him.

Harry sighed again. "It's sort of ... weird," he said, frowning a bit. "What I want to say."

Draco arched his eyebrows. "Weird, from you?" he teased.

Harry smiled, rolling his eyes slightly. "Yes, actually," he said. "You probably won't believe me."

Draco was intrigued but kept his face neutral. "I'm listening."

Harry took a deep breath, still having half a mind not to say it at

all, but then he said in a sort of rush, "Are you attracted to Fred and George?" And then he blushed scarlet, unable to help it, for his every thought about them sped through his mind then.

Draco's eyes widened. He hadn't expected the question. He tried to read from Harry's expression whether or not his flirting with Fred and George had upset his husband or something else. "They are attractive men," he said cautiously.

Harry was silent for a few more moments. "Yeah," he said quietly. He found he was actually a little afraid of telling Draco his thoughts. He swallowed. "Okay," he said, bracing himself, "what ... would you think of ... sex ... with them?" He had to look away from Draco's face and came close to whispering the word sex. Where the hell did the whole being a Gryffindor thing go when he needed it?

"Look at me," Draco said.

Harry's eyes flickered back to Draco's face. His heart was thumping.

"Are you asking because you are upset with me? Or is this something else?" Draco asked, still being cautious.

"Oh. No. No, no, I'm just – I'm just asking," Harry said, tongue stumbling over his words. Except that he wasn't just asking, but one step at a time was all Harry could seem to manage as he waited to hear what Draco would say.

Draco smiled, arching an eyebrow and reaching to cup his husband's chin so that he could look into his eyes. "So the answer is yes, I am attracted to them. And when they dance with us, yes, I do think of other things it would be nice to do with them," he answered, watching Harry carefully.

Harry's heart was still beating rather quickly. "Yeah – I ... me too," he said quietly. "It's ... hard not to."

Draco's smile grew and his heart sped up. "So you have been thinking about it?"

Harry bit his lip. "Yeah," he said with a small wince, and it strangely sounded more like a question than an answer.

Draco licked his lips, eyes darkening. "Tell me what you have been thinking about," he encouraged, voice dropping with sudden arousal.

Harry looked at Draco, slightly alarmed. "Um, well, sex," he said,

stating the obvious. "Your ... birthday's coming up and I thought ... maybe ... we could, well, you know."

"You aren't just talking fantasy, are you?" Draco asked, swallowing hard. He was quickly becoming very aroused as images flashed through his mind.

Harry's eyebrows rose up high on his forehead. Draco was getting this turned on just talking about it? "No, not just," he said, gaining more confidence. "I was thinking that we could talk to the twins and then ... work something out for your birthday or something. You know, like, just sex."

"I " Draco's brain seemed not to be supplying words anymore, so he nodded.

Harry licked his lips now. He leant in so that his mouth was against Draco's ear. "We could ... meet them here, get everything ready," he whispered. "And then, well, Merlin, what would we do?" He slid a hand down Draco's naked chest, dipping fingers lightly into his belly button.

"Yes, invite them to dinner and then a special dessert," Draco whispered, his cock already twitching at the idea.

"Mmm," Harry hummed quietly. "And not tell them anything at all of what we have planned?"

"And just how would you go about telling them?" Draco asked, amused. "Hey, come to dinner so we can fuck you?"

Harry took in a small, sharp breath at that, his body warming. "I guess that would be sort of odd," he said. "So, you want to ... fuck them?" he asked, very lightly tracing Draco's tattoo now.

Part of Draco wondered if this was a trick question but he was so aroused by the idea, he figured his body was making the answer obvious. "Yes," he managed, trembling under his husband's touch.

Oddly, Harry felt a quick spike of jealousy and a flood of arousal at the same time. He took a deep breath though and thought through his emotions. This was entirely his idea; Draco would never have asked on his own. Harry had known what Draco's reaction might be all along and, to be honest, this was something Harry wanted too ... a chance to bring a fantasy to life and fuck them as well. He trembled. "Yeah – I – me too," he whispered.

Draco reached for his husband, cupping his face and bringing

him down for a passionate kiss.

Harry moaned softly, slipping his tongue into Draco's mouth and bringing hands around to hold him.

The blond's right hand slid back into his lover's hair, pulling gently as his tongue slipped inside Harry's mouth.

Harry kissed Draco back slowly, stroking his tongue, sucking lightly upon it. He kissed Draco's chin and then back around to his ear, still kissing as he whispered between that, "Do you think they'll want to let us?"

"After the way they danced with us? Yes," Draco answered, gasping at both the words and touch.

"Yes," Harry said quietly in agreement, voice husky. After a moment's hesitant thinking, he continued in the same voice, "Do you think they'll move that way? How they dance?"

A groan escaped Draco's lips and he shuddered. "I certainly hope so," he answered, pulling Harry against him so that the other man was half lying atop of him.

Harry moved the rest of the way, straddling Draco with a quiet gasp. He continued to kiss him, hands roaming pale skin. "They move their hips nearly as well as you do," he said, moving his own hips in a circular motion against Draco as if his body had a need to demonstrate.

Draco's hands caressed Harry's smooth skin, fingers playing over his arms and chest and down his body. "You have certainly learnt to move yours well," he whispered, looking up with love and desire at Harry.

Harry smiled. "I had a very good teacher," he said, kissing Draco's lips again.

"So what will you want to do with them?" Draco asked, right hand caressing the hair on Harry's belly while the other slid back over his hip to his arse.

"I don't know," Harry whispered. "Kiss them, maybe ... suck them." He could hardly believe the conversation he and Draco were having. It was odd to talk about willing and wanted sex between anyone but himself and his husband.

Draco slid his hand down and wrapped around Harry's cock. "I want you to fuck me in front of them," Draco whispered, voice

hoarse.

Harry's eyelids fluttered and he groaned, even more from the words than the touch. He nodded his approval of that. "Anything you want," he said.

"I always want you," Draco whispered, stroking him. "And you know I love being watched. I love the idea of being fucked and sucked at the same time, too."

Harry groaned again. "I'm sure that can be arranged," he said, his voice shaky with arousal. He reached a hand for Draco's erection.

"Oh, yes, touch me," Draco gasped, fingers playing over his husband's cock while his silver hand cupped Harry's arse, squeezing.

Harry gasped at both feelings, stroking Draco in time with the long-fingered hand on his own cock.

"Ride me," Draco gasped, eyes half-closed as he watched Harry.

Harry groaned yet again, fingers suddenly magically slick on Draco's erection. "Oh, yeah, gonna ride this thick cock," he whispered breathlessly.

"Oh, yes, my lion," Draco moaned, thrusting up into Harry's hand. "I want to be inside you!"

Harry reached behind himself, lifting up a bit to press lubed fingers inside his entrance. "It's like my arse is begging for you," he said, licking Draco's lips as he tried to be ready quickly.

"Yes, because you know I belong inside you," Draco gasped. He was still stroking Harry's cock and licking his lips in anticipation.

"Mmm, belong there," Harry moaned. He grasped Draco's shoulder, shifting up in his lap and moving his other hand to take hold of Draco's cock behind him. He began the slow slide down as his lips parted slightly and a soft exhalation of breath escaped them while his body greedily held on to Draco, aching for more. Halfway to his goal, Harry pulled oxygen back into his lungs in an effort to make the descent last as long as possible. The feeling of being opened up and filled by his husband was one that Harry knew he would never grow tired of or want to rush. Unless, of course, he was in the mood for hard and fast. Harry clenched the muscles inside himself as he whispered, "Need you in me ... always."

Draco moaned and his neck arched as he felt Harry's warmth and magic envelop his cock. He could feel the slow and amazing progress

as Harry took it slow. "Oh, Gods, oh yes you do!"

"I do," Harry agreed, fully seated on Draco after a moment and panting. He moved his hips in a circular motion again. The dragon on his hip behaved as wildly as it always did while he was this turned on.

"Oh, yes, you move so well," Draco gasped, and looked up with half-lidded grey eyes at his lover. His hand on Harry's cock squeezed gently while the other hand reached up to touch his face.

Harry leant his face into Draco's hand, kissing it. He arched and moved on Draco's cock, rotating again, rocking against him.

"Harry, yes," Draco gasped. "I love being inside you and the look on your face as you take me."

Harry dipped his head forward and kissed him, moaning into his mouth. "My arse is yours," he whispered between quick breaths as he continued to slide up and down on Draco's cock. "So yours."

"Yes, yes, mine," Draco gasped, thrusting up into each slide now, his heels digging into the bed for traction as he moved.

Harry's head was full of the sounds in the room, the puffs of Draco's breath against his face, the feeling of being fucked by him. He concentrated on moving, working Draco's cock in and out of his body and shifting his hips at different angles until he felt the head of Draco's cock brush against the small knot of nerves that had waited impatiently. Harry couldn't help the moans that began to build up inside his throat.

Draco's fingers on his lover's cock kept pace with his movements, feeling the power inside Harry uncoil and writhe with the dragon on his hip. "Oh, yes, my love," he whispered, "take me, ride me!"

Harry moved faster after that, the moans now escaping with almost every breath. Unable to control his actions, he squeezed Draco's shoulder in a bruising grip and threw his head back, coming in spurts over his husband's belly and chest. "Draco," he groaned, arse clenching.

"Harry, yes!" Draco shouted, feeling his lover's body squeeze him tight and his magic flaring. Draco filled Harry with his seed, always amazed that he was allowed to do this. That Harry wanted him. Really wanted him so much.

Harry went slightly limp, panting still. He began kissing Draco

again, stroking his face and his hair. "No one could be as good as you," he said.

"No, no one," Draco smiled, kissing him back and running his finger through Harry's hair. "Playing with them won't make us any less meant for each other. I am always yours."

Harry nodded, knowing Draco was right. "Nothing could change that," he said. "I've put your mark on me." He smiled and touched the dragon.

Draco smiled, looking down between them and seeing the way both tattooed figures seemed to be curled up in post-coital bliss as well. "You set your mark on me long before," he whispered.

Harry kissed Draco softly, simply resting with him. "You don't think it will make things awkward, do you? Between us and Fred and George?"

Draco flushed, smiling. "They have always teased us, so no, I don't think it will change their behaviour that much."

"And you're not ... mad at me for this?" Harry asked. He had other questions but the issue most concerning Harry was that Draco might consider his suggestion hypocritical and he never wanted to do anything that would cause his husband to lose respect for him.

Draco smiled happily up at Harry. "For being willing to let us play with two gorgeous men who have been teasing us both for a long time?" he asked in a teasing tone.

Harry smiled crookedly. "I mean for, well, the way I've acted before and then now this." It was strange, but he still didn't like the thought of Draco with Theo. He frowned, wondering why.

"There are differences between what happened and this," Draco said softly, still petting Harry's hair. He withdrew his sticky hand from between their bodies and wiggled his fingers in front of his lover, grinning.

Harry raised an eyebrow and grinned as well. He held his tongue out and wagged it a little.

Draco chuckled. He had been expecting a Cleaning Charm but he happily brought his fingers to his lover's mouth. "Pervert," he teased.

"You love it," Harry teased back before sucking on one of his fingers.

Draco moaned, shivering as Harry sucked his fingers. "Oh, yes,

love it, love you," he answered.

Harry smiled. He gave Draco's hand a last lick before he moved forward to kiss him. "Love you," he said.

"No one will ever make me feel like you do," Draco whispered.

"Same goes for me," Harry whispered in return. "I love you, I love you, I love you." He pressed his lips to Draco's, kissing him with a sort of force. Then he pulled back and stared at his face for a few moments. "So this thing with Fred and George," he said. "Any ... limits?"

Draco thought about it. "This will be your first time with someone besides me," Draco said. "I would like you to set the limits you need to be comfortable."

"Well," Harry said slowly, blushing a little at the first time comment, "I don't know if it has to do with being comfortable, but, I like that you're the only one that's ever been inside me."

Draco blushed. "Yes, it feels ... special, to me," he answered. "Remember the binding clause around that?"

Harry nodded. "That was quite literal," he said.

"I don't mind fingers but I think yours should be the only cock inside me," Draco whispered.

Harry smiled, delighted that Draco felt the same way he did. He nodded. "I hope Fred and George are willing to bottom," he said. "I don't know if they ever have before."

The idea was startling to Draco and his face flushed bright. He imagined himself fucking one of the twins and closed his eyes, taking a sharp breath. "Merlin," he whispered.

Harry smiled a little, wagging his eyebrows. "Sorry you won't be surprised on your birthday," he said. "I figured this wasn't the kind of thing to be a surprise. Wouldn't want you to have a heart attack."

"Anticipation will be part of the fun," Draco agreed, smirking and raising his own eyebrows. He opened his mouth to add more when the quiet of the room was shattered by an ear-splitting shriek.

Harry sighed as screeches of the word, "Dada!" were added.

Harry and Draco only sat for a minute before the cries were even louder. "Merlin, she's so impatient," Harry huffed, sliding away from Draco and performing a Cleaning Charm.

Draco winced at the sound but nodded, getting out of bed and

reaching for his dressing gown. He knew Harry would need to feed April, which left him to deal with Valen.

Harry kissed Draco quickly before grabbing his dressing gown as well and heading into their children's bedroom.

– CHAPTER TWELVE –

Four for Dinner

No one knew that Harry and Draco were going to be having 'dinner' with Fred and George alone. Harry had made sure that no one knew. He was a bit embarrassed about it. He could only imagine Mrs Weasley's face if she were to find out he wanted a foursome between himself, his husband, and her twin sons. Merlin.

Ron and Hermione had taken Valen and April over to the Burrow, to give Harry and Draco alone time on Draco's birthday. It was very nice of them, as it always was that they took the children so often. Harry also couldn't imagine their faces if they were to find out what he and Draco really needed 'alone time' for. He flushed even as he thought about it, standing there with Draco in the entrance hall.

They were waiting for Fred and George to arrive. The twins were late, of course, but time seemed to be flying for Harry and he fidgeted as he stood against the wall.

Draco was a little nervous himself. His husband had agreed to let him have sex with two other men. And Draco had had a kind of crush on Fred and George for a long time. He smirked when he saw the flush on Harry's face. That never failed to turn him on. "Nervous?" he teased, stepping closer.

Harry rolled his eyes. "No, not at all," he answered, stuffing hands in his pockets, taking them out again, and then tapping on the wall with his fingers.

Draco stepped up so that he trapped Harry against the wall. He grinned down at him. "I could see about distracting you"

Harry shook his head, smiling a bit. "You are rather good at that," he admitted, bringing his fidgety hands forward to lightly grasp Draco's hips.

Draco leant forward so that he rested a hand on the wall on either side of his husband's head. He brought his body very close but not quite touching, breath on Harry's face.

Harry breathed in Draco's scent, his eyes drooping as he looked at him. "Very good at it," he said, voice gone a bit deeper.

"I adore that I can do that to you without even touching you, yet," Draco agreed, his own voice husky as well.

"*You* adore it?" Harry said, feeling the dragon against his skin quite adoring it as well.

Draco's grin was, at once, both mischievous and predatory. "Oh, yesss," he whispered.

Harry shivered, and then looked over almost lazily as noises sounded from the fireplace.

George stepped out of the hearth, brushing himself off as Fred appeared not more than a few seconds behind him. He grinned when he set eyes upon Harry and Draco. "Don't let us interrupt," he teased.

Draco stepped back from his husband, flushing as he turned to greet their guests. "Oh, there you are," he teased.

"In the flesh," said Fred, grinning.

Harry flushed brighter than Draco, but not from being caught nearly snogging. Fred's reply had his mind already fast-forwarding to the evening ahead. Harry swallowed reflexively in an attempt to clear the dryness that had sucked all of the moisture from his mouth.

"Sorry we're late," said George, grinning too as he handed his cloak to the house-elf that had come to collect them. "Had a lot of customers today."

"Business is good then?" Draco said, trying to sound casual and not laugh at the look on his husband's face.

"Quite good," Fred confirmed, staring at Harry with obvious amusement. "So, where's everyone else?"

"Yeah, we're starving," said George.

Harry let out the breath he had been holding very slowly, so as not to make a noise. They had told Fred and George they were having a dinner for Draco's birthday. Of course they would think everyone else was going to be there as well. He didn't want Draco to have to deal with all of this, but he couldn't seem to make his voice work right in that moment. Harry's eyes sought out Draco's face as a form of refuge while he tried to get his nerves under control.

Draco smirked, arching an eyebrow. "It's just the four of us, and I do believe dinner is ready," he said, pausing. "We will be dining in

our suite."

The twins laughed. "Just the four of us?" said Fred. "What would the point of that be?"

Oh, Merlin, Harry didn't know if he could take this.

"It's my birthday, indulge me," Draco teased and rolled his eyes.

Fred and George exchanged glances.

"Well, wait," said George. "You're not serious, are you?"

"It's honestly just the four of us here?" said Fred.

Harry still had not spoken and Draco was hard pressed not to laugh. "Let's go up to the suite, we have something to discuss with you," he said.

There was yet another glance exchanged between the twins. Harry wondered if they could talk to each other with their eyes. He supposed it was possible since he was sure that his own eyes were letting Draco know exactly how he felt which would probably explain the look of amusement each time he glanced at Harry.

"Okay," said Fred slowly, with a slow smile to accompany it. "But we're on the defensive now."

"Any pranks you might have planned, for whatever reason, are not likely to get past us," George agreed.

Well, it certainly isn't a prank, Harry thought.

Draco grinned, rolling his eyes. "Oh, like we could get anything past you," he teased, holding out his hand to Harry.

"Well, you couldn't," said Fred as Harry took Draco's offered hand. "But that doesn't mean you wouldn't try."

George snorted. "Oh, they're not that thick, are they?" he said.

Harry flushed brighter than ever as that simple sentence brought cocks to mind. Many cocks.

Draco chuckled at the look on Harry's face. He didn't need Legilimency to know what he was thinking.

Harry shot Draco a sideways half-glare. Where the *hell* did he store his calm composure so that it could be brought out so easily?

The twins walked behind Harry and Draco, following them through the house.

"You're awfully quiet, Harry," Fred observed, sidling up beside him. He bumped into him a little with his hip, like he did when they danced sometimes. "Might you be hiding something?"

Yeah. The erection in his trousers. "Maybe," he said. Might as well let them have their fun.

They reached the suite, where there was a table set for four. Draco continued to smile mischievously.

"Well, lads, you've just gone all out, haven't you?" said George, staring at the set-up.

"I must admit," said Fred, a smile in his voice. "I'm quite curious."

Draco gave his enigmatic smile and gestured for them to sit. "Make yourselves comfortable," he said.

"If you say so," said Fred, stepping into the room and looking around himself.

He and George both checked their chairs out before they sat, still smiling amusedly.

Draco laughed in delight, waiting until both men sat and then took his seat.

Harry sighed quietly as he sat next to Draco, able to compose himself a little better while he wasn't standing. Even though he had discussed this with Draco several times and was happy to see Fred and George, waiting and wondering how the twins would react to learning about why they had been invited was nerve-wracking.

"Let's see what this dinner is you have planned," said George, smirking.

The foods were all dishes that Draco knew the twins liked. It was a nice meal and he had picked a good wine from the Malfoy vineyard stock.

Harry reached for the wine. Oh, he could use a drink.

The twins seemed even more suspicious when they saw the food. They sniffed it and their drinks, staring at Harry and Draco. "If you've laced any of this with anything, revenge will be sweet."

"We haven't done anything to the food," said Harry. "Don't worry."

"Oh, well that just makes me feel so secure," said George.

Draco rolled his eyes, still grinning as he sipped his wine. "Oh, nothing like that," he purred.

Fred and George looked up at that voice and Harry blushed at the sound of it.

"If it's nothing like that," said Fred slowly, adopting his own flirtatious tone, "then what is it like?"

Draco looked to Harry, to see if he would speak. Harry had barely spoken a word since the twins arrived and this had been his idea. Since this was his birthday gift to Draco he knew he should be doing more than simply sitting there picturing the twins naked as he sipped his wine but even those two acts seemed to momentarily exhaust his ability to string together sentences. Catching Draco's look, Harry knew that attempting an entire conversation might do him in.

While Draco looked at him, Harry stared back. He wasn't exactly sure how to let the twins know what they wanted to do without sounding overly vulgar, getting embarrassed, or being too business-like. And there was still the problem of being able to speak. He took another drink from his glass.

The reaction just made Draco laugh again, shaking his head in amusement. Harry could do and say the most amazingly hot things in bed, but now the man was tongue tied. "So Harry had a proposal," the blond said to the twins, "but seems to be a little nervous to bring it up."

Harry flushed again and nudged Draco with his elbow.

The twins seemed highly intrigued, both of them leaning forward in their seats.

"What *is* this proposal?" asked George.

"And why does it make Harry blush like a virgin?" asked Fred, smirking.

Harry flushed even bloody brighter, trying to find the words in his head. He wasn't even sure how it was physically possible for him to blush since all of the blood in his body seemed to be in a hurry to go elsewhere.

Draco laughed aloud at that and shook his head. Teasing both the twins and Harry was delightful. He wondered how long he could draw it out before something gave. "He does blush very prettily, doesn't he?" he asked, smirking.

"Very pretty," Fred and George agreed in unison, and laughed.

"You are enjoying this far too much," Harry said, smiling tightly at his husband as his face burned bright red.

"Well, I know I am," said Fred, leaning back again to eat. "But, really. What's this proposal?"

"Want us to make you a special sex toy or something?" asked George, snorting.

"No," Harry said, voice slightly strangled as he thought of the sex toy Fred and George *had* given them. Well, sex *toys* really.

"Not exactly," Draco teased again, so hard now he thought his trousers might split from the pressure. "But we did appreciate the ones you gave Harry before."

The twins' eyes widened slightly, and they looked darker than their warm golden-brown for a moment.

Fred cleared his throat, looking at Draco oddly, but the amusement was back in a split second. "Well, we had hoped you would," he said.

Harry remembered why he wanted his cock in their arses then, why he wanted to watch Draco with them. They really were hot.

Draco licked his lips, letting the twins see in his eyes the way he felt about them. "So Harry has been thinking of ... experimenting," he said softly.

Their eyes flashed dark again and Harry felt his cock twitch.

"What kind of experimenting?" asked George.

Well, Harry couldn't leave it all to Draco, could he? "Of the sexual sort," he said, heart hammering.

Their eyes went even darker and Fred quirked an eyebrow. "Why are you telling us?" he asked, slowly again.

Draco grinned and waggled his eyebrows at Harry, trying to encourage him. "Harry has an idea of something I would like for my birthday," he said, voice deep.

The twins turned their eyes on Harry. He licked his dry lips and forged blindly ahead. "If you wouldn't mind too terribly much," he said, having to clear his throat, "you two are what I'd like to give him."

There was a pause, as if Fred and George were waiting for something more, but when nothing else came, their eyes narrowed. "You're taking the piss," said George accusingly.

Draco laughed again but shook his head. Yes, the idea of Harry actually offering to share Draco with anyone did sound unbelievable;

it would have been a year ago. He was still amazed himself and he'd had more time to get used to believing it.

Harry shook his head no. He wanted to make it clear to the twins that he wasn't playing and that they weren't being set up. "That's why we asked you here," he said in a quiet but firm voice. "Sex. With the two of us."

"With – with both of you?" said George, eyes still dark but going wide again.

Fred watched them with disbelief and ... hunger etched in his features. It was often there, but never like that.

Draco licked his lips, suddenly feeling more serious as the possibility became increasingly real. "Yes," he whispered.

"We've ... got the next room set up for after dinner If you want to do it," Harry said.

"And this isn't a joke?" asked Fred.

"No, not a joke," Harry answered.

"I ... I have been attracted to you two, for a long time," Draco confessed, his turn to blush now.

The twins' mouths dropped open slightly and they both looked at Harry as if to say, *Please don't kill us*, and Harry actually wanted to laugh. "Well, you are hot," he noted, hoping he sounded desirous rather than nervous.

"Indeed," Draco agreed, feeling his throat tighten and his blush spread to his ears. His cock twitched hard with his embarrassment.

It took Fred and George a few moments to get over the shock, which was really quite understandable.

"So you won't curse our dicks off if we say you're both fucking gorgeous?" asked George.

Harry thought they were practically *panting* and his cock twitched hard too. He had a feeling they were going to accept, and that it was going to be pretty good. In spite of Harry's awkwardness, he did want this birthday to be special for Draco and a night to remember.

Draco eyed his husband with amusement. "I don't think *cursing* your dicks is what he has in mind," he purred.

Harry flushed again but it was half in pleasure. "Interested?" he said.

Fred smirked sexily. Yes, he did. "I'm really starting to think

you're quite serious," he said. "Any rules?"

"Only one," Harry answered. "No fucking. Unless ... you want to be fucked."

Draco loved it when Harry was direct but it still brought another blush to his face to hear him say that to the twins.

"Why, Harry," said Fred, "you're quite the charmer, aren't you?"

Harry waited silently. The offer had been made and the terms had been set; it was all up to Fred and George now.

"How could we say no to those – undoubtedly – beautiful pieces of anatomy?"

Draco sucked in a breath at that and he swore he was getting sore from the arousal. Did Fred and George just agree to be fucked? Oh, Gods.

Harry touched Draco's thigh underneath the table with his fingertips. Once over the initial asking, this was really quite enjoyable.

"So how do you do it, Draco?" George asked, and he purred that time. "Do you unwrap your presents before or after we've sung Happy Birthday?"

Draco was speechless for a moment, licking his lips nervously again. "For dessert?" he suggested.

"What's for dessert?" asked Fred. "Us?"

Draco's breath caught and he nodded. "Yes," he whispered, managing to look at them both but still blushing as he did. Only Harry knew how much being embarrassed aroused him.

Harry leant in close to his husband, mouth against his ear as he said lowly. "I suddenly really want dessert."

"Oh, yesss," the blond replied, trembling. He couldn't have finished his meal at this point.

"God, you are so hot like this," Harry continued to whisper. "Come on." He slid his hand into Draco's, pulling for him to stand.

Fred and George still sat watching them.

Draco allowed himself to be pulled to his feet, flushing even more when he realised how obvious that would make his condition.

Draco needn't worry about his condition. When Harry stood, he was hard as a rock, and when Fred and George stood as well, it was obvious that they were in quite similar states.

Draco took all this in and grinned. "Happy birthday, indeed," he

whispered.

Harry grinned at him, pulling him towards the bedroom and glancing at Fred and George so that they knew to follow. Dessert was about to be served.

– CHAPTER THIRTEEN –

Dessert

Draco trembled as his husband led him into the candlelit bedchamber, the other two following. Now that he was there, he was almost too nervous to know where to begin.

It was indeed a bit overwhelming, and Harry didn't really know where to begin either. Fred and George, however, seemed a lot more confident.

"Lovely," Fred said huskily upon entering the room, shucking out of his robes.

Draco's eyes widened and his pulse quickened as he watched the other two. He had had fantasies like this but the reality was overwhelming.

Harry could hardly believe it. Fred and George, his best mate's twin brothers, were stripping for him and his husband. God.

"I hope you're not expecting us to give *you* a show," said George with a slow smile as he tugged on his own belt.

"Quite a good one so far," Draco answered, arching an eyebrow as he looked them both up and down.

Harry was surprised that he didn't feel a spike of jealousy. He actually quite agreed with Draco. Oh, Merlin, and then they dropped their trousers, and their erections were even more prominent and Harry shivered with arousal.

Draco shivered, as well, licking his lips again. He glanced to the side to see Harry's reaction and grinned at the open lust he saw.

Harry happened to glance at Draco as well, and he looked so incredibly, gorgeously turned on that he had to kiss him. So he did, and reached for the buttons of his shirt. It was no longer difficult to understand where to begin now that his lips were on Draco. His husband would always be his starting point, his finish line, and everything in between. Fred and George were simply there to make the 'in between' more fun.

Draco moaned the minute Harry touched him, mouth opening to him. He loved it when Harry took control.

"Love you. So hot," Harry whispered into Draco's open mouth, fingers moving quickly.

Draco panted as he stood, letting his lover undress him. He wanted this. Wanted to be spoiled like this on his birthday. "Yes," he agreed.

Harry groaned, and then, quite suddenly, there were another pair of hands helping, pulling Draco's shirt and slipping it down his shoulders. And Harry nearly jumped when yet another pair snaked from behind him to fumble with the fasteners of his trousers.

"Oh, Gods," Draco gasped, feeling almost faint with desire. He looked over Harry's shoulder to see one of the other two men smiling back at him. It was Fred and he locked eyes with Draco and licked a slow, wet line up Harry's neck. Harry groaned again.

Right then, Draco felt nips and licks to the back of his own neck as his hair was pushed aside and his bare chest caressed by George behind him. Draco moaned, tilting his head to one side to allow George better access but forcing himself to keep his eyes open to watch Fred with Harry.

Harry had expected a little awkwardness, a little hesitancy, not this – this *beat*, these sensations to come so easily. He could feel Fred's tongue on him, feel his hands still working on his trousers. He opened his eyes to watch Draco, and it was so incredibly strange to be so close to him, feeling this pleasure, watching him, and knowing they weren't the ones giving each other the pleasure.

Fred's eyes were still on Draco's as he licked along Harry's skin, and then licked the corner of his mouth. Harry looked at Draco too as he gently touched the tip of his tongue to Fred's.

Draco shivered with both the sensations of George's hands and mouth on him and the sight of his husband kissing Fred. He reached his hands back to touch the man behind him. George breathed hotly into Draco's ear, and then his hands were pushing at the trousers, sliding inside them to get them down and his palm rested against Draco's tattoo.

Harry watched them even as he licked along Fred's tongue, wondering if the tattoo would feel the same for Draco when a

different person was touching it.

Draco had wondered the same thing but was not surprised when the tattoo seemed to remain just that under George's hand. Not that it didn't feel good to have the man touching him.

Fred had managed to unfasten Harry's trousers even as his tongue was twisting with Harry's. Fred pushed his hands over the man's hips and then cupped Harry's arousal through his shorts. "Very nice," he whispered.

Harry gasped, thrusting out slightly into Fred's hand, still watching Draco. He felt almost *too* stimulated. It was unreal that Harry felt so intimately connected to Draco within the circle of two other men and it felt as though the moment was bringing them closer, adding a new layer of trust to their relationship and their love for each other. And watching George undress Draco was hot.

"Fuck, I wanna ride you," George whispered, pushing Draco's trousers and shorts down in one. He was naked, and his hard cock pressed against Draco from behind.

Fred gripped Harry's cock with his hand and his other hand cupped an arse cheek. "Good idea," he said to his twin.

Draco's entire body shuddered at that and he gasped, head turning to look back at George. His hands touched the man's hips, sliding back. George smirked at Fred and then captured Draco's lips, his eyes closing in obvious pleasure. And Draco found George's kiss was different, tasted different, than Harry's. Yet, it was good. And it was exciting listening to Harry and Fred too.

Harry gasped again from the sight before him, feeling his cock pulse with it and Fred's agreement with George. They really wanted to be fucked? Merlin, it was almost just too much. "You wanna ride me?" he breathed, amazed he could still even *think*.

"Do you have any idea how much we have wanted you two?" Fred asked, squeezing Harry's cock for emphasis.

"Perhaps a – oh, God – perhaps a bit," Harry panted, his eyes still firmly planted on Draco and how utterly – surprisingly – beautiful he looked while kissing. He groaned. "Mmmm, wanna see your cock in his arse," he said to his husband, actually surprising himself. He knew he had a filthy mouth when it was the two of them but, apparently, being a part of a crowd did nothing to clean up Harry's language.

Draco's eyes had nearly closed as he kissed George but they snapped open at that. If he couldn't see Harry's magical signature, he would have suspected Polyjuice. He pulled back from the kiss and looked into George's eyes. "Want me?" he asked.

A light flush spread over George's face and he nodded, completely and obviously aroused. Draco kicked his shorts and trousers aside and then turned, taking George by the hand and leading him to the bed. He smiled up at George and then over at Harry and Fred before lying back on the bed.

"Fantastic," Fred said, nipping at Harry's jaw. "Shall we join them?"

Harry's mouth had gone slack as he stared at Draco. It took him a moment to answer Fred. "Yeah," he said, voice very deep. "But I want to watch him."

George stared with open lust and awe down at Draco. "When did you get these?" he asked with a smirk, dipping to quickly lick the lion upon Draco's skin. Draco moaned, arching under that tongue. Though not as strongly as with Harry, the tattoo did seem to respond to Draco's arousal, moving as if pleased with the lick.

Fred fingered the edge of the tattoo that showed above Harry's shorts. "What's yours?" he asked.

Harry had gasped when Draco had arched and now took Fred's hand, sliding it down his own hip and then thigh, so far that his boxers had to pull down with it. "Why don't you take a look yourself?" he said.

Fred chuckled and slid to his knees, taking Harry's shorts to the floor. His face was now level with Harry's hip and he ran his fingers over the dragon tattoo.

On the bed, Draco reached out and sunk his fingers into George's hair. "Yes, more," he gasped. George groaned quietly, licking the tattoo again before licking straight up Draco's shaft.

Harry trembled, both from the sight of Draco again, and the feeling of Fred touching him. Had Draco touched him, the dragon would have arched and lolled its head and sparked. It seemed interested in Fred, but that was it. It wasn't mad for him. Harry felt a small bit of relief at that.

Fred chuckled, petting the tattoo. "Dragon in honour of him and

he has the lion, cute," he smirked. Then he slid his fingers over to Harry's cock and up his shaft. "This is even nicer."

"Yes," Draco encouraged, arching into George's tongue. "Suck me," he added. George complied, sliding his lips tightly over the head of Draco's cock and sucking greedily.

Harry licked his lips, dragging his eyes from Draco to look down at Fred. "You want it in your arse or your mouth?" he asked, enjoying the word game, and the heat it sent speeding to his groin.

"Is this an either/or or do I get to say both?" Fred responded with a grin, sliding back Harry's foreskin and licking the head of his cock. Harry groaned his approval, laying a hand atop Fred's head.

Draco was panting and murmuring encouragements to George, turning his head to watch Fred and Harry.

"You make the prettiest noises, don't you?" George cooed, a little raspy as he stroked Draco and pressed the flat of his tongue to the head, collecting every drop of pre-come.

Draco smiled, Fred and George mirrored each other's movements with Harry and himself. "Mmm," Draco hummed in response to the question.

On his knees, Fred slid his mouth over Harry's cock swirling his tongue as he did. Harry groaned yet again and then glanced up over at Draco, who was looking every bit like he was quite enjoying himself. Harry smiled at him. "Want to see?" he asked huskily.

Draco licked his lip. "I see you," he answered Harry, shivering at the sight as well as the feeling of George sucking his cock.

"See you too," Harry echoed, thrusting his hips forward a little. Fred bobbed his head, sucking and slurping Harry's cock. He had one hand resting on Harry's tattooed hip and the other wrapped around the base of his cock. Harry groaned. He could tell the difference between Draco and Fred as the sensations overtook him but there was no denying that Fred's tongue was capable of so much more than telling jokes.

George sucked up powerfully on Draco's cock, humming deeply and gently rolling his balls in his hand. Draco moaned again, eyes half-closed and fingers tightening in that red hair. He remembered the 'I Never' game they had played at Grimmauld and that both had drunk to having been fucked before. He wondered who and was now

very happy that they were experienced. He tugged at George's hair. "Come here," he said.

George moved at Draco's urging, up his body, and then quite plainly straddled him.

It blocked Harry's view of Draco's face and he suddenly felt a very strange pang in his heart. Even with a hot bloke going at his cock like he might never see one again, Harry couldn't do it without looking at his husband. "We have to move closer," he gasped.

Fred gave another slurp and then grinned up at him. "Sure," he said, getting to his feet then.

Draco shivered as George climbed atop him. It was almost intimidating. His cock twitched, eager, but he also found himself looking for his husband.

Harry was glad that Fred didn't seem to mind, and figured, really, that that was why he had felt comfortable doing this with them. This was just sex for them. It was what Harry had been the most worried about, that there might be something more there for them when he and Draco asked, but there wasn't. In the sense of a relationship, Draco was *his* and his alone, and even now, straddled by another man, having just had his cock sucked by that man, Draco was *his*. And perhaps it was possessive, but Harry couldn't help it, and perhaps it was territorial to claim Draco's mouth in a searing kiss as he climbed atop the mattress with Fred, but Harry couldn't help that either. There would always be others who would desire his husband but Harry couldn't help wanting to be the only one to *love* Draco.

Draco gasped, mouth opening to Harry's as he felt George sliding over him. He arched into the man even as his right hand came up to grasp Harry's hair.

"So hot," Fred said, grinning at them and running a hand down Harry's back.

Harry shivered at that, tongue sliding along Draco's, and George sliding along Draco's cock, and Fred's hand and skin sliding along Harry's and it *was* hot. "Your cock's aching to fuck him," Harry whispered into Draco's mouth, wanting this to be the most terribly arousing, amazing experience for his husband that he could possibly make it. "I want to watch it hard and wet and sliding into his eager arse, and I'll slide inside Fred and I want to kiss you as we're *fucking*

them."

There couldn't be anyone sexier than Harry. It was fact and Draco felt himself burn with the knowledge that the man loved him. "Yes," he gasped, shivering at those words. "Please!"

Fred chuckled. "Never thought to hear him beg," he said. He slid one hand around Harry, wrapping fingers around his shaft. "Sounds good to me."

"I don't think – mmm – anyone needs to ask what sounds good to me," said George, nearly breathless as Draco's cock slid along the cleft of his arse. "I do ask for some lube, however."

Harry almost wanted to laugh at the sound of his voice, somehow high and low at the same time. With Fred's talented hand still pulling at his cock, Harry turned and lay lazily back, so that his head rested near Draco's hip. He had quite a spectacular view of Draco's cock and George's arse. He reached for that cock, hand slicked with lube wandlessly in a quick second.

Draco felt the spark of magic and the lube, groaning as his lover slicked his cock for George. He turned his head and he could see Fred's hand pumping Harry's cock. The second twins' attention was on watching George about to impale himself on Draco's cock.

Harry was panting with arousal by the time he had added more lube and gently began pressing fingers into George. George stilled, his back arching slowly, his eyes closed as an extremely sexy noise spilled from between his parted lips. Harry's cock twitched hard in Fred's hand.

"Harry likes that," Fred told his brother, his voice betraying how much he did too.

Draco trembled as he slid his silver hand across the bed and up Fred's thigh. The man gasped when the warm smooth metal of his fingers stroked Fred's cock.

"You don't know how good it feels, dear brother," George managed to moan with that teasing tone of voice he used whenever he called any of his brothers 'dear brother.' And they both sounded so fucking sexy and Harry thought he might die of arousal hearing them *talk* like that to each other. Harry pumped his fingers inside George, pulling more sounds from his throat as he stretched him for Draco.

"And the silver hand," Fred replied, "you have to try this ..." He moaned as Draco's fingers, wrapped around his shaft, began pumping him.

Draco's other hand was still petting his lover's head on his stomach. "Ready?" he asked, his cock brushing against both George's thigh and Harry's hand.

"Mmm, yeah," George breathed, and Harry slid his fingers out slowly, taking Draco's cock again to position it at the tight, slick ring of muscle.

Draco moaned again when he felt both his husband's hand on his cock and the head pressed against George's entrance. "Yes, ride me," he encouraged.

Fred laid his hand atop Draco's silver. "Slow down," he warned him, not wanting to come yet. He smirked, watching with hungry eyes as his brother prepared to fuck the blond.

George smirked too, licking his lips as he slowly began to sink down on Draco's cock, back arching in that same slow motion.

Harry's mouth went a bit slack and he groaned from deep in his chest. "Fuck," he whispered.

"Oh, yesss!" Draco hissed and his body shook with the effort not to arch yet.

"Oh, brother," Fred said in a voice that sound envious.

Harry groaned again and actually felt high. With effort, he pushed himself up as George pushed himself down, and then went for Fred's mouth, guiding him to lay down beside Draco.

Draco released Fred's cock so the man could move, his own attention focused on the man riding him now. He gasped, arching now as George came down on him again.

Fred trembled a bit, despite his grin as he lay down beside Draco, looking up at Harry. "Going to take me now, Harry?" he asked, voice husky.

Harry traced Fred's lips with his tongue, trailing his still-wet fingers down his body to trace his entrance in much the same way. "Yes," he said, eyes half-lidded. "I am."

"Oh, fuck, feels good," George gasped when Draco arched into him. He rolled his hips, his entire body, like he danced.

Draco reached both hands for George's hips now, meeting the

hip rolls with his own moves. It was like they were on the dance floor and it was all the hotter for it.

Fred was watching Harry with his mouth parted in clear anticipation. He spread his legs until one lay against his brother's too. Harry slicked his fingers again with more lube before slipping them inside the man below him, groaning at the tightness of his body.

Fred hissed, tensing a moment before relaxing into that touch. He shifted, pulling his knees up more. "Fuck," Fred managed and then grinned up at his brother. "He feel good?" he asked him.

Draco worked his hips, his cock sliding in and out of George. "Yes," he encouraged and agreed.

George laughed breathlessly. "Feels fucking good," he answered his brother.

"Oh, yes, he does," Harry agreed, searching around for Fred's prostate as he glanced at Draco's face.

Draco face showed his delight as he writhed under George, smiling at the laughter. He looked over at Harry, licking his lips at the almost predatory expression. "Fuck him, Harry," he encouraged.

"Oh, God," Harry moaned at that, removing his fingers and slicking his cock quickly. "You want my cock?" he asked Fred.

"Oh, he wants it," said George, rotating slowly.

"Yes, fuck me, Harry," Fred begged, both desire and mischief in his eyes as he did.

The slow fuck was driving Draco crazy. He wanted it to last, especially since he wanted Harry to be fucking Fred at the same time. Yet, his body was beginning to tremble with the need to go faster.

Harry shuddered at those words leaving Fred's mouth. "Fuck, yes," he whispered, beginning to press inside.

Draco couldn't see Harry's cock from where he was, but he could see the looks on both men's faces. "Yes, my love," he gasped.

Fred shook and moaned, eyes half closed as Harry filled him. "Oh, yes," Harry gasped in return, waiting for Fred to adjust. He pushed his legs up a bit, bending and leaning to bring his mouth to his husband's.

Draco saw Harry leaning forward and he pushed himself up on his elbows to meet him. He kissed his husband, moaning while George's body tightened and slid on his cock.

Harry slid his tongue into Draco's mouth as he slid his cock into Fred's arse, setting a pace as he rocked into the man.

"You're so fucking hot," George gasped, moving a bit faster atop Draco.

Now things seemed to be picking up speed and Draco gasped as George rocked on him. Fred stared up at them kissing, arching into Harry with each thrust. Harry broke the kiss to pant against Draco's lips, moving his hips more firmly so that his skin was slapping with Fred's. He reached down to wrap a hand around the man's cock.

Draco mirrored Harry's movements, wrapping long fingers around George's cock too. His other hand clutched at Harry's hair as he stroked and fucked George.

Harry sighed with the familiar feeling of Draco's hand in his hair. "Feel so good," he panted. "They feel good."

George moaned long and loud. "I'm close," he breathed.

"Bring us," Draco insisted, tugging at Harry's hair to let him know what he wanted.

Harry nodded, knowing exactly what Draco meant. He sped his hand and hips up, jolting Fred's body as he fucked him. It didn't take very long before he could feel his own orgasm teetering on the edge, the sounds in the room, the smell of sex, sweat, men, the *beat* – it was all so much, and so fucking good.

"Shit!" George shouted, throwing his head back, and Harry looked to see one long, sticky stripe painting Draco's chest. His body tensed, his balls tightened and he was coming hard inside Fred, thrusting and jolting his body again.

"Ohhhh, yesssss!" Draco shouted. He would probably have come with George writhing on him like that, but the power of Harry's magic sweeping through him made it feel explosive. His back arched as he filled George, his entire body shuddering and his hand in Harry's hair tightening.

Fred cried out too, legs wrapped around Harry's hips as his come coated his hand. Harry held himself up with effort, shaking and trembling in bliss.

George slumped, panting as his muscles continued to convulse around Draco. Fred rested one hand on Harry's side and the other reaching to pat his brother's thigh affectionately. He was shuddering

but laughing too.

Draco smiled at the happy laugh, still so high from the orgasm and magic that he would have laughed at nearly anything. And then they were all four laughing, because they were all four high, and having spectacular sex like that was certainly good reason to laugh happily.

"I like this kind of birthday party," Draco added as he laughed, feeling totally slick, messy and delighted.

"You know, I think I rather like it too," said George with a grin, raising up to let Draco slip gently from his body. "Splendid idea, lads."

Harry smiled goofily, pulling out of Fred, and unable to resist sitting back on his knees to admire the look of him. "Yes," he said.

Draco continued to smile, looking up in wonder between the other two men and Harry. "Birthdays are for fucking," he quoted and laughed again.

"Well, quite obviously," Harry agreed, grinning as he bent over Fred to kiss Draco again.

Fred scooted up and leant over Draco, kissing him once Harry was done. "Happy birthday, Draco," he said with a grin when he pulled back again.

Draco smiled up at him. "Thanks," he answered.

George laughed at that and bent to kiss Draco as well. "And many happy returns of the day," he said with a playful eyebrow waggle.

Draco blushed, sitting up now. "I hope so," he said smugly.

Fred and George exchanged grins before they both planted big kisses on Harry's cheeks, and Harry squirmed away from them when he felt their tongues against his skin. He shook his head, but was very glad that it seemed things would be completely fine.

They laughed, crawling away and off the bed with come leaking down their legs. Harry couldn't help but stare and smiled goofily again, looking at Draco.

Draco grinned too. It was a view he never thought he would have. "You look good, wearing us," he teased.

"Hm?" said Fred absently, looking over his shoulder as if he could see his own arse. He smirked and shook it a bit as George

laughed, bending slowly to retrieve his clothes.

Harry shook his head at them again, but they were damn hot.

Draco smiled as he watched their friends dress. He felt so happy he couldn't stop smiling.

The twins cleaned themselves and soon stood in their robes, grinning at Harry and Draco.

"Well, boys," said Fred. "It's been a wonderful, kinky evening."

"Too right," George agreed.

"I do wonder what you'll come up with next. Why, the next time we see them —"

"Harry might be all dolled up in a corset and stockings."

Harry flushed and made a face, at which the twins laughed loudly.

Fred winked. "See you."

George was still chuckling as he followed his brother out of the room.

Draco laughed too and waggled eyebrows at his husband.

Harry shook his head at Draco, but smiled at him, falling onto his back and wrapping arms around Draco's neck so that he had to come too.

The blond laughed, happily allowing himself to be pulled down with Harry. "You are amazing," he said, voice full of wonder.

"Oh, am I?" Harry said, amused.

"You know you are," Draco laughed, carding his fingers through Harry's extremely messy hair.

Harry rolled his eyes, simply staring at Draco with a nice, small smile on his lips.

"You seemed to enjoy that as much as I did," Draco pointed out, settling down beside Harry with an arm around him.

"Well, why lie?" Harry said, content as he continued to smile. "It was fun. And you looked hot."

Draco looked serious. "No, never lie to me. I am very glad you enjoyed it. And even more happy to be with you than ever."

Harry released a quiet laugh. "Well, that's good to know," he said.

Draco flushed. "I mean, that you trust me," he said.

Harry went a bit more serious himself then. "I *do* trust you, love," he said.

"Good," Draco smiled again. "So, my lion, what was it like for

you?"

"You mean the noises I made didn't make it obvious enough?" Harry teased, but then pulled Draco closer. "Honestly, it was very good, very hot. They move well and they're excellent kissers, but you're ten million times better. And it was nice because ... I knew they wouldn't really make a move on you, that they didn't, you know, like, want to date you or anything." His face flushed a small bit with the confession.

Draco chuckled, not the least bit surprised by this confession. "Still yours," he assured him. "Gladly and completely yours always."

Harry sighed gently in contentment. "I know," he said, and smiled again. "Yours."

"I still have a few hours left on my birthday," Draco whispered, licking one of Harry's nipples playfully.

Harry grinned. "Yes, and you can bend me to your every whim. Except we don't have any corsets," he said with a loud, happy laugh.

Draco snorted, not so sure about the corset idea, and made a face that showed that. "Hey, I did the eyeliner bit already," he laughed.

Harry snorted. "Yes, but that was hot," he said. "Fred and George are just weird."

"We haven't played as many of our pretend games in a while," Draco said, smirking.

"Hmmm," Harry hummed with interest. "Suggesting something?"

"Oh, maybe the Chosen One catches the Bad Slytherin doing something naughty and decides to teach him a lesson?" Draco asked hopefully.

A slow grin spread across Harry's face. "That sounds *lovely*," he said in all seriousness. He slapped Draco's arse. "How about you go and do something naughty then?"

Draco rolled away and Summoned his wand, casting Cleaning Charms on both of them and then stood there smirking as he thought of what to do next. "Oh, I have been terrible. Insulting Muggle-borns and scaring first year Gryffindors," he drawled.

Harry gasped in pseudo shock, his eyes going darker. "Well, I absolutely can't have that," he said. "Someone will need to be punished."

"And you think you are the man to do it, Potter?" Draco drawled,

twirling his wand in his fingers.

"I think I might be, Malfoy," Harry said, drawling himself. And then he grinned in a predatory fashion before he pounced.

– CHAPTER FOURTEEN –

In the Morning

Harry still couldn't believe what he and Draco had done the previous night with Fred and George and, more specifically, he still couldn't believe that it had been so enjoyable. But it had been, and he was happy that they'd done it – not only because it had been fun, but also because he felt like it had perhaps made things between himself and his husband even better.

The children were still sleeping, having been brought home by Hermione and Ron, and it was a quiet, peaceful summer morning. Harry leant over, pressing a smile and a kiss against Draco's lips.

Draco hummed against Harry's lips, not even opening his eyes yet but reaching his hand for him automatically.

"Good morning," Harry told him, voice raspy with sleep as he pressed himself to Draco's side.

"Morning, love," Draco whispered and then hummed happily as he rubbed himself against his husband.

Harry chuckled. "You mean you haven't had enough?" he teased, smoothing a hand down Draco's back.

"Enough of you?" Draco said, opening his eyes, smiling at Harry. "No such thing."

Harry laughed lowly in delight. "Want another piece now?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"Oh, yes," Draco answered, sliding his hand over Harry's hip to squeeze his arse.

Harry shivered as Draco's fingers brushed over the dragon tattoo. He slicked his own entrance in lube before Draco even got there, grinning at him.

Draco chuckled when his fingers found his lover ready. "Oh, so eager for me," he cooed as he began pushing inside.

Harry murmured a low throaty noise in pleasure. "Why, of course," he said, voice dropping into a huskier tone. "You aren't the

only insatiable one around here."

Leaning in for another kiss, Draco's tongue began seeking entrance to his husband's mouth even as he pushed a second finger inside Harry.

Harry slid his hand back up Draco's skin, grasping the back of his neck. He opened his mouth for his husband, sucking his tongue inside. Harry wanted to fill himself up completely with Draco. He wanted to taste him, touch him, encircle him as a reminder that they belonged only to each other. As wonderful as the previous evening had been, Harry needed to close the circle again until his world narrowed down to what existed only between the two of them.

Draco moaned, cock twitching in response. He pressed his knee between his husband's, encouraging him to open his legs for him. Harry did, letting his legs part as he moved onto his back, pulling Draco with him. As they moved, Draco's fingers slipped from his husband and he positioned himself between Harry's legs. It was a tricky position one-handed, not having a second hand to brace himself.

"Do you want your other hand?" Harry asked breathlessly, looking up at Draco about to push inside him. Draco smiled and nodded. So, Harry held out a hand and Summoned it, attaching it to Draco with the well-known charm.

Draco chuckled, shivering as Harry used magic with their bodies pressed so close. He braced himself with the silver hand while sliding the other over the dragon on his lover's hip, before using it to position himself.

Harry released a moan, gazing lustfully up at Draco as he wriggled his arse down against him. "Give me a nice, lazy fuck," he said, smiling with half closed eyes.

Draco delighted in pleasing Harry, his almost imperious attitude making him laugh even as he pushed into him.

Harry laughed too, but then gasped when Draco breached him. "Mmm, so good stretched around you," he said, arching into the movement.

Draco pushed all the way in and held there, chuckling. His lion husband could even turn bottoming into a management position. "I adore filling you," he gasped.

"Good, hop to it then," Harry teased, though it was more of a gasp as well. He drew his legs around Draco's thighs, pulling him tighter.

"Git," Draco said as he exhaled, shivering as Harry's body clenched around him as well.

"Prat," Harry answered, pulling said prat down to kiss him again.

Draco would have laughed but his mouth was full and his body trembling with the need to move. He began to rotate his hips, sliding in and out of his lover's body even as he mirrored the movements with his tongue.

Harry groaned, the sound a low rumble from his chest. "Oh, love it when you fuck me, Draco," he breathed when their lips parted.

Draco grinned, continuing the slow rotation of his hips and looking into those green eyes. "I would never have guessed," he teased.

Harry continued to arch against Draco with every thrust. "Especially when you hit – *mmm* – there. You're doing an exceptionally good job of that this morning," he laughed, breathless again.

"I adore morning shags," Draco agreed, rocking gently as he continued his slow slide in and out of his husband.

Harry adored them too, nodding while he let himself slide too deep into the pleasure to say anything else. However, he did open his mouth again when he was shining with sweat and *right* on that edge. "Make me come," he gasped, speeding his movements. "Fuck, Draco, make me come!"

Draco had fallen into a place of suspended pleasure, rocking and sliding and just glorying in the moment. At Harry's urging, he began thrusting hard and fast.

Harry threw his head back, reaching down to grasp the length of his cock. And then he was coming hard between them, keening his intense approval of Draco's movements.

Draco cried out, thrusting hard into his lover, entire body tensing with the power released between them.

"Mmmm, yes," Harry encouraged, voice slurred as he petted Draco's hair, clenching around him purposefully. The slow and graceful descent that bridged ecstasy and satiation was always one of

Harry's favourite places to be with Draco. Enveloped in the damp warmth of each other while gliding back to earth; Harry would have been content to stay there forever.

Draco gasped again, nearly collapsing atop his husband. He curled over and around Harry, holding him. "Yes, indeed."

Harry smiled. "Oh, that was a good one," he sighed, revelling in moving his hands over Draco's slick back.

"Very good," Draco agreed, resting his head on Harry's shoulder, enjoying the quiet before the children woke.

Harry closed his eyes, thinking along the same lines as his husband. He thought he was about to drift off again when there was a loud pop in the room. His knew even before he opened his eyes that a house-elf would be standing there. Well, at least Draco was covering his bits with his own body for the moment.

"Master Draco," said Leakey, large eyes wide. "There is someone at the door that needs to be seeing you."

Draco didn't move from atop Harry, turning his head to look with annoyance at the elf. "Who could possibly be at the door, especially this early?"

"Mistress Narcissa," Leakey squeaked. "Leakey was telling her I is sorry, I is, but I cannot be letting her in because of the wards, Master Draco, but she is wanting to be seeing you."

Harry had never heard the elf ramble on in such excitement, and his own eyes had gone wide. Surely Leakey was mistaken.

Draco withdrew and rolled off his husband, moving to sit up and looking at the elf with wide eyes. "My mother? Here? Now?"

"Now at the door!" said Leakey, nodding quickly. "Right outside, she is. And it is being her, Master! It is being her!"

Draco scrambled from the bed, Summoned his wand, cast a Cleaning Charm on himself and grabbed his dressing gown.

Harry's mouth had fallen open and he didn't know what exactly he was supposed to do as he watched Draco spring from the bed and rush about. Harry had seen many different faces of Draco, even before that very first kiss but this was new. He couldn't recall ever seeing his husband ... flustered. And Harry hoped, for Draco's sake, that it really was Narcissa at the front door. He could already see the relief and hope in Draco's eyes and didn't want to see that replaced

with despair.

"My mother, alive, Harry!" Draco babbled excitedly. "Get up!"

Harry blinked a few times before he smiled in amazement at the happiness in Draco's voice. He cast a Cleaning Charm as well before grabbing his own dressing gown and pulling it on.

"Tell my mother we will be right there," Draco told Leakey and then reached for Harry's hand.

Leakey nodded quickly again and popped away, while Harry took his husband's hand, squeezing it. He was feeling a bit flustered himself but he wanted to be strong for Draco just in case the elf was mistaken. With the length of time that Narcissa had been missing, it was hard to believe she could be standing on their doorstep.

Draco Apparated them both to the front hall. He was so excited and nervous he was almost afraid to open the front door. What if it wasn't really his mother?

Harry was nervous too, mostly for Draco, but, Merlin, what if it *was* Narcissa? The last time he'd seen her had been two children ago at their wedding, and the last time Draco had seen her, she'd disappeared directly after. He knew she hadn't been responsible for what had happened the night Valen was born, but it was difficult to think of her and not recall the fear he and Draco had felt while delivering Valen on their own and the terror of nearly losing his husband. That, however, was only Harry's initial feeling. Other, less identifiable, feelings hovered just behind the apprehension but Harry took a deep breath and shoved them all back down.

Draco wondered if they should have got dressed first but he didn't want to keep his mother waiting. He took a deep breath and opened the front door.

And, quite amazingly, there stood Narcissa Malfoy. Her hair was longer, falling around her waist now, and ragged at the ends. Her robes were common and draped over her thinner form, and she appeared pale and slight. Her eyes were red-rimmed, and makeupless, a rare look from her, and there was nervousness in them, but when they fell upon Draco, the woman gasped with a softness that was nearly a whisper and brought a hand to her mouth.

Draco's eyes watered immediately, stepping forward with his hands out to Narcissa. "Mother," he managed but his voice caught on

anything more.

"Draco," she breathed out as if his name were a prayer. Narcissa stumbled forward and hugged her son tightly, grasping at his dressing gown like someone might come to pull him away from her.

Harry stood to the side, wanting to be a source of strength for Draco but giving mother and son a moment to themselves. Leakey bounced into the house from outside to stand beside Harry, watching the scene in adoration.

Draco put his arms around his mother, a small sob escaping him. "You're real," he said in wonder.

Narcissa's blue eyes filled with tears which immediately created paths down her smooth face. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," could be barely discerned from the sounds.

It had been over two years and two months since Draco had seen his mother. When she hadn't reappeared after Voldemort was destroyed, he had assumed her dead. He cried now, unable to stop himself. "You're back," he choked out, his voice thick with emotion.

"I – I didn't want to stay away so long, son, but – " Narcissa paused and brought one shaking hand up to gently brush the hair back from Draco's face, " – the passing of time seemed to make it more difficult to return but yesterday marked another ... birthday that I missed and I knew I had to see you. I'm so sorry, Draco," she said with a quiet sob and clutched tightly at her son's back. Harry could see her thin body trembling and heard the anguish in her voice when she apologised. He suspected the apology was for more than staying away for so long. Much more.

"You're home," Draco said, voice cracking, "I am so glad you are home."

"Tu ne sauras jamais combien tu m'as manqué, mon petit-dragon avide." Narcissa whispered to him, kissing the side of his face.

Draco pulled back a little bit, smiling down at his mother as he soaked in her words and knew that she, too, would never know how much he had missed her. He then looked over at Harry, who was still standing in the doorway.

Harry tried not to frown, not wanting to interfere, but uncomfortable with not knowing what had been said.

Narcissa sniffled and also turned her head towards Harry, who

gave Draco a small smile before turning wide eyes on his mother-in-law. Harry moved away from the doorway in invitation for both of them to come inside.

Draco kissed his mother's cheek and then stepped back, drawing his wand. He closed his eyes and focused on the house wards, shifting the permissions to once again recognise her magical signature.

It brought more tears to Narcissa's eyes that she quickly wiped away, and then she stepped into the house, taking a deep breath and releasing it quietly and slowly through her nose.

"Welcome home," Draco said softly as he joined them inside, closing the door behind him.

Harry stared at the woman standing before him and knew that his life was about to take a wild turn. He swallowed inaudibly before nodding. "Welcome home, Mrs Malfoy."

Narcissa nodded as well, fixing her robes with absent hands and smoothing her hair as if she were about to see someone important. She stared back up at Draco, almost meekly.

Draco was still stunned and unsure of whether to treat his mother like a guest in the Manor. He couldn't even offer her her old rooms because he and Harry occupied them now. "Uh, let's go into the sitting room and have some tea," he suggested.

"Yes," she agreed, taking a few steps forward to follow Draco.

Leakey popped away, apparently to get the tea, and Harry followed Draco and his mother into the sitting room, feeling very odd and still shocked.

Draco had to adjust the robe as he sat down, aware that they were barely dressed. He didn't even know where to start with all the questions. "I have missed you very much," he said.

"I've missed you every day," Narcissa agreed, reaching to take her son's hand and squeezing it. "I've been trying to keep up with you. With everything."

Harry left them to sit on the couch together, taking a seat in one of the armchairs instead, watching.

"You can't trust everything you read in the papers," Draco warned her, reaching to take her hand again as if to reassure himself she was real. "But you do have two grandchildren now."

She smiled at that, so many different emotions in her eyes that it was hard to read. "You named her after me," she said softly.

Draco smiled back. "Yes, her middle name," he agreed. "They will be up soon."

She actually looked a little nervous at that.

Harry wandlessly cast a *Tempus* to check the time. "Any minute now," he said.

Leakey returned with the tea.

"Have the lavender suite prepared for Mrs Malfoy," Draco told the elf and poured tea for his mother and then himself. "Things are a lot different here," he warned her.

Narcissa took her tea, holding it steady. "I have not been here for ... two years," she said. "It would be foolish to not expect some things to be different."

Draco nodded, stirring sugar into his own tea. He didn't know how she would react to Ron or Hermione now. "I don't know if you are ready to talk about it yet, but at some point, I would really like to know what happened, where you have been."

She nodded again too, and then, as if he had been able to sense Draco thinking about him, Ron strode into the room, looking tousled and sleepy. "Oh, you blokes are already up? I didn't think you'd be awake for ... another" He trailed off, staring at Narcissa in great confusion. "Um ...?"

Draco was torn between wincing and laughing at their friend. "Mother, do you remember Ron Weasley?"

Narcissa's back had immediately straightened so much that it looked uncomfortable. "I know him," she said.

Ron scratched his arm, still very obviously confused.

"Ron and his wife, Hermione, live with us here at the Manor," Draco explained, watching his mother warily.

"Yes, I know," she said quietly. "I believe that was mentioned in the newspapers."

Harry shouldn't have been surprised, being married to a Malfoy and all, but he was still rather amazed at how quick Narcissa's demeanour and mood seemed to change.

"Good," Draco said, "that should make things easier for you then." He sipped his tea again. Fossey popped in beside them before

he could figure out what to say next.

"Master Harry," the elf said. "Miss April be awake."

Narcissa's calm mask faltered.

"Thank you," Harry told Fossey, getting to his feet. He looked over to Draco. "Shall I get them?"

"Please," Draco answered, smiling at his husband.

Ron followed quickly after Harry as he left the room. "What's she doing here?" he asked, wide-eyed. "I thought she was ... was"

"So did I," said Harry. "And Draco. Apparently, she's alive. Leakey woke us this morning and said she was here – just like that."

"Merlin."

"Tell me about it," said Harry, then wondered why he was walking and stopped. "You go let Hermione know," he said to Ron. "I'll get the kids."

Ron nodded, and they both Disapparated.

Harry could hear April's cries before he opened the door to her room.

"Dada!" she squealed when he entered.

"I know, I know," he said, crossing to get her out of her cot.

Valen was already out of his cot and playing with toys on the floor. Toys that should have been in the playroom instead. He smiled up at Harry.

Harry smiled back at him, shaking his head. He hefted April against his side, then patted his leg with his free hand. "Come on, son," he said. "Someone downstairs for you to meet."

Valen got to his feet. "April smells," he told his father, who had forgotten to change the baby's nappy.

Harry huffed. "Yes, thank you for the information," he said. He made a quick stop to change the nappy, which did smell rather awful, and then led both his children through their house and down to the sitting room.

Valen strode along beside Harry, looking up at him curiously. "Daddy worried," he said.

Harry raised his eyebrows as he stared down at the boy. "Nervous," he corrected. "A tad nervous. But don't you be worried, okay?"

"Okay," Valen said, squeezing Harry's hand as if to reassure his

dad.

Harry smiled. Valen had the ability to try his patience in so many ways but then there were times like these caused Harry to go soft inside and forget the naughty moments.

The three finally reached the sitting room, April tugging on Harry's hair so that it was in even more of a state than when he'd left.

Draco looked up when his family came in the door. "Mother," he said softly. "Here are our children."

Narcissa looked hesitantly around, her eyes looking dangerously tearful again when she set sights on the two little people.

April ceased her pulling, staring at her grandmother with the same exact colour blue eyes as the blonde woman.

Valen released Harry's hand, looking at Narcissa curiously as he walked forward until he stood in front of her.

Narcissa's hands trembled, so she set her tea aside and stared at Valen with warm, soft eyes. "Hello," she said quietly, giving him a small smile and hurriedly wiping at her eye so that the tear didn't escape down her cheek.

Draco watched in wonder as his son held out a hand to Narcissa.

"I am Valen," the little boy said. "You are pretty."

Narcissa had to wipe her eye again before she took the little outstretched hand. "Thank you," she said with a small laugh, sniffing again. "You are very handsome."

Harry watched, astounded.

"Valen, this is your grandmother Narcissa, my mother," Draco said, his own eyes watering as well.

Valen looked between Draco and Narcissa but didn't look surprised by the statement. "Grandmother," he said, "will you eat breakfast here?"

Narcissa brought her other hand up to rest her fingers lightly beneath Valen's chin and leant forward as if the two were sharing a secret. "I would love to, ma petit," she said.

April patted Harry's face, still staring. "Down," she commanded in her little voice.

Harry kissed her forehead before placing her on the ground, following after her as she toddled up to her brother and grandmother.

Valen looked at his sister, and then smiled at Narcissa. "April," he said proudly.

"Well, you're just as pretty as your brother is handsome," Narcissa said, close to whispering. She reached out a still-shaking hand to gently pet her hair.

"Pitty," April repeated happily.

Harry sat down on the arm of the couch next to his husband, watching, in increasing awe, how well April and Valen were taking meeting this woman. The affection that Narcissa felt for the grandchildren she was seeing for the first time was clearly evident in her face and in the tender touches she gave each child.

Draco reached up and took his husband's hand, leaning against him. This was beyond what he had dared to dream.

Everyone looked around when Ron entered back into the room, this time with Hermione. They both had obviously got hastily dressed judging from their clothes and hair.

Narcissa went a little stiff again, but then turned back to the children, smiling at them.

Hermione cleared her throat awkwardly and Narcissa sighed, turning once again.

"I ... don't know if you remember or know me," said Hermione. "But I'm very happy to see that you're doing okay. I know Draco has been worried."

"I know who you are," Narcissa acknowledged softly, glancing at Draco. "Thank you."

"I owe my life and my family's lives several times over to these two," Draco told his mother, wanting to get this clear immediately. "Without them, we would not have won the war."

Narcissa stared at Draco seriously, nodding to him, but not saying anything.

Hermione blushed and Ron shrugged. Harry gave them each the barest hint of a smile and a very slight shrug of his own. The fond feelings that Draco had for Ron and Hermione hadn't appeared overnight, in spite of how much they had always meant to Harry. Narcissa was older and more set in her ways than Harry and Draco had been when forced to confront their views and Harry knew that, for Draco's sake, they would need to be patient and hope that time

would continue to heal old wounds.

Valen looked between the adults and then patted his grandmother's hand. "It's okay," he assured her, then tugged. "Come eat."

She smiled once more at Valen, allowing the little boy to tug her to her feet. April, not to be outdone, wobbled to take Narcissa's other hand.

Harry glanced down at his husband, giving him a small smile.

Draco marvelled as his children led their grandmother to the dining room. He stood and drew Harry into his arms. "Now I have everything," he whispered, "more than I could have wished for even."

Harry kissed him. "Everything is exactly what you deserve," he whispered back.

"Well, then it is good that I have you, my lion," Draco answered, leaning in to kiss him.

– CHAPTER FIFTEEN –

In the Soup

It had been nearly a week since the unexpected arrival of Narcissa at Malfoy Manor. She had spent the first two days enclosed within her suite and Harry had assumed she simply needed some time to herself after the emotional reunion with Draco. Harry spent the days with Hermione and Ron while Draco looked after his mother. Valen and April were also brought to their grandmother's suite for small visits throughout those two days.

Harry was honestly happy for Draco and knew how much it meant to his husband that Narcissa was not only alive but back in his life once more. There were other feelings inside of Harry though, that he tried to ignore. He wondered how Narcissa's presence in the house would affect Draco and what kind of changes it might mean for all of them.

Once Narcissa emerged from her sanctuary and began joining them for meals or to spend time in the gardens, it was clear to Harry that she was only relaxed when she was with Draco or the children. Harry often caught her looking at him and when his eyes met hers she would continue to study him for a moment before looking away. He could also see her discomfort when Ron or Hermione came into the room. Harry wanted to talk to Draco about his concerns if Narcissa chose to live there with them permanently but every time they were alone and the moment seemed right, Draco would mention something that Narcissa had said and Harry saw the way his husband's eyes lit up in happiness at having his mother back. Harry didn't want to be the one to dim that light.

It was now the weekend and Hermione had suggested the day before that she and Ron could take the children to The Burrow for the evening while Harry, Draco and Narcissa enjoyed a quiet dinner together. Harry knew Hermione was only trying to be helpful and that she believed that if they could spend more time together that the

slightly cool reserve that Narcissa kept in check around Harry might warm up but, Merlin, an entire evening with Mrs Malfoy? Harry wasn't convinced. He wasn't sure yet about his feelings for Narcissa but the feeling that concerned him the most was one of distrust. He didn't understand where that was coming from but, for Draco's sake, he was willing to make the effort to get to know his mother-in-law better. Only for Draco.

The candles around the dining room cast an amber glow that pushed the shadows into the corners but did nothing to erase them completely. The table was elegantly set with china and stemware that had been passed down through several generations. Harry sat nervously to the right of Draco who was seated at the head of the table while Narcissa sat with a calm look on her face to the left of Draco. The appetizers had already been cleared away and the soup had just been served. Harry kept one hand below the edge of the table, resting on his knee, as a reminder not to jiggle his leg up and down. A cushioned hush enveloped the room and Harry would have given anything at that moment to hear April screaming or Valen yelling. Anything to distract him while Narcissa spoke about the flowers that were now blooming in the gardens. Harry was pulled from his thoughts when he realised that Draco and Narcissa were both looking at him expectantly.

"I'm sorry?" Harry said after clearing his throat. "Did you ask me something?"

Draco could tell both Narcissa and Harry were nervous. He'd been so overjoyed to see his mother alive and well, and he still was, but he was also worried about the growing tension between Narcissa and his husband. He'd hoped that they would find a way to come to terms with each other but he didn't know how he could help that happen. Narcissa had asked if Harry liked the leek soup, and Draco could tell that not only had Harry not been listening, he didn't like the soup. "Harry's not overly fond of soup," he answered for him, realising it was probably obvious what he was trying to do.

Harry glanced at Draco and gave him a tight smile before shifting his gaze to Narcissa. "It's very good, Mrs Malfoy ... for soup. I guess Draco's right, though; it isn't one of my favourite foods."

"It wasn't always a course that Draco appreciated either when he

was a child," Narcissa replied. "We hosted a dreadfully boring dinner party when he was just a little older than Valen and he fell asleep during the second course, tipping face first into his soup. Lucius and I were grateful for the distraction." Narcissa then turned and smiled at Draco. "The next few times we served soup you begged your father to place a Sticking Charm on you that would hold you to the chair. It took several months before you lost your fear of soup."

Draco blushed, looking down into the remains of his current soup. He hadn't thought about that in years. It had been embarrassing at the time and he had worried that he'd been in trouble. His parents had found it much more endearing than he had.

Harry felt his entire body tense up at the mention of Lucius. It was as though the man was suddenly sitting at the dinner table with them. It took Harry a second to realise that the hand on his knee had clenched itself into a fist. Looking over at his husband, Harry wondered if the mention of his father was the reason for the faint pink on his cheeks.

"I think dinner parties are boring too," Harry said to Draco while trying to unclench his fist. "I'm surprised more people don't fall asleep in their soup although I think we'll wait until the children are older to subject them to things like that. Right, Draco?"

Draco frowned, glancing unhappily at his husband. He didn't agree actually, but found himself torn between feeling like defending his mother but not wanting to upset his husband. The reason they didn't have formal dinners, at least as far as Draco thought about it, was that Harry himself didn't like them, not because of the children. "I think learning table manners is a gradual process," he said as the most neutral answer he could come up with.

"It *is* a gradual process, son," Narcissa agreed with a small nod. Her blue eyes then rested on Harry. "Draco did not attend most of our formal gatherings until he was older but Lucius and I did want to give him the opportunity to join us once in a while as a measure of including him. He was quite excited about the prospect of the dinner; it was the reality that put him to sleep."

Harry saw the smile that rested on Narcissa's lips as she recalled family memories. He couldn't believe that she had mentioned Lucius' name again in front of both of them. Harry gave up on his fist and let

it remain in a tight knot on his knee. He realised that what he had mistaken earlier for distrust of Narcissa was actually anger and he knew he needed to get it under control but how was he to do that when he didn't know what he was angry about? Harry looked down into his own bowl of soup and took a deep breath. He decided it might be better to let Narcissa and Draco enjoy their meal while he kept quiet until the evening ended. Harry was tempted to tip face first into his own bowl of soup if it meant not having to hear Lucius' name again.

Draco was tempted to sigh, but knew both his mother and husband would take that as a critique. Probably rightly so, and deserved, but not something he wanted to engage in at the moment. The difficulty was that he could practically hear what each of them was thinking. He knew the world of his mother, the values of a proper pure-blood of "their station." They were the rules he had taken for granted until he started Hogwarts.

Draco also knew Harry saw all of them as, at best, outdated, and more commonly, as outright wrong. It was a conflict between them on a regular basis. And Harry blamed Draco's parents for a lot. Again, Lucius mostly earned that. Harry couldn't understand how Draco still had good memories and loving feelings towards them. Draco failed to control it, sighing before he could stop it.

Harry heard the sigh and glanced up through lowered lashes just in time to see Narcissa arch one eyebrow as she looked towards Draco. In that moment, Harry saw three generations superimposed over one face. It was somewhat expected that he would see something of Draco in his mother but to see Draco and Valen in Narcissa's face with one simple gesture was slightly unsettling. Feeling guilty for his part in creating the sigh, Harry attempted to engage his mother-in-law in one of her favourite subjects ... Draco. Fortunately, that happened to be one of Harry's favourite subjects, as well. Harry fidgeted a bit in his seat and cleared his throat. Mother and son looked over at Harry who smiled apologetically at Draco and then looked across the table at Narcissa.

"Draco sometimes plays the piano for us," Harry began awkwardly, unsure of what might be considered a safe subject. "I'm hoping maybe that's a gift passed down in your family since I can't

play any instruments and it would be nice if Valen and April could. I ... like hearing him play."

Draco didn't blush but was amused by Harry bringing up the piano. Harry and their children were the only ones he had played for since he was much younger.

Narcissa smiled at Harry's words but paused for a moment before answering. "Draco's educational goals were fairly well in place before he was born. Lucius was firm about which subjects our son would be tutored in before attending Hogwarts and music was one of the subjects that we certainly agreed upon. As a young girl, I was actually taught to play the violin but I do prefer the piano and I've enjoyed listening to my son play since he was a small boy. Will Valen and April be taking piano lessons, as well?"

Harry stared at Narcissa and realised, a moment too late, that his mouth was actually hanging slightly open from the moment he heard her mention Lucius' name for what had to be the *third* time. The woman seemed determined to include Lucius in every subject they discussed and Harry had had enough. He felt his face growing warm in anger and, after closing his mouth, sat back in his seat with both hands now clenched into fists and resting in his lap. Oxygen seemed to be in short supply as Harry tried to keep his breathing steady.

"If they show an interest in piano then I'm sure we'll arrange lessons," Harry replied in a controlled voice, "But we won't be forcing anything on them."

Draco saw the change in Harry immediately, shaking his head, dismayed that there didn't seem to be a safe topic between his husband and Narcissa. This time, Draco wasn't even sure what had set his husband off. He was confused by the anger in Harry's tone, and the accusation. And it wasn't as if he didn't have plans himself as to what his children should learn. "Harry," he admonished.

Harry turned to look at Draco with his eyes slightly widened behind his glasses. It sounded to him as if that one word was Draco's way of telling him that he was out of line and when he saw the look on his husband's face he realised that that was exactly what was happening. Harry felt hurt but, most of all, he felt the slow lazy burn of anger and what frustrated him the most was he still didn't know why. Harry lifted his chin slightly as he looked at Draco and said in a

low voice, "I don't think there's anything wrong in giving our children some control over their lives, do you, Draco?"

Draco winced when the stemware trembled, the wine dancing in the glass. "Harry, I liked the piano lessons," he pointed out, trying to placate his husband's anger. "And you like that I can play now." He didn't want to argue over their children's education right then. He had a feeling Harry was angry about something more.

"Yes, but what if you wanted to play something different like the flute or the cello or ... or ... the tambourine!" Harry replied, frowning at Draco. "The point is you never had a choice just because it was what he wanted and your mother let him decide. I want Valen and April to have a voice in what happens to them, that's all."

Before Draco could reply to Harry, they both heard the soft sound of Narcissa clearing her throat and both young men turned to look at her. "Draco, the dinner has been lovely and it has been my pleasure to spend the evening with both of you," she said, while laying her napkin over her plate. "I believe, however, that the soup may have been a bit too rich for my appetite and I'm not feeling well. If you'll both excuse me, I'll just retire to my room for the evening."

Narcissa gracefully stood up and gave a slight nod to Harry who, along with Draco, also stood. She then stepped over to her son and lightly kissed his cheek. Without a sound, Narcissa glided across the floor and left the dining room, closing the doors gently behind her. Harry and Draco sank back down into their chairs while watching her leave.

As Harry saw the doors close, he felt the tension in his body begin to drift away like the last lingering scent of the perfume that Narcissa had been wearing. He took a deep breath and exhaled, bringing one hand up to rest on the table while his fingers slowly began drumming lightly. The silence in the room was a blanket that Harry wanted to throw off of both of them right away and he knew his husband might be upset that Narcissa didn't stay to finish the meal. He was sure she left because of his comments but Harry felt that it was out of line for her to continue bringing Lucius into the conversation in light of all that the man had done to them. Looking everywhere but at Draco, Harry wondered how he might be able to salvage the situation. He didn't want his husband to be angry with

him but he also didn't want Draco to be hurt by being forced to think about his father. If Harry had to choose one feeling over the other for Draco then he knew he would rather deal with Draco being mad instead of wondering if he was thinking about the past.

"Well, I don't really like the soup that much, but I don't think it's too rich," Harry said cautiously, deciding that ignorance might work best. "I hope she feels better, though."

Draco had been staring after his mother, stunned by her sudden, if still polite, retreat. The moment his husband spoke, he started, turning angry grey eyes on Harry. He hadn't wanted this badly to hit Harry since the end of the war. "To hell with the soup," Draco declared, getting to his feet again so fast he nearly knocked the chair over.

Reacting with instincts that were mostly dormant since the end of the war, Harry shoved his own chair back and also stood. "What!?" Harry retorted, his face and neck now flushed in light crimson. "You think it's my fault that she left? How is that, Draco?"

Draco's fingers curled into his palms, only his realisation of the futility of it keeping him from drawing his wand. He couldn't outdraw Harry's wandless magic. His husband's anger crackled in his magic, making the hair on Draco's arms stand on end and the china rattle on the table. "You twisted everything she said into an insult and flung it back in her face!"

Before Harry could answer, there was a muffled popping sound and he glanced down at the table in time to see the remnants of Narcissa's soup being soaked into the linen tablecloth and dripping over the edge of the table as the delicate china bowl lay there in several pieces. Harry had an urge to summon Mrs Malfoy and let her know the soup was no longer an issue. Lifting narrowed eyes back up to rest on Draco's angry features, Harry felt a fresh surge of anger and growled, "I'm sorry my manners aren't quite up to Malfoy standards. You might want to give me some guidelines on which responses are appropriate so I don't mess up next time! Merlin forbid I actually speak my mind or anything!"

"By anyone's standard, you were a boorish oaf," Draco snapped, turned hard on his heel and headed for the door, entire body shaking both with his own feelings and Harry's magic prickling over his skin.

"Walking out like your mother, Malfoy?" Harry spat out, waving one hand at the door to charm it to stay closed. The candles now flared and dimmed behind their glass globes. Harry didn't want to bring up why he had been upset at dinner but his emotions seemed to be taking control of his tongue. "I'm not the one that couldn't open my mouth without mentioning Lucius every single time which seems pretty fucking inconsiderate to me but maybe since I'm just a boorish oaf I might not be up on proper dinner etiquette!"

Draco knew it was stupid, but he slammed his silver fist into the locked door, the wood splintering and pain reverberating up the rest of his arm. The last time he and Harry had actually really fought was during the mess with Nott. Now, there was no binding compulsion for Draco to follow Harry's orders, but that didn't mean that Draco was any match for the most powerful wizard in the world. He kept his back to Harry. "Let me out."

"No," Harry said stubbornly, but in a more even voice. He had winced at what Draco had done and knew it had to have been painful but he knew he couldn't let his husband leave or it would just make everything worse. Not to mention the fact that if Draco walked out, Harry was sure he would head straight to his mother's room to check on her and they could commiserate with each other on Harry's bad manners. Deep down, Harry knew Draco would never do that to him but Narcissa's arrival seemed to be bringing out a side of Harry that he hadn't seen in himself since he had attended Hogwarts.

"I don't think I said anything wrong or that wasn't true," Harry said, his tone still tinged with anger but quieter. "Maybe I could have said it differently, though, or ... used fancier words so that nobody was offended!" So much for attempting to make things better.

Draco had thought they had worked past this kind of hostility and it cut deep. He looked down at the silver hand, and the ring on it. "You were an arse, making it sound like everything my mother did was about manipulating and controlling me. What? Are we back to all Slytherins as untrustworthy snakes?" he sneered.

Harry paused and considered Draco's words. "No," he began slowly, "I don't think your mother is controlling or manipulating, actually. I think Ron's mother is actually more controlling than your mother; it's not a Slytherin thing ... it's a -" Harry had a confused look

as he tried to think since it felt like his anger with Narcissa was different than what he was feeling at that moment. "I think it's a ... Malfoy thing."

Draco turned, eyes narrowed and brow furrowed as he looked at Harry. "What?" he hissed. It hurt even more. Harry had sometimes bragged about "his Malfoys" when talking about Draco and their children. "Just what is it that you have a problem with!" he demanded.

Harry took a step backward without realising he had done it as his hands curled up into fists and he felt much as he had when they were in school and the line between the Malfoys and the Potters was clearly drawn. "Oh, I don't know," he snapped back. "Maybe the way they look at the rest of the world as if a bad odour had the audacity to get close. Your mother barely speaks to Ron and Hermione and they live here! How fucking rude is that?"

Draco knew it was true, that Narcissa was very uncomfortable whenever she was around Ron or Hermione. He suspected that although part of it was prejudice, some of it might be much more about her own failings to help Draco. He wasn't about to say any of that to Harry, especially given the man's current behaviour. "And that justifies your behaving like a berk and insulting both her and me at dinner?"

"Yes, Draco," Harry replied sarcastically. He couldn't believe that Draco would defend Narcissa's ill manners while attacking his own. "I believe it does justify it, especially since the times she isn't ignoring people that I consider family she spends looking at me like she thinks I'm about to steal something from her. Of course, that's only when the two of you bother to be around any of us at all!"

"Who would want to be around a judgmental prick?" Draco snapped. "You even have to lock me in here now!"

"I'm a judgmental prick?!" Harry yelled, ignoring the comment about the door since he had no intention of unlocking it. A small china saucer flew from the table and shattered against the back wall. Harry's anger escalated into fury with less than a second of transition time. "When it comes to judging others, you Malfoys are the fucking rulers of that world!! And why is that? I'll tell you why; because nobody is good enough and especially not the Potters so now that

your mother is back you can both look down your noses at the rest of us and congratulate yourselves for being born into the right family! Don't fucking talk to me about judgment!"

Draco was absolutely sure he wasn't doing that and he was stunned that Harry would say such a thing to him. He opened his mouth to speak but couldn't find words, closing it again and beginning to shake now. He had a flash of memory, his father glowering down at him, shouting at him in the same tone as Harry was using now. He backed into the door, terror that was as much memory as present flattening him against it.

Harry was panting for breath after the last words he had flung out into the room and it took him a moment to realise that Draco wasn't screaming back. From where he stood, there appeared to be nothing but naked fear on Draco's face and Harry quickly spun around to look behind him as if the ghost of Lucius himself might have decided to make an appearance and was swooping in for the kill. Seeing nothing and nobody else around them, Harry felt his heart drop when he understood that the only one in the room that could be scaring Draco was ... Harry. He froze all movement and unclenched his fists, bringing both hands up in front of him as a calming measure. "Draco?" he said hesitantly. "Are – are you okay, love?"

It had been a long time since Draco had had such a vivid flashback and Harry's magic, usually something that excited him, made his stomach flip uncomfortably. His hands were splayed out flat against the door, his heart thudding hard in his chest, his mouth dry and gaping like a fish. "I" He couldn't form words.

Harry's first instinct was to run to Draco and hold him but, for the first time, he was scared that his presence would be more damaging rather than healing. He didn't know what to do and finally shuffled back slowly a few steps, putting more distance between the two of them and hoping it would help. "See, Draco?" Harry said in a soft voice, almost singing the words like he might do with the children after a bad dream. "It's just me, Harry, and everything is all right. It's just you and me and we're fine. Can I ... can I come over there, maybe?"

Draco tried to take a deep breath. He didn't know if it was the

man's change in tone and body language or the shift in Harry's magic. Probably both. The air had felt so thick he couldn't breathe and now it was clearing. He blinked, realising his eyes were stinging and tears now slid down his cheeks. "Harry," he managed in a breath.

"Yes, Draco," Harry murmured, hating the tears that he saw but feeling a small bit of relief that the terror seemed to be leaving. He was still afraid to move, though, without permission to be in Draco's space. "Everything is good, love. We're all safe and together and I really want to help you, Draco. Please ... can I come to you?"

Draco came to himself enough to know where he was and what had happened. Fear had replaced anger, but now that the fear was lessening, it left him feeling bewildered at his husband's behaviour. "Why?" he asked and, to his shame, his voice cracked even on the one word.

Harry's gaze dropped to the floor and he stayed where he was, the distance between them now seeming to have doubled. The feelings that had risen to the surface since dinner had always been there but it took the arrival of Narcissa Malfoy to coax them from the shadows. Harry patted his thighs absently, still searching the floor for the right words. "I'm not ... one of you," Harry said, letting the words bypass his brain and come straight from his fears. "It was okay before because it was just us but now it's different. It's me and it's both of you and the children look like her and they're Malfoys so it's all four of you ... and me."

Draco felt a different kind of fear then – that old fear of the gulf between them, that Harry wouldn't want him. He wasn't even aware of the conscious choice as he sunk to his knees, looking up at Harry. "I am yours," he said, looking up imploringly at Harry. It was a phrase that had been essential in the Binding Spell that had separated Draco from his parents, from their control, and tied him to Harry. The binding now was mutual, but Harry had done the claiming that had freed Draco from the aspects of being a Malfoy he had not wanted.

Harry bridged the distance between them and sank down to kneel before his husband but still not touching him. "I know that, Draco, and I'm yours," Harry said quietly. "But that's not what I mean. Being mine doesn't stop you from being a Malfoy; I wouldn't want it to. It's

just that I ... don't understand dinner parties with three-year-olds, tutors and music lessons, ordering meals in French but ... you do and your friends do. Your mother knows that world and so will our children and I'll still be a boorish oaf with bad manners ... I'm afraid of being left behind, I guess."

Draco's hands trembled but reached for Harry's anyway. "I ... I don't want you to be anyone or anything but who you are. I love you, love that our children are part of both of us. I walked away with you, turned my back on my family, on being a Malfoy, thinking I would never have that back. I know you don't understand, but just because my father was wrong, that he did horrible things, doesn't make everything about our heritage, our family evil." His eyes pleaded with Harry to understand.

– CHAPTER SIXTEEN –

The Malfoy Feast

Harry took Draco's hands in his own and studied his husband's face for a moment, studying the worry and fear that seemed to have become etched into his skin and reflected in his eyes. Harry couldn't have that, couldn't be the one that crushed the happiness that Draco had been feeling all week. Still holding Draco's hands, Harry rose on his knees and leant forward. He brought his hands around to the small of Draco's back, effectively capturing his husband in that small space against the door. Harry ran his hot tongue along the side of Draco's neck before retracing the path with cool breath until he reached the front of Draco's throat which he caught lightly in his teeth.

Draco reacted as he always did, arching into Harry's touch, lifting his chin in offering and moaning. His body trembled in both desire and relief. He knew this, understood it when Harry slid into the role of lion claiming him.

Harry could feel the pulse in Draco's neck beneath his teeth and smiled inwardly when he felt it begin to race. The flames of fury that had raged across Harry's emotions earlier created a backdraft of lust that now swept through his veins and he bit harder, taking what belonged to him no matter how many Malfoys returned to the Manor. Harry released Draco's throat and licked at the red mark before sliding to the right to whisper in his ear, "I'm going to mark every fucking inch of you, Draco. You might be a Malfoy but you're about to be filled with the Potter heritage."

Draco shuddered, his cock immediately leaping to the promise of that. "Yesss," he hissed, turning his head to nuzzle the side of Harry's face, his husband's inky black hair tickling his nose.

Harry used his left hand to hold on to both of Draco's wrists and brought his right hand up to twine his fingers into Draco's silky blond strands at the back of his head, gripping tightly. "Time for the

main course, Draco," Harry breathed into his husband's ear while dominating every part of Draco's space with his own body. "Get your arse on that table, flat on your back and don't you dare hesitate for one second!" With that, Harry released Draco and stood up before stepping back.

Draco was always shocked, though delighted, when this kind of mood struck Harry. The blond scrambled to his feet. He practically stumbled to the table, laying back, only an arms reach from where their unfinished bowls of soup still sat.

Harry hid a smile as he watched Draco rush to the table and climb atop it with more determination than his usual grace. The candleholders in the centre of the table wobbled for a moment and then steadied as Draco lay down as instructed and Harry could see his chest rising and falling rapidly with anticipation. Harry was still somewhat angry and upset but not with his husband. Even as Harry had yelled and cursed, he had known that none of his fury was the result of anything Draco had done or said but was more a result of the tension he had been feeling since Narcissa had first arrived and vague, disquieting thoughts that had been dancing in the back of his head. Draco had taught Harry that some of his best magic occurred when he was angry and he intended to take full advantage of that fact tonight – right there in the middle of the Malfoy dining room table. Like a lion on the prowl, Harry stealthily made his way to the table and let his eyes wander over his prey. The only problem with that? Too many barriers to the vulnerable skin that belonged to him. Harry held up all five fingers on his right hand and smiled dangerously at Draco. "I'm still hungry, Draco," Harry said casually, in a tone that contradicted the territorial glitter in his eyes. "Let's see what's on the menu tonight, shall we?"

The aura of danger that Harry exuded when he got like this wasn't just a metaphor. It crackled in his magic, and as a Sensitive, Draco's own magic responded, skin shivering and body tensing. He knew, to his core, that Harry would never do anything to really endanger him. Yet, Draco loved that Harry would push that edge sometimes, doing things that others would probably be horrified to know "their hero" was capable of. Draco's prick reacted with an eager twitch and Draco clenched his teeth on the moan that tried to

escape.

Harry circled closer, his hand still in the air, until he reached the chair he had been sitting in earlier. Using the chair to climb up, Harry soon stood on top of the dining room table near Draco's feet, looking down at his husband. The smile faded away and Harry's brows furrowed as he tilted his head. He folded down one of the fingers on his extended right hand and as he did, Draco's shoes vanished from his feet. Harry murmured, "Counting down ... we're at four now."

Draco's toes curled as Harry's magic washed over him. He splayed his hands on the table, feeling the linen beneath his fingers. He knew he would soon be feeling more of it against his backside. Of all the places they had had sex, the dining table hadn't been one of them. "Four," he whispered in reply, in case Harry wanted him to count it aloud.

Harry's mouth curved upward into a smile that could only be called feral and he nodded once at his husband. "Very good, Draco, keep going ..." With that, Harry folded down the next finger and the silk black socks disappeared, leaving Draco's feet completely bare.

Draco managed not to laugh but his mouth turned up in a smirk, the magic ticking. "Three," he said, his voice bordering on an insolent drawl this time.

Making a small tsk-ing sound with his mouth, Harry shook his head. "You'll have to do better than that, Malfoy, or one of us might be going to bed without dinner tonight. Now where were we?" Harry slowly curled his thumb down over the two fingers already resting against the palm of his hand and, as skin touched skin, the black dress robes that hugged Draco's body melted into thin air.

Every time Harry used his magic to strip Draco, it was as if it caressed every inch of his skin where the clothing had been and Draco shuddered, arching his back as his skin prickled with the heat of it. He forgot to count, only managing a keening sound.

"Fuck," Harry whispered, nearly forgetting the game as he stared down at Draco who was practically writhing against the white linen beneath him. Licking his lips, Harry brought down one more finger and the dark silk underwear vanished, exposing the jutting hip bones that beautifully framed the cock that Harry planned to feast on.

Lifting his eyes to Draco's face, Harry lowered the last finger and his own clothes were spelled away instantly and not a moment too soon as he fell to his knees with a growl and crawled quickly up Draco's body. "Dinner is fucking served," Harry said against Draco's lips, his hands clutching at his husband's shoulders. With that, Harry's mouth crashed against Draco's with a hunger that was almost violent.

Draco would have laughed then, but his mouth was busy, opening to the kiss that was as much teeth and tongue as lips. He arched up again, the head of his own prick sliding wetly against Harry's hip and moaning at the feel of Harry's sliding up over his to his belly. He lifted one hand to Harry's side and the other to his husband's head, pushing his fingers into the thick hair. Between them he felt their tattoos spark into movement.

Harry pulled his lips away from the kiss that had been nearly bruising in intensity and lowered his head in blind exploration until he reached the rapidly pebbling nipple and latched on, sucking and nipping while the moans caught in his throat made a deep muffled sound. "Oh, fuck ..." Harry panted, pulling in much needed oxygen. His hands were now gripping Draco's biceps. "I'm going to fuck you from the third course all the way to dessert; I'm going to fucking fill you with me!"

Both desire and amusement rippled through Draco, lips drawing up into another smirk. He imagined how scandalized his mother would be by Harry's current table manners. "I'm yours and I'll take anything you want to dish out, Potter," he teased, but meant every word.

"Yes," Harry growled, moving with a speed that seemed impossible that brought him back up and face to face with Draco. "You will and you'll fucking love it." Before his husband could respond, Harry slithered down the pale body. Releasing his grip on Draco, Harry's left arm shot out and swept away the pieces of china that stood between him and the goblet of wine he was reaching for. Shattering sounds filled the air but Harry didn't care. He pulled the goblet close and slowly dribbled the White Burgundy wine over the flat expanse of Draco's belly before greedily sucking and licking the liquid with sounds that were almost obscene. In between slurps, Harry murmured, "You taste so fucking good ... so good."

"Oh, Gods!" Draco gasped, and a sound that was half-moan and half-laughter bubbled from him. The cool of the wine contrasted intensely with the warmth of Harry's mouth – and it tickled as well as aroused. Draco's cock bobbed in response as if to insist that Harry's tongue should pay more attention below his navel.

Harry lifted up and sat back on his heels, grinning now at Draco with the remnants of wine smeared across his lips and his chin. Even his cheeks glistened with the liquid. The grin widened and Harry's green eyes danced as he raised the goblet in the air and poured the contents over Draco's hip, his thighs ... his cock. Harry then tossed the empty goblet backwards over his head and more shattering was heard. "Sorry, Draco," Harry smirked, sounding anything but sorry. "Thirsty." And without another word, he leant over and slid his lips completely over Draco's fevered cock, tasting the combination of sweet and salty. All Harry could think was *fucksucksuck* which wasn't really thinking at all, but Draco tasted so good and he was so hungry. No meal would ever satisfy his taste buds the way Draco's cock did.

Draco practically screamed, first as the cool liquid splashed against him and then at the delicious heat of Harry's mouth devouring him. The blond's hands fisted in the tablecloth on either side of him, yanking frantically and sending what dishes remained on the table rattling, some joining the goblet in shattering to the floor.

Harry didn't know why but he was taking some strange pleasure in the breaking sounds of the glassware and dishes. It seemed to add to the frenzied delight he took in devouring every delicious inch of Draco. Using his tongue with practised skill, Harry brought it roughly up the underside of Draco's cock, tracing along the veins before reaching the top and gently nudging the slit in search of any wine that might be hiding from him. Harry had no plans to let a single drop go to waste. He gave one final lick and then placed both of his hands beneath Draco's thighs and pushed up in a quest for better access to the rest of the sticky liquid. "Oh, fuck," Harry breathed in anticipation. "I want to climb inside you"

Draco gave a delighted bark of laughter at that, happily spreading his legs as directed. He felt the wine dripping down between them, sticky rivulets dripping from his sac. "Oh, please," he begged.

"Fucking love your table manners," Harry laughed before diving

forward. He pulled one sac into his mouth and gently sucked and cleaned the stickiness away from the wrinkled skin. When he was left only with the flavour of Draco, Harry moved on to the other one and performed the same meticulous cleaning ritual, humming happily the entire time. He wasn't quite done yet, though. There was one more place that harboured the vintage wine that Harry was sure was too expensive to go to waste. Leaning to the side, Harry snatched up another wine goblet and flung the liquid out where it splashed against the wall and ran down in wet streaks. He quickly Transfigured the glass into a round fat pillow complete with the Malfoy crest and pushed it beneath Draco's hips to lift him a little higher. "Time to fucking eat," Harry growled and bent over to lick Draco's furred hole where the last of the wine glistened seductively.

Draco was near delirious with pleasure. He keened and shook with every suck and lick., and eagerly lifted his hips when told to, legs shaking with anticipation fuelled adrenaline. He could feel a drop of liquid sliding down the crevice between his buttocks and see Harry's intense green eyes following the path. He felt his hole tremble under the scrutiny and his cock dripping its own liquid onto his still slick belly.

Spreading Draco open even further with his hands on that perfect arse, Harry traced his tongue in ever tightening circles, lapping up the sweetness with satisfied moans. When he finally made his way back to the hole that had begun to quiver, Harry first turned his head and kissed the inside of Draco's thigh before plunging his tongue inside and pushing past the ring of muscles that wouldn't take defeat without a show of effort. Harry alternated pushing inside with licking and sucking while Draco's body steadily relaxed beneath his ravenous affections.

Draco threw his head back, whimpering and moaning as he returned to curling his fists into the linen on the table. "Yes, yes, please, Har-ry!"

As the tablecloth was bunched up and pulled, Harry felt something splash the back of his thigh with a sting. He turned and saw the silver candlestick holder as it wobbled before settling down again. A flash of memory caught Harry and the image of the two of them covered in red wax like drops of blood played in his mind. The

circumstances then were different, and not so different, from what was happening now except that Harry wanted to believe his trust in Draco's love for him was stronger now. Which meant he needed to truly believe it. Harry grinned and reached behind him to pull one of the long tapered white candles out of the holder and sat up on his knees, lifting the candle and keeping it upright so the wax only dripped down the candle. His other hand drifted down to the puckered hole he had recently abandoned and lightly stroked the soft skin there, still wet from Harry's mouth.

"Draco," Harry breathed. "Want to eat by candlelight?"

Draco looked up in shock at Harry, eyes wide. He'd confessed to his husband, in the midst of the turmoil following that incident with Theo back at Hogwarts, that he liked wax play. Harry had never acted on that information and Draco had assumed he would avoid it afterward. Now, the blond swallowed hard, giving Harry a firm nod but not trusting himself to speak.

Harry loved that Draco trusted him to do this, especially since he had never done it before and now they were playing with danger. His free hand kept teasing and touching Draco down below; the only lubricant was Harry's saliva and, knowing that Draco enjoyed a bit of pain with his pleasure, he left it that way and waited for the right moment to press in. Harry locked eyes with Draco, watching carefully for any signs of distress as he lifted the candle and moved it forward over his husband's torso. Anticipating that first splash of liquid fire was part of the game and Harry smiled as he made intricate designs in the air without tipping his hand either way yet.

Draco's eyes focused on the flame end, watching as the wax melted, collecting into a heavy glimmering pool that would soon fall onto his naked damp skin. He took a deep breath, holding it while he waited for the fall.

Up and down. Back and forth. Harry had seen Draco inhale and then grow still but that just wouldn't do at all. Harry brought his other hand up and, still watching Draco, put two fingers in his mouth and sucked for a moment, coating them liberally before withdrawing them and touching Draco's hole again. One finger moved forward, pushing just past the slightly loosened barrier and when Draco exhaled at the sensation, Harry tipped the candle and painted a line

down the left side of Draco's chest from his nipple to just below his rib cage.

Draco's attention had been so focused on the candle he hadn't realised what Harry intended with the other hand. He shuddered as he was breached, body spasming around the sudden intrusion so that he nearly missed the hot liquid falling. The first drop splashed onto his already erect nipple, the pain blossoming moments later. He cried out, writhing under the dual onslaught.

"Oh, Merlin ..." Harry murmured, stunned at the reaction of his husband and feeling himself grow harder as an erotic sort of power washed over him. Licking his lips and fighting against the urge to lick Draco's cock, Harry pushed in further and twisted his finger until his search yielded that special place which now came under Harry's assault. As his finger scraped past the bundle of nerves, Harry tipped the candle again and a matching line marched its way down Draco's right side.

Draco's hands were balled into the fabric of the tablecloth, back arching and toes curling around the edge of the table itself as he tried to hold himself in place. His right nipple quivered in anticipation just before the drop landed and Draco's cock mirrored the spasms, dripping pre-come in a sticky line to his belly where it pooled on his skin almost like the wax that now cooled the left side of his chest. His breathing was a ragged sound that seemed to fill the room.

A part of Harry wanted to stop and make sure Draco was all right but a part of Draco – the part that was rigid and leaking – told Harry that his husband was doing just fine. Pulling his finger out, Harry bypassed the second finger and went directly for three. Pressing in steadily and massaging the walls the entire way, he worked his way back to the nerve center and the moment he felt Draco's body jerk, Harry connected the two lines with a third line across the middle. Smiling now in satisfaction at the wax H painted on Draco's chest, he brought the candle down to his own hip and let a small drop splash on the back of the dragon tattoo which caused the fluttering and writhing to increase in ways that brought heat pooling deep in Harry's belly. He blew the candle out with a gleam of possession in his eyes and said in a husky voice, "Fuck, yeah ... you belong to me"

Sensations rolled through Draco – the burning of the wax against

his damp skin, the burning stretch of his opening below, the pulsing pleasure inside where Harry's fingers worked him and, sparking through it all, Harry's magic like flame warming him inside and out. "Yes, belong to you, always you," he managed, voice cracking with intensity as he looked up into Harry's eyes.

Harry tossed the candle aside and pulled his fingers free. He then leant forward and kissed Draco's chest, his ribs, his belly with tenderness. One more kiss, this time on Draco's hip before Harry sat back up on his knees and, taking one slim ankle in each hand lifted them to his shoulders. He looked down into the grey eyes that held emotions that only Harry had permission to see and he hoped that his own eyes reflected all of that back to the only man he would ever love. A silent Lubrication Spell marked the last of the rituals needed before Harry's body could do what it had been aching to do all evening. "You fucking belong with me, Draco," Harry mumbled as he lined himself up and pushed forward in one smooth thrust. The sigh tumbled from his lips in the form of incoherency. "Oh, fuck, yeah ... fuck, oh, fuck ..."

The lion on Draco's hip nearly roared in pleasure as the one above him, Harry, slid deep. "Belong with you," Draco echoed his husband, reaching up to clutch the man's shoulders, gripping slick skin. There was nothing in the world like the sensations of Harry's flesh and magic filling him, pleasure radiating out and up Draco's spine.

In the small pause he took, allowing Draco's body to meld itself to Harry's in a way that was familiar yet always felt like the first time, Harry's dragon tattoo moved frantically against his skin increasing the heat of the moment. He ran his hands up and down Draco's body, never stopping in a quest to own, absorb, take what was already his and Harry's mouth mirrored the frenzy with kisses being trailed across the pale column of neck and collarbones. "Inside you always," Harry gasped as he slid almost all the way out and thrust back in with a vengeance borne of need. "Fuck, yeah ..."

Draco arched his neck as he practically clawed at his husband's shoulders and arms, wrapping his legs around Harry's hips and doing his best to move with him as each thrust lifted his buttocks and rattled the few unbroken objects on the table. The remaining silver

candlesticks fell over, one guttering out and the other paused on the edge of the table, wax dripping off its end and onto the floor.

"Love ... being inside ... you," Harry groaned as his sweat-dampened hair clung to his forehead and Draco's tight walls clung to his cock. Harry could swear he felt every contoured dip and ridge inside of his husband and the furrows being etched into Harry's skin by Draco's hand created a painful sensation that only made everything feel even better. He blinked back the sting of sweat rolling into his eyes and twisted his upper body to the right, bringing his teeth down on Draco's shoulder and biting ... hard.

Draco shouted, the pain and pleasure spiking so that he nearly came. He was trying to hold back, to let Harry's magic bring them together. That magic was sparking over his skin even now, rippling with his husband's desire. Draco felt the wax cracking where it stuck to his sweat-soaked skin and hissed as the salt from their bodies stung the small burns. All of it combined, to make him dizzy. "Love you!" he shouted.

"Ohfuckohfuckohfuck," Harry chanted mindlessly, after pulling his mouth away from Draco. He threw his head back, the tendons in his neck stretching and nearly pulsing with every thrust, every slide, as Harry pounded into Draco with a fury of lust that sent his magic spiralling out of his body. Harry felt the rush hit him as he was pulling away and stilled for a second before slamming into Draco and emptying himself into his husband, the thick fluid coating Draco's passage in spurts that matched the beat of Harry's heart. The groan that tumbled from Harry's mouth sounded something like, "Love you too"

Heat engulfed Draco, spreading out from where they were joined, pulsing with the spilling from his husband inside him. Draco felt every throb, the beating of his husband's heart and Harry's breath on his skin. His own release spattered between their bodies, mingling with the wax as he clutched Harry tightly.

The tiny thrusts that Harry's body continued making were more of a reflex now. His bunched and knotted muscles began to uncoil and relax as he dropped his head into the curve of Draco's neck and struggled to replenish his oxygen supply with muffled gasps and moans. He couldn't imagine what the two of them looked like at that

moment and he didn't care; not that he could see much with his glasses now fogging up. Harry only knew that no matter what happened in the future with the return of Narcissa and Malfoy traditions that might never make sense, Draco loved him and needed him. Harry would learn to work around everything else. Turning his head inward, Harry finally regained the use of his voice and said hoarsely, "Fuck, Draco ... you felt so good."

Draco chuckled, the sound still breathless. He could feel the tablecloth bunched up under him, the unforgiving surface of the hardwood table and the sticky mess of wax, wine, sweat and semen that practically glued their bodies together. He gave a little squeeze with his muscles to the cock still buried inside of him. As the cloud of magic and sex lifted from his mind, he relaxed, realising his husband had done what he always did to relieve his tension and fear. The sheer physicality of it was very Gryffindor and completely Harry. Draco ran the fingers of one hand through Harry's thick damp hair. "Yes, perfect," he answered with a smirk.

Harry smiled at that against Draco's neck and trailed lazy fingers up and down his husband's arm. Using the last bit of energy he had, Harry lifted up slightly and pressed a soft kiss to Draco's mouth before whispering against his lips, "Yes ... we are."

– CHAPTER SEVENTEEN –

Sympathy

Two days after what Harry liked to think of as the Malfoy Feast, he wandered into the library in search of a toy that Valen had misplaced. Hermione had mentioned that she had seen it last in the library that morning. Draco had April and Valen outside where they were playing under the shade of a giant oak tree and Valen had pleaded with Harry to find his favourite miniature dragon. With a quick kiss for Draco, Harry had wandered inside the house. He could have Apparated inside or Summoned the toy but it was a beautiful June day and the walk felt good.

Standing there now, in the spacious room lined with shelves of books, Harry did a quick glance around but didn't see what he was searching for. With a sigh, he ran his fingers through his hair and headed for a chair that Valen seemed to favour. Harry knelt down and brought his shoulders to the floor as he looked underneath the chair. Success. Harry wriggled closer and stretched his arm until he could snag the dragon. Before he could slide out from his position partway under the chair, he heard the soft voice of Draco's mother very close by.

"Mr Potter, if I might have a moment?"

Harry jerked upward and slammed the top of his head against the bottom of the chair with a muffled thwap. He stifled a groan as he squeezed the toy in one hand and clutched at his head with the other, which now throbbed with pain and the unease of being alone in a room with Narcissa Malfoy. Wriggling back out from under the chair, Harry sat up on his knees and looked up at the still-frail blonde woman standing just inside the doorway. Her face was impassive but Harry thought he detected just a hint of emotion in her blue eyes. Hoping against all odds that Draco would come looking for him at that moment, Harry gave a brief nod and climbed to his feet before gesturing to the chair opposite where he stood.

With a polite nod of her own, Narcissa moved quietly into the room and sat down at the edge of the chair, her slim hands clasped tightly in her lap. Harry backed up until his calves hit the chair behind him and he also sat down. He laid both hands down on his thighs and moved them slightly up and down in a nervous gesture. The tiny dragon snapped harmlessly at his fingers.

Harry hadn't spoken to Draco's mother since the dinner fiasco although Harry had offered to apologise. He had received a smile from Draco when he said it, but offering and doing were two different things and Harry had been uncertain of the best way to approach the woman. It seemed that he no longer had to worry about that. Harry wondered briefly if the day was growing warmer outside since it suddenly seemed uncomfortably hot in the room. He cleared his throat and tugged at his collar.

"Mrs Malfoy," Harry began, wincing at the way his voice sounded in his ears. "Can I – can I just first apologise for my manners at dinner the other night?"

"You may," Narcissa replied, tilting her head slightly.

Harry's brows knit themselves together as he gave Narcissa a blank look before realising she had taken his question as something literal rather than as the half-hearted attempt at an apology that it really was.

"Oh," Harry mumbled and cleared his throat again, sitting up straight now. "Then I just wanted to tell you that I am sorry and I hope we can ... do dinner again soon. With all the courses this time." Harry reddened then as he remembered that Narcissa was actually the only one that missed out on more courses. Draco had provided Harry with a delicious meal.

"Thank you, Mr Potter. I accept your apology." One hand fluttered up to the slender throat and rubbed at the hollow there for a moment before Narcissa continued speaking in cool tones. "I did actually wish to speak with you about the other night. I want to assure you that I did not mean to say anything that might have offended you and if there are topics that you would prefer weren't discussed then perhaps this would be a good time to share that with me."

Harry felt the early stirrings of anger again as he stared at

Narcissa. How could she not know what it was she had said at dinner that might have been out of line? Harry knew she was intelligent so he wondered if she was being purposely unaware. Keeping his hands on his thighs, Harry took a deep breath.

"I don't – " Harry started and stopped. He struggled between the option of being tactful and being completely honest because he knew that when it came to Lucius that tact was not his best trait. His words then rushed out, squeezing past the tightness in his throat. "I would rather not hear Lucius' name every time you open your mouth, if you want to know the truth. He's not welcome here, even if he is dead."

So. Complete honesty then.

Narcissa studied Harry for a moment without speaking. Her hands had rejoined each other and she sat impossibly straight in her chair.

"I see," she finally said in a soft voice. "And would you have me completely erase all of Draco's childhood memories, Mr Potter, because, I assure you, that his entire past – the good and the bad – is saturated with the presence of his father."

Harry frowned at those words. He could still feel the anger inside of him waiting for the chance to be unleashed but it was hard to do that in the face of someone who looked at him with his daughter's beautiful blue eyes.

"Lucius was a bastard who wasn't capable of anything good," Harry said in a harsh, but quiet, voice. "I don't think Draco needs to be reminded of his father and shouldn't have to be upset every time you bring him up."

"I was well-acquainted with my in-laws," Narcissa said with a frosty smile. "I am quite certain that there is no question regarding Lucius' paternity and, as for my son, he is happier than I have ever known him to be even during the moments we discuss his father. Unless I am mistaken, Mr Potter, the person that is getting upset is not Draco, but is, in fact, you. And the person causing that distress is not Lucius; I believe, instead, that it is me."

The room not only felt warmer but the air seemed to have been sucked out of it completely and Harry found it difficult to breathe. He stared at the woman with widened eyes and could almost feel the colour draining from his face. Harry still wasn't sure what he was so

mad about but, with Narcissa's words, he knew that she was right and that she was the target of his anger. It had never been Lucius. Not this time, at least. Harry tried to swallow past the lump of reality that had suddenly taken root in his throat.

Needing to move, Harry stood up and took several paces across the room before coming back to stand behind the chair that he had been sitting in previously. His attempts at keeping his hands relaxed had failed and they were now clenched in matching fists at his sides; he scarcely noticed the small toy dragon writhing and snapping in his tightened grip. Narcissa never moved, but continued to watch him. Harry returned the gaze and wondered just what it was about this woman that made him want to yell or hit something. He knew that she had also suffered during and after the war but it still seemed as if she should be paying for something. Harry lifted his chin and fought off the unfamiliar feelings that seemed to have ensnared him.

"Why didn't you do anything to protect him?" Harry blurted out, his voice cracking on the last word. The question took him completely by surprise and he actually stumbled back a step in shock.

Narcissa closed her eyes and Harry was sure that he could see a slight trembling in her hands. The only sound in the room was the pounding of Harry's heart. He was sure that it was loud enough for Draco's mother to hear. After what seemed an eternity, she opened her eyes and there was raw and untamed pain evident in them for a brief second before she regained her composure. Narcissa then dipped her head slightly and when her eyes met Harry's again, all traces of emotion were hidden once more.

"I will spare you the details of life in the Manor while Lucius was alive," Narcissa said in a voice that was barely above a whisper. "It would be improper; I will say, however, that despite what you believe you may understand about me, I did do my best to provide for my son's safety and happiness. I did my best, Mr Potter"

"Your best?" Harry laughed but it was a painful sound; the kind of manic laughter that often preceded tears. "Do you know what Draco – " Harry stopped short and snapped his mouth shut. Draco's secrets weren't his to reveal and Harry wasn't sure just how much Narcissa knew about the hidden relationship that Lucius had had with his son. He looked down at the floor before his green eyes, now

filled with bewilderment, sought her face out once more. "I just don't understand why you didn't try harder or take him away or ... or not let other people hurt him!"

Narcissa's voice was still soft but now held a gentle note in it as her blue eyes captured Harry's. "Are we still talking about Draco?"

"What are you on about?" Harry demanded, uncertain now as to which direction the conversation had turned. Some small part of him closed itself off as if to ward away her words.

Rising gracefully from her chair, Narcissa took two steps towards Harry and stood there for a moment. Her eyes swept around the room that was probably as familiar to her as her own face but small changes had been made here and there that retained the elegance of the Malfoy library yet added a touch of comfort and charm that made it clear the children were as welcome in that room as they were in their playroom.

"Do you know what the difference is between sympathy and empathy, Mr Potter?" Narcissa asked. "You'll find several dictionaries in here that will attempt to define each word but, in my opinion, the difference would simply be the roads that we have travelled. I do not presume to know your past although it would appear that I will not be offered that same courtesy. However, your intentions are honest and directed towards the protection of my son's well-being. I could not ask for more and, indeed, it is not my right to do so. Draco now belongs with you and it is your right to make the choices that determine his happiness."

"We both make those choices together," Harry countered. "For each other."

"And that, too, is your choice," Narcissa replied calmly. "It is to my son's benefit that you are who you are but let me ask you this, if you might indulge me for a moment. If you should ever choose to do things ... differently, for whatever reasons, do you truly believe that Draco would have the same freedom of choice that is extended to you by the wizarding world? Does his voice reach the ears of others in the same capacity that yours does?"

Harry thought he understood what Narcissa was saying and it made him uncomfortable. He knew that Draco had worked hard and risked his life more than once for Harry but it would be a lie to deny

the fact that there were still those on both sides of the light that would always link the Malfoy name with Voldemort, whether it be as a supporter of the madman or as a traitor.

"That would never happen, Mrs Malfoy," Harry insisted angrily, offended now at what she was insinuating. "I'm nothing like Lucius and Draco knows he's safe with me and -"

"Yes, Mr Potter?"

"And our children are safe with both of us!" Harry spat out. "They won't be scared or hurt or alone because we'll *both* make sure that never happens!"

"That is where you are wrong," Narcissa said quietly. "Your children will be scared, at times, or hurt or even alone. That is the nature of childhood, Mr Potter, but when your children become adults and they are given information about the past then I believe both of you can be proud of the fact that what your children will feel will be sympathy, and not empathy, for Draco ... and for you."

"For me?" Harry murmured, feeling surprised that he had just received what sounded like a compliment from his mother-in-law.

"I am truly sorry, Mr Potter, that your mother was not able to do for you what you mistakenly believe I had the opportunity to do for Draco," Narcissa came closer, now standing on the other side of the chair that Harry leant against for support. "If it were possible to go back and change things I would do that but, even with a Time-Turner, it would be impossible to change the roads we have all travelled without risking the existence of Draco, my grandchildren, and even you. You will only hear me say this once, but I much prefer the wizarding world with you in it and at Draco's side. My son has earned this happiness."

Harry blinked behind his glasses and opened his mouth to speak but when he realised that nothing was coming out he simply closed it again. Her comment about the Time-Turner forced him to recall his own despair when he and Draco had travelled to the past. The choice had been right there within his grasp to save his parents but the cost had been too high. Harry did wish his childhood hadn't been filled with so much loneliness and pain but he knew he would gladly do it all over again if it brought him Draco and his children. Harry straightened his shoulders and studied Draco's mother. He wasn't

sure what had just happened between the two of them but he did know that it couldn't have been easy for her to speak so openly. It seemed that, maybe, the cycle of shameful secrets was truly broken, whether it be forbidden touches or dark nights in a cupboard, and those left standing would be the ones to create something better. There were still things about Narcissa Malfoy that would bother Harry but, he supposed, that was probably true in any family. And the Malfoys were his family.

"Thank you," Harry finally replied, feeling the tension seep out of his body and the soft summer breeze coming in through the open window swept it away. "And ... just Harry would be ... okay."

"Very well, Harry," Narcissa said with a small nod. She then smiled and this time it reached the blue eyes that April had inherited. "I was not always a Malfoy and that is something you and I have in common. I believe it is something we can build upon."

There was a knock on the still open door and Draco appeared framed in it. "Oh, Mother, nice to see you," he said in a surprised tone. A blond eyebrow rose and he smiled. "I see you found it," he added, gesturing to the toy dragon in Harry's hand.

Harry looked over at Draco, still somewhat stunned by the turn of events. His brain finally registered Draco's words and he looked down at the unhappy dragon as if seeing it for the first time.

"I ... did," Harry answered, his voice sounding distant. "Hermione was right; it was here in the library."

Narcissa swept across the room towards Draco and placed her hands lightly on his forearms as she leant in and kissed him on the cheek. "It is lovely to see you, as well, son. It's a beautiful day outside and, if you'll both excuse me, I think I might like to spend some time in the gardens." Narcissa then turned and nodded slightly at Harry who still hadn't moved. "Enjoy your day, Harry, and – " she then turned back to Draco and gently squeezed his arms, "I should hope to see you later, Draco, but enjoy this time with your family."

With that, Narcissa quietly left the library. Harry's eyes were wide as he watched his mother-in-law gracefully leave the room.

Draco smiled after her, and then turned to his husband, both eyebrows up this time. "You seem to be getting along better."

"I – she, um, I mean ..." Harry stopped and tried to figure out

what had just occurred. He then searched Draco's face and saw something different in his husband's eyes that made him smile back and he strode across the room until he reached Draco. The smile became a soft chuckle and Harry shook his head. "Your mother is ... something else. I think you two are a lot alike and I'm not sure whether to smile or be nervous, love."

That, of course, delighted Draco who laughed. "Both," he said and captured Harry's mouth with his own.

– CHAPTER EIGHTEEN –

Favour

Draco took long, confident strides as he made his way up the winding stone path that led to the side door of the conservatory at the back of the Manor. June was preparing to slip away from the calendar for another year as it offered another beautiful day. The warmer months in England would soon be upon them; today, however, was perfect so Harry and Draco had spread a large blanket out among the apple trees to enjoy some time outside with the children. The blossoms had disappeared from the trees in late spring but the leaves were full and thick, providing generous shade as Harry chased Valen around the trees and they took turns hiding from one another. Draco had spent that time playing on the blanket with April and her toys until the fresh air brought about tiny yawns and she now lay on her stomach with her feet tucked up beneath her, sound asleep. As he had leant back against the tree, Draco had glanced up towards the house and could just make out the silhouette of his mother behind the large glass windows, watching all of them at play. After signalling Harry to let him know where he would be, Draco headed in to see Narcissa.

In the past two weeks, things had improved in the house between Narcissa and Harry which was a relief to Draco. Nothing meant more to him than his family and to have everyone making the effort to get along better pleased Draco very much. He knew that things weren't perfect, but compared to what he had known growing up, life in Malfoy Manor was now fairly idyllic. His mother still had difficulty acknowledging Hermione and Ron, and Draco often turned away to hide the smiles when he saw the pained expressions on his mother's face at some of the outfits that Harry chose to relax in. He hadn't brought it up with his husband, but Draco was almost sure that Harry was choosing some of the pieces on purpose just to see Narcissa's reactions.

Draco stepped into the double-pitch domed conservatory that was completely enclosed in glass and smiled at his mother who sat on a comfortably padded lounging chair with a cup of tea on a small table by her side. The colours in the room reflected those outside with different shades of greens and browns complemented by splashes of vivid reds that matched the roses in the gardens just below the glass view. Through the open windows, Draco could hear the faint laughter of Valen and Harry as they played. Narcissa smiled back at Draco and inclined her head towards the empty chair on the other side of the table set for tea.

Draco smoothed his hands down the front of his light linen trousers. Living with Harry had also affected his choices in clothing, so that, at home at least, he tended to wear clothing with more of a Muggle influence in their design, even if still made by a wizarding tailor. His button-down shirt was short-sleeved and his trousers hugged his arse in a way that would have been considered obscene by more conservative wizarding ideals. They were, however, more practical for chasing children and pleased Harry. Narcissa hadn't said anything about them though she had arched an eyebrow when she had first seen him in such an outfit. Now, Draco leant back in the chair next to his mother and crossed one ankle over his knee. "Your Aphrodite will bloom soon," he pointed out for something to say.

"As it does, every year, without fail," Narcissa replied, with a slight teasing tone to her voice. "If I remember correctly, a certain young man not much older than Valen is now had a very serious discussion with that plant the one year it failed to bloom that included the threat of being relocated someplace 'far, far away' and it has bloomed every year since then."

Draco smirked. He had been quite an imperious little boy, believing that he could order "lesser creatures" of the world the way it seemed his father did. He tested the matter on the plants, animals and even insects of the Malfoy estates. "I am glad it pleases you, Mother."

"It pleases me a great deal, Draco," she noted, turning now to look at the plant as her voice turned wistful. "I have missed seeing all of my plants coming to life for such a long time and I will miss seeing this one bloom when it fulfills your expectations of it in the next few

weeks."

Draco frowned as the meaning of her words sunk in. "Mother, why would you not be here to see it?" he asked, uncrossing his leg and leaning forward with his elbows on his knees.

Narcissa turned soft eyes on Draco; it was a gentle look that had once been reserved only for her son but now included Valen and April. "It's time for me to take my leave, son. These past weeks have been joyful and have eased my mind in regards to your welfare, but this is your time in Malfoy Manor to raise your family and it is my time to move on."

Draco wanted to argue with her, realising that he almost feared that if Narcissa left, he wouldn't see her again. Her return had been such a relief. Yet, he was also aware that she was unlikely to ever feel entirely comfortable sharing a home with Harry, let alone Hermione and Ron. "Where will you go?"

"Please don't look at me that way, Draco," Narcissa requested firmly, yet reassuringly. "I'm not expiring and you won't be doomed to conversations with my portrait. I'll only be a Portkey away; I was thinking, perhaps, of France. I have always loved it there."

Draco would have preferred her closer, but the idea of her in France was so fitting he couldn't object. He knew she loved it there and he smiled at the memories of the times he had spent at the estate there. He nodded. After a moment he smiled, arching an eyebrow. "In that case, I was wondering if you would do me a favour, Mother."

"I recognise that look, darling, and should probably insist on hearing it first," Narcissa said, matching Draco with an elegantly raised eyebrow of her own. "For you, though, I shall agree and reserve the right to change my mind."

"Of course," he acknowledged with a nod before continuing. "I am so busy with the estates here, that I don't have time to really manage the vineyard in France. I was wondering if you would be willing to take that over until one of the children is old enough for it." It was only partially true, of course. What he was really doing was offering her the place that she had always enjoyed most in his childhood, the Malfoy estate lands in France.

Narcissa was silent for a moment and looked down at the hands folded in her lap. The breath that she released was probably meant to

be silent but the shaky exhalation of what seemed to be relief was audible all the same. Lifting her head again, Narcissa gave her son a genuine smile. "It appears I won't need to change my mind, after all," she said, her blue eyes outshining the sun. "It would be my pleasure to accept the favour if you would permit me to request a favour of my own."

"Thank you, Mother," Draco answered, "and what is your request?" Now he knew where she would be and that it was a safe place she liked. He could make sure she was provided for without it appearing like charity.

Narcissa faltered for a moment, uncertainty passing like a shadow across her face so quickly that most people would have missed it. "I do understand that Harry will join you in making the decision, but, perhaps, when the children are a bit older I was hoping that you might consent to allowing them to visit with me. I promise you they would be protected and it would be lovely for them to spend time at the vineyards like their father did when he was a child."

Draco reached out, palm up for his mother's hand. "Of course, I will talk with Harry, but I doubt there will be a problem. I have told Harry about my summers there. Did you know we took a kind of late honeymoon there right after the war?"

Placing her own hand in the larger one of her son, Narcissa squeezed gently. "I do recall reading about that. There was a photo that accompanied the article and I was not only pleased at your choice of where to spend your holiday but also pleased, and grateful, to see that you appeared to be happy. There was a time when I did not believe – " Narcissa paused and held tight to Draco's hand. "In any case, I would be honoured to have my grandchildren visit me and I will make the request formally with Harry if you believe that to be best."

Draco knew that Harry's biggest objection would actually be letting either of their children out of his sight. Harry was extremely protective of their children – well, they both were. "When you are settled and ready to receive visitors, we will have to talk about it."

"Of course, son," Narcissa said with a small nod. "And, in the meantime, I do plan to return and visit with them here. You may find this hard to believe, but it won't be long until you are waving

goodbye to Valen as that dusty old train carries him away to Hogwarts. I should hope to get to know Valen, and April, very well before that day arrives." Narcissa turned at the sound of Valen's laughter floating up towards them. "I am ashamed to admit this, Draco, but I was uncertain of what I would find when we met again. The lessons you learnt as a child on what defines a good marriage or good parents made me very afraid for you and for your children. I can say, however, with complete honesty that you, Draco, truly are a good father."

Draco was very happy to hear she would not be disappearing from their lives again. His eyes followed her gaze, watching his son, his mind drawn back to that first time on platform 9 3/4. He'd been elated to be going to Hogwarts but also very frightened that he would not live up to his father's standards. A fear that turned out to be well-founded in the long run. He'd been so determined to be just like his father though. He flushed, turning back to meet his mother's eyes, looking into her blue ones. Same as his daughter's. "He wasn't kind to you, was he?" he asked, afraid of the answer.

Two high spots of colour appeared on Narcissa's cheekbones and she carefully pulled her hand away from Draco's to clasp her own together tightly as if to hold on to herself. Her chin lifted slightly, perhaps in defiance of the past. "Kindness towards me was not a promise made nor expected when we spoke our vows to one another, therefore, I can assure you that no promises were broken by Lucius in that regard."

Draco had no illusions about what kind of man his father had been. He and Harry had fought and, in self defence, killed Lucius. Lucius had demanded absolute control of his family and meted out brutal punishment for any deviation from his impossible standards. Draco had learnt to please his father, even sexually, to appease him. He also knew it was an unwritten rule of pure-blood aristocratic culture to not even speak of such things. He grimaced with the realisation that it was probably Harry's influence that had prompted him to say anything about it. Draco still had questions but was at a loss for how to ask them. "I know ... I was difficult sometimes," he ventured carefully.

"You were a challenge when you were very young, Draco, and I

regret not having the opportunity to spend more time with you," Narcissa continued, watching Valen chasing Harry around a tree. "As you became older, though, your choice of role model affected your behaviour and I was afraid for you ... and of you, at times. You were a direct link to Lucius in a way that I no longer seemed to be and that gave you power. Your adolescence was, indeed, a difficult time but I'm sure it was even more difficult for you."

Draco wasn't happy to hear that his mother had feared him, but it made sense. There were a few years after Lucius had quite literally seduced Draco, that if his mother had said anything against her husband, Draco would probably have told him. It wasn't something of which he was proud. It wasn't until Lucius' attack on Harry in the Ministry at the end of fifth year, and Lucius' subsequent incarceration, that Draco was able to break free from the hold his father had on him. He didn't know if his mother knew what his father had done to assure his submission and loyalty. And he had no idea of how to bring that up or if he should. "I would have done what he told me, then."

Narcissa turned and looked directly at Draco, her gaze piercing. "And you did just that, son, and I understand why."

Draco felt his cheeks flush and he dropped his eyes. "I ... I won't be like him. Harry has helped me make sure of that," he admitted.

It was Narcissa's cool hand that now reached out to clutch Draco's hand in a firm grip, her voice clear and strong. "Draco, do not ever feel you have to look away from me or be uncertain of what you think you might see in my eyes. Lucius' choices were not your choices even if you were somehow convinced that they were. He was a very persuasive man who knew how to take what he wanted and manipulated others into believing that they gave of it freely. The blame for what you endured lies only with Lucius and those adults who should have kept you safe – and failed to do so." Narcissa paused and glanced out at Harry for a long moment before turning back to Draco. "You never were like Lucius, son; wanting his love and choosing his path are two different things. You only wanted to be loved and I can see that with Harry ... you are. *Je te crois.*"

Draco felt embarrassed by the rush of relief, eyes stinging as he realised how much he had needed to hear that. She *trusted* him. He

closed his eyes for a moment, taking a deep breath to get control of himself before raising his eyes again to meet his mother's. " And ... you. I know you did the best you could, given the choices, or lack of, that you had. Thank you. I love you too."

"Merci, son," Narcissa said and patted Draco's hand before pulling her own away. "My choices are different now and so I choose to spend a great deal of time with my son and my grandchildren. If, for no other reason, than to ensure that April and Valen do not inherit their father's abysmal fashion sense. Draco, dear, I actually saw him yesterday in a shirt that seemed to be some strange shade of orange; I wasn't aware they made clothing in that colour." Narcissa's tone was completely serious but those who knew her well would see the mischief in her eyes. She shook her head slowly and brought her teacup up to her mouth. Before she took a sip, Narcissa muttered, "Orange, indeed."

Draco's smirk mirrored hers. "Oh, yes, I lay blame for that entirely at the feet of the Weasleys," he insisted. "I tried hiding that hideous garment but he just uses that amazing power of his to Summon it." Only a Slytherin would understand that he was bragging about his husband by that statement.

Narcissa inclined her head to the side and narrowed her eyes. "Perhaps a piece of clothing so valuable would be safer with me in France." She smiled at Draco. "Until his 'amazing powers' extend to his wardrobe we may need to help him out, son. He's very ... different, isn't he?"

"Oh, yes," Draco answered with almost a purr and a definite grin. "He certainly is."

– CHAPTER NINETEEN –

Like the First

The day passed by quickly and the time outside with the children resulted in two very sleepy little ones who dozed off before Harry and Draco completed bedtime rituals with them. Heading back into their own room, Harry was afraid he might have dislocated his jaw with a yawn of his own. He had always considered himself to be an energetic person, but Valen had outlasted him among the apple trees and the day was finally catching up.

Stepping near the bed, Harry toed his shoes off and glanced at Draco out of the corner of his eye. Figuring out his husband's feelings was sometimes difficult, but this evening it had been mostly baffling. The emotions that did manage to find themselves making an appearance in Draco's eyes seemed completely contradictory and Harry wasn't quite sure what to make of it. There had never been an opportunity to ask Draco if something was wrong which slightly tested Harry's patience. Even though he knew Draco sometimes needed space or time to work through things inside his head, Harry wasn't always able to wait that long before needing to know what was going on. Now that they were alone, Harry wondered if he should ask or give his husband a moment. As he unzipped his trousers and gave a slight wriggle that sent them sliding to the floor, Harry began to silently count down sixty seconds in his head.

Draco had been distracted, thinking about the conversation with his mother and what it would mean to have her far away again. He was so caught up in his thoughts that looking up to find Harry naked almost came as a surprise and he smiled immediately. It was a sight he never tired of and his body reacted predictably enough.

Three ... Two ... One Harry's clothes were now completely gone and he had no more numbers left in his head. The counting had distracted him and he had nearly forgot exactly why he was counting until he looked up and saw Draco smiling at him. A glance down

confirmed at least one suspicion, even if he still didn't know everything. Harry started to smile back but took a detour for a quick yawn which he covered with his hand. Pulling his hand away, the smile widened.

"What's that look for?" Harry asked, in mock-innocence.

Draco tossed the last of his own clothing aside and reached for his husband. "You," he said, voice suddenly husky and a grin on his face.

Harry moved closer and slid into Draco's arms. "Oh," he said nonchalantly. "Then I'll accept that look and, in exchange, you can have this" Harry leant in and began to lick and kiss at a spot on Draco's neck just below his ear that Harry was aware made his husband slightly weak in the knees.

Draco wrapped his arms around Harry and, lifting his head to let him suck his throat, pulled them both back into the large waiting bed.

Harry felt a swoop in his stomach as they fell together and he pulled his head back with a laugh once they landed safely on the bed with a soft bounce. It hadn't escaped his notice that Draco still wasn't saying much. In words, that is. His actions were saying quite a lot. Harry's laughter died away at the look in Draco's fathomless grey eyes; he studied the face that he loved before closing the gap between them and running his tongue lightly over Draco's bottom lip as a moist salve just before nipping gently.

"Biting mood?" Draco teased, taking hold of Harry's wrists and pulling them up above the man's head as he straddled him.

"Only if it's a day ending in a Y," Harry replied, allowing his arms to be captured.

"Keep them there," Draco ordered, smiling in acknowledgment of the joke but then giving his own bites as he nibbled along Harry's jaw to his ear.

Oh. So that's the kind of mood Draco was in, Harry realised with a soft groan as he tilted his head to the side to allow complete access. Harry fought the urge to clutch at Draco as he felt the little stinging sensations along his skin that made him shiver. He kept his hands above his head, though, and arched his body up in an unconscious attempt for more contact. Or, perhaps, not so unconscious as his hips rolled slightly and he groaned, "Need more"

"I need you," Draco whispered in his ear, tongue leaving a wet trail along the edge and his breath making Harry shiver. "I am going to ride you."

Those words made Harry's stomach feel the same way it had when they fell on the bed, only this time the only things falling were the soft gasps from Harry's lips and he nodded almost desperately. "Fuck, yes ... need you, need us, Draco ... ride me."

Draco reached beside the bed, picking up the jar of lube and sitting up, all the while looking down at Harry as he opened it and dipped the fingers of his hand into the oil. He knew he could ask Harry to Summon lube wandlessly but he wanted to do this himself, with his husband watching, like he did their first time together.

Harry's chest rose and fell with each breath of anticipation and he held still, searching Draco's face, wishing he could sweep aside the curtains that hid away the emotions so well. Their lovemaking was always filled with want and hunger for each other but the need tonight felt stronger to Harry in a way he would never find the words for but, fortunately, his body heard everything Draco wasn't saying. Harry's pupils widened in desire until the green was nearly consumed by dark lust as he whispered, "Want to be inside you"

"Yes," Draco agreed, oil dripping down his fingers and splashing on Harry's skin as he lifted up, reaching behind himself to press two fingers into his own body, silver hand braced on Harry's chest and mouth open as he gasped.

The sound of that gasp and the look on Draco's face forced any stray blood that had been circulating without a destination straight to Harry's cock and it hardened more than he might have thought possible. Watching the gleaming oil on Draco's hand and seeing his face in self-inflicted ecstasy, Harry was nearly lost as memories of their first time like this merged with the warm familiarity that all of their moments together had woven into the fabric of their skin. It was almost more than his body could take and he drew in large shaky breaths in an effort to keep from coming before his husband even touched him. Draco's face was beautiful. "Fuck," Harry murmured in awe. "You – you're just ... fuck."

Draco almost laughed, pleased as he always was with Harry's desire. He trembled as he worked his own fingers in and out of his

body for a moment, oil dripping to Harry's belly below. Then he slipped them free and ran the oiled fingers down his lover's cock, squeezing it gently as he positioned himself.

Harry drew in a sharp breath at the touch, his arms nearly trembling now with the effort of keeping them above his head when he so desperately wanted to stroke Draco's thighs; run hands along his belly, his chest, his shoulders as he pulled his husband against his own chest. Instead, Harry's eyes drifted downward, waiting for the moment his cock would be surrounded by the heat of Draco. Licking his lips in an attempt to share moisture that his dry mouth wasn't capable of producing, Harry panted, "Yes, love ... take me inside of you ... oh, God"

"Oh, yes, I am going to," Draco answered breathlessly. Harry's hands twisted and Draco could feel the tension in the man as Harry struggled not to take control again. Magic flared, sending tendrils of power over Draco's skin as if, even with his hands passive, the wizard below him still couldn't completely submit. Draco lowered himself, feeling the blunt head stretching him open as his body accepted Harry's cock.

The trembling now spread to Harry's hips as he fought the urge to thrust up into Draco and take him in one quick push, but this wasn't about Harry. He wasn't even sure that it was really about Draco but it was definitely about both of them together. Harry swore he could feel his cock swell and strain the moment it began the maddening slide into Draco as if it could hurry things along by showing impatience. Energy roiled through Harry and he wouldn't have been surprised if a fierce wind suddenly began whipping through the room because there was a storm inside of him and the eye of that storm was sitting atop Harry looking incredible in the candlelight.

"I want to fuck you, Draco," Harry implored, keeping his eyes only on Draco's face now. "I want to fuck you so much."

An odd mixture of groan and chuckle escaped Draco as he let his weight bring him down the rest of the way, impaling himself on Harry, balls resting on the skin of his lover's groin and body spasming as he adjusted. "You have no patience, love," he teased, fingers of both hands curling against Harry's chest, smearing oil near

one dark nipple.

"Fuck patience," Harry gasped and gave Draco a pleading look. "Now?"

"Fuck me," Draco agreed, nodding and waiting for the strike as he allowed his husband the chance to pounce.

"Oh, yes!" Harry said in a sort of strange choking cry of relief as he tilted his hips slightly to bring them down before slamming up into Draco with sweet fury. The impact was worth the wait; Harry squeezed his eyes shut and threw his head back. Sweat broke out on his skin, mingling in dark places with the oil and it was only the beginning of wet and friction and heated pulses. To the non-existent winds above him, Harry chanted, "In you ... in you -"

Draco knew that once Harry got going, it was best to hold on and enjoy the ride. He worked his hips in circles, a counterpoint to Harry's thrusts.

From that moment on, Harry let himself go, hips pounding and dark hair flying, except for the sweat-soaked strands that clung to his forehead and cheeks. The invisible bonds that held his arms back seemed to force strength into the lower half of his body as if in retaliation for having to stay still. Every muscle in Harry's hips and legs coiled and stretched in a furious rhythm that demonstrated the fact that Harry's grace wasn't limited to flying. Except he *was* flying right at that moment. Flying in and out of Draco and there was no better feeling in the world. Harry's breathing was ragged and nearly painful but he didn't care and he knew he would rather fuck Draco until he was blue in the face than slow down at that moment. He was too close to falling. "Oh, fuck, Draco ... close!"

Draco's hands slipped up to grab hold of Harry's shoulders, doing his best not to fall as his lover's body smacked into him over and over, magic in waves that made his head spin and pleasure rippling through him. His own hair was equally damp, beads of sweat falling to mingle with the pre-come that dripped from his prick as it bounced between them. He was too far gone to answer but he could feel the build-up of power that would bring him with his husband's orgasm.

Within seconds, the lion roared and drove his hips up trying to meld himself with Draco by force. Harry's cry of desire spiralled into

a throaty moan of release when he held the thrust for a breath as the first spurt spilled inside of Draco. After that, the smooth rhythm deteriorated into a frenzy of movement as Harry's cock took over and pleasure singed every single nerve ending with a wave of fire. There were no more words; Harry surrendered himself to Draco's body.

Draco's release splattered between them, drops of white hitting Harry's chin. The blond threw his head back with a shout, fingers digging into Harry's skin. No matter how many times they made love, this moment always filled Draco with more than pleasure; with a sense of belonging that soothed every ache or fear he'd ever felt. He was Harry's and that's what he had always wanted.

Harry had opened his eyes in time to watch his husband lose himself and he was stunned each and every time he had the good fortune to witness it. The tendons in the pale neck stood out in sharp relief against an otherwise smooth surface. Harry's eyes skated up the neck to the face that was the picture of wanton elegance with trembling lips and flushed cheeks. Harry always declared every moment of their lovemaking to be his favourite but this really was. This was the exact moment when the blond shed the image of Draco Malfoy and became simply Harry's Draco. His beautiful dragon. Harry brought his aching arms down and ran his hands up and down Draco's thighs. "Fucking incredible," Harry whispered. Let Draco think he was talking about the sex. Harry knew what he was really talking about.

Draco was still shuddering as he looked down, his eyes on the emerald green of his husband's. He could still remember the first moment he had looked into those eyes in Madam Malkin's, nearly nine years before. He'd lost a part of himself then and had despaired that he would never be whole again. Sitting atop the man now, he knew that he was the luckiest man alive. "Amazing," he echoed and then leant forward to kiss Harry.

Harry brought his hands up and slid one behind Draco's neck to cup gently while the other one moved up and over Draco's shoulder to bring him close. He could taste his husband with every lick, every suck of the lips that were parting at his unspoken request. The kiss was lazy and wet and perfect. Harry pulled back a bit and rested his

forehead against Draco's chin, releasing a quiet laugh. "I have to say that if I get that every time you give me a look then I'm going to be staring at you a lot more in the future. Just so you know"

Draco wriggled a bit, feeling the pleasant burn of his sore arse from the pounding and the sticky wet slide of their skin together. "I have always watched you," he reminded Harry, kissing the man's damp forehead. He loved his life now, but the conversation with his mother reminded him of those painful years when Harry had not returned his feelings.

"I'm still not sure exactly what you saw," Harry said, tilting his head back now to look into Draco's eyes. "But I'm glad you kept watching and waiting until I could see you too."

"Well, until I shoved you against a wall and kissed you," Draco quipped, reluctantly letting his husband's cock slip from inside him and moving to lie down beside him.

"It was pretty hard not to see you then," Harry replied with a grin. "That kiss was pretty eye-opening, Draco."

Draco lay on his back, looking up at the cross-beam of their canopy bed. The letter "H" was carved there. "It's amazing what one will do when you think there is nothing left to lose," he teased. "I remember thinking that if you killed me then it would have been worth it."

"Well, that first kiss probably wouldn't have got you killed although 'eye-opening' did nearly become eye-blackening but the second kiss" Harry scooted closer and laid his head on Draco's shoulder, also looking up at the carved initials. "The first kiss might have made me see you but it was the second kiss that made me want you and it was definitely worth it."

Draco couldn't have agreed more.

– CHAPTER TWENTY –

Empathy

Draco wrapped his arms around Harry, fingers playing with the inky damp hair at the back of Harry's neck. They lay there for a few minutes, sweat drying on their bodies. "Our life now is more than I could have wished for," he said, considering how to segue into a conversation about his mother.

Harry laughed and pressed closer to Draco. "Well, if you wished for a houseful of people who never imagined they would ever live together and noisy children then I have to agree that you definitely got what you wanted. You should have seen your mother's face yesterday when Hermione brought up the stuff about house-elves. At first she looked shocked but by the time Hermione was finished she had that same glazed look in her eye that Ron gets and I think it's the first time she and Ron had anything in common."

Draco couldn't help but laugh at that, especially since he could easily imagine his mother's reaction. He reached a hand over and laced his fingers with Harry's, hands resting on his husband's chest. "Well, they will all get a chance to recover when my mother leaves," he said.

Harry blinked and paused before saying anything. He knew that if he gave a sigh of relief that it would hurt Draco's feelings but he had to admit it was hard not to smile at that moment. Ever since they had talked, things had been better between Harry and Narcissa but he still felt uncomfortable around her. He always felt as if Narcissa were studying him or judging him and Harry was afraid that he always came up short in her eyes. "Um ... she does know she's welcome to stay, right?" Harry asked, after clearing his throat. "I know it's not what she's used to but she doesn't have to leave, Draco. Where would she go?"

Draco watched, bemused, as his husband's emotions played across his features. "I think she knows how we feel," he answered.

"And she and I both appreciate your efforts, as well as Ron and Hermione's, to make her feel welcome." Draco paused, fingers carding gently through the tangle of Harry's hair. "She plans to stay in touch with us and will be back for visits. My mother and I have talked about her taking over stewardship of the Malfoy Vineyards in France."

"Are you okay with her leaving?" Harry rubbed his thumb along the back of Draco's hand. "I guess she would probably be happier in France than here but does it bother you that she wants to go?"

Draco had to think about that. Actually, what was bothering him more was that it didn't bother him. "I love my mother," he said, after a pause. "And I am very glad she is alive and back in my life. It makes me very happy to see her with Valen and April. Yet, there are parts of our past that I think will always leave a strain between us. It will probably make it easier on her as well as us if we visit but not live under the same roof."

Harry wasn't sorry to see Narcissa go, but he did feel unsettled to hear Draco say that it would probably be best to have his mother leave. Harry only had the fantasy version of his own mother in his head but even with the opposing examples of Petunia Dursley and Molly Weasley, he had seen how tight their bonds were with their children. He supposed that was why he had been so angry with Narcissa in regards to what Draco had suffered through, practically under her nose. Harry sometimes wondered if Draco ever gave it any thought. "Well, I guess that makes sense," Harry said, although it actually didn't make sense to him at all. It almost made it sound as if Narcissa and Draco were distant relatives rather than mother and son. Harry turned his body more towards Draco and pushed himself up so that he rested on one elbow. In this position, he was able to look into Draco's grey eyes which seemed pensive at the moment. "I guess what I don't understand is why she disappeared for so long and now she's barely here and wants to leave. Has she even talked to you about the past or explained things?"

Draco knew he needed to talk about the past and his mother with Harry, to help him understand. Yet, most of Draco's explanations in the past only seemed to confuse his husband more. "She left to make it easier for us to fight Voldemort without her in the way," he said.

"It's why she stayed away that is complicated."

"There was no reason for her to stay away after the war," Harry said firmly. "She let you think she was dead, Draco, and for what? We would have taken her in at any time; even before the war ended and we told Snape to tell her that. So why did she leave you?"

Draco sighed, closing his eyes for a moment to collect himself, one hand still caressing Harry's hair to help him stay focused. When he opened his eyes again, looking into those earnest green ones almost undid him. "She couldn't protect me. After Macnair used her to get to us, I think she knew that Voldemort might try that." He paused again, waiting to see Harry's reaction before he continued.

Harry narrowed his eyes as he recalled the results of what had happened when Macnair had placed Narcissa under Imperius. He knew it was irrational for him to believe she could have fought it but the thought sometimes came into his head all the same. Yet, if Voldemort had got hold of Narcissa the results would have been even worse. "Of course that bastard would have used your mother," Harry said tightly, remembering the visions of Valen in the arms of the monster. "He didn't care who he used to get what he wanted. But it seems like – " Harry stopped. He didn't want Draco to feel that Narcissa was under attack and he did want to hear why she stayed away. " – like maybe she could have tried harder, that's all."

Draco arched an eyebrow, showing the scepticism he felt. "Harry, the only reason they could not use Imperius to get to me was that I was under the protection of your Binding Spell," he reminded him. Draco knew he would have been no match for an Imperius done by Voldemort. Harry's magic had protected him over and over again, even bringing him back from the brink of death.

"I don't mean that," Harry said, not really sure how to say what he did mean. "I mean that maybe if she wanted to protect you she should have left sooner. She's the one that chose to stay with Lucius as long as she did. I just think maybe she could have tried harder to protect you sooner than she did."

Draco knew it was because Harry had been raised by Muggles, but he was always surprised by the depth of ignorance Harry still had of wizarding culture and laws. "My mother couldn't have left Lucius without leaving me behind and in my father's sole custody," he said

bluntly. "I was the sole heir. No one would have taken that away from Lucius and the blood-line he represented."

Harry felt a flash of annoyance at Draco's words. They had been over this before and, while he understood what Draco was saying, Harry still believed there had to have been another way for Narcissa; a better choice than living with someone as sick and cruel as Lucius. Surely Dumbledore would have helped them. "I just think it's wrong, that's all," Harry said vehemently. "I don't understand it when rules about heirs and blood are more important than people. Just because it's always been done that way doesn't make it right, Draco. And look at Parkinson; it's still happening today and everyone has the titles and the money and the heirs but is anybody happy? I want to say that I get why your mother couldn't leave without losing you but I really don't because I just can't believe that there wasn't somebody that could help her if she really had wanted to leave."

Draco shook his head and moved to sit up more, leaning against the headboard. "And just who would have saved me if she had told them?"

"Well, she had to have family that might help her," Harry replied. "Or she could have gone to Dumbledore and he would have done something to help both of you."

"The Black family? The way they stood by Sirius?" Draco couldn't help the sneer in his voice. "And Dumbledore, the way he helped me when he found out what Voldemort had done in sixth year? Or maybe he could have sent my mother and I to live in a cupboard?" Draco was angry and he knew the last line was low, but he couldn't help his own anger. Harry had always railed against Snape while defending Dumbledore, even when Snape had been the one to at least try to help mitigate what Lucius had done to Draco.

Harry's mouth dropped open at Draco's last comment and he scrambled up so that he was no longer lying alongside his husband but now sat facing him. He felt a flush of anger and humiliation at having the worst part of his childhood flung back into his face that way. "He didn't have a choice about that! It was the only way to keep me safe!" Harry shot back, shock still colouring his voice. "You would have been a lot safer in a cupboard than in your own home but you'll never know because your mother never even asked!"

Draco felt the spike of Harry's anger in his magic but refused to back down. He sat up further, arms crossed over his chest to ward off the desire to relent. "And how do you know what she did or did not do? I know she asked Severus for help. Can you even imagine what it was like to be married to Lucius? I know that before I began Hogwarts, there was a Tracking Charm on me. My father would have killed anyone who tried to take me away from him. In fact, he did try. Remember?" he demanded.

"Yes, I remember," Harry growled. "I was fucking there!" There was a part of Harry that knew he was being stubborn now but there was also a part that needed to believe in Dumbledore. He needed to believe that there was a good reason for the path of his childhood and he needed to believe that mothers could save their children if they were alive to do so. Drawing in a deep breath to argue in favour of Dumbledore, Harry then recalled Narcissa's words to him in the library and the meaning of what she had said suddenly slammed into him with the eye-widening force that unexpected clarity often brings. This wasn't about what Harry needed to believe because it wasn't about Harry's childhood. Narcissa wasn't Lily, Lucius had been insane, and Draco was ... right here, looking at him with eyes that were angry but Harry could see that beyond the anger was something else – pleading. Harry's shoulders slumped just a bit and his voice softened. "Yeah, I do remember and I hate it that you lived with that and nobody saved you. When things are wrong I want to fight against that but I can't this time and I hate the way that feels. I don't know how to fix the past, that's all"

Draco sucked in a deep breath at the shift in Harry. He could see and feel the way Harry had finally got what Draco had been trying to tell him. His own grey eyes were suspiciously misty as he reached a hand to caress Harry's cheek. "But someone did save me," he pointed out. "You did."

Harry shook his head and reached up to take Draco's hand. "We saved each other, love. I don't think I could have defeated Voldemort without you, and you were the one that reached out to me first. I just want to fix everything for you and, although I may want to Obliviate myself for saying this, that means making things right between you and your mother so you can have everything the way you want it to

be and then maybe she won't leave you again. I still don't understand why she stayed away for so long and let you worry about her."

The warmth of Harry's affection, of Draco's hand pressed between the man's face and fingers, made him shiver. He did not want to imagine his life without Harry. His mother had been right, he didn't like what he had been becoming. Yet, it was difficult to admit it to Harry. Draco couldn't meet his husband's eyes as he did, dropping his own gaze to the dragon tattoo on Harry's hip. "She was afraid of me."

Harry's face reflected the disbelief and confusion he felt about what Draco said. "Afraid of you?" Harry replied with complete surprise. Harry had always assumed that Narcissa's reasons for staying away somehow had something to do with him and her disapproval of their bonding. He never thought it might be about Draco. "How could she be afraid of her own son? Doesn't she even know you?!"

Draco snorted, realising how much Harry had let himself forget about the way Draco had been before his father went to Azkaban. Draco supposed he played a big part in that, always telling Harry how much he had always wanted him. That part was true. He just rarely talked about how angry he'd been as well. "Do you remember me in fifth year? Or breaking your nose on the train at the beginning of sixth?"

"Yeah, but -" Harry recalled the cold eyes that had looked down on him just before that foot came smashing into Harry's face. That person seemed like a stranger now. " – but I always thought that was just a me and you thing. I never thought" Harry's voice trailed off and he wondered briefly how he had ever managed to destroy Voldemort when he considered just how long it sometimes took him to piece things together. "Your mother thought you would be ... like Lucius?"

Draco felt the heat on his cheeks, knowing they would be pink now. He nodded. "I wanted to be like him. I was trying to become him. I just ... wasn't very ... consistent."

This revelation startled Harry and even scared him a little although he wasn't sure why. It wasn't as if he didn't recall the proud look on Draco's face when he was a child, standing next to his father

while Lucius sneered at everyone and made nasty comments. Harry supposed that what scared him was that he didn't understand this side of Draco at all and, once he fell in love with his husband, he wanted to believe that Draco had been an unwilling participant even in the cruelties he inflicted on others. Hearing this, though, opened the door a little further towards understanding Narcissa's life a little better.

Harry moved forward on the bed until he sat alongside Draco once more and pulled his husband close. He could see how hard it was for Draco to confess this to Harry and, even if he was uncertain of how he felt, he wasn't going to let Draco's courage go unrewarded. "I guess it's all you knew, right? I mean, he was your father and all, so it makes sense you would want to do things he would be proud of so he would love you." Harry struggled to keep his voice soothing as he said those words since Lucius' idea of love made him want to bring the man back to life just so he could kill him all over again. "But I don't understand why she still thought that after what we did to – to Lucius and you helped me destroy Voldemort. Why did she think you would still be like that after you were with me?"

Draco found Harry's touch comforting but it almost made it more difficult to tell him these things. "Yes, it was what I knew, what I believed. And the doubts I had, I had kept to myself, not sharing them with my mother. She had no idea how I felt about you or the so-called mission from Voldemort," Draco explained and then took a deep breath knowing he would have to continue. "She is Slytherin, Harry. And the only conversation she had with me after our bonding was at the wedding. What do you think she saw? I had been magically bound as a concubine by a man so powerful that he had somehow rescued me from Voldemort's curse and then turned around and not only got me out of paying the price for my actions, but beheaded my father, making me Lord of the Manor. From a Slytherin perspective, you appeared to be a ruthless adversary. To those who don't know you, Harry Potter seems a cunning, powerful wizard who took what he wanted. To my mother, it may have seemed like I had allied myself with you for power in the way Lucius had tried to do with Voldemort."

Harry felt his face grow warm when he heard himself described

that way. He had always considered most of his own accomplishments to be the result of luck or a lot of help from other people such as Draco. It was strange to think that Narcissa, and possibly others, viewed him not as a teenager stumbling his way through life but as a powerful wizard capable of striking down those who opposed him. Harry's mind leapt from that to the night that Draco's friends had nearly got them killed in a misguided effort to 'free' Draco. An uncomfortable feeling unfurled itself in the pit of Harry's stomach and began spreading throughout him when he understood then how he appeared to those who didn't know him. It was almost more than he could take in and it unsettled him. The scrutinizing looks from Narcissa made more sense now. "Your mum thought you had completely become Lucius. She must have been scared that if she came back that you would consider her a traitor and make her pay for that. That's something Lucius would have done" Harry wasn't so much replying to Draco now as he was simply thinking out loud and trying to make sense of things that had never made sense before. "Lucius would have made her pay."

Draco tried not to smile, but the truth was that he had always known how Harry looked to those trained, as he was, to see power as the primary motivator of people's actions. It was one of those rare moments when Harry saw a glimpse of the Slytherin point of view. "Yes, exactly," he answered. "It must have been a terrifying gamble for her to come back, to hope that she would be allowed to see her son and grandchildren."

Harry grinned suddenly and leant over to kiss Draco on the curve of his neck. He pulled back and looked at his husband. "Well, at least now we know where you inherited the gene for gambling when you're terrified. I guess we have your mother to thank for that kiss."

Draco laughed in delight, relieved that Harry understood. "Yes, well, you are a terribly powerful wizard. The world is just lucky that you seem to focus most of your magical energy on sex," Draco teased, then waggled his eyebrows. "Something I am certainly pleased with." He leant towards his husband, nudging their noses briefly before going for another of those magical kisses.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE –

Abraxan

Harry walked beside an excited and nervous Ron Weasley, who was clutching a sleek new broomstick. He had recently dubbed the broom the Abraxan500, named after the powerful winged horses. Only within the past few weeks had Ron finished the development of his first broom, and it had not yet been flown. Harry had agreed to test it for the first time.

"You are sure it's going to be safe, aren't you?" asked Hermione, who was walking with them as well.

Fred snorted. "Eh, Harry'll probably crack his skull open," he said. The twins had come from work to watch the first flight. Mr Weasley was there, as well, and shot a displeased look towards Fred before smiling encouragingly at Ron.

"I'm sure Harry's skull will be fine, son," Mr Weasley pointed out in a cheerful voice. Harry could see the pride and happiness on Mr Weasley's face when he turned to give Harry a broad smile.

Ron looked even more nervous and Harry shook his head.

"Maybe I should just test it," said Ron.

"I already said I would," Harry replied. "I can stop it if something goes wrong and I promise I won't crack my skull." He smiled wryly, raising an eyebrow.

Draco snorted and then hefted April against his hip, holding her with his silver arm. Valen bounced along beside him.

Ron sighed as they neared the pitch, shaking his head now, too.

"Aww, don't worry, little brother," said George, grasping Ron's shoulder and giving it a rough shake. "You can't have completely screwed it up."

"That's right," said Fred. "You *are* of our blood."

Hermione frowned at them. "I think he's done a very good job," she said firmly.

"Ooh, and Mrs Weasley attacks," said Fred, chuckling.

Hermione rolled her eyes and Mr Weasley held up one hand in the direction of the twins. "That's enough, boys," he said. "Ron's worked hard for this and Harry's being good enough to test it for him. I'm sure everything will be fine."

"I wouldn't let my husband on it if I didn't think the design was flawless," Draco said, voice a bit haughty. He still had tendency to sound like that when he was nervous.

"I wanna ride!" Valen piped, tugging on Harry's trouser leg.

Harry looked down, raising his eyebrows. Then he lifted Valen and threw him into the air. "Not this time," he said to the little boy as he caught him. "We have to test it first."

Valen laughed happily at their favourite game and April began to squirm in Draco's arm, reaching for Harry too. "Dada Harry!"

"Oh, you too, huh?" Harry said, laughing at April. He threw Valen up again before setting him back on his feet, then took April, tossing her up as well. She giggled and gasped when she went high, and then clutched Harry around the neck.

Draco smiled, grey eyes sparkling with affection as he watched his husband and children.

Harry grinned at the girl, kissing the tip of her nose as they all continued on their way. "Well, let's do this," he said to Ron, handing April back to Draco when they had reached the Quidditch pitch stands on the Manor grounds.

Draco took April and then leant in to kiss Harry before he could walk away. Harry kissed Draco back and then joined Ron on the pitch. He smiled reassuringly when he saw the anxiety on Ron's face.

"You sure about this, Harry?" Ron asked.

"Yes, Ron," Harry answered, holding a hand out for the broom. "I. Can. Stop. It."

Ron sighed one last time, handing it over.

Draco got the two children settled beside him on one of the bleachers. He tried to look calm, so as not to make the children worry. He still found himself idly fingering his wand in its sleeve.

Harry released the broom and it hovered at his mounting height. "Well, so far so good," he said, smiling up at Ron as he threw a leg over the handle. "It'll be fine."

Ron released a slightly shaky breath, nodding.

Harry nodded as well, and then rose a few feet. He was surprised with how smoothly the broom glided upward.

Over by the stands, Fred and George were watching with interest. "I have five Galleons on a broken arm," said Fred.

"Ten on a broken leg," George replied in a quiet voice, trying not to be overheard by Mr Weasley who stood down at the edge of the pitch below the bleachers.

"Oh, just be quiet," Hermione snapped, eyes never leaving Harry.

Draco was torn between amusement and annoyance but simply snorted again. He had one arm around Valen and only realised he was holding the child too tight when Valen squeaked in protest.

Harry moved cautiously, testing the tilt and rotation of the broom handle. He was struck again by the smoothness and the control. Ron might have really hit it big. He went higher, still not really putting on any speed.

"How is it?" Ron shouted from below.

"Amazing so far!" Harry shouted back, bringing the broom into a slow barrel roll.

April clutched Draco's arm and he was lucky it was his silver hand or it might have hurt. "It's okay," he assured her.

"Daddy Harry can do anything," Valen assured her, looking completely confident.

Harry pulled up again, going even higher. It seemed the broom handled height very well. He pulled a few slow twists and turns, and he gripped a little tighter as he put on a spurt of speed, shooting down several feet – he started to get nervous when it seemed he couldn't pull back up. His eyes widened and he tugged hard on the handle, but still couldn't pull up.

Draco's eyes grew wide and his heart beat faster. If his husband was pulling one of his stunts, he would have to kick his arse later. If he wasn't

"Fuck," Harry hissed under his breath, watching the ground moving closer and closer. He chanced moving a hand off the broom, and flipped sideways slightly, but managed to fling a Cushioning Charm and slow himself before he hit. It did hurt though, and he knew his side would be bruised.

Ron ran over to him and Mr Weasley arrived just behind him,

kneeling down and placing one hand on Harry's shoulder. "Give yourself a minute, son, before you try to get up."

Draco was up and running before he even thought about it, wand drawn and dropping to Harry's side.

Harry stared at the three of them, wincing as he pushed himself up. "Well, something's off with the speed," he said. "Lucky I decided to go down rather than up."

"Are you okay?" Ron asked, voice an octave higher.

"Yeah, I'm fine," Harry answered, lifting his shirt to examine the damaged side and touching it gingerly. The skin was already beginning to discolour.

Draco scowled, heart still beating fast. He felt torn between anger and relief. It was ridiculous, the rational part of him knew that. The fingers of his right hand were curled tight about his wand.

Harry frowned, reaching to rub Draco's arm as Hermione rushed over with the kids and the twins. "I'm fine," he said.

Draco huffed but then reached to touch Harry's side, his fingers cautiously tracing the edges of the blossoming bruise.

Hermione had gone pale, but the twins were grinning.

"Break anything?" George asked with a smirk, eyeing Harry's legs.

"No," Harry said, snorting. "And I can heal this bruise."

"You fall down," came April's little voice from where she stood clutching Hermione's hand.

Harry smiled at her. "Yes, love, but I'm okay."

"See, told you," Valen told his sister, tone smug.

"Heal it," Draco insisted, fingers still touching Harry's skin.

Harry cocked an eyebrow before looking down at his side again. He focused his magic into it, healing from the inside. He felt it tingle and knew it was working.

Draco felt it too, shivering at the feel and licking his lips automatically.

Harry smirked and released an amused breath. "All better now," he said, eyes on his husband.

"There are children present," said Hermione when the twins had smirked as well. Mr Weasley cleared his throat and appeared to be studying some point off in the distance.

Draco pulled his hand back, feeling like he should say he hadn't

done anything, but his blush gave away his thoughts.

"Anyway," said Harry, sparing his husband. "Like I said, something's not right with the speed. I tried to go fast and it wouldn't let me change direction."

Ron sighed and nodded, retrieving the broomstick.

"Don't worry though," Harry continued. "It's probably easy to fix."

"I have no idea why I'm doing this," said Harry, clutching the highly improved Abraxan500. Test after test had been performed, and after the speed problem had been corrected, Harry had never flown on a better broomstick before. He had no idea how Ron had done it, but his friend had truly developed something amazing.

They had contacted Oliver Wood, who still played for Puddlemere United. He'd had a few words, and the owner of the team had agreed to show Ron's broom off at half time during one of the games – but only if Harry Potter flew it, and if they gave the team one of the brooms for free. The publicity that came with Harry's name brought a crowd to the match, which was good for the team, and for Ron, so Harry couldn't not do it, even though using his fame to get things, or using it for anything really did make him a bit uncomfortable.

At that moment, he was standing down on the sidelines with Draco as halftime neared. The rest of the family was up in the box, watching the game.

Draco leant against the wall near the entrance to the pitch. Although he enjoyed watching Quidditch games, most of his attention during this one was on the dark haired man pacing in front of him. "You are working yourself into a state," he commented.

Harry huffed and ceased his pacing, letting his head fall back. "Half the crowd's here for the bloody halftime 'show'," he said. "This isn't a big game."

Draco chuckled. "I'd come to see Harry Potter any day," he drawled.

Harry rolled his eyes. "You see me every day," he said. "I was going to pull off a few dives, makes a few loops, and now – Merlin, look how many bloody people are here!" He huffed again, knowing it

was stupid. He'd played in front of all of Hogwarts, but nothing had been expected of him then.

"You don't even have to catch the Snitch," Draco huffed. "Just show them some pretty moves. You always make flying look easy."

Harry sighed, smiling a bit at his husband. "Whatever you say," he shrugged, looking over his shoulder as the commentator announced his name.

Draco leant over and gave him a quick kiss before he could launch.

Harry took a deep breath then, guiding the broom easily out into the air. He heard the crowd roar and felt pretty much like an idiot, but there was nothing else for it. He raised a hand and gave a wave, and did smile when he saw the Weasleys and his children cheering from their seats.

As the commentator began to describe the broom, Harry rose up higher into the air. The crowd roared as he looped effortlessly, hardly needing to think about it, and as he pulled off a few more moves, he did start to feel better. Maybe it wasn't so bad.

Draco crossed his arms over his chest, smiling up at the sight. It still amused him that watching Harry fly aroused him so much. He had made sure to wear robes, not trousers, today in anticipation of that fact and that he would be in front of a large crowd which included their children.

Harry swerved and dove and shot up again, grinning now as he simply flew without worry. Probably made the broom look better like that, anyway. After one last dive that he managed to pull out of just in time, bringing a gasp from the spectators, he landed easily on his feet.

Draco's gasp and moan was lost in the applause from the ecstatic crowd and he was very glad their children were up in the stands instead of standing with him.

Harry gave another short, salute-like wave, climbing off the broom and making his way back over to Draco to let the regular game continue. "That was great," he said, grinning.

Draco tried to control his face, smiling but not well, certainly not blushing or drooling over his gorgeous husband with his wind-tousled hair and face flushed from riding. The blond swallowed hard.

Harry cocked his head to the side, a smug smirk slipping over his smile, though he felt a flash of warmth in his gut staring at Draco looking so obviously turned-on and so *very* fetching. "How was it?" he asked.

"Fantastic," Draco managed, licking his lips.

Harry waggled his eyebrows a bit. "You can *show* me how fantastic when we get home," he said. "Join the others for now?"

Draco took a deep breath, trying to control himself as his heart sped up even more with that promise. He nodded.

Harry smiled again, holding his free hand out to his husband.

Draco still trembled as he took Harry's hand, squeezing it.

Bringing that hand to his lips, Harry kissed the top of it. "You are very hard to resist, my love," he said, moving towards the stairs.

Draco leant in, whispering in Harry's ear. "Our family will be watching the game."

"True enough," Harry whispered back, feeling his cock give a twitch. "Are you suggesting we not wait until we're home?"

"I don't think anyone would mind the hero using the showers after flying," Draco whispered again.

"Hmm, how about the hero and his husband?" Harry asked, having paused on the steps.

"Exactly," Draco said, ear pressed to Harry's, whispering despite the loud crowd. He licked the edge of Harry's ear.

Harry moaned quietly. "Come help me wash up," he said, changing direction. "There might be a few places that are hard to reach."

Draco grinned as his husband led him back down out of the stands and to the home team's locker room.

Once inside the room, Harry backed Draco into a corner, grinning as he moved in to kiss him and then pull gently on his bottom lip with his teeth. "What *is* it about a locker room?" he whispered hotly. He leant against the wall with his hands on either side of Draco.

"I spent years playing against you and having many locker room fantasies," Draco gasped, hands reaching to slide under the Quidditch uniform top.

Harry chuckled lowly. "Oh, yes, I know," he said. He and Draco

had played many of them out. "However," he continued, "I think I like being your husband and being allowed to bend you over again and again."

Draco moaned, body shivering at his husband's words. "Yes, bend me over," he encouraged.

"Fuck, yes," Harry growled, bringing his hands over Draco's body and stripping him bare. He stripped himself as well before grasping Draco's arse and squeezing. "Most amazing arse on the planet," he said, taking the skin of Draco's neck between his teeth.

Draco gasped at the shock of the cold stone of the wall against his back and Harry's magic and hot body against his front. He tilted his head, encouraging Harry's teeth on his neck and his own hands scratching up his husband's back.

Harry sucked in a hissing breath before he bit down hard enough to leave a bruise, and then another. "You like this, don't you?" he asked, bringing his fingers up, sliding slowly between Draco's arsecheeks. He healed the marks he'd left with his tongue, feeling the slick muscle tingle.

"Fuck, yes!" Draco growled. Sometimes he really wanted it rough. Rough because it was exciting but also because then Harry had an excuse to heal him, too, which felt fantastic.

Harry chuckled again, darkly. "Good," he said. He quickly grasped Draco's wrists then, stepping back as he pulled him forward. "Bend over," he demanded, directing Draco towards one of the benches.

Draco bent forward, hands on the bench, hair hanging around his face and arse turned up for his lover. His cock twitched powerful at the feel of being presented and exposed like this, knowing someone could walk in on them at any minute.

"God, you are so fucking hot," Harry groaned, slapping Draco's arse as he lubed the fingers of his other hand and slid them inside.

The slap stung in just the right way and Draco spread his legs wider when he felt Harry's fingers pushing into him.

"Fuck, yes, spread your legs for me, my *dragon*," Harry growled and purred at the same time. He pumped his fingers quickly, squeezing with the other hand.

Draco's fingers, silver and flesh, curled over the edge of the

bench as he submitted to the delicious stretching and squeezing. His cock hung hard and heavy beneath him. "Yes, my lion, yours," he gasped.

Harry bent over Draco as he removed his fingers and took his cock in hand. He teased his husband's entrance, rubbing the head of his cock over it as he nipped with hard little bites over Draco's shoulders.

Draco shuddered, wriggling his arse in response to the teasing. "Yours," he whispered, "devour me."

"Mmm, yes," Harry whispered, standing upright again before pushing in. He closed his eyes with the feeling of such tightness, cock leaking inside his husband.

Draco's cock was dripping onto the bench now and his legs shaking as he felt Harry's thickness fill him. His moan was long and full of sheer delight.

"Gonna make you come so hard," Harry promised in a moan, grasping Draco's hips and purposely laying his hand over the lion.

Draco would not be surprised if his moans were loud enough to be heard outside now, Harry's flesh and magic almost too much. His right hand was near white knuckled where he held the bench, and the silver might leave a dent. "Yes, take me, fuck me," he growled back.

Harry moved forward hard, entranced with the way Draco's body looked and felt. "Fuck *yes*," he hissed and snarled. "Mine!"

Each thrust forward filled Draco, making his body shudder and his skin shiver with the magic that came with Harry's excitement.

Harry's breathing sped up and he bit his lip tightly and grasped even tighter. "Fuck, Draco, coming!" he shouted, bending again to grasp the bench as he spilled his seed.

Draco's seed splattered on the bench below and he curled forward, nearly collapsing onto the bench, chest heaving as he tried to catch his breath. "Oh, yes," he whispered.

Harry pressed the side of his face to Draco's back, his eyes closed as he panted. "Yes," he echoed his husband.

Draco's knees shook and he began to chuckle.

Harry laughed lowly as well, kissing Draco's skin as he shakily tried to push himself up.

Once his husband slipped from his body and stepped back,

Draco sank to his knees on the floor, laughing in earnest now.

Harry raised his eyebrows, watching Draco with amusement.

Draco pushed his hair off his face, tossing it back over his shoulder and looked up at his husband, still laughing. "How are you at repairing wood?" he managed after a minute and then pointed to where he had scored the edge of the bench with his silver fingers.

Harry joined in with the laughter then. "Merlin, that thing could be dangerous," he said, thinking of how the benches in the locker room back home looked.

Draco pulled himself up to sit on the bench, careful to avoid both the slick spot and the gouges in the wood. He reached for Harry, drawing him close for a kiss.

Harry smiled, kissing Draco thoroughly as he let his arms rest atop his broad shoulders.

Draco finally pulled back, smiling happily up at him. "We should get that shower now before someone catches the Snitch and this room is full of shocked Quidditch players, including Oliver Wood."

Harry grinned. "Good idea," he said, pulling Draco up.

Draco cast a Cleaning Charm on the bench and floor and smirked while Harry managed to repair the worst of the damage to the bench. Then they actually did shower, just managing to get dressed when they heard the roar of the crowd outside that signalled someone had indeed caught the Snitch.

Harry ruffled his own wet hair, drying it quickly. "Just in time," he said, letting out a short laugh, as he reached for Draco's hand and then headed for the door.

Harry led them both up the stairs and into the box their family and friends were gathered in.

"Merlin," said Ron, beaming as he waved them over. "What took you so long to get up here?"

"Just took a quick shower," Harry answered, managing to cover his blush.

Ron didn't seem to find anything wrong with that answer, and if he did, Harry didn't think he cared very much. "That was brilliant!" Ron said. "It looked great out there!"

Mr Weasley lightly clapped Harry on the back. "You did an

incredible job, Harry. The crowd loved watching you and the broom looked amazing." Harry flushed slightly at the praise and smiled first at Ron and then Mr Weasley.

Valen was bouncing up and down, not wanting to be left out. "Daddy Harry flies better than anyone!"

Draco grinned, nodding. He certainly agreed with that. "I think it was a good demonstration and the news combined with the ads in the *Daily Prophet* should really make the opening."

Harry grinned, ruffling Valen's hair.

"It certainly should," Mrs Weasley agreed. "You did wonderfully, dear," she said to Harry. She actually didn't attend too many Quidditch matches, but had come to see the Abraxan flown in public for the first time. Then she turned to Ron, kissing him on the cheek as she congratulated him.

"Aye, not so bad," drawled a voice from behind.

Harry turned, still grinning as his eyes met the sight of Oliver Wood, still in his uniform. He held a hand out to him. "Not so bad yourself from what I saw," he answered.

"We won," Wood said, nodding and shaking Harry's hand. He nodded to Draco and reached a hand out to Ron. "And that broom of yours is fantastic."

Ron shook the offered hand enthusiastically. "Can't thank you enough for helping us out, mate," he said, his voice as enthusiastic as his greeting.

Wood smiled and glanced around the box at the family, grinning. "Aye, well, I think the broom helped us win this one."

"You fly good, too," Valen declared and Wood laughed, smiling down at him.

Harry snorted, looking down at Valen as well.

"Okay, okay," said a voice from next to them. "Your daddies are right here."

Harry turned his head to see Ginny, hefting a squirming April in her arms. "She's going to absolutely die without one of you," she said, sounding a bit amused.

Harry chuckled, reaching for the little girl and kissing her forehead.

Wood grinned. "Cute kids," he said to Harry, but his eyes stayed

on Ginny.

"Valen and April," Draco said, smirking, "and I think you may have met Ron's sister, Ginny, back at Hogwarts."

Ginny raised an eyebrow at Draco, but held her hand out to Oliver. "Sure, I remember you," she said with a smile. "Left after my second year. Great game."

"Ye were such a little thing then," Wood teased, holding her hand just a little longer than usual.

Ginny's eyes may have glinted. "Well, maybe then," she said, still smiling.

It was clear from Wood's eyes that he liked the way she looked now. "You like Quidditch?" he asked.

"Love it," said Ginny. "Played Seeker and Chaser back in school."

"Replaced me for a bit when I couldn't play," said Harry, grinning at Draco quickly before glancing back.

Draco grinned and rolled his eyes. "Why don't we go out for dinner to celebrate the Abraxan's début. Wood, care to join us?"

"Yeah, that'd be great," said Ron, who had been staring a little oddly between Ginny and Oliver, but now seemed happy. "Come with us."

"Aye," Wood grinned, "It'd be a pleasure."

– CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO –

Heroes and Elves

Harry shut Valen's bedroom door very quietly once the boy had fallen asleep. He and Draco had already put April to bed. It was surprising really. She was usually the one that took longer.

They'd had a quiet dinner and night at home with only their children. Ron and Hermione had gone out to eat and to see a film, *The Lord of the Rings*. It was adapted from a book Hermione had read, of course. Ron had come back amused, but amazed, as he always did about Muggle movies, and he'd gone on for ages about the ways Muggles had of trying to have a go at magic.

Harry shook his head, stepping into his and Draco's room to begin getting ready for bed himself. "We should go on a date," he said absently as he rid himself of his clothes and pulled the covers back on his side of the mattress.

Draco arched an eyebrow. They did go to dinner and sometimes dancing, but hadn't been going out as much lately. "Sounds nice," he agreed.

"Yeah." Harry sat down and pulled the covers up over his body, then raised a hand to spell away Draco's clothes as well. "We should go to that film Ron and Hermione went to."

Draco made a kind of half grimace, part smile. "You want me to go to a Muggle film about magic?" he asked dubiously.

Harry chuckled. "Well, they said it was good, and we've never been to a film together. You've never even been to one at all, and I've only been twice. It would be fun."

Draco looked sceptical. "No, I have never been to a Muggle theatre," he confirmed. "Did you like it when you went?"

"I wouldn't have suggested it if I hadn't," Harry answered. "Dudley hogged all the popcorn and soda, but it was fun."

"Popcorn?" Draco asked as he slid into bed and scooted closer to his husband.

"You've never heard of *popcorn*?" Harry asked in disbelief.

"Should I have?" Draco asked, turning on his side and propping his head on his hand as they talked.

Harry snorted. "It's just surprising is all," he replied. "It's food, and a lot of people eat it when they go to the cinema."

"So we will sit in the dark and watch a Muggle story about magic and eat popping corn?" Draco asked with a smirk.

Harry chuckled again. "If you want, and it's not *only* about magic. There's a story to follow as well."

Draco still found the idea dubious but there was little he wouldn't do for Harry. "In the dark with you, I might have other ideas," he teased.

"Don't you always?" Harry teased back, pressing a kiss to Draco's lips.

"Always," Draco whispered, licking at his husband's lips and sliding a hand up into his hair.

Harry couldn't believe Draco was actually with him, at a Muggle cinema, seeing a Muggle film, surrounded by Muggles, and it hadn't even taken that much convincing to get him to go. He counted out the pounds to hand over for their tickets, holding in his laugh as his husband was jostled by some enthusiastic children standing in the queue behind them.

Draco was wearing Muggle clothing. And it felt like the fabric chafed. He didn't know if maybe he imagined it. And the tag at the back of the shirt was rubbing against his skin. He gave the children a glare and held Harry's hand tighter. As they stepped to the door, he imitated Harry who held the piece of paper out to a teenager in a uniform who tore it.

Harry was really trying desperately not to laugh. Draco pretending to be a Muggle was absolutely priceless. "You want some of that 'popping corn'?" he teased when they were inside.

Draco frowned. He knew Harry was teasing him but didn't know what was funny. "If that is what one eats here," he said cautiously, looking around at all the blinking lights and sniffing at the strange smell of the place.

Harry couldn't help it then and he did laugh, leading Draco over

to the concession stand. "Do you want something to drink as well?" he asked, looking at their choices over the shoulder of a rather round man.

Draco followed where Harry was looking and tried to figure out the list of options. "Do you have a suggestion for something?" he asked.

Harry cocked his head to the side. "Well, do you want something that tastes more like fizzy juice, or cola?"

"Fizzy juice?" Draco said, still unsure. "Oh, that's chocolate," he said when he saw a box of sweets. "I like chocolate."

Harry laughed again, rather loudly, and a few of the surrounding people stared at him. "I'll get some of those then, too," he said. He ended up getting sodas for both of them, a large bag of popcorn, and the chocolates. "Here," he said, handing the soda over as they moved for the screen number printed on their tickets. "Does that taste all right?"

Draco sipped the drink through the straw, making a face again he did. "Very sweet," he said. He was looking curiously at the bag of yellow corn. He followed his husband into a crowded room with rows of seats and low lights.

Harry chose as private a spot as he could without giving up getting a good view, which meant that they were still surrounded by other people, but not overwhelmingly so. He handed the popcorn over, watching Draco's face.

"So this is edible?" Draco asked, eyes narrowed sceptically as he picked at white puffs coated in something greasy.

"Yes," Harry assured, demonstrating the fact by lifting some to his mouth. "I think it tastes good," he shrugged.

Draco trusted Harry, really he did, but they didn't always agree on things. Harry ate things like Treacle Tart, for example. So the blond was understandably wary as he put the thing in his mouth. "Salty," he said.

Harry nodded in agreement. "And it gets stuck in your teeth really horribly, but it's still good."

Draco took another one and then another sip of the syrupy drink. It was odd but they did seem to go well together. Then the lights dimmed and the large screen lit up.

Harry sat back in his seat, almost more interested in watching Draco than he was in watching the film itself.

The first thing about it was that it was loud – very loud. It startled Draco and he didn't like that. And there were all these bits and pieces about other movies before the movie they were there for. But once the story started, he found himself getting caught up in it.

Harry found it rather interesting as well. The old wizard inevitably reminded him of Dumbledore, and it was quite sad when he died. Harry also felt bad for Frodo, feeling he could definitely relate to what he went through.

Draco thought that putting all that power in one magical artifact like a ring, was probably a bad idea. There were things that were uncomfortably like their own war with Voldemort too. The elves amused him, seeming to resemble pure-blood wizards, especially in attitude, more than house-elves.

Harry was amused by the elves in the same sense, only because he knew exactly what Draco was thinking about it. However, there was one elf that was not amusing at all, but incredibly good-looking. Harry's eyes were drawn to him every time he was on screen, and he hoped he wouldn't die in any of the fights only to watch him some more.

Draco found a number of the characters sexy, but the one he was most attracted to was the one called Strider who turned out to be some kind of prince, really named Aragorn. He scooted closer, hand slipping over the armrest dividing him from his husband and taking his hand.

Harry smiled, threading their fingers together.

"The ring is like a Horcrux," Draco whispered when Boromir was nearly possessed by it.

Harry hadn't even thought of that, but it really was, and he nodded. At least Frodo didn't need to get rid of seven of them. He was so caught up in the film that he was shocked when it ended without telling the rest.

He stretched stiff limbs, reaching to pull his coat on. "There must be a sequel," he sighed.

"All that and we don't get to find out how it ends?" Draco complained. He was surprised to realise that they had managed to eat

all the corn and the chocolates while they watched.

Harry smiled, amused again. "So you liked a Muggle film enough to want to know the end?"

Draco snorted, but took his husband's hand, pulling him against his own body. "It was interesting," Draco admitted.

They were stared at, but Harry ignored it. "Weird how similar it was to ... some things."

"Does that make you Frodo," Draco teased, nipping at his lover's lips despite the disapproving sounds of some of other people leaving the theatre.

Harry rolled his eyes. "I suppose," he said. "Hopefully I'm not that short."

"No, not that short," Draco teased. "You look like that prince to me."

"Oh really?" Harry said loftily. "He was shaggageable. Can you guess who I liked?"

Draco flushed. "Mmm, the blond?" he guessed.

Harry laughed softly. "Ooh, you're good," he said, tugging on a strand of Draco's blond hair.

"So you think Aragorn and Legolas ...?" Draco asked, arching an eyebrow.

Harry grinned. "Well, it had to have been lonely on that big, long journey," he said as his voice dropped lower.

Someone behind them cleared their throat and Draco released Harry. He had just been about to grope his husband in the middle of the mostly empty theatre. He looked up to see one of the employees waiting by the door.

Harry blushed, shaking his head. "Let's get out of here, yeah?"

Draco took Harry's hand and led them out, aroused and eager to be alone with his husband.

They headed out of the cinema and around to where they couldn't be seen in order to Apparate home, and Harry was still amused and aroused both as they handed their coats to the house-elf. "If *you* were an elf, you would be one of those hot ones," he said.

Draco arched an eyebrow at his husband. "I would certainly hope so," he said indignantly. The children would mostly likely be in bed already, so he drew his husband against him and Apparated to their

bedroom.

A moment after they landed in the room, Ron poked his head inside their door. "I thought I heard you," he said, completely ignoring how Harry and Draco were pressed together. It was a normal occurrence, after all. "We just put April in her cot."

"Okay," Harry answered, impatient and trying not to show it. "Thanks for watching them."

"They were good," Ron nodded. "Did you like the film?"

Harry stared at him pointedly.

Draco snorted but nodded.

Ron laughed at them. "The elf?" he asked Harry.

Harry raised his eyebrows, but laughed as well. "Yeah, if you're talking about what I think you are."

Ron shook his head. "I knew you'd like the poncy one," he teased. "Night," he added, ducking out before Draco could retort.

Draco shook his head but then turned his attention back to his husband. "So you were going to tell me how Aragorn turned to Legolas on their long journey," he prompted, voice low.

Harry smiled, sliding his hands into the back pockets of Draco's jeans. His arse really did look amazing in them. "Well," he started, "maybe Legolas would walk in on Aragorn 'polishing his sword' and offer him a helping hand."

Draco laughed in delight, sliding a hand between them and cupping the front of Harry's jeans. "Oh, yes, he would want to aid his hero."

Harry's eyelids drooped with the sensation of Draco's warm hand. "And Aragorn would gladly accept the aid of those clever, quick archer's fingers."

Draco chuckled warmly, using said fingers to unfasten Harry's jeans and slide them inside. "Legolas would want to serve his future king and companion," he said, then slid to his knees, looking up at Harry.

Harry's cock seemed to leap up and he gasped quietly, his fingers slipping into silky blond hair. "There's no doubt he would serve very well," he breathed.

Draco looked up in both amusement and awe at his beautiful husband. He wrapped long fingers around Harry's shaft and then ran

his tongue up the underside of it. "Such a beautiful sword," he teased.

Harry released a soft groan and smiled. "Luckily, this one has never been broken to pieces."

"Feels firm and fine to me," Draco said, drawing the foreskin back and swirling his tongue over the sensitive head.

"And your skills seem quite satisfactory," Harry replied as a prickling, pleasurable heat spread across his skin.

"Satisfactory?" Draco asked with an arched eyebrow.

Harry grinned down at him and flicked Draco's nose. "No talking back to your king," he drawled, knowing that his flushed face and terribly erect cock gave away just how 'satisfactory' he found Draco's skills.

Draco grinned and leant forward, sliding his lips over the 'crown' of said king's arousal, licking and sucking.

"Ahh, yeah," Harry sighed, his head falling back. He gripped Draco's hair tighter, pushing and pulling.

Draco loved it when Harry pulled his hair like that and it spurred on his own arousal as he slid his mouth further down Harry's shaft, humming in delight.

Harry arched forward into that wet, soft heat, his mouth falling open. "Yes, suck me," he whispered, spreading his legs wider even though he was still in his trousers.

Draco did, taking more of Harry's cock into his mouth, pressing it into the back of his throat. His fingers moved up and down with his mouth, stroking Harry as he sucked him.

Harry gasped in delight, but then gripped Draco's hair even tighter, pulling him back. "I want you to bend over for me," he told him.

Draco licked his lips. "Anywhere you like, your majesty," he answered with a smirk.

Harry chuckled in a deeply aroused sort of way. "Strip," he ordered, smugly removing his own shirt and tossing it carelessly aside.

Draco got to his feet, quickly removing the Muggle clothes and tossing them onto a chair. He smiled, stroking his own cock and waiting for Harry's next command.

"Mmm, someone as beautiful as you are shouldn't be allowed to

wear clothes," Harry purred, both serious and wondering if Draco would get the underlying joke about elves.

"Git," Draco chided, shaking his head. "You want me naked around everyone?" he added, knowing that unlikely given Harry's jealousy.

Harry snorted. "No," he answered, rolling his eyes. "And you're slipping out of character." He removed his jeans, shoes, and socks with his magic, then stepped forward to spread his hands over Draco's chest.

Draco grinned. "My apologies, Sire," he replied but couldn't keep the amusement from his voice.

Harry laughed. "Well, I'm not king yet," he said. "Just a fierce, gorgeous warrior, for now." He waggled his eyebrows.

"I'd still like to show you my appreciation and pledge my ... service to you," Draco purred.

Harry began to kiss and nibble Draco's skin. "And I will certainly want to make sure my loyal subjects are always pleased."

"Mmm," Draco hummed, hands sliding around Harry's waist, caressing him.

Harry grasped Draco's arse with both hands, squeezing as if testing the feel of it. "And you know what else?" he whispered.

"What?" Draco asked breathlessly, moving closer so that his arousal slid against Harry's.

"I believe I've found the perfect sheath for my sword," Harry answered, sliding one hand down the crack of Draco's arse.

Draco couldn't help but chuckle at that bad joke. "Perfect for you, I agree," he whispered.

Harry laughed again, kissing Draco's lips as his fingers played lightly over the blond's entrance. "Now I believe I told you to bend over," he said.

"As you command, Sire," Draco said, still smirking as he turned around. He leant forward and braced himself against the foot of their bed.

Harry took in the view quite happily, landing a smart smack on one of Draco's arsecheeks. "Now, if you're half as good with this as you are with that bow, I believe we'll have a *beautiful* fellowship," he grinned.

"Elves are long lived. I've been around longer than you have," Draco retorted, rotating his hips suggestively.

Harry grasped those rotating hips with eager hands. "Sounds promising," he said. "You may please me yet." He thought it was funny and hot at the same time, oddly enough.

Draco looked back over his shoulder with a smirk. "As you wish, my king," he responded, his cock hanging hard and leaking as he waited for Harry to 'sheath his sword.'

Simply because he could, Harry loaded his fingertips with magic to trail them over Draco's skin on the path towards his entrance again. He performed the Lubrication Charm against that tight hole and muttered, "How incredibly amazing," in a pseudo-shocked voice. "I seem to have developed sexual powers."

Draco gasped and then chuckled at his lover's odd humour. He spread his legs wider. "Maybe you have found the ring you have been looking for," he teased.

Harry couldn't help but laugh loudly at that one, even while sliding fingers into his husband's arse. "Merlin," he sighed, shaking his head.

"Or Gandalf," Draco laughed, body shivering as he opened to his husband's touch and magic.

Harry began laughing yet again, positively giddy with humour. "If we don't stop, I'm never going to get it in."

"Oh, that would be a tragedy, Sire," Draco quipped, but it was heartfelt.

"Quite the tragedy," Harry agreed, pressing his fingers to Draco's prostate as he stretched him, and moving in to press close and let Draco feel just how hard he was.

Draco moaned at both sensations, his body quivering around those fingers. "Oh, please," he gasped.

Harry leant down and licked the skin between Draco's shoulder blades. He slid his fingers slowly and teasingly away, then grasped his cock to tease Draco's opening with that as well.

The blond whimpered, probably not something an elf in the movie would do, but he didn't care as long as he got what he wanted. He arched his back more, lifting his hips and trying to encourage Harry.

"Do you want it?" Harry whispered between wet kisses to Draco's skin, more aroused now than anything else.

"Yes, please fuck me," Draco begged, shaking with desire now.

Harry began to push forward, but stopped just shy of actually breaching the blond, his breath coming in quick pants. "Please, what?" he whispered, cock pulsing.

Draco whined this time but then tried to remember the game. "Please, your majesty," he moaned.

Harry grinned and moved inside, his mouth open against Draco's back. He took skin between his teeth, not quite biting down, but holding it there.

The delicious slide of Harry's cock into him with the counterpoint of teeth on his skin had Draco whimpering in pleasure this time, hands fisting in the blanket on the bed. "Yessss!"

Harry began to increase the pressure of the bite as he moved his hips back and forth firm and smooth.

"Oh, Gods, yes!" Draco responded enthusiastically, forehead resting on the bed as he arched into it.

Harry pulled up then to thrust even more firmly, taking a possessive hold on Draco's hips as he did.

"Yes, yours," Draco gasped, feeling his husband's magic crackling over his skin and in each thrust.

"Mine," Harry responded, somewhat breathless, but still persistently strong in his movements. He kept his eyes open, watching the way Draco arched, taking every slide forward.

Draco moaned, holding nothing back. Pre-come dripped from his cock as it bounced with every thrust.

The harder Harry fucked Draco, the harder it became to hold back himself. He gasped and finally had to let his eyes fall shut, his fingers digging into Draco's skin as he pulled him onto his cock over and over again, teeth bared with the pleasure of it. "Close!" he gasped, even though Draco would be able to tell.

Draco could barely breathe for the magic sparking through his body. Sweat gleamed on his skin in the candlelight and he was panting. "Yesss," he managed to hiss.

Harry's spine curved inward with the force of his orgasm and his mouth opened in a long, loud shout in the direction of the ceiling.

Draco's release shuddered through his body with Harry's magic, like a hot blast from the inside out, body trembling and knees wobbling to keep upright.

Carefully pulling out, Harry then flopped onto his back on the bed, reaching to pull at Draco's arms.

Draco happily crawled into his husband's embrace. "My hero," he whispered.

"Your sated hero," Harry replied with a smile. "That was fun."

Draco's sweaty face was pressed to his lover's equally damp chest. He licked the skin. "I will be your sheath any time, Sire," he teased.

Harry's smile widened. "Is that what we're going to do every time we see a film now?" he asked, implying that they would see more.

Draco chuckled. "If I get that every time I go to the movies," he said. "Much better than the greasy corn."

"You get that *any* time you want," Harry said suggestively, leaning down to kiss.

Draco lifted his head, kissing Harry with slow sensuality that suited his relaxed state. Then he curled comfortably against him, head on Harry's shoulder. Like many times when they were like this, his gaze was drawn to the 'H' on the canopy support. "They write stories about magic but they don't even know the most powerful wizard in the world lives among them," he said softly.

"It's still strange to think of it that way," Harry said in reply. "Most powerful wizard in the world? I'll never be used to it."

Draco sometimes found it strange himself – strange that Harry hadn't known that he was capable of so much power. And, as a sensitive, it seemed absolutely obvious to him. It was like the rest of the world was blind and he was trying to describe colour. "Strider didn't look like much to outsiders either," he pointed out.

Harry snorted. "I thought I was technically Frodo."

"Well, you do have hairy toes," Draco smirked.

Harry pulled a face and lifted his leg to examine his foot. "I guess," he agreed. "The most powerful wizard with hairy feet."

Draco snickered, ruffling his husband's hair on his head too. "Very hairy," he teased.

"That is my name," Harry pointed out.

"Then I suppose it suits you," Draco said, grinning and looking at

his husband with sparkling eyes. After a minute, his face smoothed out, his expression serious. "So does Frodo make it?" he asked.

"I don't know the end," Harry answered, pushing Draco's hair away from his face.

"Hermione said it was based on several books," Draco said. "We should read them."

Harry smiled in amusement. "No patience for the sequel?"

"How long until the next part?" Draco asked sceptically.

Harry chuckled. "I don't know," he said. "I could ask Hermione for her books, though."

"Good," Draco answered, giving him a kiss. "Want me to read them to you? Maybe we will find more ... inspiration?"

Harry smiled at the suggestion. "Sounds very good to me," said Harry. "And inspiration will be easy to find with you reading the words with that sexy voice."

Draco flushed happily at that and relaxed against his husband.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE –

Birds, Bees and Unicorns

Harry's head jerked up quickly at a high-pitched scream from where April and Valen were playing, but he sighed once he had seen that it was only a loud peal of laughter. He laid his head back in Draco's lap, letting the rays of May sunlight warm his face. It was the first very nice day since winter, and Harry and Draco had spread a blanket over the grass to sit on while they watched their children romp around the grounds.

Valen had had his fourth birthday in March, April had only just turned three, and it had been five years since Draco had first kissed Harry. It was hardly believable, but it was very true. Harry was twenty-one, married, and had two children. He couldn't have thought of a better way to be living his life.

Just as he had really settled into relaxing again, there was another scream, louder and closer this time, and before Harry could even open his eyes –

"Ooof!" There was a smelly, stuffed unicorn being pushed into his face, and a flushed, excited-looking little girl sprawled over his chest. "April," he gasped, having not expected the landing. "What are you doing?"

"Baawin!" she shouted. "Baawin is gonna get me dirty!"

Valen followed soon after, standing over his parents and sister with his hands on his hips and his eyebrow arched in a pose that was so like Draco it made his blond father laugh.

"She is just whining again," Valen asserted.

Harry looked up at Draco and shook his head, smiling a little himself. "Are you whining again?" he asked her.

She scrunched her nose up in a little look of indignance. "No," she declared firmly.

"What do you mean he's going to get you dirty?"

Then, April spoke in a sentence that most people might not have

quite been able to understand. "Was running (babble) and Baawin, and then (babble) him is being mean."

"You were running, and Valen was trying to push you, and he was being mean?" Harry asked.

April wiped her slightly runny nose and gave a great sniff. "Yeah."

"Looked like you were playing to me," said Harry. "I didn't see him being mean."

Draco's fingers gently stroked his husband's hair as he tried not to roll his eyes at their children.

"Exactly," the four-year-old boy said in a haughty tone. "She just doesn't like it when I am winning."

Harry snorted, sitting up now so that April fell off his chest and into his lap. "You know," he said to her. "It's not nice to be a snitch."

Her face transformed into one of shock that Harry could even suggest that she was being such a thing. April's little mouth dropped open and her eyes widened as she stared up at Harry.

Valen's look was one of smug vindication and Draco shook his head at the familiar expression. "And winning isn't everything," he warned his son.

"No, it's not," Harry said in agreement. "Now what if I make you both hug and say 'I love you'?"

April giggled and made a disgruntled face at the same time.

Valen rolled his eyes but a smile still quirked up the edges of his mouth. He held his arms open for his sister. "Come here, silly girl," he said.

April looked from Valen to Harry, and Harry nodded.

Still clutching the worn unicorn she couldn't bear to part with for more than a single minute, she climbed from Harry's lap and gave her brother a hug.

Valen smiled as he wrapped his arms around his little sister's shoulders, patting her back. "Don't worry, April," he assured her, "if Uni gets dirty, Daddy Draco will fix it."

Harry laughed at that, since he didn't think he had actually ever seen Uni clean. The stuffed animal had been wet, sticky, and scruffy but Harry couldn't recall when it was clean.

April looked to Draco for confirmation.

Draco huffed but nodded. "Yes, I can clean the toy," he drawled. "But I won't do it every day. You need to learn to take care of your things."

Harry rolled his eyes that time. If Draco really expected April to keep her unicorn clean, he was mad.

April sniffed at her Daddy Draco. Draco drew his wand and held out his silver hand for the toy. April took a few little steps forward and placed Uni delicately in Draco's hand, as if it were breakable.

Draco took the unicorn with a solemn air and then cast a Cleaning Charm on the fabric. The thing sparkled bright white.

"Told you," Valen said, pride in his voice and stance.

April took the unicorn back, shooting Valen one of her little looks. Small fingers caressed the unicorn that she now held close to her face and nuzzled with one cheek.

Harry snorted at them both again.

Valen smirked. "Race you to the fountain," he yelled starting to run before the sentence was finished. April let out an indignant shriek, taking off after him, the unicorn now dangling precariously from one hand.

Harry sighed, turning to Draco to press a quick kiss to his lips and Draco reached to cup the back of his husband's head, kissing back instead of letting him get away. Someone cleared their throat from behind them, and Harry broke the kiss to look around.

Hermione was standing there with Ron, looking amused. "Are we interrupting?" she asked, raising an eyebrow.

Draco rolled his eyes but smiled, leaning back on his arms and looking up at their friends. "Just enjoying the nice weather."

There were more shrieks as both children saw Ron and Hermione and came running their direction.

"It is beautiful out today," said Hermione, smiling widely herself as she gently petted April's head.

"Hey, kiddo," said Ron, beaming as he bent to ruffle Valen's hair.

Valen smiled, but ducked his head away, smiling mischievously. "Hey," he responded.

"What's up?" said Harry.

Hermione lifted April into her arms and sat down on the blanket with her, and Ron joined her after making a go for Valen's hair again.

Valen laughed and hopped back, showing those quick reflexes that made his dad's proud already. Then he walked around and sat down beside Draco, leaning against his father who put an arm around him. Draco arched an eyebrow at his friends and waited.

Harry waited for his question to be answered, raising an eyebrow at their friends' happy moods.

"Well," said Hermione. "We actually do have something to tell you."

Hermione kissed April's hair and glanced at her husband, grinning at him. "Go ahead," she said. "I know you've been dying to tell them."

Ron beamed again and drew himself up slightly. "Hermione's going to have a baby," he announced.

Draco and Valen had near identical expressions as their eyes widened and they grinned. "Congratulations," Draco said.

"I – wow – are you serious?" Harry asked, eyes going wide as well.

"Of course," said Hermione, laughing happily. "You can't be the only one to announce a pregnancy."

Harry grinned then. "Congratulations," he agreed.

"You got a baby?" asked April in her small, curious voice.

Hermione hummed in amusement. "Yes, in here," she said, giving her own belly a few pats.

April didn't look like she believed that very much.

Draco smiled at his daughter. "The baby starts out very small and grows," he explained. "Her belly will grow big and then it will be time for the baby to come out."

"So how did the baby get in there?" Valen asked him.

Hermione blushed slightly. "Um" She looked at Harry and Draco. Harry laughed and scratched the back of his neck awkwardly, completely unsure of how to answer that question when it was a four-year-old asking it.

Draco flushed slightly too. "Why don't you and I have a talk about that later?" Draco suggested.

"Promise?" Valen asked.

"Promise," Draco nodded, hugging his son's shoulders.

Harry released a sigh of relief, exchanging a glance with Draco.

"Have you told anyone else yet?" he asked Ron and Hermione.

"No, not yet," said Ron. "Mum's going to flip!"

Harry smiled. "I'm sure she will," he said.

Draco's smile didn't fade. He loved the idea of more children in the house, even Hermione and Ron's kid. Well, he thought, maybe especially theirs. They had become family to him.

"Won't it be weird?" Ron went on. "Us having a baby?"

Hermione huffed. "Not too weird, I hope," she said, giving him a nudge with her own shoulder.

"No weirder than us, I suppose," said Harry with a snort.

Valen curled up into Draco's lap, head against his chest, eyes closing. Draco petted the child's hair, smiling softly. "I think it's about time," he teased their friends.

Hermione raised her eyebrows. "Well, it's not wise for just everyone to have babies at the tender age of seventeen," she teased right back.

"Seemed to work out for us all right," said Harry, smiling at Valen falling asleep.

The expression "tender age" made Draco frown. He glanced at Harry, realising that with everything they had been through they hadn't really been that young at seventeen. When they had had Valen, they didn't even know if they would live to be eighteen.

Harry glanced up at Draco and cocked an eyebrow at his expression as Hermione helped April with the purple ribbon tied around her unicorn's neck.

"I love you," Draco mouthed silently to Harry, arms wrapped around their sleeping son. Then, "later."

Harry didn't really know what was up, but he nodded, leaning over to kiss Draco's cheek.

After a short while, Ron and Hermione were on their way to deliver the good news at the Burrow. Harry and Draco made their way back inside the house. Valen and April were laid down for a nap, though April whined for ten minutes straight that she wasn't tired.

When April's eyes had finally closed, Harry turned and made his way out of her room, pulling the door softly shut behind him. He held his hand out for Draco to take, intending to lead him back into

their own bedroom.

Draco smiled at him and allowed himself to be led. His mind was on the wonder of their children and the idea of their friends as parents too.

Harry kicked his shoes off and settled on the bed himself, holding his arms out for Draco to lay in them. Draco toed his shoes off too and tucked them under the bed, crawling into Harry's arms. Harry smiled and kissed Draco's forehead, lying with him for a few moments before he asked, "What was the later for?"

"Nothing really," Draco said, nuzzling his lover's neck and hair.

"Well, if it was nothing, why say it?" Harry persisted, meeting Draco's eyes as he pushed his hair back.

"Just something Hermione said," Draco whispered.

Harry frowned. "She said something?" he asked. "What?"

"She said 'tender age of seventeen,'" Draco said, face serious as he thought about it again.

Harry frowned again, confused. "What about it?" he said.

Draco rolled his eyes and shook his head. "It implies a kind of ... innocence," he said, then rolled onto his back. "I never felt that way."

Harry watched him, reaching to play with a strand of blond hair. "I suppose I never *really* did either," he said. "She was only joking, love."

"We were both only seventeen when Valen was born," Draco said with a smile. He reached his hand up to slide along Harry's hand and up his arm.

"Yes," Harry agreed. "To most people it probably does seem weird – we were already bloody married by then. I guess we *had* to grow up fast, hm?"

"Too fast," Draco agreed as his hand slid over Harry's shoulder and under his hair to the back of his neck, caressing the soft skin there.

Harry sighed with the touch. "Wouldn't change it though," he said. "I love them more than anything."

Draco smiled, grey eyes focused on those shining green. He knew the pain they had both suffered and what it meant to them to say they wouldn't change what had happened. "Yes, where we should be, exactly," he agreed.

"Exactly," Harry echoed. "I belong with my husband and kids, and I will until I'm old and dead." He smiled.

Draco pulled against Harry's neck, bringing his husband close and kissing him.

Harry allowed Draco to kiss him and kissed back, feeling the warmth that always accompanied Draco's touch.

The blond shivered at the taste and feel of Harry. They had recently celebrated five years together and he found that even now each kiss was amazing to him. He pulled back to rub his nose against Harry's, knowing how much the simple gesture would delight him.

Harry hummed with contentment and smiled a wide, lazy smile. "I adore you," he said quietly.

"Good," Draco answered smugly, arching an eyebrow.

Harry chuckled, stretching and then adjusting himself into a more comfortable position against his husband. "You know what you just made me think of with that kiss?"

"What?" Draco asked, fingers sliding up the back of Harry's skull and luxuriating in the feel of the thick dark strands slipping through them.

"The fact that Valen asked how a baby got inside Hermione's belly, and the fact that you told him to ask later," Harry answered.

Draco smirked and waited for his husband to continue.

"What do we tell a *four-year-old*?" Harry asked, raising his eyebrows. "I didn't think this would come up for another few years at least."

"The truth," Draco said calmly. "If he is old enough to ask, then maybe he should know."

Harry let out a snort. "Tell him about *sex*? He's four!"

Draco laughed. "And what would you tell him?"

Harry made a bit of a face. "I don't know," he said. "Certainly no bloody details."

"You don't trust me?" Draco asked, arching an eyebrow at his husband.

Harry gave Draco a disgruntled look. "After five years and two kids, you're completely right. I don't trust you," he said sarcastically. "I'm just saying He's so little."

"He is who he is," Draco sighed. "He is curious about everything."

He seemed in a hurry to be born and now he is always in a hurry to be grown." He shrugged.

Harry sighed too, still frowning slightly. "What do you plan on telling him?"

"Trust me," Draco smirked.

Harry rolled his eyes, shaking his head. "So I'm not going to be there then?" he said.

"If you won't die of embarrassment," Draco teased.

Harry gave Draco a look of mock-offence. "*Me?* Embarrassed?"

Draco grinned and shook his head, leaning up to kiss him again.

Draco knew that Valen wouldn't let it go. It just wasn't his nature to forget an unanswered question. So later that evening, with April already having fallen asleep on the sofa beside Harry, Valen walked up and stood with hands on his hips in front of where Draco sat in a chair, reading.

Draco looked up and arched an eyebrow at the boy.

Valen huffed.

"Yes?"

"You promised."

"Fine," Draco said, closing his book and setting it aside.

Harry looked over at the pair and sighed, unable to help focusing on how little his son was, how little his voice was. He couldn't believe Valen was about to get some semblance of a 'sex talk.'

"So ask what you want to know," Draco encouraged, watching that determined look. Somehow Valen seemed to know that this wasn't a question he was expected to ask and instead of deterring him, it seemed to make him more set on it.

"How did the baby get inside?" Valen repeated.

Draco had had all day to think of an answer but still felt daunted, no matter how confident he had behaved with Harry. "Well," Draco said. "Each person has an essence inside them, something that is unique to them. We share that with someone we love very much. Sometimes we combine them to make another person."

Valen frowned.

Draco sighed. "It's like planting a seed that can grow into so much more."

Well, Harry thought. *So far so good.*

"How did the seed get inside her," Valen insisted.

Draco winced. He had hoped that his son would be satisfied with a more metaphorical answer. He glanced nervously at Harry and then took a deep breath. "A man makes a seed inside his body," he began. "A woman has a place inside her that can join with and grow the seed. There are ways two people can join their bodies together that make it possible to plant the seed."

Harry was nervous too, and was starting to feel very unsure of all this. If Valen wanted much more of a technical answer, he didn't know if he wanted him to be given one.

Valen seemed to take a minute to consider it. He cocked his head and then looked between his fathers. "Where did I grow?" he asked.

Harry looked in surprise at Draco, having not expected that, though he supposed he should have. "Well," he said, scooting a bit closer to Draco. "You grew in my belly."

Valen nodded but then looked back and forth between the two of them again. "Daddy Harry is not a woman," he said with a hint of accusation in his voice.

Draco sighed and nodded. "No, he is not. And most of the time, a man can't carry a baby inside him like a woman can. Daddy Harry is not most people."

Harry did flush a little then, but nodded in agreement with Draco.

Draco smiled at his husband's blush and his clever child. "You are the son we created together," he added.

Valen smiled too. "And then you made April," he said firmly, sounding proud of himself for having figured that out too.

"Yes," said Harry. "And then we made April."

Valen looked calculating then. "So who will you make now?" he asked, looking between them.

Draco laughed and glanced over at his husband, arching an eyebrow.

Harry raised both his eyebrows, looking from Draco to Valen. "Um, well, I'm not sure," he said, slightly amused. "Do you think we should make another baby?"

Valen huffed, looking indignant at the question. "Yes," he

insisted in a tone that implied it was obvious.

Draco laughed in delight and grinned, face flushed as he waited to see what his husband would say to that.

Harry scratched the back of his neck, shaking his head at the obvious pleasure Draco was now taking out of the conversation. "Well, I *know* Daddy Draco wants another baby," he said. "That would mean you would have a new little cousin from Uncle Ron and Aunt Hermione, and a new little brother or sister."

"Brother," Valen said firmly with a nod of his blond head.

Draco laughed again and pulled the determined little boy into his lap for a hug.

Harry shook his head again, looking seriously at Draco, but smiling as well. He moved even closer, laying a kiss on Valen's forehead. "Brother, eh?" he said.

"Exactly," Valen said, using his favourite word in that perfect imitation of Draco.

Harry laughed, kissing him again before kissing the corner of his husband's mouth. When being outnumbered included Draco and Valen, Harry knew when to smile and give in. He subconsciously ran a hand across his own belly, their little family was about to grow in size. And love.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR –

Making Music

Once again, Harry found himself lying in bed with Draco after having put Valen and April to bed, only it was dark outside now, and they were under the covers for the night. It had been a rather eventful day. Hermione was pregnant, Valen had been *sort of* told about sex, and had proclaimed he wanted a brother.

It was the last bit that had Harry really thinking. He turned to his husband right then, propping his head up on his hand. "A brother, eh?" he said, repeating his line from earlier.

Draco reached up to stroke his husband's hair, smiling. "He did seem to be rather determined about that part," he said softly.

"He's rather determined about everything," Harry said with a wry smile. "What do you think?"

"Are you asking if I want to make another baby with you? Or whether the sex of the child matters to me?" Draco asked, smirking.

"I suppose you should answer the first before the second," Harry answered with a smirk of his own.

Draco's smirk grew into a grin and his fingers slid deeper into his lover's hair. "You know I do," he said in a voice gone deeper with desire.

Harry licked his lips. "You know, it's rather strange that you get turned on thinking of it," he said, though his smile gave away his delight with his husband. "What is it about it that does it for you?"

Draco shivered, because it was true – it really did do it for him. He was aroused almost instantly at the thought. He flushed, trying to figure out a way to explain. "What part do you wonder about?" he asked, voice husky. "The part where I make love to you, feel our magic combine? Or the part where I can feel that life growing inside you and know that it is our love that made it? Or the part where I look into the eyes of our child?"

Harry's eyes actually drooped with those words. "I think all of it

sounds wonderful," he said, his voice dropping lower now too.

"Wonderful," Draco echoed, fingers curling into the hair at the back of Harry's head. He licked his lips. "So you'll do it?" he asked, nearly whispering.

Harry felt his heart speed up and nodded.

"Oh, yes," Draco breathed in excitement and desire. He tugged gently, hoping to encourage his lover to more.

"But not now," Harry whispered, bringing his mouth to Draco's for a long, languid kiss. "Let's time with Hermione."

Draco relaxed into the kiss, silver hand coming up to slide over Harry's back. "Mmhmm," he agreed, nipping at Harry's chin.

Harry smiled, pressing closer to Draco and kissing him again. "Want to have your baby inside me," he whispered truthfully. "Another son."

Draco groaned then, desire flaring even hotter inside him. He pulled Harry's body tight against his own.

Harry took in a shuddering breath, licking Draco's lips, hands sliding over pale skin before he whispered, "Fuck me."

A month had passed since Hermione had announced her pregnancy, which meant that she was four months along. When Harry and Draco had told her that they were thinking about having another baby as well, *she* had actually suggested timing the pregnancies before they could even bring it up. She was so excited about the idea of having children the exact same age, and thus able to attend school together and be in the same year, that she actually gave them the very day she and Ron had conceived – rather embarrassingly for Ron, as it was his birthday, March first.

Draco's twenty-second birthday passed, and all of June with it. Planning the pregnancies together required Harry and Draco to conceive in early July, and so when it approached, it was exactly what they intended to do.

Ron and Hermione took the children on the evening of July first. Though conceiving didn't actually take much more than normal sex, it was special, and nice, that their friends had given them the night to be with each other. Right then, Harry sat listening to Draco play piano. It was one of Harry's favourite things, something he still

found very sexy and romantic. He didn't know what it was about it. Just that Draco was willing to play for him was a complete delight.

Draco's long fingers played over the keyboard, letting his feelings flow through them and into the music he made. He loved his husband, now more than ever. He was excited on many levels and he wanted to make this perfect.

Harry adored the look of concentration on Draco's face and sat watching him for a few more minutes, but then he stood, wanting to touch his husband. He came up quietly behind him and lightly wound his arms about Draco's middle, bending to rest his chin on Draco's shoulder.

Draco trembled, fingers faltering a touch, but he focused and managed to continue playing.

Harry smiled, watching Draco's hands, listening to the sounds filling the room, listening to the way they seemed to tell him what Draco was feeling. It sounded exceptionally good to him. "I love it when you do this," he said lowly into his husband's ear. It meant everything to Harry that he was able to hold the memory of how each child was conceived; the tender moments that went into the creation of each baby.

Harry's breath against his ear made Draco gasp and he huffed, still smiling. He tried to focus on the finish of the song, so close but so was his husband.

Still smiling, Harry kissed Draco's earlobe, and then pulled on it very gently with his teeth.

Draco hit a wrong note, wincing and hissing from both the sound and the lovely tremor down his body. Humming in amusement, Harry continued to kiss and nibble his husband's skin until Draco's fingers stilled on the keys, leaning his head away and giving his lover better access to his neck.

Harry licked Draco then, dragging his tongue over his throat. "Are you ready?" he whispered against his wet patch of skin.

"Oh, yes," Draco gasped, quickly closing the lid to the piano and turning to wrap arms around Harry.

Harry gasped in surprise at Draco's enthusiasm, but he grinned and brought his lips to Draco's.

Draco kissed him passionately, licking and sucking on Harry's lips

as his hands slid around to cup Harry's arse.

"Mmm," Harry sighed, wrapping his arms around Draco's neck, his body heating with arousal. "I want you inside me," he whispered.

"Deep inside you," Draco agreed, whispering it against his husband's ear. "So will we conceive our son on the piano or in our bed?"

Harry groaned quietly. "Wherever you want me," he breathed.

"I want you everywhere and in every way possible," Draco said, a familiar line but one he still felt passionately. He grinned though at the idea of the piano. "Strip us," he said huskily.

Harry immediately did so, and then ran eager hands over his husband's body. "Perhaps we'll have a musician," he whispered, kissing Draco again.

Draco grinned even more when his husband's words were so close to his own thoughts. He got to his feet, still touching and holding him. "Brace yourself on the piano," he told him.

Harry nodded, eyes heavily lidded with desire as he moved to do as Draco said. He pushed his arse out for his lover's eyes, staring back over his shoulder.

Draco's cock twitched, filling quickly as his eyes slid over his beautiful husband. "I am going to make you whimper and beg me, Harry," he promised darkly.

Harry felt a scorching heat flood in his lower half and his cock jumped powerfully. "Fuck, yes," he gasped, pushing his arse out a little more to tempt Draco into action.

Draco chuckled. "What is it I called you the first time in the hospital wing bathroom?" he asked, reaching fingers up to trail his nails down Harry's spine.

Harry almost wanted to roll his eyes, but chuckled deeply as he shivered with sensation. "Gryffindor paragon," he said.

"Oh, yes, and a wanton thing," he purred, fingernails swirling over the flesh of his lover's back.

"Very wanton at the moment," Harry said breathlessly.

Draco loved to tease his eager husband. He focused for a moment, lowering the temperature of his silver hand and then reaching to trail the now cold tips over the same path.

Harry hissed in surprise from the new sensation, groaning. He

wondered right then if it was possible that the sex really defined their children's personalities. Valen was determination personified, and the sex during which he had been conceived had been *very* determined. April was an unpredictable whirl of emotion, and she had been conceived on a spur of the moment decision after ages of her fathers being unable to touch. Harry wondered if the child they were about to make would be a well-organised, kinky pianist.

Draco was focused on his lover's body – the way his arms strained to hold the edge of the piano, his legs trembling and his buttocks flexing. He smiled as his flesh fingers caressed Harry's twitching arsecheeks and the cold fingers moved to the crevice between them.

Harry gasped now at the stark contrast of his *very* warm skin and the coldness of the metal.

Draco slowly switched them, his cold hand squeezing Harry's arse and his warmer fingers sliding down to tease his lover's opening. He leant forward, licking along Harry's right shoulder blade.

A low, throaty moan spilled from Harry's lips, his hole twitching and tightening under Draco's fingers. He sighed with the feeling of his husband's slick tongue on his skin, with the sensations of switching from hot to cold.

Draco licked along his lover's other shoulder blade and then down his spine. He bent to one knee, as he shifted the temperature of his hand again to match the other and spread his lover's arse as his tongue slid down the dark skin between the cheeks.

Harry groaned loudly then, his toes and fingers curling. "Fuck, yes, Draco, don't stop," he said, quite as wanton as he had been a moment ago.

"You love my tongue," Draco whispered, licking slowly with long swipes until he reached his lover's entrance. Then, breath ghosting over it, he missed that spot and continued licking below towards his lover's balls.

Growling in frustration, Harry closed his eyes as Draco teased him, though his cock twitched again. Draco chuckled, sucking and licking at the soft sac while his fingers kneaded Harry's arse.

"Draco," Harry moaned, not even meaning to allow the slight whine in his voice

Draco sucked those delicate orbs into his mouth, tonguing one and then the other.

Harry growled again, leaning more heavily against the piano. "Feels good," he gasped. "I know where it might feel – mmm – better."

Draco hummed, the vibration against his lover's balls.

"Ah! Shit," Harry breathed, squirming slightly. "Now," he pleaded. "Want your tongue."

Draco flicked that tongue against his lover's balls again.

"In my *arse*," Harry elaborated, in the unlikely event that Draco needed clarification.

Draco laughed softly, working his tongue back up over his lover's perineum and finally to that tight hole.

"Yes," Harry groaned in relief as he felt that hot, slick wetness. He pushed back into Draco's face a bit. "Please, yes."

Draco complied, his cock twitching hard as he pressed the tip of his tongue into Harry's hole.

Harry let his head fall forward to rest against one arm as he sighed and moaned. His cock ached and his belly was filled with liquid heat. The warm invasion launched by Draco set Harry's body in motion and he shook and trembled with each tiny thrust.

Draco wiggled his tongue inside his lover, holding him spread as he did. He loved the sounds his husband was making.

"God, yes. Fuck, Draco, fuck," Harry gasped and babbled. "Love your hot tongue, love your mouth. Feels so *fucking* good."

The blond slurped and sucked and thrust his tongue in and out of Harry, shuddering with his desire as he did.

Harry had begun to rock with the movements, cock so hard he could barely think. "Fuck me!" he cried. "Fuck, Draco, want your cock!"

Draco wanted to be inside him too. He nipped at his lover's buttock as he pulled back and got to his feet, hands sliding over his lover's hips.

"Please," Harry whimpered, slicking his hand and holding it out to Draco, who slid his fingers over Harry's, slicking them and then reaching down to press inside. "Mmm, yes," Harry sighed, readying himself for the magic they were about to use.

"Gonna fill you with my cock and my seed," Draco growled. "Going to make another son with you." His fingers worked quickly, knowing well how to prepare his husband.

Harry groaned deeply, arching as more heat seemed to spread through him. "Yes," he readily agreed. "Draco, now."

The blond slid his finger out and pressed his cock against his lover's entrance, rubbing it before pressing forward. Harry groaned again with entry, pressing back to meet Draco's hips. Draco used his silver hand to hold Harry's hip and his other to reach around him, wrapping long fingers around his leaking cock. He flexed his own hips, pushing deeper into him.

"Oh, fuck," Harry whispered, letting his eyes fall shut and his husband take over, focusing on making his magic work, on making a little boy.

Draco rocked into him, watching the piano shake as he did. "Your words, our cries, they are my best music," he gasped.

Harry nodded, panting as he listened to their sounds and gasps. He wanted to say something eloquent in return but pulling the magic around them was taking any concentration that wasn't already being driven into a frenzy by his husband's body pushing into him, creating a connection that seemed to mark the beginning of forever.

"My lion, my love, my husband," Draco chanted, pumping his hips with each phrase.

Harry braced himself with one arm, reaching the other to grasp Draco's arse, to pull him tight. He could feel those waves of magic crashing now, signalling that it was working. They were forming another life together. He let out a breathless laugh.

Draco felt Harry's power and the power of the Malfoy Manor swirling through them as his own desire and love felt like a tremendous surge inside him.

"Yes!" Harry cried, coming hard as the waves seemed to rear up over his head and knock him over the edge. Semen spurted from him, splashing onto the floor and over Draco's hand.

Draco threw his head back, crying out as he filled his lover with his seed, the power of their joining sending shocks through his entire body. He held tight to Harry's hip, barely able to stay standing.

Harry shuddered, still shakily holding himself up with one arm. "I

love you," he managed to whisper, a lazy smile spreading across his face.

Draco found his knees buckling and rather than fall onto his husband, he slid to the floor, kneeling with his hands on Harry's hips and still panting. "Always," he answered.

Harry turned slowly, going down in front of Draco to wrap arms about him and kiss his lips.

His right hand was still slick with his husband's seed and Draco drew that around to rest on Harry's belly, pressing his face cheek-to-cheek with Harry and closing his eyes as he concentrated on the spot. The flutter of magic was there. Different from either of their other two children but very clear.

Harry's smile grew and he drew back to look at Draco, sliding a hand along his face. His breath caught in his throat when he saw the amazed look in Draco's eyes; a look that he recalled seeing twice before.

"I can feel him," Draco whispered. "He feels warm and steady."

Harry sighed with contentment, moving forward and pressing even closer to his husband. "Here we go again," he said happily.

"At least now I know where to get all the weird Muggle foods you crave," Draco teased, nipping at Harry's chin.

Harry laughed. "I wonder what Valen and April will think about the way I'll look."

Draco nuzzled his lover's neck, silver fingers holding him as his others stayed on Harry's belly. "Oh, I think they will drive us crazy with questions," he said.

Harry snorted quietly. "They already do that," he said.

The blond chuckled, rubbing himself sensuously against his lover in that way that Harry always said reminded him of a cat.

Harry grinned and kissed Draco. "Have you been watching Shredni again, my sexy husband?" he teased in a murmur against his lips.

"Mmm, he learnt it from me," Draco whispered and then nibbled on Harry's bottom lip.

Harry swiped his tongue out against Draco's lips and teeth. "I think we should go to bed," he said. "And then you can show me a little more."

"Oh, yes," Draco agreed, smiling as he got to his feet. With the children watched for the day, he fully intended to make love to his husband as many times as he could manage it.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE –

Like Me

"And, God, my feet are killing me," said Hermione leaning back against the sofa. Her belly extended like Harry's, but he still found it stranger to see her like that than himself.

"Mine too," he agreed, peeling the wrapper off his chocolate frog. Several sweet coverings already littered the coffee table in front of him. He had several small stacks of the chocolates wobbling precariously on the rounded table that his stomach formed. "My back, too."

"Oh, yes," Hermione groaned in agreement. "Pass me one of those."

"I thought you wanted to eat healthy," Ron teased.

Hermione rolled her eyes at him, holding her hand out for the chocolate. Her own stomach held the carefully folded wrappers from the chocolates since it was too much effort to place them on the coffee table. She added the new wrapper to the growing pile.

Draco was seated at the chess table with his four-year-old son across from him. Valen looked so much smaller when he sat in a straight-backed chair.

The boy's eyebrows were furrowed as he concentrated on the board. He reached a small thin hand and pointed to his father's knight. "This one jumps sideways," he said, clearly trying to puzzle out what Draco's next move would be.

Draco nodded. "Two then one or one then two places." He glanced over at the other adults and rolled his eyes. "Trying to get them to eat like normal people is a lost cause, Ron," he asserted.

Harry huffed and shoved another chocolate in his mouth while glaring at Draco as Ron chuckled.

April, who was busy playing with Uni and Uni's best friend, Sarah the horse, stood then, chocolate spread over her face from eating the frogs as well. She crossed to her brother, watching him. "That's like

Sarah," she said as if the information would help Valen, pointing to his knight.

The blond boy smiled at her. "Yes, a horse," he said. "It has a rider, see." He pointed to the little figure on the back and the figure waved back.

Draco chuckled in amusement and used the knight to take his son's bishop.

April giggled, and then turned and walked over to Harry. "Daddy Harry, I want more," she said, pointing to the chocolate.

Harry raised his eyebrows. "You've already had quite enough, don't you think?"

April pouted. "You have one," she pointed out.

"Yes," said Harry. "But you're three, and I have a baby in my belly."

Hermione laughed at him. "You'll get a tummy ache," she told April.

April still looked disgruntled and shook her head.

"A baby brother," Valen said smugly, looking over at his Daddy Harry before returning his focus to the board. He smirked and moved a piece, his queen taking Draco's knight.

Draco smiled and nodded. He held out a hand towards April. "Come here, my little one," he cooed at her.

April turned her little pouting, scrunched up face on Draco, arms crossed over her chest. She took a few small steps towards him, close enough for him to pull her forward.

Draco scooted his chair back, scooped up the little girl and placed her in his lap, wrapping arms around her and petting her thick dark hair.

Harry sighed, handing a last frog to Hermione and banishing the rest. He supposed it really wasn't nice of him to eat chocolate in front of a three-year-old being denied said chocolate. "Her face is messy," he said in warning to Draco, though the man couldn't have missed the fact.

Draco smiled at the smeared face of his child and reached for his wand. He Summoned a cloth and then used it to gently wipe her face. "Such a messy pretty thing," he teased her, eyes flicking to his husband.

April sniffed, scrunching up her face even more as Draco wiped at it.

Harry snorted. "And I suppose you're saying she gets that from me?" he said, trying to cross his own arms in front of him although the huge belly somewhat ruined the effect.

"Well, of course she does," said Hermione with amusement. She reached and lightly flicked the corner of Harry's mouth.

Sure enough, he found chocolate there when he licked at the spot. Harry smiled and shrugged.

Draco laughed in delight and kissed his daughter's forehead. "Beautiful girl," he told her.

Valen rolled his eyes but still smiled.

Draco moved his next piece. His son was so different from April, hardly ever a spot on the boy.

April smiled at the praise and happily lay back against her Daddy Draco's chest. "Daddy Harry?" she asked.

"Hmm?" said Harry absently, still licking at his mouth in search of chocolate. He began to wish he had kept his stacks of chocolates. The cravings didn't seem to be going away and all he had now to satisfy them were the traces of sticky sweetness lingering on his face and fingers. Harry now eyed his hands before sticking one finger in his mouth to suck it clean. It wasn't quite the same but it would do for now.

"When is that baby coming out of there?"

Harry looked over at her. "Well, soon, I hope," he mumbled around his finger.

"Soon, Hermione will also have a girl," Draco told his daughter, gently stroking her hair back. "Do you like that idea?"

April smiled and nodded. "She will be pretty like me, huh, Daddy Draco? And I will play with Uni with her, and maybe she will have her own, since Uni is mine."

Hermione and Ron smiled at April, and Harry shook his head, hearing exactly what that little "Uni is mine" comment meant.

Draco smiled and nodded. "Yes, when she gets bigger, she will play with you," he agreed. He heard the possessive tone and looked with amusement over at his husband, thinking how much it sounded like Harry as well.

"And my brother is in Daddy Harry's belly?" April asked Draco, even though she asked almost every day, and said it all the time.

"Yes, your baby brother is growing there. When he is ready, he will come out," he assured her.

"Do you think he will have pink hair maybe?" she asked as if trying to persuade Draco to make him have pink hair.

Harry laughed, picturing a newborn with pink hair.

"No, baby," Draco soothed. "His hair will most likely be like either Daddy Harry's or mine."

Valen snorted at the idea of pink hair but moved his chess piece.

April frowned at her big brother. "I think he might have pink hair though," she said decisively.

"And purple skin?" said Harry with a wink at her.

April's eyes widened into perfect little circles and she looked up at Draco.

"Nobody but Tonks has pink hair," Valen said in a haughty tone.

Draco gave his son a warning look of disapproval. Then he turned his gaze back to his daughter. "You will just have to wait to see what he is like," he told her.

April poked her tongue out just barely at Valen, a tiny bit of pink barely peeking out but enough to satisfy her.

Ron was chuckling at them as he asked, "Who's winning over there?"

Draco arched an eyebrow at the redhead, clearly indicating what he thought of the question of whether or not a four-year-old could beat him.

Ron laughed. "You never know with that kid," he said.

"He is learning fast," Draco acknowledged and Valen beamed under the praise.

Harry smiled. "Could probably beat me," he said, grinning at how Valen took the compliments.

Valen preened under the approval of his fathers and Ron.

Draco smiled back at his husband.

Harry chuckled and shook his head. "Who's hungry?" he asked, rubbing his belly.

"You just ate half a box of chocolate frogs," said Ron.

"Coming from the man who can eat a whole box and then three

servings of dinner?" said Hermione, raising an eyebrow.

"We'll join you when we finish the game," Draco answered, setting April back on her feet.

Harry nodded and then sighed, attempting to push himself to his feet.

"I suppose I could eat," said Hermione, and Ron stood to help her. When he bent to pull her up, she stood halfway and then made a bit of a strange noise, before going completely still.

Draco looked back over his shoulder at the sound.

Ron frowned. "What?" he said, leaning closer.

Hermione was frowning as well. "I -" she said. "I don't know. It might be"

Harry stared at her with wide eyes, and April hurried over, grasping Harry's leg. "What's the matter, Aunt 'Mione?" she asked.

"Nothing, sweetheart," said Hermione uncertainly. "I'm sure it's nothing."

Draco glanced at Harry. "Hermione, is it a contraction?" he asked.

She looked over at him. "It ... well, it feels like one," she said.

"Like before?" asked Ron, going a bit pale. He was speaking of the false alarm Hermione'd had the previous week.

"Maybe," said Hermione, still frowning. "They're supposed to be five to ten minutes apart."

Draco got up from his chair and came over to them. "Why don't you sit down and we will wait to see," he said. "Even if it is, it will be hours before anything happens."

She nodded and Ron lowered her back down with great care. Harry had to smile a bit.

Hermione began to rub her belly and April moved a bit closer to her. "Do you have a tummy ache from chocolate?" she asked with an air of great seriousness and sympathy.

"No, not a tummy ache," said Harry, laying a hand atop April's head.

"Is the baby sick?" Valen asked, sounding worried.

Draco smiled back at him. "No, we think she might be trying to decide if it is time to be born," he answered.

"She's getting out of there?" April asked, looking back at Harry.

"Maybe," said Harry, smiling at her.

"Will *he* come out?" she asked, turning and laying a little hand on Harry's belly.

"I don't think today, love," Harry answered.

Valen got up and came over to stand just behind Draco, slipping his hand into his father's.

April giggled as the baby kicked in Harry's belly again, her little hand pressed against his skin. It was absolutely amazing to her, so much that she demanded Harry to make the baby kick. He smiled at her, petting her hair.

He was laying in bed with her, Valen and Draco. Shredni, Draco's grey cat, had decided to join them as well, perched on the mattress and flicking his tail.

"Emawy kicks feet too!" April said happily. "Hey, Daddy Harry, can she play with me today?"

"Well, she's real little still, baby," said Harry. It had turned out that Hermione hadn't been having a false alarm. Only a few days previously she'd given birth to a healthy, red-headed little girl, Emily Jean Weasley. Ron, to everyone's amusement – but especially Fred and George's – had taken the birth worse than *Hermione* had. He'd nearly passed out in the delivery room and the Healers had needed to fetch him water and a Calming Draught. Emily was a beautiful baby though, and Harry had never seen Ron and Hermione look so happy.

Valen pretended not to be as interested in the kicking of the baby inside Harry. But Draco knew better. He had seen the way the boy would reach a hand out to rest on Harry's belly when his sister wasn't paying close attention. At the moment, though, he was curled up with his head on Draco's chest. He had been fairly quiet since Emily's birth. "What will we call him?" Valen asked suddenly but quietly.

Harry frowned thoughtfully. "Good question," he said. "Daddy Draco and I haven't talked about it really."

Draco arched an eyebrow and looked between his son and husband. "So, Valen, did you have any suggestions?"

The boy looked for a moment like he wasn't sure if he should speak. He clearly had something in mind.

Harry smiled at him. "Come on," he said. "What is it?"

April watched as well, staring at her brother.

"Severus," Valen said firmly, holding his chin up a bit defiantly.

Harry's eyes widened and his brows rose high on his forehead. "Severus?" he said, looking at Draco.

Draco's eyes widened and he smiled, looking quickly down at his son. He had, of course, told him stories about Severus Snape, the man who had been his godfather and had eventually sacrificed his life for Draco. But he had not suggested this to his son. Draco smiled and cocked his head at his husband.

Harry frowned slightly, laying his hand on his belly next to April's. "Why do you say that name, son?" he asked, wondering how on earth the little boy could possibly know how to name someone after someone else. But then again, Harry was always wondering exactly how Valen managed to ask and know the things he did.

"He was smart. He taught Daddy Draco potions," the boy insisted. "And then he died for him."

Harry's eyebrows rose again. "Yes ..." he said slowly. "And that's what you want to call your baby brother?"

Draco kept his mouth shut, very curious about how this conversation would go. He would have been reluctant to suggest the name given how difficult Severus Snape's relationship had been with Harry. But he liked the idea.

"Would I have a brother if he hadn't done that?" the boy asked Harry.

Harry's eyes remained wide. "You astound me, Valen," he said quietly, gaze flicking to Draco again. "That is quite a name."

Valen smiled, taking Harry's words as praise. "It is a strong name," he insisted.

Draco nodded, smiling at his husband and stroking the boy's head.

Harry sighed. He really had got past everything that had ever happened between the Potions Master and himself, but he had never imagined naming a son after him. "What does Daddy Draco think?" he asked.

Draco arched his eyebrow again. "Can't argue with his logic," he replied.

Harry sighed once more. "Okay," he said. "Let's say I agree to

this – hypothetically. What for a middle name?"

Valen and Draco exchanged glances and then identical shrugs. Draco looked up and smirked.

Harry released a quiet half-snort. "What do you think, April?" he said.

April had laid her head on Harry's belly, but looked up. "Paul!" she said a few moments of thought.

Harry raised both eyebrows. "Paul? Why Paul?"

"Cause Grandad Arter likes Paul from the wireless!"

Harry continued to frown confusedly. "Who's Paul from the wireless?" he asked.

"He's a bug," said April firmly.

Harry laughed loudly then, understanding what she meant. "Is he a beetle?"

"Yeah!"

"Has Grandad Arthur been trying to get Muggle stations in again?" Harry asked Valen, still chuckling, realising his daughter was talking about Paul McCartney from The Beatles.

Draco snorted and shook his head. "How about one from each side of the family instead," he said.

"Yes, I don't think Paul will work," said Harry. April pouted, but Harry petted her hair. He sat back, thinking. "How about James?" he said with a wry smile, half joking.

Draco nodded, considering it. He was amused, thinking how annoyed both men would be with the combination. It appealed to his sense of humour. "I like it," he said.

Harry cocked an eyebrow. "Seriously?" he said.

"Severus James," Draco said aloud, testing the sound of it. He looked down at his son. "What do you think?" he asked.

Valen raised both eyebrows, obviously really thinking about it. "Yes," he said.

Harry hummed quietly. "Severus James," he said aloud as well. He was quiet for a few moments. "Well," he said finally, "I never *thought* I'd name my son that." He smiled a little.

"Sebrus James," said April, obviously not wanting to be left out.

"Sev," Valen said, rubbing Harry's belly with a small gentle hand. The smile that he shared with Harry was worth naming their new son

Severus, Harry decided.

The baby – Severus – kicked at his big brother's hand. "Sev," Harry repeated. Merlin, wouldn't *that* be something to get used to? "Severus James Malfoy."

The birth had gone almost exactly as April's birth had. Harry had started having contractions while sitting with his family. April had cried, because she had thought that her Daddy Harry was hurt, but Valen had been the one to calm her down.

Severus had been born only a short while later. His hair was as black as April's, which Harry found quite appropriate, but he had Draco's nose, like Valen. He seemed very quiet so far, which was a *relief* after April. Harry adjusted him in his arms, smiling down into that tiny little face as he waited for his husband to return.

Draco went to retrieve both the older children from the care of Hermione. A little hand in each of his, he led the way back to the Master Suite of the Manor.

"We are going to meet Severus now," Valen told his sister.

"He came out?" April asked, still a little snuffly.

"Yes," Draco answered. "He is fine and so is your Daddy Harry." He released Valen's hand and opened the door following the boy inside.

Valen actually paused inside the door, looking uncharacteristically reticent.

April poked her head into the room curiously.

Harry looked over at Draco and April, smiling a little tiredly. "Hey," he said, and then spotted Valen, smiling at him as well and beckoning with a hand.

April squeezed Draco's hand, trying to stand on tiptoe to see what her daddy was holding.

Draco picked up the little girl and walked forward, setting her on the bed. He looked back at his son. "Valen?"

Valen took a deep breath as if steeling himself for something and then walked slowly forward to stand beside the bed.

Harry exchanged a curious glance with Draco before pulling the little blanket off of Severus so that the children could see.

The tiny little boy scrunched up as if trying to hold in the warmth

and made a grunting sound.

April gasped. "Is that him?"

"Yes, your new brother, Severus," Draco encouraged. He smiled with warmth at both Harry and the baby and then looked down at Valen who stood beside him. "What's wrong, Valen?"

Valen made a face that said he didn't want to tell but sighed. He looked up at Draco then and said in a small voice. "What if he doesn't like me?"

Harry smiled at Valen, feeling his heart and chest fill with warmth at that little voice. "Come up here," he said.

Draco smiled too, nodding to the little boy. He had the urge to pick him up like he did April but knew that Valen would resist. He had reached a stage now where he insisted on doing everything himself.

Valen grabbed the edge of the bed and climbed up, crawling over to Harry. He stopped just short of touching his daddy. Harry saw the small signs of worry on Valen's face. He hadn't yet mastered the art of hiding his feelings as well as his Daddy Draco, in spite of how alike they were. Harry smiled reassuringly at Valen and rested a calming hand on his son's knee.

"Look," Harry said quietly, showing the baby to Valen more clearly. "He's your little brother. He loves you already, just like April did when she came."

April smiled at the mention of her name, tearing her intent eyes away from Severus to smile at Valen. "He loves you, Baawin," she said reassuringly, laying a small little kiss on her big brother's cheek. "And me too?" she asked both her daddies, looking between them.

"You are his big brother and big sister," Draco said. "He loves you and he will need you to take care of him and teach him."

Valen nodded, seeming to look proud at Draco's words. "Can I touch him?"

Harry smiled, nodding, and leant in closer to Valen.

Valen reached out and tentatively touched Severus' hair. "Hi, Sev," he whispered.

Sev made another tiny grunting noise, opening grey eyes. Valen's own eyes widened and the two brothers studied each other for a moment before the sleepy baby closed his eyes again and Valen

looked up at his Daddy Harry and grinned, his face shining in delight. Harry smiled back and patted his oldest child on the knee where his hand still connected the two of them.

"His hair is like mine," said April, not wanting to be left out.

"Yes," Harry agreed. "And it looks like he's got the same nose as you, Valen."

Valen peered at his brother as if trying to evaluate the baby's nose.

Draco sat down on the bed, smiling in delight at his family. His grey eyes shone as he reached and rested his hand on the small of Valen's back.

Harry looked up at his husband, sighing with contentment. "I love you," he said quietly, leaning up a bit for a kiss.

"I love you too," Draco answered, kissing his husband. The baby squirmed in Harry's arms.

"Oh, you'll get used to it, Sev," Valen whispered to his little brother.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX –

Rules and Rebels

Harry was very flustered and frustrated. Trying to feed two small, hyperactive children while also trying to keep two infants happy was not as easy as it might have looked. Harry thought Emily might need to have her nappy changed, and he knew that Sev would want to be fed as well in a few minutes. April was standing on her chair, dancing, and Valen seemed to watch serenely but had barely touched his sandwich.

At least one of them was calm even if he wasn't doing what he was supposed to do.

Ron and Hermione had gone out to eat, and Draco was working on ... whatever it was he was working on in his study. Harry wished it was nap time rather than lunch.

"April, get down!" he said for the third time. "You're going to break your neck."

She pouted and crossed her arms, but did sit down when Harry gave her his *look*. He couldn't believe he had a *look*; he'd never thought he would have one before.

"Daddy, can I have a biscuit?" Valen asked sweetly.

Harry sighed, taking Sev out of his swing as he started to fuss. "You didn't eat your sandwich," he answered Valen, rocking the baby in his arms.

"I'm not in the mood for this," Valen explained, poking at the sandwich disdainfully.

Harry laughed at the five-year-old. "Oh, you're not?"

April looked between her brother, Harry, and her half-eaten sandwich, obviously contemplating her next move.

"No, sometimes I just don't feel like eating some things but want to eat something else instead," Valen explained in that 'oh-so-reasonable' voice he had that sounded eerily like Draco.

"Like sweets?" Harry raised his eyebrows, trying not to smile.

"Exactly," the little blond boy said with an arched eyebrow. "Don't you?"

"Sure," Harry answered. "But it's better to eat your real food first."

"I don't want this either, Daddy," April joined in, her little hand slowly pushing her plate away from her.

Valen gave her a look that said he felt she was just copying him but didn't object. "Yes, Daddy," he answered happily.

Harry rolled his eyes but ... they *were* cute, staring up at him with big green and blue eyes. And what would a biscuit hurt, really? It wasn't as if they never finished meals or ate sweets all the time and Harry wasn't really in the mood for the consequences of denying them a biscuit. They could eat dinner later. "All right," he said. "You can each have a biscuit. Just ... don't mention it to Daddy Draco, and you have to eat all of your dinner later."

Valen's took the offered biscuit but then his eyes grew wide, looking over Daddy Harry's shoulder.

Harry winced, knowing immediately what Valen was staring at. He turned his head to see Draco standing in the doorway.

"Hi, Daddy!" April greeted him, standing on her chair again and waving her biscuit around with her hand.

Draco was leaning against the doorway in that forced casual thing he sometimes did that was reminiscent of their school days. He arched an eyebrow at his husband, trying not to show his anger in front of the children.

Harry sighed, still rocking Sev who definitely wanted to be fed now. "You two go ahead and play," he told April and Valen.

Valen grabbed his sister, apparently spotting trouble when he saw it coming, and led her from the room, glancing back at his daddies as he did.

Draco hadn't moved from the door, arms still crossed over his chest.

Harry could tell Draco was aggravated, but he didn't want to be the first to speak. Instead, he began to take his shirt off to feed the baby, hoping it might calm Draco since he liked watching Harry nurse.

Draco huffed and strolled into the room, looking pointedly at the

unfinished sandwiches.

"I know, I know," Harry said before Draco could speak. "What's the big deal? They're biscuits, and it's only lunch."

"We agreed they would not have treats if they didn't eat their food," Draco insisted, trying not to raise his voice even though he was very angry at the moment.

"Draco," Harry sighed. "It's not like I let them have the whole jar."

"It's the principle of the thing," Draco snapped. "You are always giving in whenever they want something they aren't supposed to have. What's the point of making agreements if you don't keep them?"

"It's food!" Harry said incredulously. "And I don't do it *all* the time."

"And I try to keep our agreements and come out looking like the mean father," Draco sneered.

"Mean father," Harry repeated, sighing once again. "That's ridiculous."

"Is it? It's almost like school again. You don't want to follow the rules, so you ignore them," Draco snapped, realising it was probably an unfair comparison but angry enough that he didn't stop.

Harry scowled. "Well, I'm sorry, Mr Perfect," he retorted. He knew it was wrong of him to have given the sweets, but he couldn't help the way Draco made him feel sometimes.

"I used to get so mad at you in school when the teachers would let you break the rules but punish me for doing so," Draco insisted. "It wasn't fair then and it isn't fair now."

"I *did* get punished in school," Harry countered, frowning. "And fine, I really am sorry," he added grudgingly.

Draco sighed. Unfortunately, his brain had suddenly reminded him of that crazy bitch Umbridge and her sick ideas of discipline. He shook his head and pulled out the chair next to where his husband sat. "Yeah, I remember," he said sadly, reaching for his husband's hand.

Harry adjusted Sev so that he could hold the baby with one arm, putting his hand in Draco's. He didn't know how the man managed to make him feel angry and then guilty within five minutes. "That

doesn't matter," he said. "And I didn't even think of the way giving the kids biscuits would make you look."

Draco traced the faint hint of a scar on the back of his husband's skin. "Gods, you were bloody amazing standing up to that wacko," he whispered, remembering the times he was glad Harry broke the rules. "Thanks," he said, acknowledging Harry's words then.

Harry smiled and shook his head. "While you were off joining the Inquisitorial Squad and taking House points. I don't think either of us followed the rules very well."

Draco nodded, smirking as he lifted Harry's hand to his mouth and kissed the back of it. "I think that when we *make* the rules, we should. So you want to change the rule or follow it?" he asked.

Harry blew his fringe up out of his eyes, looking towards the ceiling. "I suppose I should follow it," he answered. The rule was reasonable and he knew that if the kids indulged in sweets too often they would never eat the foods they should.

Draco reached his other hand out to caress that fringe, pushing it back for his husband. He glanced down and saw that Sev had fallen asleep nursing. "Difficult to go from rebel to daddy sometimes," he teased.

Harry snorted. "Rebel Daddy?" he said dryly. "I suppose that does sound ridiculous."

Draco grinned. "Just be careful who you are rebelling against," he warned, leaning in to kiss his husband now.

Harry kissed him back. "You got it, love," he agreed. "I suppose I need to learn to resist their charms."

"I can't resist yours," Draco admitted.

Harry grinned at that one. "I hope you never learn to."

Harry smiled, shaking his head as Sev tried to get away again, crawling as fast as he could move. He reached for the little boy, pulling him back on the blanket. Ron did the same with Emily, who had gone crawling in the other direction.

"She won't hold still!" Ron exclaimed as Hermione laughed.

Harry chuckled as well. "Get used to it," he said.

All of the inhabitants of Malfoy Manor were outside on the sunny July day, letting the children get some fresh air. Sev and Emily,

however, were proving to be quite the handfuls. Their chubby bodies wriggled and squirmed each time they were captured until they were released to try and escape from the blanket once again.

Draco was lying on the extra large blanket, head propped up on one hand. "We could race them. Put them both in the middle and see which one makes it to the edge first."

Harry snorted, setting Sev in the middle of the blanket. With a grin, Ron did the same with Emily and both men then sat back on their heels and waited. Not surprisingly, the babies didn't move at all, staring at their parents with their wide eyes.

Draco laughed. Harry turned and grinned at his husband before laughing along with him.

"C'mon, Em," said Ron, patting the ground and then giving a small whistle as if calling a pet. "C'mon."

She only continued to stare.

Draco rolled onto his back, laughing harder now.

Harry smiled, watching as Ron continued to try to coax Emily to crawl, and then, turning eyes on Draco, laughed in amusement.

"That's right, Daddy," said Hermione, reaching for Emily. "You can't make me race."

Draco lay on his back, smiling at his strange family and snickering softly. He wiggled his fingers at Sev. "Come to Daddy, Sev," he cooed.

Sev looked over at Draco, watching his fingers. After a moment, he lowered himself down, crawling towards Draco.

"Aww, that's it," Draco encouraged as the infant came closer.

Sev placed both hands on Draco's chest, patting lightly.

Draco picked the infant up, laying him directly on his chest and petting his hair. "Such a good boy," he told him.

Sev smiled down at Draco, showing the edges of two little teeth. With an affectionate smile, Harry bent down to kiss husband and son. Draco smiled up at Harry and then looked past him frowning. "The other two seem awfully quiet. Can you see them?"

Harry frowned a little as well, turning his head. He could see April standing a bit away, her shoulders slightly hunched. He exchanged a glance with Draco before he called out, "April!"

She turned her head quickly ... suspiciously, and Harry narrowed

his eyes. "Come here!" he called.

She glanced behind her before beginning on her way, seeming to take as long as she possibly could, which was even more suspicious. April never walked when she could run. Draco turned his head to see his daughter, one hand still petting the infant on his chest.

Harry cocked an eyebrow. "What are you doing?" he asked.

April looked at him. "I'm not doing anything," she said.

Harry doubted that. "Really?" he said.

April nodded, her eyes wide as if that would prove she was telling the truth.

"Where's your brother?" Draco asked suspiciously.

Her eyes flashed to Draco and then back to Harry – very rapidly. "He went to the loo," she said in too careful a voice.

Draco arched an eyebrow, looking up at his husband.

Harry looked back down at Draco, frowning. "April," he said seriously. "Where is Valen?"

She frowned too. "In ... the loo." She sounded less confident about saying it.

Draco rolled to the side, laying the infant on the blanket again and sitting up to look around for their son.

Harry's heart began beating just a little faster as he looked around as well. He didn't see Valen anywhere nearby. He didn't hear him either.

Ron stood from the blanket, hands on his hips. "I don't see him out here," he said.

Draco handed Sev to Harry and stood up, craning around to look. He saw no telltale head of blond hair. "Valen!" he called out.

"Maybe he did go in the house," said Hermione, standing with Emily as Harry got to his feet with Sev.

April kicked the ground, studying her own feet.

"April Narcissa," said Harry, rounding on her. "Where is your brother?"

It took her a few moments, but, "I don't know," she answered, sounding upset.

"Leakey!" Draco shouted and moments later the elf appeared in front of them.

"Master Draco," Leakey said.

"Where is my son Valen?" Draco demanded.

Harry's heart was pounding now as he waited for Leakey's answer.

"Master Valen be on the Quidditch pitch," the elf said.

"The Quidditch pitch?" said Harry in confusion. "What's he doing there?"

"Flying," the elf answered.

"*Merde!*" Draco gasped and Apparated to the pitch.

Harry's eyes widened and his mind went blank for a moment. He mouthed silently, looking back at Ron and Hermione.

"Give him to me and go," Ron said quickly, taking Sev out of Harry's arms. As soon as the baby was secure, Harry was gone, Apparating half a minute after Draco.

Draco arrived on the field and then looked about. He saw his son – his five-year-old – high above him on a broom. He was torn between furious and proud as his mouth dropped open, staring.

Harry's reaction was almost exactly the same. He was stunned for a few long moments before shouting, "Valen!"

Valen was flying in a circle about ten yards above them. When Harry called out, he looked down, his eyes going wide in surprise. He squeaked and the broom spun.

Harry gasped, throwing his hand out to slow the broom. The broom stopped in mid-flight but Valen lost his grip and fell. His small body began to plummet towards the ground as he cried out.

Draco reached to draw his wand, knowing he could not be fast enough.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN –

Hold On Tight

Time felt like it went in slow motion as Draco tried to pull his wand and cast a spell to stop his son's fall. Valen was plummeting towards the ground, and Draco's stomach lurched in fear as he realised he wouldn't be fast enough to save him.

Harry didn't even know what sort of magic he threw at his child, only that it was fast and powerful. He caught Valen with it, ensuring that the boy didn't hit the ground. His steady hand lowered in tiny increments, matching the slow pace at which Valen was lowered and when he turned his palm carefully, his son's body twisted slightly until he was coming down to land on his feet.

Draco shivered at the surge of power from his husband and his knees shook with relief at seeing their son float gently to the ground.

Harry's heart was still beating furiously. He let Valen reach the grass, breathing heavily. The sudden release of magic and his own adrenaline left him shaking now and he leant forward for a moment to rest his hands on his knees and take deep breaths.

Draco felt a spike of anger now as he strode forward, grabbing Valen by both upper arms. He had the urge to shake some sense into the child and wanted to hug him close at the same time. "Valentine Leander Malfoy!" he yelled from only inches away.

Harry followed after his husband, staring angrily down at their son. "Why did you do that?" he demanded. "You *know* you're not supposed to fly big brooms. You *know* that."

Valen seemed to recover, despite still being held in a hard grip by Draco. He lifted his chin defiantly and his eyes were that same flashing green Draco knew so well. "I know. But I did it and I was good at it!" he answered.

Harry bit his tongue hard for a moment. "You could've killed yourself, Valen! What then?!"

Valen scowled, the expression so like Draco that the blond father

nearly smirked in response. "But I didn't," the child insisted.

"But you could've!" Harry said through gritted teeth. "And you had your sister *lie* for you!"

That last one seemed to hit home and Valen had scruples enough to flush then and look down.

Draco shook his head. "Look at me, son," he insisted. He had to clench his teeth for a minute not to give in when he saw his son's eyes watering now. "It was bad enough you endangered yourself, but getting your sister in trouble when you were supposed to be taking care of her, was not honourable."

Harry had to actually look away in order to not give in. Valen had just broken two clear rules and *Harry* felt bad.

Valen blinked, eyes wide and a tear running down one cheek, then another on the other side. Apparently the issue of honour had not occurred to him before and he was stung now. His mouth opened but then closed again, as he struggled for something to say.

"We cannot do things just because we want them," Draco continued. "To be honourable you must weigh how your actions affect others." His heart ached to pull the boy into a hug but he kept a stern face.

Harry swallowed and nodded, chancing a glance down at Valen.

"I – I'm sorry," Valen gasped, beginning to tremble now.

Draco felt torn, not knowing if this was enough. It wouldn't have been enough for his father but he didn't want to be like Lucius. He glanced up at Harry, wanting his guidance now.

Harry bit his lip, not entirely sure what to do either. He met Draco's eyes for a moment and then dropped down to the ground next to him. "Valen," he said in a gentler voice than he'd been using before. "We love you, and that's why we don't want you to get hurt. You could've got hurt on that broom. And Daddy Draco's right, it's not honourable at all to have your little sister lie so that you can go off and do something you know you're not supposed to. I think we'll take away *your* broom for a while, but you can earn it back if you're good."

Valen's tears flowed a little faster now but he actually looked relieved as well.

Draco understood that. Knowing the punishment was better than

fearing it. "And you will apologise to your sister; Hermione and Ron as well."

Harry nodded in agreement, still staring at Valen. He knew his son came by his actions honestly; Harry had broken more than his share of rules in school and Draco had a talent for finding ways around them. As much as Harry wanted to forbid Valen from ever getting on a broom after seeing his tiny body fall, Harry knew that would only make Valen want it more.

Draco pulled his son to him then, letting out a sigh that was almost a sob and Valen buried his face against his father's chest.

Harry smiled a little, hugging the both of them and rubbing Valen's back in soothing circles. "You won't do that anymore?" he asked quietly.

Valen pulled back a bit turning his head to look into Harry's eyes, his own eyes shining green as well. "But Daddy, I want to fly," he whispered.

Harry's heart clenched a little. "I know," he said, understanding that feeling completely and forcefully keeping himself from calling Valen 'baby.' "You just have to wait a while before you can ride a big broom. It's easy for *me* to lose control on a big broom. I can take you for rides, but it's not a good idea for you to do it all by yourself."

Hope flared in the boy's eyes. "You'll take me?" he asked in a small voice.

Draco kept one arm around Valen but reached the other to pull Harry closer. He snorted with amusement now.

Harry smiled. "Yes, I'll take you," he said. "You should've asked rather than get in trouble, kid," he continued, raising an eyebrow.

"Thank you, Daddy," Valen said, throwing both arms around Harry's neck and kissing his cheek.

Draco was grinning now. He didn't say it but he wouldn't be surprised if Harry could see it in his eyes. He absolutely believed this kid would be sorted into Slytherin.

Harry shook his head at Draco, smiling wryly now. "Go on and say you're sorry now," he said to Valen. "We'll be right behind you."

Valen stepped back, wiping his eyes and face on his sleeve. He smiled at the two of them before running back towards the rest of the family. Harry continued to shake his head, getting to his feet and

holding his hand out to Draco.

Draco grinned, taking his hand and getting to his feet, using his other hand to dust off grass from his trousers.

"You don't even need to say it," Harry said.

That just made Draco chuckle, grinning so big it nearly hurt. He reached for Harry, pulling his husband against his own body.

Harry smiled, laying a kiss against Draco's lips and slipped his tongue into his husband's mouth, hands pressed firmly to the small of Draco's back. "If Ron and Hermione didn't have all three of our children and one of their own, I would fuck you right here," he said lowly.

"Mmm," Draco hummed, kissing Harry more fully. Now that the fear had faded, he still felt flushed and it felt very good to hold Harry. He would like to have done more then too but his husband was right. He pulled back and smiled at him. "We should put the broom away. Maybe I should lock them up from now on."

Harry sighed and rested his head on Draco's shoulder. "Probably a good idea," he said. "I can't believe he did that." He paused for a moment as his eyes swept the empty sky above them. "Well, actually I can, but still."

Draco chuckled, nodding as he stepped away from his husband and picked up the broom. "Knowing him, Locking Charms may not hold long," he said with a sigh.

Harry let out a breath. "No, I guess not," he said. "Maybe he won't try it again. I did agree to take him on rides."

Draco returned the broom to the broomshed, placing on it the best Locking Charm he knew and returned to Harry, holding out his hand.

Harry took Draco's hand in his own, Apparating them back to their friends.

Ron and Hermione were both sitting on the blanket again, herding fast-moving babies. Valen and April were chasing each other a few feet away.

Draco shook his head in both wonder and exasperation at their children. "Did he apologise?" he asked the other two.

Hermione smiled wryly at Harry and Draco both. "Yes," she said. "But he didn't say what he did."

Harry frowned at Draco before he went to the blanket to get Sev. Draco huffed. "Valen," he said sharply.

The boy froze where he was, eyes wide. Then he came to stand in front of his fathers.

Harry raised an eyebrow at his son. "You didn't tell them what you were saying sorry for?"

"You didn't tell me to do that," Valen answered, hands on his young hips. He tilted his head, his green eyes darting from Harry to Draco.

"An apology without meaning is not of much use," Draco countered.

"It's not up for argumentation," said Harry, eyebrow still raised. "Say you're sorry and what for."

Valen frowned, pursing his lips. "I apologise for telling April to lie and for breaking the rule not to ride a real broom," he said in a careful tone that showed he was choosing his words carefully.

Harry shook his head, but it sounded all right to him. He nodded to Valen.

Hermione gasped quietly. "He rode a real broom?" she asked.

Valen grinned and Draco tried not to smirk as he nodded.

"Which one was it?" asked Ron, who kept several of his models in the broomshed.

"My five-year-old was flying a broom and you care which model?" Draco asked indignantly.

Ron had the sense to look cowed. "Well, he's all right," he said, shrugging one shoulder slightly and ignoring the look Hermione was giving him.

Harry rolled his eyes. "It was mine," he said.

"The Firebolt," Valen volunteered proudly.

"Yes," said Harry, unable to stop himself from grinning just a little. "A professional broomstick entirely not designed for five-year-olds."

Draco knew they shouldn't let on how proud they were in front of said five-year-old but he nodded. "He was at least thirty metres up," he added.

Ron raised his eyebrows. "Thirty?" he said in surprise. "During my first go I only made it to" But he fell silent at a more pointed

look from Hermione.

"You could have been hurt," she said to Valen.

"I wasn't hurt and I wasn't afraid," the little blond insisted. "I love it."

"Well," said Harry dryly. "Love it or not, I better not ever catch you at that again. Not until you're older. You ask for a ride and remember that you're working on earning your own broom back."

"Yes, Daddy Harry," Valen said quickly.

Draco motioned to their daughter. "April."

April bit her lip, turning slowly and looking at Draco.

"You are never to lie to me, your Daddy Harry, Ron or Hermione again. Even if one of your brothers tells you to. Understand?"

April frowned at Valen, but nodded. Valen gave his sister an apologetic look when she glanced at him, then both children turned to look at Draco.

"You can go play now," Draco told them and lay back down on the blanket. He sighed contentedly as Valen and April ran a few yards away and continued chasing each other.

Harry smiled at him and laid Sev back on Draco's chest. The little boy patted Draco's face and babbled at him.

"Well, glad to see you are happy," Draco told the infant with a quick smile up at Harry. Nothing better than relaxing and lying in the sun with his family. "Maybe we should get friends together for a Quidditch game soon," he suggested.

"Sure," said Harry. "Bet Valen and Chris would both love that."

"Sounds good to me," said Ron.

Sev didn't comment directly but slobbered on Draco's chest.

Two weeks later, Harry awoke a sleepy Valen and quietly helped him get dressed in the pre-dawn hours while the rest of the household slept. Once the two of them moved away from the bedroom suites, Harry Apparated them to the pitch where he had already placed his Firebolt after cleaning and trimming it the night before. The early morning sky was a deep grey colour and even the birds were still asleep in the trees surrounding the pitch. Harry took in a deep breath of the cool air and knelt down beside Valen who stood there eyeing the broom with a drowsy smile on his face. The slight chill in the air

and the anticipation left two rosy patches on Valen's smooth, pale skin and Harry saw the excited light in his eyes.

"I was eleven years old before I rode my first broom, Valen," Harry said in a hushed voice, not wanting to break the stillness around them yet. "I made a lot of mistakes but I loved it right away. You love it too so I think maybe you and I should fly together and I'll teach you what I know." Harry pulled a small pair of flying gloves out of his back pocket and handed them to Valen to pull on before he tugged his own onto his hands. "Are you ready?"

Valen's green eyes were wide and the boy nodded eagerly. "Yes, Daddy."

Harry held his hand out in front of him and the broom leapt to the silent call, hovering in front of both of them. Throwing one leg over the broom, Harry then bent his knees and folded his legs to allow the broom to dip a little closer to the ground. He held out one hand towards his son.

"No riding in the back," Harry said, with a grin. "You get the front seat and make sure you hold on tight."

Valen grinned and took Harry's hand, climbing into place. Little hands gripped the broom handle and he looked back over his shoulder at Harry. "Holding on tight," he assured him.

Harry bowed forward slightly, creating a safe pocket that encompassed Valen's body and brought his own hands down to grip the broom. With a slight movement forward, the Firebolt heeded the subtle gesture from Harry and began to rise in the air with increasing speed until the self-created wind swept over father and son, whipping blond and black hair around two smiling faces. Harry manoeuvred the broom so that it flew in a figure eight within the pitch, steadily climbing higher. When they were able to see for long distances in any direction, Harry pulled the Snitch from his pocket; a special one that was charmed to move a little slower than a regulation Snitch and glowed to make visibility easier in the dim light of early dawn.

"Okay, son," Harry said, bringing his mouth to Valen's ear and holding the Snitch in front of him. "You're in charge now. Show me what you can do." And with those words, the tiny wings on the Snitch sped up until they were nearly invisible and the glowing orb leapt from Harry's hand and disappeared behind them.

Harry immediately felt the change in Valen's body as his shoulders hunched down and when his son turned his head, Harry saw that the easy smile had given way to fiery determination that fairly leapt from his searching green eyes. As Valen brought one shoulder down slightly and leaned, Harry followed the movements and the broom swiftly turned and headed in the other direction. It seemed that the Snitch had disappeared and Harry was torn between his instinct to look for it and watching the way his son seemed to know exactly what to do as his small body moved gracefully in tiny directions, skillfully mapping the pitch while his bright eyes scanned the spaces around them.

Behind Valen, Harry's face held a smile that was probably impractical while flying in the same places where insects flew but he couldn't help it. In all the times he had flown for Quidditch points and for pure pleasure, he had never really envisioned the day that he would share a broom with his son. Harry had known of Draco's fears about being a good father; Harry had always had similar fears since his time before Hogwarts had put him in the care of someone who hated him. His only real knowledge of what it meant to be a good father came from Arthur Weasley and Harry was grateful to the man for opening up his home and his life to Harry and sharing his family.

"You're doing a brilliant job, Valen," Harry shouted in the wind. "Straighten your back a little and lean forward if you want to go even faster."

Valen immediately heeded Harry's advice and Harry's body followed his son's which brought a burst of speed to the Firebolt, sending it racing across the pitch towards a soft glow in the distance. Harry blinked in surprise. Valen had seen the Snitch even before he had. One small hand carefully eased off of the handle and extended forward as the gap was closed. Harry held his breath, almost wanting to close his eyes, as the fingers stretched further and further until -

"I got it, Daddy! I got it!" Valen yelled, waving a fist with the struggling Snitch trapped inside of it. "Did you see that?"

Harry laughed out loud and brought one arm across Valen's chest to hug him close and keep him from falling off of the broom in his excitement. Valen had caught the Snitch! The Firebolt hovered high above the ground as Valen smiled at the captured Snitch and Harry

smiled at Valen.

"I did see it, kid!" Harry shouted back. "You saw it even before I did!"

Harry heard the tiny snort of satisfaction and knew his son had a smug smirk on his face at that moment. He could already picture the identical look on Draco's face when Valen recounted everything once they got back to the Manor. Harry sighed and kept his arm close to Valen who leant back into his father's embrace and relaxed while happily studying the Snitch. This wouldn't last forever and Harry knew it. There would come a time when Valen would need to create distance in order to carve his own path but until then Harry wanted to hold on tight and never let him go. Harry glanced behind them and saw the tiny wedge of light that told him what was about to happen. He turned the broom around and bent his head close to Valen's.

"*Lumos*," Harry whispered and the sun broke over the horizon, spilling yellow and gold over everything in its path. Valen slowly turned his head until he could look his father directly in the face and Harry reddened slightly as Valen arched one eyebrow and shook his head in disbelief.

"Well, it would have worked on April," Harry laughed. "I had to give it a try."

– CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT –

Invitation

Harry was trying to feed Sev his mashed bananas, but he kept laughing at something and spitting them out, tiny clumps clinging to his chin and falling to his bib. Harry was sure it was April or Valen making faces at the baby, but every time he turned his head they simply pretended to be eating their oatmeal calmly. Harry huffed. It was actually pretty funny, but it *was* difficult to get the baby fed.

Hermione was feeding Emily, who was laughing as well, but not quite as much as Sev was. Ron was behind the sports section of the *Daily Prophet*, dropping eggs down his shirt as he tried to take a bite without looking. He looked down and frowned at the spilt food as if it had appeared there by magic.

Draco smirked, watching his family as he read the financial section of the paper. Valen was making faces at his little brother but managed the calm disinterested look when Harry turned around. It still amazed Draco, who had been called the 'Ice Prince' by house mates, that his heart felt so warm and full at little domestic moments like this.

Leakey popped in next to him, mail on a silver tray. Most of it, as usual, was business related. But one envelope was on very expensive parchment. He had received enough wedding announcements in recent years to recognise one immediately.

"Anything for me?" Ron asked, still not looking from the paper and trying to aim for his mouth with a piece of toast.

Draco was distracted, opening the invitation and then staring in surprise at the words there.

Harry looked over his shoulder when there was no answer from Draco. "What's that?" he asked.

"A wedding invitation," Draco said softly.

Harry raised an eyebrow and tried to think of any unmarried couples that they knew. "We don't know anyone getting married, do

we?" he said. "Who's the wedding for?"

Draco took a breath. He looked up at Harry. "Theodore Nott," he answered.

Harry raised both eyebrows.

"Oh, he's getting married?" said Hermione, looking over now too. "Who's he marrying?"

"Antoinette Reveia," Draco answered. "I think she went to Beaubaxtons."

"Maybe Fleur knows her," said Ron.

Harry nodded. "When's the wedding?" he asked, watching Draco's face curiously. He wasn't quite sure what he saw in his husband's eyes but it almost looked as if his thoughts were a million miles away. Or years.

"October, in France," Draco answered. He didn't know why it felt odd to be reading about his ex-lover's wedding. It didn't bother him, but he did find his mind flashing back to old memories of the young Theo. The boy had been quiet and clever, and one of the best parts of Draco's early years at Hogwarts. They had been establishing a friendship, of sorts, again, so it surprised Draco that Theo hadn't told him he was getting married.

Harry nodded again, still watching. "You going to go?"

"I should," Draco answered, looking up to meet his husband's eyes. "Will you go with me?"

Harry gave him a small smile. "Certainly," he replied, giving Sev more bananas. In spite of the years and occasional times together, Harry realised he still only knew Theo as much as Theo would allow himself to be shared. He did understand, though, when he observed Draco and Theo chatting or laughing that the man he used to consider a rival was genuinely grateful for his friendship with Draco. Harry would attend the wedding for Draco but also because he did wish Theo well.

"We could celebrate our wedding anniversary in Paris," Draco said, blushing a bit. It was still a running joke among their friends that they had a peculiar fetish for weddings. And they had been to a lot of them in recent years. Their behaviour at Luna and Neville's had been nearly as scandalous as Bill and Fleur's.

Harry snorted, flushing a bit as well. He didn't even know why he

still blushed. One would think that he would have been cured of that by now.

April looked at both her fathers questioningly. "Can I go too?" she asked.

Valen had arched an eyebrow at both men's blushes. Draco thought it was odd how a five-year-old seemed to always catch such things. He swallowed hard and tried to figure out how to answer his daughter. He would prefer to be alone with his husband for their anniversary, but that would mean being away from their children for the trip.

Harry looked at Draco, shrugging while one hand gestured towards the invitation. "Is there anything there about bringing kids?" he asked.

Draco smirked, eyes full of heat as he looked at Harry. "Maybe we should discuss this privately," he suggested.

Valen rolled his eyes and huffed.

Harry blushed a little again as he glanced at Valen. "And this private discussion should take place when?" he said.

Draco looked to Hermione then, because if he was taking his husband off for a 'private conversation' then they would need someone to watch the children.

Hermione and Ron were both completely unfazed. She rolled her eyes a bit and Ron shook his head, reading his paper again. "It's adding up," he said, slight amusement in his tone. "Just wait."

"I know," Draco replied, smiling. "After breakfast," he said to Harry.

Harry smirked slightly and nodded, lifting the little spoonful of bananas again. He could hear small sighs coming from Valen's direction and knew his son was indignant that he might be missing out on a grown-up conversation. Valen hated to be left out of anything.

Draco could barely focus on his food after that. He passed Ron's mail across the table to him and then set his own business mail aside. One of the advantages of the work he did was that he could take time from his day to be alone with his husband. And it never ceased to amaze him how much, and how often, he wanted Harry.

Harry had no idea how he and Draco still managed to fuck as

many times as they did. Without Ron and Hermione there it would have been impossible. April and Valen finished their oatmeal and Harry finished feeding Sev, and then helped Hermione and Ron set him up in the playpen with Emily in the sitting room. He looked over at Draco, raising an eyebrow.

Draco's grey eyes held his husband's as he nodded, gesturing to the door. Valen asked Ron to play chess, and, as Ron stood to take the game out, Harry smiled mischievously at Draco, taking the lead out of the room.

Draco followed his husband, grinning. "So where should we have this ... conversation?" he asked in a voice full of heat.

"Is our bed too tame for you today?" Harry asked with a sly smile, taking hold of Draco's hips. Apparently even thinking about weddings was enough to set the pair of them off in an explosion of desire.

Draco's heart sped up more, shivering at his lover's touch. "Anywhere you want," he whispered.

Harry chuckled lowly, pulling Draco forward and kissing him as he Apparated them to their bedroom anyway.

Draco laughed in delight and pushed his husband back against the bed post, bending to nip at his chin.

"Mmm," Harry hummed, smirking again as he watched Draco. Then he stripped them both quickly, smirk widening into an almost-grin. Harry never tired of watching Draco's face when he did that.

Draco gasped, not in surprise but in perpetual pleasure, as his lover's body was now naked and rubbing against his own. "Yes!"

Harry slid his hands down Draco's back, resting them on the swell of his arse as he pulled him tighter. He loved the way their bodies seemed to meld together fluidly as if two parts of a puzzle were linked to create something whole.

"So good," Draco whispered, his cock sliding against Harry's. "I want you to wrap your beautiful legs around me while I fuck you."

"Mmm," Harry hummed again, his cock jumping. "Fuck, yes."

Draco could, and sometimes did, spend hours making love to his husband. But what he wanted at this moment was a fast hard fuck. He pressed one knee between Harry's legs and reached down to cup Harry's arse, pulling him higher against his body.

Harry groaned loudly, helping to lift himself as he brought arms up around Draco's neck. He could practically feel the heat leaping and twisting off of Draco's body and causing the air around them to shimmer like a desert mirage. He already knew this was going to be good, but then, it was always good.

Draco slid the fingers of one hand down the crevice of his lover's arse. "Make yourself slick for me," he practically growled in Harry's ear.

Harry released a low, shaky breath, using his magic to slick himself where Draco was rubbing rather than slicking his fingers as usual. The urgency was being passed from Draco to Harry and he didn't want to waste a moment.

Draco moaned, feeling the spark of power and then sliding his fingers to press into his lover's hole. "I am going to fill you," he promised.

"Yeah," Harry moaned, clenching his arse. "Please yes." It would be difficult for Harry to choose his favourite moment when he was with Draco but experiencing the first press of fingers inside his body would be near the top of the list. It was always a prelude to something even better separating the walls inside of him and making him feel complete.

Draco chuckled, panting at the feeling of his lover's arse squeezing his fingers. He worked them a minute longer, making sure Harry was ready for him and then pulled his fingers out and grasped Harry's arse, pulling him up until he felt the head of his cock brush Harry's balls.

Harry licked his lips, and then stretched his tongue out and leant forward to lick at Draco's. He brought his legs up, wrapping them firmly around Draco's hips, waiting for his cock. Between them, the dragon and lion tattoos rolled against each other.

Draco moaned again, the head of his cock sliding in the lube until he felt his lover's opening. His fingers tightened, squeezing the flesh of Harry's arse-cheeks as he lowered the man onto his cock.

Harry groaned with entry, cock jumping again and arms tightening around Draco. There was something about this position that made Harry feel even more filled, as if everything in his body was shifted aside for Draco's cock and it took his breath away every

time.

Draco felt each inch of the slide into his husband's body, moaning as he did. Harry was so stretched open like this that Draco didn't stop until he felt that tight ring gripping around the base of his cock. Harry's cock and balls were pressed between their bodies. "Oh, I love this, love you," Draco gasped.

"Love you," Harry echoed, holding Draco even tighter in every way he could. "Fuck me."

"Yes," Draco answered and spread his legs a little wider so that he could begin thrusting up into Harry. Every delicious slide out and the hard push in made him moan.

Harry did his best to move with Draco, gasping as the movements were faster, harder. Mostly he just held on and tilted his head back to suck in a few deep breaths in between his moans of pleasure.

Each thrust slid Harry's cock against Draco's belly, leaving a trail of pre-come. "Yes, yes," Draco chanted as he fucked him.

The heat was building up rapidly inside Harry, his cock jerking and spurting. "Fuck *yes!*" he shouted, coming almost unexpectedly as Draco brushed his prostate. His torso twisted as he rode out the orgasm.

Draco cried out, shoving hard into Harry and struggling to hold himself up as the magic rushed over and through him. He pumped his seed into his lover, fingers digging hard into his arse and face pressed to Harry's neck. Harry smiled, panting blissfully as he clung to his husband.

Draco kissed the sweaty skin of his husband's neck and then shifted them while turning so that he fell backwards on the bed with Harry now atop him. Harry yelped with the unexpected movement, but then grinned down at Draco, bending to kiss him. Chuckling again at his lover's surprise, Draco slid his hands up Harry's back to cup his head as they kissed.

Harry sighed happily, pulling back a little to push the fingers of one hand through Draco's damp hair. Touching and caressing Draco after sex was always nearly as good as the journey that it took to get there.

Draco relaxed, thoroughly kissing Harry, carding fingers through

his thick hair as he did. When he pulled back, he smiled again. "So want to celebrate our sixth wedding anniversary in Paris?" he asked.

"Could be enjoyable," Harry said with a grin. "The wedding's not *on* our anniversary, is it?" he asked. It would feel strange to share a wedding anniversary with Theo Nott, no matter how far things had progressed between the pair of them.

"No, the week before," the blond answered. "We'd have to spend at least a week in Paris then."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Without the kids?"

Draco cocked his head, thinking about it. They actually hadn't spent that long away from their children before. "Do you want to?" he asked.

Harry frowned thoughtfully. "I don't know," he said. "We haven't ever spent so long away from them, but it would be nice to have a week alone with you."

"If it's too much for Ron and Hermione, I am sure Mrs Weasley would be willing to help as well," Draco smiled, nuzzling Harry's face.

"Yeah, and the kids would like that," Harry agreed. "Should we do it?"

"Yes," Draco answered, blushing when he realised he wanted to take his husband to his ex-lover's wedding. And probably fuck him right after.

Harry quirked an eyebrow. "What's embarrassing about that?" he asked.

The question only made Draco shiver and his face redden more. "Given what we usually do at weddings"

Harry snorted. "Shall we fuck at this one then too?"

Draco nodded, still embarrassed to admit that was what he wanted.

Harry smiled down at him with affection. "We might have to keep it a bit quieter though," he said. "It won't be our family at this wedding."

Draco licked his lips, excitement showing in his grey eyes. "Yes," he agreed.

Harry chuckled at him. "I'm the luckiest man ever," he said. "I've made love to you every day for over five years and you still want me

this much."

"Always," Draco agreed, pulling his husband down for another long kiss.

– CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE –

Je t'aime

Harry held the door open for his husband, staring up at the – well, extremely fancy-looking restaurant. It looked like a place that might take your Galleons just for walking inside – which, he thought, was probably the case unless one enjoyed sitting next to the kitchen.

One of the things that Draco loved about Paris was shopping. Shopping for his husband who had no clue about style, but who looked fucking hot in good clothes. He grinned at him as he stepped inside, feeling more hungry for Harry than for anything that would be served at what was supposed to be the best restaurant in town. Harry smiled at the look Draco gave him. He'd been giving him that look all day long. It was really quite nice. Perhaps he would let Draco dress him more often, though he did feel like he could feed a small country with the money it had cost for his outfit.

When Harry stepped beside him, Draco's hand automatically went to rest at the small of his husband's back, resisting the urge to slide his hand lower. They had reservations and anywhere in the wizarding world, they were instantly recognisable. "Messieurs, par ici je vous prie," the Maître d'hôtel said, smiling as he led them to a table.

"Merlin," Harry said quietly to Draco as they were led to their table. "How much does this place cost?"

"We can afford it, so it doesn't matter," Draco whispered.

Harry sighed. Well, that meant it cost a fortune. It was certainly true that they could afford it, but Harry still felt a bit odd as if he were doing something wrong by spending so much money.

"Relax, love," Draco said as they took their seats. "It's a special occasion after all."

Harry smiled again; he knew Draco was right and that they both deserved this. "All right, all right," he said. "Very special occasion."

The waiter came up to them, bowing and speaking in French.

Draco smiled at his husband and answered the waiter.

Harry raised an eyebrow, sitting quietly and looking for a menu somewhere ... not that he would be able to read it.

The waiter's smile grew and he bowed, talking again, this time to Harry. Keeping his smile in place, Harry's eyes slid over to Draco for help when he didn't recognise any of the words.

"He is congratulating us on our anniversary," Draco translated.

"Ah," said Harry, looking once more at the waiter, his smile widening. "Er, thanks," he added, not sure if the man could understand English at all. The waiter nodded and left.

Draco reached across the table, resting his hand palm up and Harry grinned at him, placing his hand in Draco's. Draco squeezed his hand, smiling, his grey eyes shining with his love for Harry. "I love you now more than ever," he said softly.

Harry's own smile widened a bit. "Is that your way of telling me you love me more every day?" he said, bringing Draco's hand up and kissing it.

"I have loved you so much and for so long, I can't believe it is even possible, but yes – yes I do," Draco answered, shivering still at such a simple kiss to his hand.

Harry kissed his hand again. "I love you more than anything," he said truthfully.

The waiter returned carrying a silver bucket with a bottle of champagne. He popped the cork and filled their glasses for them. Draco smiled and lifted his. "To you, my husband, whom I have loved since that first moment I looked in your eyes and saw the spark that is you and only you."

Harry smiled once again. The expression had hardly left his face. "And to you, *my* husband, for kissing me in the bathroom and giving me ... my life." His heart seemed to swell as he said it, and warmth spread though his body. A lot of people might believe that Harry's life was halved by the time before Voldemort was destroyed and after, but Harry knew that, when it came to halves, the defining moment for him would be the moment Draco first kissed him.

Draco lost himself in his husband's love, remembering with him that first angry kiss in the bathroom. It had been a near suicidal move but it had turned out to be the smartest thing he had ever done. He

blushed when he glanced up and found the waiter waiting respectfully with their soup.

Harry looked up as well, sitting back a little for the soup to be placed in front of him. He grinned at Draco and wondered if he had ordered the soup for them.

Draco waited until the waiter had stepped away. "A place like this doesn't use a menu," he explained. "They have two options on each course, but there will be many courses through the evening. Each one is made by a chef with a lot of care and only the best ingredients."

Harry raised an eyebrow again. "I don't know if we've ever been to a place quite this nice," he said. He lifted a spoonful of soup to his lips and was surprised by how good it was. He wasn't overly fond of soup but this could change his mind.

The blond tasted his soup, his eyes never leaving Harry's. "Beside you is the nicest place," he whispered.

"I can't compete with you," Harry said in a slightly deeper voice, feeling even warmer.

"I think we are pretty well matched," Draco said. It was a running joke in that they still traded off at beating each other at Quidditch – competing against each other in games that usually led to great sex afterwards, sometimes before and after.

Harry chuckled. "*Very* well," he agreed, sipping his champagne.

When the soup was done, there were two smaller courses and each was more delicious than the last. As they ate, they talked about the things they had seen in Paris. They had, of course, attended Theo's wedding several days before and had used Harry's Invisibility Cloak to have sex in a side room during the reception. They were pretty sure that they hadn't been overheard but the guests weren't quite like Fred and George who made a point of embarrassing them every time. The wedding, though, had been beautiful although Harry had been taken aback when Narcissa stood in for Theo since he had no parents. She gracefully took her place in the receiving line next to the bride's parents, greeting and speaking with each of the guests. A glance at Draco told Harry that he was also surprised to see his mother in the wedding but there was a soft smile on his lips when he saw her with the bride and groom. For the traditional mother and groom dance, Narcissa and Theo glided elegantly together across the

floor and Harry saw where Draco inherited his own talent for dancing. The next few days had been spent sightseeing and shopping, and intimate moments. Now they were celebrating six years together.

Harry couldn't stop reaching across the table, touching Draco's hand and arm. He was sorely tempted to feed him ... with his fingers, but he thought that probably wouldn't be proper. "What are we doing after this?" he asked, working on the food in front of him that looked almost too much like a decoration to eat.

Despite the years married to Harry, Draco still flushed at the question and let the other man see the heat in his eyes as he did.

"Oh, that," said Harry smirking a bit and hoping he wouldn't get hard right there at the table.

Draco pitched his voice low, not hard to do given how aroused that look made him. "Literally, whatever you want, my love," he purred.

"I want you," Harry said, speaking soft and deeply in the quiet restaurant. His eyes were now serious and dark with emotion.

The main course finally arrived and, as much as Draco delighted in the meal, his smouldering desire had him shifting in his seat. He took another sip of champagne. "Anything in particular you have in mind?" he asked.

"Mmm," Harry hummed, lips curved with a slow smile. "I want to dance with you, but I don't think we'll last long if we go out somewhere."

"How about on the balcony of our hotel room?" Draco suggested, licking his lips. Because of their fame, he had arranged for a hotel room with magical shielding for privacy, even on the balcony.

"Sounds brilliant," said Harry, meeting Draco's eyes.

Draco swallowed hard, almost not tasting the expensive food. "Yes," he whispered. He drew himself back from the urge to leave then, turning the conversation back to the events of their trip. "What did you think of Theo's bride?" he asked.

Harry took a quick, deep breath. "Well, she seemed nice," he said. "Pretty. Did you like her?"

Draco tried to realistically appraise Antoinette Reveia-Nott. It wasn't easy given his relationship with Theo. "She is pretty and from a respectable pure-blood family," he said cautiously.

Harry frowned just slightly, nodding and wondering why Draco's voice sounded like it did.

"I wasn't able to speak to her enough to know much more than that about her. She was charming, but she is trained for that," Draco continued.

"Trained for it?" said Harry. "Sounds like an animal or something."

Draco huffed, sipping his champagne. "Felt that way sometimes," he admitted. "I have seen my mother do the same gestures and looks. Gracious and polite even to people she hated."

"Strange that Theo got married to her so quick," Harry said, wondering just how long the couple had known each other. "I didn't even know he had a serious girlfriend. Did he tell you?"

Draco frowned, shaking his head. "No, he didn't," he answered. "It could be that he met her and fell in love," he speculated, but didn't sound convinced.

Harry smiled. "Well, I know it's possible to fall in love quick," he pointed out.

"I know I did, even if it took me years to tell you," Draco grinned. "I know everyone can't be as in love as I am with you. I just want him to be happy. I think he deserves it, especially after his childhood."

Harry winced slightly. He didn't know anything about Theo Nott's childhood, but if it had been anything like Draco's, he knew it couldn't have been terribly great.

Draco was still frowning, swirling his champagne in the glass. "You know his father was a Death Eater. Did you know his mother died when he was young?"

"No, I didn't," Harry answered truthfully. It had never occurred to him that he might have anything in common with Theo such as losing a parent – or two.

Draco paused. "I know how she died because of my father," he admitted.

"How did she die?" Harry asked, watching his husband.

Draco's frown deepened and he had to take a deep breath before continuing. "Theo's father killed her," he said in a quiet voice. "She spoke against their master."

Harry's eyes widened in shock. "I -" he began but stopped as he tried to imagine how Theo must have felt. "That's ... horrible."

"He would never talk about it, but I am sure he knows. May have even witnessed it," Draco whispered.

Harry frowned and thought back for a moment. "He could see Thestrals," he said quietly. "Back in fifth year."

"Yes," Draco nodded. "Theo never wanted to be a Death Eater and was terrified of his father. That first year, some of the other boys teased him about nightmares."

Harry continued to frown. It did sound quite a lot like Draco to him. He didn't know if Draco had been teased for nightmares, but he did know that his husband had had them. He began to see the common ground that Draco and Theo had built their friendship on and why they seemed to understand each other so well.

Draco smiled a bit wryly then, looking up to meet Harry's eyes. "They quit teasing him after I made an example of a couple. I think that's how we became friends."

Harry smiled a little at that. He knew from experience that Draco protected those he cared about, much to the displeasure of those who dared to test him on that fact. He would always think of Draco's relationship with Theo with slight discomfort, but the "Love Potion incident" had been years ago, and Harry respected their friendship. Their bond was no less important than the one Harry shared with Ron or Hermione; different, perhaps, but no less important.

"I just hope that, unlike his mother, Theo married for love," Draco said. He smiled again then. "I suppose I have become a romantic fool about such things."

"I think we're both romantic fools," Harry said, reaching yet again for Draco's hand.

Dessert was a flaming concoction and quite tasty. But the fire just made Draco think about Harry. Well, at this point that's all he was thinking of anyway. He couldn't wait to return to their hotel.

Harry licked his fork clean quite suggestively when finished, smirking. "Are you ready to go, Mr Malfoy?" he asked.

"Very much so, Mr Potter," Draco replied, waggling his eyebrows. He left a small bag of Galleons with their payment on the table and escorted his husband to the receiving area the wizarding

restaurant had for Apparating.

Harry Apparated with Draco, not surprised with the *bag* of money it took to pay, but still hardly able to believe he could eat anywhere so expensive. He cleared his head of that though, and turned to Draco, taking him around the waist and grinning.

They had Apparated back to their suite and Draco led Harry out onto the balcony with its view of Paris at night, before pulling his husband close and kissing him again.

Harry kissed languidly back, hands moving down to grasp Draco's arse as they pressed against each other.

Draco hummed happily into Harry's mouth, fingers of his right hand sliding up to his neck and into his hair, cradling his husband's head. He tilted his head to deepen the kiss, tongue sliding with Harry's.

"I love kissing you," Harry whispered needlessly between said kisses. "Love all of you."

"Oh, yes," Draco agreed, kissing Harry's chin and cheeks now too, as his silver hand slid down his lover's back. "The kiss is worth the kiss and more."

Harry smiled at that reminder from so long ago. God, they really were both romantic fools. "Do we have any music?" he asked, still holding Draco's arse as he swayed their hips together.

Draco drew his wand and turned on the wireless in the room with a spell. Soft music seemed to float in the air. He arched an eyebrow at his lover and began to move his feet as well as his hips, dancing them slowly around the rather large balcony.

"I would've *never* liked this in school," Harry whispered in Draco's ear, moving with him and getting even more turned on. The way Draco's body moved was sinful and Harry loved it.

"Maybe if I had been your dance partner" Draco whispered back, licking the curve of Harry's ear.

"Moving like this might have made me seriously reconsider," Harry said, shivering from the wet tongue on his skin and then taking Draco's earlobe between his teeth.

Draco hissed and then moaned as he moved his knee between his lover's thighs, dancing much closer than McGonagall would ever have allowed.

Harry moaned as well. "I've never seen anyone as sexy as you are," he said breathlessly as his hard cock was pressed against Draco's leg which pressed and pushed against him in rhythm.

It delighted Draco that Harry found him so sexy. He nipped at Harry's ear, giving a small growl as he rotated his hips, rubbing his own arousal and Harry's as he did.

"Mmm, breathe your fire on me, my dragon," Harry said, laughing at his own incredibly cheesy line and imagining exactly what he really wanted Draco to put on him.

Draco chuckled, continuing to lick and bite down Harry's neck, using his hand in Harry's hair to pull his head to the side to give himself better access. He backed Harry up to the stone railing of the balcony.

"Fuck," Harry let out, grinding now more than he was dancing.

Draco chuckled again, vibrations sweeping against Harry's neck as he sucked. He reached his silver hand between them pulling loose Harry's tie even as rotated his hips against his husband's.

Harry licked his lips, looking down and watching Draco hungrily. It felt like Draco was actually breathing fire on him as hot as he was. "Yeah," he groaned. "I want you."

Draco pulled back enough to look into his lover's face. "Don't spell away the clothes this time," he warned him and then, with a wicked grin, he reached both hands to the front of that very expensive shirt and ripped it open, buttons flying as he did.

Harry's eyes widened and he gasped, his cock attempting to leap up within his trousers. He didn't care how much the damn shirt cost.

Immediately bending his head to capture one of Harry's now exposed nipples with his mouth, Draco nipped and sucked like a man starved.

Harry's chest heaved with his panting, fingers reaching and spreading through Draco's hair as they itched to strip his husband bare.

Draco was trembling with desire now but was not going to let his throbbing cock rush this too fast. He licked and nuzzled his way to the other nipple, loving the feel of the erect flesh against his tongue. He let his fingers slide down, pulling Harry's shirt tails out of his trousers and then caressing his sides and stomach before finally

reaching to unfasten his belt.

"Draco," Harry groaned, trying to rut against the man in front of him.

Draco released Harry's nipple and grinned up at him, arching an eyebrow and asking in a mock-innocent voice, "Yes, my love?"

"Oh, you are evil," Harry breathed. "Incredibly sexy, but evil. I want to *fuck*."

Draco laughed wickedly as he unfastened Harry's trousers. "No more foreplay?" he asked in false surprise.

Harry huffed and groaned at the same time. "Not when you're driving me completely crazy," he said, touching every part of Draco he could reach.

Draco was still fully clothed, his cock straining the tailored trousers and a wet spot spreading. He slid his husband's trousers and shorts down but left them pooling around his ankles, shoes still on. Harry's cock bobbed enticingly in front of him but Draco didn't touch it yet. "Turn and face out towards the city," he instructed.

Harry released a frustrated sigh when no attention came to his throbbing erection, but he did turn, knowing that despite how much he wanted Draco's cock, whatever his husband would do to him was bound to be very good.

Draco stripped Harry's suit coat off and tossed it and his own aside. "Grab the railing," he warned him.

Harry raised his eyebrows, taking the railing tightly in his hands as his heart sped up.

Draco pushed Harry's shirt up around his shoulders so that he was exposed from shoulder blades to calves and ran his hands lovingly down that golden flesh.

Shivering again with the feeling, Harry spread his legs as wide as he could while constricted by the trousers.

Draco was grateful for the weather control charm on the balcony that allowed them this despite it being October 31st. The sight of his husband spread wantonly half-dressed with Paris spread beyond him was truly delicious. He had every intention of fucking him like this but he also wanted to prolong the fun. He got to one knee behind Harry and nipped at the round flesh of his arse.

A slow, lazy smile spread across Harry's face. "Oh, this you can

do as much as you want," he said.

Draco laughed again, knowing how much this pleased Harry. Some of Harry's kinks were very consistent. Draco spread his lover's cheeks, nipping at the more sensitive skin inside.

Harry bent over more, reminded of that night on their own balcony back at home, when Draco had been invisible.

Draco kneaded his lover's arse with his fingers while he pressed his face between those cheeks, licking along the crevice, tongue fluttering over his hole.

Harry hissed through his teeth, eyes sliding half closed as he pressed back, trying to get more of that hot, wet tongue. "God, yes, feels so fucking hot, so *good*!"

The blond loved it when Harry babbled like that, rewarding him by using the tip of his tongue to tease his opening.

"Yes, Draco, please yes," Harry groaned, head lolling on his neck. "Want you to lick me, suck me." His hands gripped tighter, his toes beginning to curl.

Draco couldn't help but chuckle at that. He obliged by pressing his lips around his lover's puckered flesh and wriggling his tongue into him. Harry, though, didn't care if Draco full out laughed at him. He couldn't spare enough room in his brain to think about his words. He could only think about the warm, slick muscle that was apparently trying to melt him from the inside out.

Draco lost himself to that musky flavour and the shivering flesh that was his husband. He licked and sucked and thrust with his tongue, fingers digging in as he held him spread for his feast.

It didn't take very long at all before Harry was begging and pleading. He tried to look over his shoulder at Draco, his arse pressed very far out. "Please, Draco," he moaned pitifully in a way that might have made him blush if his cock weren't so hard. "Please!"

Harry begging was still one of the sexiest things in the world and Draco's own cock was aching hard. He gave another couple thrusts with his tongue and a nip at an arse-cheek with his teeth, then got to his feet and began fumbling with his own trouser buttons.

Harry reached blindly and impatiently behind himself, grasping Draco's trousers and sending them away with his magic. He needed Draco now.

Draco didn't complain that Harry had done what he told him not to. Instead, he stepped quickly forward, rubbing the swollen head of his cock between his lover's cheeks. "Slick yourself," he said in a voice hoarse with need.

Harry did so immediately, mixing lube with Draco's saliva still coating his entrance. "Fuck, yes, fuck me," he demanded, breathing heavily.

"As you wish," Draco agreed and pressed in hard and quick, trusting the urgency in his lover's voice and his knowledge of his body. He moaned loudly as he slid deep into Harry, fingers clutching his hips.

Harry cried out loudly, arse clenching around Draco's cock as he was jolted slightly forward, but the cry was followed by a long, low moan.

"Oh, yes," Draco hissed, trembling at the way Harry's body held and tightened around him, magic flaring in the contact.

"Yes," Harry echoed loudly, thrusting back against his husband.

Draco slid back and then thrust forward again, moaning and shivering at the feel. "Oh, I love fucking you," he gasped. "You are so beautiful and you feel so amazing."

It was Harry's turn to chuckle, though he did so breathlessly and with many moans in between. "God, *yes*," he agreed.

Draco had no more breath to speak now as he began to pump his hips, fucking Harry in long deep strokes.

Harry groaned and sighed and moaned with each slide, arching his back as tremors of pleasure shot up his spine.

Draco was sweating now as he drove himself again and again into his husband, the man's sounds were beautiful and the slap of their skin erotic. He felt his own body pulse with pleasure on each thrust. He slid his silver hand around Harry's waist so he could hold on to him still as he thrust and then used his now freed right hand to slide down and grasp Harry's cock, moaning at the way it was already slick and dripping.

Harry let his head fall forward as his mouth dropped open in another long moan that sounded ragged with breathlessness. He clenched his muscles, moving his arse with Draco's hips until he couldn't hold back anymore. "Draco! Fuck!" he shouted as he came,

going slightly still as he spilled and spurted over Draco's hand, his body taut with the effort.

Draco had been on the edge and expecting this when he touched Harry. Even so, the feel of his lover's come on his hand, his arse clenching around his cock and the magic that flared still brought a shout from him as he arched and spasmed, pumping his seed into Harry.

"Mmm, yes, want you inside," Harry breathed, moving his arse again through Draco's orgasm.

Draco felt Harry's body and magic milk every ounce of seed and pleasure from him until he was sighing and trembling to hold himself upright still.

Harry grinned, still panting slightly as he shakily lifted himself up some. He thought his face might look dazed as he tried to catch his breath.

Draco still clung to Harry, wondering if his legs would give way at any moment. He was pressed against Harry's back and kissed the damp skin of the man's back. "Oh, Gods, I love you," he gasped.

Harry sighed happily. "Always," he whispered.

"Take me to bed?" Draco implored, feeling his knees tremble now.

Harry looked over his shoulder, pulling gently away and then turning to put an arm around Draco's waist, his free hand splayed flat across his chest.

Draco shivered and bent to capture Harry's lips with his own, clutching Harry both to keep standing and because he couldn't bear to be apart yet.

Harry kissed gently back, feeling lightheaded with emotion. "Happy anniversary, love," he whispered against Draco's lips, half because he thought it was possible for his voice to crack otherwise.

"Happy anniversary, my lion – my husband," Draco agreed, kissing him again.

Harry sighed happily, taking Draco's hands. "Let's go," he whispered.

Draco allowed himself to be led inside to the bed and gratefully collapsed back into the down bedding. Harry smiled and landed next to Draco, turning to face him.

The blond wrapped his arms around his lover and smiled sleepily. "Bloody brilliant week," he whispered.

Harry moved closer and gently rubbed his and Draco's noses together. "Fantastic," he agreed. "Quiet."

Draco smirked, his husband's obsession with his nose always amused him. "We have reservations through Monday," he said, hesitating.

Harry frowned just very slightly. "It's Friday," he said.

Draco lifted a hand to caress his husband's hair from his face. "I miss them," he whispered.

Harry sighed, smiling again. "So do I," he whispered back.

Draco grinned. "We could go home in the morning if we wanted," he suggested.

"We could," Harry agreed with a nod, grinning as well. "Back to our lovely house where we're woken with screams, splattered with mashed potatoes, and begged for countless bedtime stories?" He snorted; he really did miss all of that.

"I think we are crazy, but yes," Draco agreed. "This week has been wonderful. Yet, I miss our family."

"I do miss them very much," Harry said. "You think they miss us?"

Draco smirked. "I think it's Mr and Mrs Weasley we should be worried about."

Harry chuckled. "They probably miss us *very* much," he said.

"So we make love in the morning and then get a Portkey home?" Draco suggested.

Harry chuckled again. "Sounds like a plan," he said, laying a kiss on Draco's lips.

– CHAPTER THIRTY –

Formidable Children

The main dining room in the Malfoy Manor was full of big balloons and streamers that clashed with the regular decor. Valen and April had been allowed to decorate for their little brother and cousin's birthday party, which meant that it all looked quite colourful and extravagant.

The entire Weasley family was there, as well as Neville and Luna with their new baby, Frank Xenophilus Longbottom, and Theo and his new wife.

It was chaos at the moment. The children able to walk were running around the table, and those able to crawl were scooting all over the place. *All* of them were loud.

Draco stood in the background for the moment, arms crossed against his chest and leaning against the door frame. He loved watching the chaos. Particularly, he enjoyed watching Harry in the middle of it.

"Not how I pictured you," Theo said beside him.

"I always wanted children," Draco replied.

"So many?" Theo asked, raising both eyebrows. "Isn't that something you used to taunt the Weasleys about?"

"It was," Draco answered, still smiling.

Harry bent to pick up Sev, feeling that he was in danger of being trodden on by Valen, April, and Chris.

Ron retrieved Emily, looking flustered with all of the children. "Merlin," he said. "It's like they're getting louder."

"They are," said Harry, half amused. He glanced at Draco, grinning and shaking his head.

Draco's grey eyes sparkled with amusement as he met his husband's. "Time for games?" he suggested.

"Games!" Chris shouted, stopping dead in his tracks. April ran into him and then glared, blue eyes flashing. Her small fists settled on

her hips as she circled around to confront her cousin. Draco stepped forward and scooped up his daughter before she could retaliate. "Yes, games," he assured the children.

April sniffed haughtily and nodded at Draco in a regal fashion.

Harry snorted quietly. "C'mon then," he said, gesturing for Valen and Chris to come forward.

Harry placed Sev in his highchair as Ron brought in the very large cake Mrs Weasley had baked for the party. Harry was still panting slightly, having just come back into the dining room from the games, which he had been begged to participate in. Merlin.

"It's a beautiful cake," said Julie, Percy's wife as she combed her son Edwin's hair back and to the side with her fingers, even though it was already perfectly in place. Harry always felt an urge to ruffle the kid's hair. Fred and George did so often, much to Percy's annoyance.

"Thank you," Mrs Weasley said happily, taking a seat at the table where she could easily see both Sev and Emily.

"Yes, lovely," said Fred, rubbing his hands together. "Let's eat it."

"I want a blue plate!" Chris shouted, either not seeing his mother's warning glance or ignoring it.

All the plates at the table were white china with silver trim, spelled not to break even when dropped by small children. Draco frowned in confusion at the demand.

Valen arched an eyebrow. "Me too," he added.

"And me," said April, climbing up in a chair.

Chris chose a seat a few places down from her, folding his arms on the table.

"Er ... well," said Harry, turning and glancing at Draco with a small shrug. "I guess I could Transfigure a few."

Draco shook his head. His husband was such a push-over. "Why not?" he sighed. Birthdays were a special day in the Malfoy household and if blue plates made the children happy then they would have them.

Valen sat next to Chris, of course. The two boys were near inseparable. What one did, the other did, good or bad.

Across the table, Antoinette said something in French to Theo. "Les garçons sont mignons."

Valen looked up with a smile and replied. "Merci, Madame. Êtes ainsi vous."

Fleur let out a small laugh and Chris smirked at Valen, arching an eyebrow. Valen grinned back at Chris and leant over to bump him with a shoulder.

"What did they say?" Harry asked Draco quietly.

Draco snorted, amused by his son. The child was a natural flirt. "Transfigure the plates, love," Draco said, stepping beside Harry and then leaning in to whisper in Harry's ear. "She said the boys were cute and Valen said she was cute."

Harry chuckled, meeting Antoinette's laughing eyes and shaking his head. If Valen was flirting at such a young age, Harry couldn't imagine what his son would be like when he was a teenager. It was rather frightening to contemplate. He reached for the plates, turning three of them blue and handing them to the children.

Chris looked at April's plate and then at Valen, raising his eyebrows. Valen shrugged and rolled his eyes, taking the plate.

Remus laughed and shook his head, leaning in to whisper in Sirius' ear. Sirius smiled and laughed quietly, watching the kids. The two men sat comfortably, shoulders lightly brushing against each other while they enjoyed watching Harry in his attempts to do many things at once.

There were two small separate cakes that Mrs Weasley had made for Emily and Sev, both topped with single flickering candles. "Everyone ready to sing?" Harry asked, dimming the rest of the lights in the room with his hands.

"Hear, hear!" yelled the twins in unison, grinning.

Draco looked around the large table full of family and friends, grinning as they sang Happy Birthday to the infants. Sev's eyes were wide with wonder. When the song was finished, both candles continued to flicker as the babies stared at them.

Harry chuckled, blowing out Sev's while Hermione blew out Emily's.

As everyone clapped, April got back out of her chair, taking her plate with her as she took a seat next to Valen instead. Valen and Chris huddled together, leaning their heads close to whisper as they ate their cake.

Draco gestured for Harry to sit, handing him a plate of cake as well. Once all their guests had been served, he sat down with his husband.

Severus seemed to contemplate the cake seriously for a minute and then shoved his hand directly into the frosting. His chubby hand squeezed and he stared in fascination at the colourful mess that oozed out between his fingers.

"Yeah, get it, Sev," said Harry amusedly, taking a bite of his own cake.

Emily dipped a little finger in the frosting, looking at Sev before tasting it.

"Well, she certainly doesn't take after you in this respect," said Mrs Weasley to Ron, smiling. "You were *covered* in cake at your birthday."

"What can I say?" snorted Ron, not noticing the frosting above his lip. "I love cake."

"Harry's face was in the cake," said Sirius, laughing. Remus nodded at the memory that made him smile.

Given the way Harry dived into everything physical, Draco had no doubt about that. It made him flush, because ever since their wedding, cake always turned Draco on. Harry smirked slyly at Draco, knowing exactly what he was thinking of, which didn't go unnoticed by Fred and George.

"You know," said George, "I wouldn't be surprised if you two had *something* ..." he used air quotations, "associated with every word in the English language."

"And some in French," added Fred.

Draco's face flushed deeper and he rolled his eyes. He looked to his husband, catching his eye as he licked frosting off his own lips.

Harry blushed heavily then too, feeling a quick flash of heat in his belly. He tried to ignore it. They couldn't *leave* Sev's birthday party and all their guests – not that anyone would probably be very shocked.

"Why do you both still insist on acting as if you're thirteen?" Mrs Weasley huffed at Fred and George.

They laughed.

Draco reigned in his arousal by promising himself to make it up

later. He made a mental note to save a piece of cake as well.

Sev was now thoroughly covered in cake and frosting, it made his hair stick up even worse than usual.

"What sort of flour did you use in this cake?" Luna asked Mrs Weasley in her dreamy voice, rocking Frank gently, whose eyes were as wide open as his mother's.

"Well, just plain old flour, dear," Mrs Weasley laughed.

"Cimphs lay eggs in some kinds," Luna explained. "If digested, it can be just terrible for the skin."

Mrs Weasley looked confused, as did almost everyone else. Harry figured that everyone there – like himself – had no idea what a Cimph was.

Valen arched an eyebrow and looked towards Draco. In respect for his friend, Draco did not roll his eyes but gave a tiny shake of his head to assure his child not to worry. Valen did look relieved and leant in to whisper in Chris' ear.

Antoinette looked more confused than anyone at the table. Theo touched the back of her hand gently and gave a small shake of his head that brought a soft smile to his wife's face and the same look of relief that Valen wore.

Draco got up from the table. "Well, now that we've had a nice treat, why don't we return to the ballroom so the kids can play."

"Sounds great," said Sirius, clapping his hands together and getting to his feet. Everyone else agreed and rose from the table to make their way back to the ballroom. April was careful to keep up as Chris and Valen stood too.

Tables and chairs were set to one side so the adults could sit and talk while the kids ran about the large hall. Mr Weasley sat on the floor with Sev in his lap, tapping out a rhythm on the floor with his hands while Sev's wide eyes followed the movements carefully before he slapped his own chubby hands down trying to mimic the different beats. In another corner, Theo was looking at the cover of a book that Hermione had handed him and the two appeared to be discussing it. Draco found himself caught up in a conversation in French with Theo's new wife and Fleur.

Valen took Chris' hand and pulled the other boy to the side, whispering again. Harry watched Valen and Chris out of the corner

of his eye, and he noticed that Bill was too.

April stood close to them with her hands on her hips, obviously annoyed at not being included in the whispering. Valen led Chris by the hand to the other end of the room, furthest from the adults. April's face scrunched up in anger, her posture straight and stiff. She turned on the spot and stomped over to the first parent she set eyes on, which happened to be Harry. He sighed.

"They are doing that on purpose, Daddy," she said, looking like she wanted to stomp her foot with the words. Harry was surprised when she didn't.

"What are they doing, love?" Harry asked, kneeling down to April's eye level.

"They won't let me play with them."

Draco sighed as he looked over at his daughter. She was only a year younger than Valen and months behind Chris, but the two boys had become so close that they often seemed to have no room for her. This was made more difficult by the fact that all their friends' other children were a couple years behind April. Draco didn't know how to help his daughter with the problem.

Harry didn't know what to do either. He picked April up and sat her in his lap. "Well, they don't look like they're being much fun anyway," he tried.

April only frowned some more. "Can't you make them?" she said.

"But that will only cause a row," Harry explained.

Draco excused himself from Antoinette and Fleur, moving over to crouch in front of his husband and child. He smiled over to where Sev seemed to be content being passed around among the other adults. "April, darling girl," he soothed. "You can't make someone want to be with you." He glanced at his husband, a pang of remembered rejection at that moment. "Getting cross with them will only make them withdraw more."

April still frowned. "But it's not fair," she said, looking at Draco now as her eyes began to brim with tears.

Harry's heart clenched and he hugged April to his chest. "Daddy Draco's right, love," he said.

"Your brother and Christophe love you. They just need their time to be boys together," Draco said. "When Emily gets older, I am sure

you and she will have secrets you won't want to share with the boys."

A few tears spilled over, but April perked up at that. "And I won't have to t-tell them?" she said.

"No, you won't," Draco assured her and glanced over towards Hermione who now sat not far from them, hoping she would back them up on that.

Hermione smiled at Draco and moved closer to them. "That's right," she said to April. "You and Emily will talk about all *sorts* of things."

April wiped at her face, glancing over in the direction of Valen and Chris, but then nodding firmly, so that her whole body moved with it.

Hermione smiled softly, petting April's black hair back from her still-wet face.

Draco stood up and kissed April's forehead, then smirking, kissed Harry's forehead as well. Harry smiled up at him, kissing Draco's lips quickly before he could stand all the way.

Meanwhile, the boys were playing a kind of game of tag using their toy brooms.

"Aye, Harry," Oliver Wood called out, when Valen pulled a familiar move of sliding nearly up off his broom to catch Christophe. "Future Seeker there?"

Harry grinned widely. "I'd say that's highly possible," he said proudly, watching his son show off all that he was learning during the special flying lessons that father and son shared every week.

"Sure is," said Ginny, grinning as well. "That kid is a natural born flier."

Draco laughed and shook his head. Their eldest son was as crafty as any Slytherin and as reckless on a broom as his Gryffindor father. "I suppose he can't help it," he quipped, smirking at Harry.

"Well, there had to be *something* the kid got of mine," Harry teased, returning the smirk.

"Like sneaking around behind the backs of his elders and breaking the rules?" Draco challenged, smirk threatening to turn into a grin.

"Oh, because you did *none* of that," Harry said sarcastically, pecking Draco's lips. They smiled at each other when they heard

Theo laugh in the background at Harry's reply.

"I think, in that, as in many things, my love, you exceeded me," Draco drawled.

Harry shrugged, feigning smugness. "Well, can't argue with that," he said, but rolled his eyes, giving Draco a wry smile. "I believe we make a formidable child."

"I *know*," said Ron, raising his eyebrows.

Everyone laughed with them then. Draco smiled. "Beautiful amazing children," he answered and then kissed his husband again.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE –

Weasley Twins

Summers bled into autumns like sand trickling to the bottom of an hourglass. It was one of those warm summer evenings at the beginning of August that found Ron and Hermione asleep in their bed, completely oblivious to the gathering of family in their adjacent sitting room speaking in hushed voices. On the first day of August, Hermione had given birth to beautiful twins; a boy and a girl they named Eric and Gwen. After two days at St Mungo's to ensure that the twins were healthy, Ron and Hermione brought them home and promptly passed out in bed together. The births had been draining on Hermione because she had carried the twins full term and was exhausted by the time they arrived. The births had been draining on Ron because – well, it was Ron.

And now, as the summer sun threw a blazing splash of reds and oranges across the sky, everyone relaxed together to quietly greet the newest members of the family. Molly and Arthur sat in the two rocking chairs, each of them holding a sleeping baby. Mrs Granger had been there earlier but was now resting in one of the guest suites. Julie kept Edwin at home since he had a slight cold while Percy, Fleur, Bill and Ginny were downstairs with the children. Now that Valen was seven, April and Chris were six, and Severus and Emily were nearly three, they were easier to take care of.

George and Fred were uncharacteristically quiet as they watched their parents with the babies, seeing the wistful looks on lined faces as Molly and Arthur recalled another time they sat with a baby in the arms of each parent. Harry sat on the couch, leaning into Draco and smiling at the sound of Ron's soft snores drifting into the sitting room.

"Percy was really too young to understand," Molly said, looking down at Eric. "And Bill had already been through it twice but Charlie was the one that seemed to have the hardest time when Fred and

George were born. He asked us why we were holding garden gnomes and what we planned to do with them."

Arthur laughed and gently brought Gwen up to his shoulder so he could rub her back. "You should have seen Molly's face! She was feeling a bit weepy already and when Charlie saw her reaction he ran to his room and slid under the bed. Since he refused to come out –"

" – Arthur crawled under the bed with him and convinced him that being a big brother to Fred and George was brilliant," Molly concluded, smiling over at her own twins who were grown men now.

Harry smiled at Molly but he had tensed up at the mention of Charlie who should have been there to welcome his niece and nephew into the family. It didn't matter how many years went by; he couldn't let go of the feeling that if he had been able to destroy Voldemort sooner then Charlie wouldn't have been killed and would be with them now, perhaps with a family of his own. And Mrs Granger wouldn't be sleeping in the guest suite alone. Harry shifted uncomfortably against Draco and tried to push Charlie's broad smile out of his mind.

Draco would have known even without the shifting what was bothering Harry. Arm around Harry, he gave his husband's shoulder a light squeeze and kissed the side of his head. "I can't imagine anyone knew the trouble you two would get into," Draco said, grinning.

Fred and George both gave comically mock innocent expressions. "Who?" asked one, "Us?" the other answered.

Arthur shook his head and smiled at his sons. "If I had a Galleon for every time you two said that we would be sitting in Weasley Manor right now."

Harry grinned and relaxed once more against his husband. The kiss had helped as well as the shift in focus.

"Malfoy Manor is perfectly lovely," Molly said in a soft but firm tone, "but I much prefer the Burrow, Arthur."

Arthur reached out with his free hand and patted Molly lightly on her arm before carefully rubbing Eric's little bald head. He smiled at Molly and said, "Good thing, too, since we happen to live there."

"I remember the first time I saw the Burrow," Harry recalled with a smile before going on, "I thought it was the best house ever and I

wanted to move in with you, even if two of your kids did look like garden gnomes."

Draco rolled his eyes, thinking that calling Fred and George garden gnomes sounded like the type of thing he would have said before he'd got with Harry. He didn't have to guess what his ancestors would think of the Weasleys or Muggleborn Hermione living in the Manor. Draco had had to lock the portraits of previous Malfoys in the basement or risk outbursts like Mrs Black at Grimmauld Place.

As Fred and George both opened their mouths to respond, Arthur cut in. "We would have liked nothing better, Harry."

Molly nodded in agreement. "There's always room for more at the Burrow, Harry, and we cared about you from the beginning."

Arthur glanced over at Fred and George before turning back to Harry and Draco. "If you only knew how many nights these two put their heads together with Ron and came up with all sorts of plans to sneak you out of your home and hide you in ours. It was scary enough to see those three plan anything together but –"

"– what was even more frightening was when Arthur would sit down on the floor and brainstorm with them," Molly laughed, her warm eyes resting on her husband's sheepish smile.

"I know," Harry admitted. "Ron told me about some of the plans and I'm not sure if I'm lucky or unlucky that they never worked out."

"I know Molly was relieved every summer when you were finally able to come to us," Arthur said, his eyes serious. "We all were."

Draco frowned, the reminder of the Dursleys and what they had done to Harry always angering him. He couldn't really regret Vernon Dursley's death.

Harry was the one this time to notice a slight change in Draco's body, nestled behind his own. He twisted around to kiss Draco's cheek while one hand ran up and down Draco's thigh. He knew how difficult it was for Draco to hear about Harry's years with the Dursleys; probably just as hard as it was for Harry to think about Draco's childhood with Lucius. He wasn't sure, though, if Draco truly understood that the reasons Harry knew family life could be better were sitting all around them and snoring in the other room.

"Merlin," George laughed, looking at Fred. "I wish I could see

the look on McGonagall's face when she finds out she has another set of Weasley twins heading for Hogwarts."

Fred laughed along with his brother. Arthur laughed too until Molly gave him a look and he turned the laugh into a small cough, which made Fred and George laugh more.

"I'm sure Eric and Gwen will be perfect little angels at Hogwarts," Molly sniffed.

"Mum," Fred said in a tone of disbelief. "Ron is their father, George and I are their uncles and they live in the same home as Harry and Draco. Those two don't stand a chance!"

"Hush, Fred," Molly replied, now giving Fred a look. She smiled down at Eric and Gwen while rocking back and forth in her chair. "Ron and Hermione need their rest."

Harry smiled as he recalled the look of panic on Ron's face when Hermione's contractions had started. It was as if he hadn't already been through this once when Emily was born. Ron said he thought it would be funny if the twins arrived on Harry's birthday but Harry was relieved, for the sake of Eric and Gwen, that they waited an extra day. He knew that all of the children would have to deal with their connections to Harry Potter when they left home and went to Hogwarts. Sharing a birthday with the wizard who destroyed Voldemort wouldn't make it any easier. Valen would be the child paving the way for the others and Harry hoped that his oldest son would be able to deal with the inevitable comparisons to his fathers. Harry's thoughts were interrupted when Draco nuzzled his neck and Harry smiled. Draco always seemed to know when he was getting too lost in his own thoughts.

"Boys," Arthur said in a soft voice, looking at Fred and George. "Come over here and take the babies for a few minutes."

"Who?" Fred asked, his eyes comically wide.

"Us?" George chimed in, looking just as shocked.

Molly nodded. "Everyone else has held the twins and welcomed them. It's your turn."

Molly and Arthur carefully stood up and waited until Fred and George sat down in the rocking chairs before placing a bundle in each pair of waiting arms. Harry grinned to see the nervous looks on Fred and George's faces. It was funny because they never had a

problem with any of the babies after a few weeks of having them around but newborns seemed to scare them.

Arthur smiled at his sons. "You're both doing fine, boys. You'll be good fathers someday."

Fred laughed. "Now those will be the grandchildren you need to worry about."

George and Draco both snorted in agreement at the same time.

Arthur put his arm around Molly and shook his head at Fred. "If you and George have children that are nearly as bright and resourceful as their fathers then I don't think I have anything to worry about at all. Your mum and I are proud of you two."

George and Fred both had identical flushes creeping over their cheeks at the unexpected praise from their father. Both young men rocked back and forth in the chairs, gingerly holding their niece and nephew who continued to sleep.

Harry then teased, "If you two have children even half as much like you then it's all of our kids we need to worry about, not yours."

Both men grinned up at Harry. Fred lifted an eyebrow and asked, "What? All we do is bring a little colour and entertainment to everyone's otherwise boring lives. Eric and Gwen, here, are going to do the same with George and I guiding the way."

Molly huffed. "You two leave those babies alone."

"Sorry, Mum," George said with a mock look of seriousness. "No can do. Once the nappies are history it's our duty to make sure these two behave in a manner befitting a Weasley twin. It's the only right thing to do."

Fred nodded. "We have big plans for these two."

Eric suddenly gave a tiny whimper while Gwen's little nose scrunched up in her sleep. Fred and George smiled down at each baby that they held and, like the mirror images they were, lightly stroked the cheeks of each baby to soothe them. Harry knew Arthur was right and that they would be good fathers someday; they had been raised with a very good father of their own. Molly and Arthur leant into each other, her arm around his waist while his arm was wrapped around her shoulder and they watched Fred and George with affection.

At that moment the snoring stopped as Ron mumbled in a loud

voice, "Run, Harry ... 'Mione's 'bout to burst"

The snoring resumed as everyone in the sitting room broke out into quiet laughter.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO –

Books or Sunshine

Draco was sitting in his favourite chair in the family's primary sitting room. He leant back, trying to focus on the latest report of *Galleons and the World Gold Market*. Master Prentice, the children's tutor, had taken a few days off to visit his ailing aunt, so the two older children were in the room with Draco, trying to read their assignments left by the tutor. 'Trying' was definitely the word for it, Draco thought. Valen and April had spent more time sighing and fidgeting than actually reading.

Valen was the master of The Big Sigh and Draco thought if the child did it again, he would throw his own book at him. *There it goes*, he thought when he heard another large inhalation and then the long drawn out sigh. April seemed to provide counter-point with a short huff in response.

"Daddy?" April asked in her sweetest little voice, passing small fingers through the particles of dust in the air that the sunlight pouring through the windows made visible.

Draco couldn't help the sigh in response to that himself, lowering the journal and arching an eyebrow at his daughter. "Yes?" he asked in an annoyed sounding voice.

April pursed her lips at that tone, simply staring for a moment, then she seemed to decide to brave it. "It's very nice outside today."

"I am sure it is," Draco replied. "So read your book and then you will be able to go out to enjoy it."

Valen frowned, watching his sister's attempt with interest.

April huffed again. "But this is boooorrring," she whined, abandoning sweetness.

"Unfortunately, lots of things that are important can be boring," Draco replied, trying to sound calm and rational despite his growing irritation with his children at that moment. What he was reading was certainly boring too.

April scowled and crossed her arms, glaring down at her book. "It's stupid," she muttered, voice barely heard.

Harry chose that moment to walk into the room with Sev. "How's it going in here?" he asked, while Severus moved closer to his brother and sister to see what they were doing.

"Stupid?" Draco sneered at his daughter. "No, stupid is what happens when you don't read, don't learn."

April only pouted and glared at Draco instead.

Harry lifted his eyebrows. "Not well, I take it?"

Valen gave another of those long sighs and shook his head, glancing meaningfully at Draco and then pleadingly up at Harry. Furrowing his eyebrows in concern, Harry looked down at Valen and then at April who was still glaring at Draco and had a stubborn set in her eyes. Valen had turned eight years old two weeks earlier and April's birthday was around the corner; Harry knew the children were probably still having a hard time settling down between the two celebrations.

"If they spent half the time they spend whining and sighing on actually reading, they would be done already," Draco complained, rubbing his forehead in exasperation.

"But we've been in here all day," April protested. "And yesterday, too. We'll never be finished for the rest of forever!" she added rather dramatically.

"I said you could go out to play when you finished your assignment," Draco insisted, voice getting a bit shrill now as his head began to pound. With trying to monitor the children's studies while they procrastinated, Draco saw his own work falling further and further behind. April's pitiful declarations weren't helping.

Valen looked between April and Draco, clearly weighing whether or not to add to this or just wait and see what happened. He looked up at Harry with big green eyes and sighed dramatically.

"That's it!" Draco snapped. "Enough with the bloody sighing!"

April looked quickly down at the table while Valen's startled eyes snapped over to Draco. Sev looked up at Draco from where he was pulling a book out of the bookcase in an attempt to copy his siblings and 'study' with them. Harry frowned, a crease between his eyebrows.

"I know it's nice out and I know none of us want to sit here and

read!" Draco started ranting. "Do you think I want to read this?" he said, shaking the report in his hand. "But sometimes we have to do things we don't want to do. Read your books, then we can go outside. And for Merlin's sake, quit whining at me!"

Harry knew the children could be a bother. He certainly knew it beyond a shadow of a doubt. Sometimes they didn't mind, sometimes they did bad things on purpose, sometimes they went directly against what their parents told them simply because they thought they knew best. But that was just it – they were kids. And they did work on their studies an awful lot in Harry's opinion. However, he didn't want to call Draco out on anything with their kids in the room. He cleared his throat to try and get his husband's attention.

Valen's eyes grew wider and he watched Draco curiously, a questioning look on his face. "Father, if you are grown up and powerful and a hero and all, why do you have to read that paper? Why is it more important than going outside?"

Draco was on the verge of yelling again when his husband gave him that look and his son started talking, but then he found himself stopped, frowning, and he tried to come up with an answer that was better than *just because that's the way it is*.

"You two just keep reading for a bit," Harry told April and Valen, then nodded to the door to get Draco to come with him. "Come on, Sev," he said, patting his leg to get the little boy to join him as well.

Draco stared at his eldest son for a moment and then frowned, looking up at his husband. He clenched his teeth and got to his feet. He had lost his temper and he knew Harry was not happy with him. He gave a huff of his own as he followed his husband.

Sev ran over as fast as his little legs could carry him and through the door with Harry and Draco. In the hall, Harry turned to Draco. "You know I get just as aggravated with them as you do," he said, lifting Sev when the little boy made a running jump.

Draco frowned, crossing his arms. "And you would just give in, wouldn't you?"

Harry rolled his eyes. "It's not that," he countered. "They *do* work all the time. They work a lot for still being so little."

"I studied for longer hours at their age," Draco snapped.

Harry frowned again and looked away. "Exactly," he said quietly.

Harry was almost glad that the tutor was gone, forcing this issue out in the open. He had been trying to find a way to bring it up with Draco but didn't want his husband to feel as if his goals for the children were being attacked. The look on Draco's face told Harry that that was exactly what was now happening.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Draco growled.

Harry sighed. "Did you have fun doing all that work you were made to do?" he asked. "Or did you want to go outside and play? Some of your childhood memories are not exactly the fondest."

"It wasn't about fun, it was about being ready to" Draco trailed off when he realised he sounded exactly like his own father.

Harry pursed his lips, giving Draco a bit of a wince.

Draco looked away, feeling angry that Harry knew it too. He just wanted the best for his children. What was wrong with that?

Harry hooked a finger in Draco's belt loop and pulled him closer. "We don't need prodigies and geniuses, just happy kids."

"Happy kids ..." Draco whispered, and looked in surprise at Harry. "Maybe our children need happy parents?" he asked, wondering about his son's question. Was he pushing himself too hard too? He had been working longer and longer hours lately. It wasn't about the money but about the need to prove himself and give the Malfoy name the respect that his father had managed to destroy. Draco wanted his children to be proud of who they were and to move confidently throughout the wizarding world.

"You've been stressed, love," Harry acknowledged, kissing Draco's cheek. "And I can't have you turning prematurely grey," he teased, waiting for his husband's reaction with a smile.

Draco snorted at the idea of his white hair turning grey. Malfoys didn't have that problem. But he smiled softly at his husband and the boy in Harry's arms. "Maybe some fresh air would be a good idea," he acknowledged.

"Yes," Harry agreed. "It would. We could let them fly their kites or something. It's a bit windy out."

Just the image of leaving studies and work to fly kites instead made Draco smile. It was almost unthinkable in his childhood.

Harry smiled at Draco's smile and kissed his cheek again. "Want to fly a kite, Sev?" he asked.

"Wanna fly, Daddy!" Sev shouted in response, wriggling in Harry's arms.

"He's definitely ours," Draco teased, kissing the boy on the head before leaning in to kiss his husband's lips.

Harry snorted and nodded, kissing Draco back.

Harry flopped down on the grass and laughed at Severus' attempts to catch the kite that was flying high in the air. He wiped a bit of sweat from his forehead. Spring had barely arrived and the breeze carried a bit of chill with it but after racing back and forth across the grass for nearly an hour with the kite, Harry was out of breath and ready for a break.

Valen and April each held the strings of their own kites while Draco held the kite for Sev, all three of them standing in the clearing while Harry rested under the shade of one of the oak trees. He was happy that Draco had agreed to fly kites with the children although he knew that the subject of the childrens' studies wasn't over. They both wanted their children to have every educational advantage but studies had never been as important in school to Harry as they had been to Draco and he wondered if they would ever see eye to eye on just how much was too much.

"Harry"

Harry turned and saw Hermione stumbling towards him, her movements jerky and her face pale. He stood up quickly and met her halfway.

"What's happened?" Harry asked right away, glancing over her shoulder for a brief second. "Where are Ron and the children?"

"The children are still napping," Hermione choked out. Her hands reached out and Harry grabbed both of them, pulling her closer. Tears had begun to spill over onto her cheeks and Harry began to feel afraid of what she was going to say. He saw Draco looking over at them with a questioning expression and Harry shook his head slightly knowing that his husband would understand that he didn't want the children to come closer. Draco gave a slight nod and backed away a few more feet with Severus running after him.

Harry's heart was pounding now as Hermione fell against him, quiet sobs shaking her body and all he could do was hold her. He

didn't know what had happened but Ron's absence sent a cold chill through his own body. He tried desperately to recall what Ron's plans had been for the day. Unable to wait any longer, Harry pulled away from Hermione and lifted her chin with his hand. He had only seen her like this one other time; the night of the massacre that killed her father but if something had happened to her mother he knew that Ron would be with her.

"Hermione," Harry said in a low, calm tone. "Take a deep breath now and look at me. Look at my face and breathe in with me."

Anguished eyes met Harry's and he watched as she pulled in gulps of air between trembling lips. The tears wouldn't stop falling but he could see her calming down just a little. Harry's heart clenched at the raw pain on her face but he needed to know what happened.

The voice that met his ears was broken and Harry felt his own composure slipping when Hermione gripped his hand painfully and whispered, "It's Arthur."

– CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE –

Irreparable

Harry stumbled dazedly out of the fireplace at the Burrow and into Draco's waiting arms. They had both wanted to come right away but neither of them wanted the children to be scared by seeing all of the adults that they depend upon simply ... falling apart. Harry and Draco also wanted to be able to sit down with their children and explain what had happened to the only real grandfather they had known. After Hermione had cried in Harry's arms, she explained that she only knew what Bill had told Ron; Arthur had passed away at home. Ron had gone immediately to the Burrow and Hermione followed after Harry and Draco promised her they would contact friends to come to the Manor and stay with all of the children.

The Malfoy children and the Weasley children were left in the safe hands of Neville and Luna as well as Tonks and her husband Donaghan. Each couple brought their own children with them and assured Harry and Draco that everything would be fine and not to worry. Harry *wanted* to worry, though. He wanted to feel anything else other than the numbing grief that threatened to swallow him. It had been hard when Charlie had been killed and Harry had shed tears at watching the family he loved fall apart, but Arthur was different. He was the closest thing Harry had ever had to a normal father and he had also been a good friend.

Glancing around the kitchen, Harry's heart ached when he saw Hermione and Ron in the corner, Hermione's arms wrapped around her husband as Ron's lanky body was bent down awkwardly and he cried with his face buried in her shoulder. Platters of food covered the kitchen table as if a meal were about to be served but there was nobody else in the room. Harry didn't want to step any further into the home; he didn't want it to be real and he knew that once he looked into Ron's eyes it would be very real. Harry took an involuntary step backward and walked into Draco. Spinning around,

he looked at his husband in a panic and whispered, "I don't know what to do, Draco. I don't know how to fix this."

There were so many things now that Draco would never have believed possible when he was young. Being Harry's husband was at the top of that list. Having come to love the Weasleys, all of them, especially Arthur and Molly, and considering them a part of his family, was another. He felt numb at the news of Arthur's death, not yet able to absorb the impact. And he didn't want to allow it either. He needed to remain in control to help his husband and family through this. Draco caught Harry, one arm around the man's waist and his other hand coming up to cup Harry's cheek. "You can't fix it, love," he said softly.

Harry felt muted anger drenching him as he looked into Draco's eyes and tried to block those words. Just as quickly, the anger was replaced by raw need and Harry clutched at Draco's arms and pleaded, "Then ... can you? Please?"

Draco closed his eyes, resting his forehead against Harry's for a moment. "I wish I could," he said, heart clenching in pain.

"This isn't real," Harry said, squeezing his eyes shut and trying to believe the lie. "It's not real and if we just – "

"Harry?"

Harry froze against Draco when he heard the shattered voice of Ron behind him. Turning, he looked into Ron's eyes and his last hope for denial was sent smashing to the ground. The bewilderment on Ron's face made him look like a child again as he gazed at Harry and said helplessly, "He's gone"

When Ron lowered his head into his hands, weeping alone, Harry broke from his trance and rushed forward to wrap his arms around Ron, holding on tight to keep both of them from slipping away. Harry's own face was wet now although he didn't allow himself the luxury of actually crying. He needed to be strong for the Weasleys.

Hermione made futile attempts to wipe the tears from her eyes as she stepped closer to Draco. "The Healer said it was his heart," she whispered, watching her husband and best friend. "It just stopped working and there was nothing they could do. Nothing."

"Just stopped?" Draco repeated. It sounded so ... mundane. Arthur Weasley had survived the war and lived to see grandchildren.

It felt strange to think he could do all that and then suddenly die. Draco laid a hand on her arm, trying to be supportive.

Hermione sniffled, the tears never stopping and she kept her voice low as she glanced up at Draco. "Bill said he never even woke up. He was napping in his favourite chair." Her brown eyes now fastened themselves on Draco's. "It – well, it seemed like Molly wasn't surprised by what the Healer said ... about Arthur's heart."

Draco frowned, wondering about that. Maybe Molly had known something but didn't want to worry the family. That would be likely if there had been a problem. "How is she?" he asked, almost afraid of the answer.

"She's – not good," Hermione said. "None of them are. We should go back in though; I know Molly will want to see both of you."

Harry wasn't sure what he was murmuring to Ron. They were the nonsensical words he whispered to his children when they were hurt or scared in the middle of the night. Ron's sobs began to slow and Harry heard the slight hitching of breath that always came after a hard cry. He had heard some of what Hermione had been telling Draco and it didn't make any sense. Arthur was still young and seemed healthy. At Valen's birthday party two weeks ago, while the candles were blown out, he had stood there with Emily in his arms and Sev on his shoulders with a huge smile on his face. And Molly. Harry tried to imagine spending decades with Draco and then losing him. Just the thought of it made Harry want to grab his husband and never let go.

Ron straightened up and Harry took a half-step back. Hermione immediately pressed against Ron's side and guided him towards the door that led to the living room while Harry watched. Once they were no longer in sight, he turned around and nearly knocked Draco over with the force of his own body as he lunged forward and held on tight.

"I know we need to go in there," Harry mumbled against Draco's neck, "but I just need a minute. Just me and you for a minute."

"Yes," Draco whispered, holding his husband tightly. He reached up to wipe at Harry's damp face.

In a home that had once been his only refuge during the

summers of his childhood, Draco now became Harry's safe haven. He tilted his head back and gave Draco a weak smile. "I couldn't do this without you. I wouldn't – " Harry broke off, an image of Molly clouding his eyes as he finished shakily, " – wouldn't even want to try."

"I'm beside you, always," Draco whispered, kissing his forehead.

After a moment of holding each other in the silence of the kitchen, Harry pulled away and wiped his face with his sleeve before turning and heading for the living room. He held his breath as he pushed the door open and stepped into the sitting area with Draco right behind him. The only thing keeping him from turning around was Draco's steady hand against his back. The room was fairly quiet considering the amount of people in it, occupying every space, except for Arthur's favourite chair which sat empty and immediately drew Harry's eyes towards it. His attention was pulled away by the quiet sound of Ginny crying, curled up on the couch against her mother who stroked her daughter's hair and gazed absently at nothing in particular. Oliver sat on the other side of Ginny, rubbing her back. Bill and Ron stood in one corner of the room near the stairs talking in low tones. Percy and his wife sat at the other end of the couch with stunned looks on their faces while Fleur stood behind Molly, keeping one slim hand on her shoulder.

A movement to the right caught Harry's eye and he glanced over to see Fred and George sitting on the floor with their backs against the wall. Their normally laughing faces were stripped of colour and the looks in their eyes made Harry's heart ache. They held hands.

Draco felt the tension in Harry's back and his own stomach flipped at the scene before him. The quiet of the room felt overpoweringly heavy, like the air was humid but with grief instead of moisture.

"They're in shock," Harry murmured, more to himself than anything else. He turned and kissed Draco on the cheek before whispering, "I'm going to see Molly. Will you check on Fred and George?"

Draco nodded, kissing the side of Harry's head before moving towards the twins. For a moment, he stood, unsure of what to do. Finally, he sucked in his breath and sank to his knees in front of

them, arms to his sides and palms up. It was a gesture of offering. Both men looked at him with surprise. It seemed to take a minute to register what he'd done and then, together they reached for his hands, holding tight.

Harry breathed a sigh of relief when Fred and George both accepted Draco's hands. He turned and moved across the room until he reached Molly and knelt down in front of her. Her gaze lowered and when she saw Harry she gave him a sad smile and pulled him up with her free arm until he was nearly in her lap. He supported his weight on the arm of the couch and let her hold him close.

"You came," Molly said against his cheek, "Now all of my children are here."

Harry felt the tears threatening to spill over but he blinked them back. He shifted so he could look into Molly's face and couldn't stop himself from asking in a ragged voice, "Why?"

Molly looked across the room at Draco for a brief second before she replied, "I don't know, Harry. It's too soon to know anything. Bill and his family were here for dinner and you know how Arthur likes to take a little nap before he eats ... but he never woke up" Her voice trailed off just before she clutched Harry closer and began to cry. Ginny's sobs mingled now with her mother's and Harry looked up helplessly at Fleur and Oliver. Oliver carefully pulled Ginny closer to himself which freed Molly to wrap both arms around Harry and he tightly returned her embrace. He knew that she had probably spent the afternoon trying to be strong for her children but the sorrow had finally engulfed her. Tears formed again in Harry's eyes as his gaze wandered up the wall and he saw the clock. The Weasley family clock no longer had a hand for Arthur and seeing that felt like a blow to Harry's stomach.

On the floor, Draco scooted a little closer to Fred and George, the three of them still holding hands. They didn't speak, which was surprising on its own. He'd never seen Fred and George quiet. Draco heard Harry and Molly and felt a tug of fear in his chest. It was, of course, one of his worst nightmares – the idea of losing Harry terrified him. He had always told Harry that he didn't want to outlive him and he still meant it.

After several minutes of holding Molly while she cried, she finally

pulled back and wiped her face with her apron. Harry settled back on his heels again and looked over at Ginny who was quiet now and resting in the shelter of Oliver's arms. Percy sat and examined his hands as if they had suddenly appeared at the end of his wrists without warning. Harry was thankful that Percy had returned to his family in time to have a few good years with his father before losing him.

"I'm going to make some tea," Molly announced shakily but with determination and Harry scooted back as she stood and headed for the kitchen with Fleur and Hermione trailing behind her.

Harry made his way over to Bill and Ron. Bill hugged him tight and thanked him for coming. Ron had an angry look on his face, his freckles nearly camouflaged by the flush flooding his skin.

"Ron?" Harry said.

"It's nothing, Harry," Bill cut in. "I mentioned that I thought Mum should come stay with us at Shell Cottage and it upset Ron."

"She shouldn't have to leave her home and everything she loves just because you decided," Ron argued, his body rigid. "Hermione and I could move in here with the kids and that way nothing would have to change."

Harry doubted that Molly would ever leave the Burrow and he was sure that Bill probably knew that and had simply been making a suggestion. Ron's anger was more than was called for and Harry knew it was because he was afraid. Losing Arthur was already hard enough but facing the prospect of Molly moving away and no more family gatherings at the Burrow was one change too many for Ron. He couldn't handle it.

"Bill's just trying to help, Ron," Harry said, stepping in front of Ron and looking him in the eyes. This wasn't the time for a family argument. "That's what families do for each other, mate, and you know your mum isn't going to let anyone talk her into leaving the Burrow anyway. This is her home and it always will be."

Ron's anger teetered for a moment before he hung his head and nodded. Bill stepped closer and wrapped his arms around his youngest brother who slowly brought his own arms up and hugged him back. Harry left them and made his way over to where Draco still sat with the twins.

Harry sat on the floor and leant tiredly against Draco. They hadn't been at the Burrow very long and Harry was already exhausted. There was still so much to do and Harry knew that the Burrow would soon be bursting at the seams with friends and members of the Order. He wished it were late at night so he could wrap himself around Draco and shut everything else out or, at least shut off the questions in his mind. Arthur's death just didn't make any sense. Harry didn't want to ask too many questions while the shock was still settling in but he hoped to talk to Molly or Ron later, even Hermione, in the hopes of finding out if anyone had answers.

The rest of the afternoon and evening crawled by. Remus and Sirius were the first to arrive after Harry and Draco and both men set about greeting newcomers – old friends, order members and distant family – and Conjuring seating areas outside when they ran out of room inside the Burrow. Harry and Draco spent their time by the sides of the Weasleys, listening to their grief and letting them know they weren't alone. All of the Weasley offspring went back and forth between needing their mother's comfort and trying to ease the pain that was already etching itself in her face. As night fell, Bill, Percy and Ron made various trips to their homes, gathering their children. Molly wanted to be surrounded by her grandchildren and Harry knew it would be better for her that way. Tonks and her husband came back with Ron, helping him with the babies while Harry and Draco made the rounds of saying goodbye and letting Molly know they would be by the next day with their own children.

Harry had tugged Draco outside, wanting to Apparate home this time and they stood there for a moment beneath the stars. Now that they were alone, Harry ran his hands up and down Draco's back as he was embraced, needing to map out the flesh that was real and solid. Arthur's death had ignited the kindling that represented every fear Harry had of losing Draco. He knew that the next day would be filled with more tears and reminders of the emptiness left behind in Arthur's wake but, at that moment, Harry also felt a spot of guilt for being relieved that Draco was still there, holding him. They still had each other and their children were safe at home. In spite of the fact that he knew it was unrealistic, Harry needed that to be true forever.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR –

Promise Me

By the time they arrived home, Luna and Neville had already bathed the children and put them to bed. Draco thanked them both and ushered them to the Floo while Harry Apparated upstairs to check on Valen, April and Severus who were all sleeping soundly. Closing their door, he made his way to the master suite and sat down heavily on the bed. Harry stared up at the ceiling, his body aching but no match for the ache in his heart. He wondered why it was that nobody ever got to say goodbye.

Toeing off his shoes, Harry let them drop to the floor, not bothering to put them away. He was already dreading the talk with the children in the morning, especially because he knew Valen wouldn't rest until he felt all of his questions were answered which presented a problem since there were no answers. He hoped that Draco would be able to come up with the right words because Harry knew for sure that he couldn't.

Harry glanced over to the side when he heard the small crack of Apparition in the hall and Draco then came into the bedroom, his pale face reflecting all of the weariness and sorrow that Harry knew was probably on his own face. Harry held one hand out. "Please just be with me for a moment, love," he asked in a tired voice. "The children are fine; just come here, please."

Draco took his husband's hand, allowing himself to be pulled close. Harry was sitting on the side of the bed and Draco stood there in front of him, looking down. He brought his other hand up to cup Harry's cheek, thumb caressing. "With you, always," he whispered.

"Always?" Harry asked, leaning into Draco's touch. He heard the tone of pleading in his own voice but couldn't help it. "Can you promise me that?"

Draco understood the need in Harry's tone, in his eyes. During the war, Draco had actually died several times but had been brought

back by Harry's need, his magic forcing Draco's body to heal. "I would do anything to stay beside you," he admitted.

"I know, because you have already, but – but can you promise me, Draco?" Harry looked up at Draco, his hands now fisted in his husband's shirt, pulling him closer. "I want to hear you say it."

"I promise," Draco swore, and wrapped his arms around Harry. They both knew it was a promise he might not be able to keep, but it was certainly one he was willing to do everything possible to fulfill.

Harry bowed his head and shook it. He knew Draco would promise him anything and walk through fire to make it happen but this promise was impossible and Harry knew it. Until today, he might have believed it but his trust in forever had been broken. "If promises keep people alive then why is Arthur gone, Draco? Can you tell me that?"

Draco sighed, moving to sit beside Harry on the bed and kicking off his own shoes. "I had a talk with Bill," he said, turning to face Harry.

Harry shifted on the bed until he faced Draco and laid one hand on his husband's knee. "Did he know anything? Was his dad sick?"

Draco took a deep breath, looking down for a moment to collect his thoughts ... or to avoid the intensity of Harry's eyes. "He had a weak heart," he admitted.

"A weak heart? That doesn't make sense." Harry frowned and lowered his own head a bit trying to catch Draco's eye. "He worked for the Ministry and was a member of the Order, for Merlin's sake. Wouldn't they have had to know something like that?"

Draco felt his own cheeks flush and he forced himself to look into his husband's face. He wanted to kiss him or do something to ease the pain he saw there but he knew he had to tell him what he knew. "They did," he said. "Bill told me."

"Everybody knew? How could the Order know without anyone telling me?" Harry felt the clutch of anger pulling him close. "I led the fucking Order, Draco, how did I not know!"

Draco winced. He knew Harry would take it this way. "Not everyone," he assured him. "Just some of the older members of the Order."

"So why wouldn't they tell me? How was I supposed to lead the

Order if I didn't even know who was strong enough to fight?" Harry's eyes caught Draco's and held them steadily, never blinking or looking away. He was nearly growling now. "It makes no fucking sense that something like that would be kept from me when I might have been making it worse. I just want to know why!"

"Arthur didn't want anyone to know. Bill told me that Arthur had been bitten by Nagini and the venom had weakened his heart," Draco explained. The attack by the snake had happened before Draco had joined the Order.

Harry shot off the bed and found himself backing away until he was blocked by the dresser. "Nagini?" he heard himself say over the pounding in his head. "Arthur is dead because of m – because of the attack?"

In the rational part of Harry's mind, he knew that Voldemort had ordered the attack and the snake had carried it out but time didn't erase the feelings imprinted inside of him that remembered how it felt to glide towards the unsuspecting man and lunge forward, sinking sharp fangs into yielding skin. And now, all these years later, the results Voldemort had intended to happen were now a reality. Arthur was dead. Harry felt as if icy water had been injected into his veins as he stared at Draco in shock.

Draco was nearly knocked to the floor as Harry sprang away, magic crackling. "What? What is it?" he asked, frightened now.

"What is it? *What is it?*!" Harry's hands curled into fists. He could feel the guilt and the rage coursing through him and he needed a target but Voldemort was dead; Harry had already killed the crazy bastard. There was nobody left to destroy but if he didn't find a way to release everything, he feared he would destroy himself. And maybe he deserved it. "I saw the attack, Draco! I was fucking there and we took too long! I sat in Dumbledore's office talking about it while he was bleeding to death and if I had convinced them faster – " Harry had lifted his hands, clutching at his hair, when he suddenly thrust one downward and back until it slammed into the dresser behind him.

Draco was shaking as he got to his feet, hands open, placating. "Harry, it's the past, it's not your fault," he pleaded with his husband, not even clear what Harry was talking about.

"How can you say that?" Harry shot back, his voice caught between a snarl and a moan. "It was me!! It wasn't fucking enough that I had to see what that bastard saw but he had to go further and it was me in that bloody snake. I tracked him down and I went after him ... Arthur never saw it coming and when I told Dumbledore, I – I wanted to hurt him too." Harry closed his eyes as he remembered the anguish he had felt when he believed that he really had attacked Arthur, wanting him dead. The pain was shoved away just as quickly with the returning anger. "I took too long, Draco! That's why they never told me; because they already knew it was my fucking fault!"

They had hit upon one of those things where Draco knew he didn't have the whole story and had missed something important. Harry's anger rippled over his skin, Draco's heart beating faster with fear and worry for his husband. He walked closer, hands still out, hoping he could calm Harry down. "I can't believe that. I don't believe you hurt Arthur or that anyone, especially Arthur, blamed you."

Harry slipped quickly away from the dresser and put more distance between himself and Draco. He realised, in a rush of memory that Draco didn't belong to him when the attack had taken place and probably had no idea what he was saying. Harry felt very alone in that moment. Trying to control his emotions, Harry gave his husband a sad smile and asked, "Who am I, Draco?"

Draco swallowed hard, confused and frightened by Harry's behaviour. He quit advancing when he saw Harry scramble away from him. "You are mine – my love, my husband," he said softly.

Harry nodded and pointed towards the window, his finger trembling. "But everyone out there thinks I belong to them. I'm Harry Potter. The most powerful wizard in the world"

The glass in the window that Harry was pointing at shimmered briefly and when Harry made a second gesture the glass liquefied and ran to the floor in puddles of water as if the pane had been made of melting ice. Harry turned and waved his hand at the tall dresser which emitted a strange puffing sound before collapsing to the floor in a pile of ashes as if a scorching inferno had eaten away at the wood. Harry could feel the release of his magic as he raised both hands now and sent the flames in each wall sconce leaping high to

lick at the ceilings and create black streaks that knit themselves together into a sinister version of a dark shadowy sky.

Tears ran down Harry's face now as he looked at Draco and he felt ashamed at the fear he saw on his husband's face but he didn't know how to help him when he couldn't help himself. One last wave of his right hand and everything that was wrong became right. The water leapt back to the window as a solid sheet of glass, the flames lowered and the ceiling gleamed softly while the dresser rose like a phoenix from the ashes. Harry sank to his knees and looked up at Draco, his voice thick with tears, and asked, "What good is it to be the most powerful wizard in the world when I can't even fix one small heart?"

Draco had felt every flick of Harry's fingers, skin buzzing with the magic. His eyes grew wide when he realised the implication. "Oh, Harry," he whispered and stumbled to him, going down beside him and reaching out. "It never occurred to them to tell you," he tried to explain. "Arthur and Molly, and even Bill, they still see you as that young boy they have loved for so many years." It was true. Very few people knew just how powerful Harry had become, but even if the Weasleys had realised it, they still might not have said anything. They gave Harry what he wanted, they loved him for just being Harry. And because of that, they hadn't wanted to trouble him with Arthur's problem.

Harry reached out blindly and wrapped his arms around Draco, holding him tight. "It wouldn't have mattered," he choked out. "My magic couldn't have saved him and even if you promise me forever, my magic can't save you anymore, either. So just promise me that if you leave ... you'll take me with you."

Draco wanted to promise him anything that made Harry feel better, but he drew back to look into his husband's face. "And what about our children? Would you abandon them?"

Harry shook his head and whispered, "No. I just don't want to lose you."

"I know," Draco whispered. He did too. One of his biggest reasons for not wanting to remove the Concubine Binding Spell had been this very issue. He didn't want to be without Harry. But their children needed them, even if something happened to one of them.

"I am yours. Now and always."

Harry tried to swallow past the lump that was now lodged in his throat and looked at Draco through a blurry film of tears. His shoulders slumped as the last of his anger crept quietly away. "I know ... and I'm yours," he replied, the grief sweeping over him. "I'm going to miss him, Draco. I'm just going to miss – " Harry couldn't finish and tightened his arms around Draco as the tears fell faster.

Draco pressed his cheek to Harry's, nuzzling his damp skin. "I know," he repeated, hands stroking Harry's back too.

Harry tucked his face against Draco's shoulder and cried for Arthur and for Dumbledore and even for his father; all of the men he had looked towards for guidance. He was tired of being angry and he knew that Draco was right; if something happened to one of them then the love they had shared would have to be enough as long as their children needed them. Harry cried until the fabric beneath his face was wet and his throat ached but when the last tear slid off his cheek into the folds of Draco's collar, he realised he felt ... clean.

Harry lifted his head and placed both of his hands on either side of Draco's jaw, his thumbs running over the pale cheeks as he looked into his husband's eyes and saw more love than he ever thought he had a right to expect. Leaning in, he kissed the tip of Draco's nose and whispered, "I want to be with you."

Draco smiled, both at the gesture and the words, then led them both over to the bed. His long nimble fingers reached up to unbutton Harry's shirt. Yes, he knew Harry could strip them with magic, but sometimes Draco liked doing this for them. He liked the way it felt to do it for Harry, to slowly reveal his lover's skin, kissing it as he did.

The muscles beneath Harry's stomach jumped as Draco's fingers brushed over his skin and his eyes never left Draco's face even as his own hands moved forward, knowing exactly where to go as he also began releasing each button from its stitched restraint. The only sound in the room was soft breathing and the beating of Harry's heart which seemed so loud he was sure Draco could hear it. He wished that he could hear Draco's.

Draco pulled Harry's shirt down the tanned arms and let it flutter to the floor, his attention riveted on stroking the expanse of golden skin revealed, mouth quirking into a small smile before he leant down

to place feather soft kisses along his husband's collarbone.

Like a conditioned response, Harry's fingers stilled and his head tilted back, baring his throat in trust and desire. He could feel the opposing sensations as Draco's lips touched each spot with heat which cooled immediately when a new spot was discovered. A rough moan emerged from his raw throat until it formed the word, "Please," as it fell from his lips.

Draco's hands slid down Harry's arms, over the man's fingers and then back up to rest on his sides. "Yes, I will give you what you need," he assured him, kissing across the muscled chest to a small red-brown nipple and swirling his tongue around it.

Harry needed this so much. This affirmation that Draco was still with him, beside him, and there was no rush or clawing need yet. One hand gently cupped the back of Draco's neck while the other began running through the long silky strands and he felt his trousers begin to tighten as his body responded to Draco's touch. Looking at his husband, Harry whispered, "You always do."

Draco teased and licked, Harry's nipples hardened to points and his breath turned to gasps. Then Draco slid his own hands down, tracing along the waistband of Harry's trousers to the front. He cupped the growing bulge there with his palm, feeling the warm pulse.

Harry's hips thrust forward, chasing the hand that wasn't rubbing against him yet as his body attempted to remedy that. His gasps lengthened into groans and he could feel the small twitches in his cock that meant the front of his pants were growing sticky with clear fluid. Harry's hands fumbled now for Draco's buttons, needing to finish what he had started so he could feel that smooth skin against his own. "Want to feel you."

Draco shrugged out of his shirt, trembling at the feel of Harry's hands on his bare skin. His own hands moved quickly to unfasten Harry's trousers, pushing them with Harry's shorts, down over the man's hips.

Harry couldn't seem to stop his hands from needing to move over Draco's body as if he were blind and needed to map out every sharp angle, every smooth curve that belonged only to his husband. But it still wasn't enough; it would never be enough and he only

hoped he had a lifetime of touching Draco. The hands moved down over the taut stomach and, with quiet urgency, grasped the waistband with both hands and sent a spark of magic to his fingers that left the trousers unbuttoned and gaping open. It only took a second more for the trousers and shorts to be left puddling around Draco's ankles and Harry couldn't hold back anymore. With a strangled cry, he threw himself against Draco.

Harry's magic rippled over Draco, and the moment their skin pressed against each other, he groaned in pleasure. He wrapped his arms around his husband and shifted, laying them both down on the bed.

"I need you inside me," Harry moaned softly, rubbing against Draco like he did after their second kiss. "Please ... I just want to feel better."

Draco rolled Harry onto his back, looking down into his face, stroking Harry's cheek and kissing him softly. "Yes, let me take care of you," he whispered, nudging Harry's legs open with one knee.

Two stray tears, making a late appearance, slid from the corners of Harry's eyes and disappeared into his black hair. He nodded, even as his legs fell open and were spread wide without hesitation, eager for the empty space he had created to be filled by Draco.

Draco braced himself with his silver hand against the bed while his other reached down, caressing the dragon tattoo on Harry's hip before moving over his husband's erection, fingers wrapping around the warm shaft. "Make yourself slick for me, love," he whispered.

"Yes," Harry whispered back, neither of them wanting to disturb the quiet that blanketed the room. With the smallest of movements, Harry felt the cool fluids coating his insides and he clenched down involuntarily, forcing some of the lubrication to slip out of his body and make a shiny path towards his lower back. Harry reached out for Draco. "In me."

Draco kept his gaze on his lover's face as he complied, moving his hand lower, finding the sick opening and pushing a finger gently inside.

Harry shook his head. He desperately needed to feel something other than the grief that held him like a jealous lover. Gentle fingers wouldn't be strong enough to break the grip. "No, love," he

murmured. "I need you in me now."

Draco didn't argue, sliding his finger out and coating his already rampant and leaking prick with the lube. He positioned himself and pushed forward, moaning at the feel of Harry's body opening to him.

With a fine sheen of sweat breaking out on his skin, Harry pushed down with his hips and bit back a cry as the burning stretch consumed him and his body pulled Draco inside. There was no waiting, no adjusting. Harry clutched desperately at Draco's back and rocked his hips, holding on to the searing ache that meant he was alive; Draco was alive. And they were together in every way they could be. Harry moaned, "Make me feel"

Draco had intended to be slow and gentle, but he saw the fierce need in Harry's eyes. Bracing both hands now, he began thrusting hard into the man beneath him.

"Yes, oh, yes" Harry whispered in a ragged voice. The sharpest edges of the pain had melted into something primitive and radiant with life. Using his hands, Harry pulled himself up and claimed Draco's lips in a bruising kiss. With each pounding stroke, each lunge forward that ground Harry down further into the mattress, Draco was putting Harry back together again.

Draco kissed back, tongue thrusting into his lover's mouth in a mirror of his cock into Harry's body. He could feel Harry's heels digging into his buttocks as the man pulled himself up with each thrust.

Broken gasps, skin meeting skin and the rhythm of the bedsprings were the only sounds to accompany Harry's healing. He felt as if he couldn't get close enough and slammed his hips up each time Draco pushed in. The sweat now covered both of them. Fevered fury pooled low in Harry's belly and one hand slipped from Draco's back to wrap itself around his cock and tug one, two, three times before the silence in the room was shattered with Harry's desperate cry of, "Draco!"

The wave of pleasure that broke over him took Draco's breath away, leaving him suspended in the moment, Harry's body wound around him so tight it felt fused to skin and bone. Draco's orgasm, the ejaculation of seed into Harry's body, was intense – but nowhere near as powerful as the feeling of connection he felt. Harry was his

world, his centre and he never wanted that to change.

Harry had barely begun to spill and shudder, when he felt Draco's prick swell even more within him and they rode the sensations out together just as they always did. Except this time it seemed as if two orgasms had bonded into the most exquisite combination Harry had ever known. Feeling lightheaded as he came down from his high, Harry's trembling legs dropped to the bed and the only thing he could do at that moment was love Draco with his eyes.

Draco smiled dazedly, still dizzy with the pleasure. He leant forward, nuzzling Harry's chin and kissing his lips.

"That was ... yeah," Harry mumbled in between kisses, running his hands over Draco's slick back. "Fuck, I needed that."

"Good," Draco agreed, smiling at the caresses. "I am more than happy to give you what you need."

"You always do, love," Harry noted, pulling back to study Draco's face. "I – I know you cared for him too and then I acted like an arse and scared you. Are you all right?"

Draco shifted, gently pulling from his husband's body and moving to lie beside him. "I'm ... all right," he said. Arthur Weasley, along with his wife, had been good to him. Despite the past anger with Lucius, when Harry had bonded Draco to him, they hadn't hesitated to take Draco into their home and their hearts. Arthur had pushed the Order to accept Draco, even to make him Secret Keeper. Not once in all the years had Arthur or Molly ever treated Draco as anything less than a full member of their family. "I will miss him too."

Harry smiled and brushed back damp strands of hair from Draco's forehead. "And I love you for that."

The events of the day brushed over Harry again, but this time he had the warmth of Draco's body to keep him from going under. It meant everything to Harry that Draco had also cared for Arthur and been cared about in return. Now there was just one more thing to deal with. "Draco?" Harry asked, still playing with Draco's hair. "How do we tell the kids? Arthur was the only grandfather they knew; how do we tell them he's gone?"

Draco didn't know the answer to that. Valen had been only a baby during the war, so they hadn't had to explain the deaths of

friends and family back then. They had been mercifully lucky since. No one close to them had died since the final battle. Draco sighed, turning his head to kiss his husband's hand. "I suppose as gently, but honestly, as we can."

"It's just not right," Harry murmured, exhaustion setting in. "Every time I think that bastard is finally gone he comes back and this time he's touching our kids. I keep thinking they won't understand and then I want to hit something because I think they shouldn't have to. Not yet."

Draco privately thought they hadn't got off light in the war, all things considered. He certainly hadn't expected to live through it and, if it hadn't been for Harry's magic or Severus Snape's sacrifice, he wouldn't have. "They are strong and they have us to help them," was all he could think to say to his husband.

Harry nodded. Draco was right; there really was no way to prepare for introducing death to children and all they could really do was hold them close and tell them the truth. Harry lifted his head and kissed Draco gently, slightly opening his mouth so that Draco's top lip was pillowed softly between his own. Barely pulling back, he placed his forehead against Draco's and whispered, "In the morning, then."

– CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE –

The Limits of Magic

Morning arrived faster than Harry had wanted it to and breakfast was a strange affair with April sharing happy stories of playing with Tonks and Luna while Valen kept asking his fathers why they had left so suddenly the day before. Draco finally asked Valen to hold his questions until after breakfast and they would all talk about it then. Valen narrowed his eyes and gave a small sigh, but quieted down. The shock and the anger were gone now for Harry and acceptance was beginning to set in. He wondered what things were like at the Burrow for Ron and Hermione. Even though they didn't always eat breakfast together, it felt odd not having them in the Manor.

After breakfast, Harry and Draco took all three children into the conservatory. They had considered talking to them outside but after the beautiful spring weather the day before, the breeze had turned chilly and the sky grey with fat drops of rain falling intermittently from the dark clouds. The day matched Harry's mood. Surprisingly, though, once they were in the conservatory, the soft glow from the wall sconces made the plant-filled room seem cosy while the grey skies made the vivid greens from all of the trees and plants outside seem even more colourful. Harry sat down on one of the couches with Sev in his lap and April climbed up beside him. Draco sat on the facing couch with Valen who gave each of his fathers an expectant look.

Harry swallowed and looked over at Draco. He had tossed and turned all night, trying to think of what to say but now that the moment was here he realised that he might as well have slept instead since he had come up with nothing.

Sev's watchful eyes looked at Draco when Harry did and then, after several seconds, he looked up at Harry and asked, "Daddy?"

Harry nodded, knowing that Sev was merely asking both of his fathers if something was wrong in his own way.

Draco took a deep breath. They had been thinking since they got the news about how to talk to their children. He knew it wasn't as much about what he would say as about having to face the pain on their children's faces when they understood. "We have some bad news we have to tell you," he began.

Harry nodded and loosened his grip on Sev when the young boy gave a small squeak. He remembered how he had felt when he realised that everything he had been told about his parents' deaths had been lies and he swore he would never do that to his own children but, now, a small irrational part of him wanted to tell the children that their grandfather had simply had to go away. He wouldn't though. Not with April looking up trustingly at both of them and Valen's sharp eyes watching his fathers.

"Something happened yesterday and that's why we had to leave you here without talking to you first even though we didn't want to do that but sometimes things happen that just can't be helped and that's what ... happened ... yester – " Harry snapped his mouth shut when his voice cracked on the last word. He knew he was rambling so it was probably all for the better that he stop talking anyway. He looked over at Draco for help.

Valen was frowning, looking almost angry. Draco knew that look. As a child, Draco had a tendency to get angry when he was really frightened. It had felt ... safer.

"We want to make this easier, make it less painful, but we don't know how," Draco tried to explain. "Something has happened to your grandfather Arthur."

"Did he get hurt or get lost?" April asked, glancing at the look on her brother's face.

Harry almost smiled at April's question. In her world, getting lost or hurt were the two worst things that could happen to anyone. April shifted closer to Harry and waited for an answer. Harry knew they just needed to come out with it since Valen looked as if he were about to start demanding answers. Sev remained quiet and watched everyone.

"Not exactly, love," Harry replied, running one hand over her tousled hair. He tried to explain what happened, knowing he was probably doing it all wrong. "We didn't know it, but granddad

Arthur's heart was – was sick and not very strong. His heart worked very hard but yesterday it was just too tired and it stopped working. He died" Harry couldn't speak all of a sudden past the lump that formed in his throat. He swallowed several times, the muscles in his jaws twitching before he thought he could speak. "He died yesterday at the Burrow."

"Just like that? Just dead?" Valen blurted out. "Why can't you fix it?"

Draco reached for Valen's hand but the little boy refused to let him take it. Instead, Valen jumped to his feet and backed away, hands clenched into fists.

Harry remembered the way he had kept Draco at a distance the night before, holding on to the anger since all of his other feelings had scared him too much. Valen's question, though, reminded him of Draco when they were both boys and the way Draco always had a way of zeroing in on the subjects that were the hardest to talk about. April's small hand now clutched at Harry's shirt hem as she watched her brother, waiting for cues on just what was happening.

"It was too late to fix it, Valen," Harry said, still trying to believe it himself. He spoke in his softest voice, the way he did when Draco was frightened. "If there was any way to fix it then we would have, even if it took all of our magic or all of our money. Some things can't be fixed, Valen, no matter how much you love someone."

"Why not?" Valen demanded. His eyes were steely, anger simmering on the surface, but his bottom lip quivered, betraying his fear and pain.

Draco noticed Severus was quiet, eyes almost closed and his face showing a kind of acceptance his brother couldn't. For his age, their youngest always seemed to be more grounded than his siblings.

Harry lifted Sev from his lap and sat him next to April who, oddly enough, was still quiet. A thought ran through Harry's mind of the calm before the storm as he stood and placed himself at half the distance to Valen before going to his knees to be at eye level with his son. He knew, from experience with Draco, not to come closer. Valen needed to be the one to decide when he was ready to be comforted. Harry was close enough, though, to reach out and take Draco's hand which he did.

"Valen," Harry began, watching as his son struggled to hide his emotions. With Harry as one of his fathers, it would be a hard-fought battle. "He's gone and we can't change it. Daddy Draco and I both loved him and we're going to miss him every day but we just can't change it. Magic doesn't fix hearts." If it did, Harry thought, his own wouldn't be breaking.

"Then what good is it?" Valen demanded, eyes glistening with unshed tears.

Draco's fingers curled around Harry's hand, using the warmth of his husband to help steady his own nerves. His heart was pounding, feeling more nervous facing his eldest child than he remembered being when going into Voldemort's stronghold. "Magic is part of us. An important part, but even your Dad isn't immortal." Reflexively, Draco held out his silver hand. Magic had nearly killed him, quite a few times, and he'd lost his hand in order to live.

Harry smiled sadly when Draco lifted the silver hand. It was a constant reminder to them of the risks they had both taken to stay together, stay alive. And it was proof that it wasn't always magic that saved the day. Harry had been humbled when it wasn't his magic, necessarily, that had saved Draco but the simple yet nearly elusive solution of amputation. Harry heard a snuffle behind him and knew it was only moments before April unleashed herself. He kept his eyes on Valen and inched closer. If he could get Valen to return to Draco then he might have time to get back to April before she scared Severus. Draco's hand in Harry's felt cold and Harry squeezed gently, sending a light touch of the magic they were talking about to soothe his husband. Draco squeezed Harry's hand in return but then let go, moving to the sofa beside April and Sev so that Harry could concentrate on Valen.

"Magic is what brought you here, Valen," Harry reminded his son. "You were the first grandchild and granddad Arthur was so proud of you and you made him happy. He loved to hold you and tell you stories and he laughed every time you laughed. Magic did that and so even if he's gone now, he was happy while he was here."

"Then why did he leave?" Valen's voice was smaller now, almost cracking and a single tear escaped to trickle down his cheek.

"You have to have a strong heart to love everyone the way

granddad Arthur did," Harry said, his own voice getting quieter. "He loved all of his children and grandma Molly and when I needed a dad he loved me too. His heart took in Daddy Draco and all of his grandchildren but it was too weak for him to keep taking care of everyone here where we are so now he's in a place where his heart won't hurt and he can still love all of us and watch over us. He never wanted to leave you, Valen, but it was time for him to go."

Harry had crept closer on his knees as he spoke, until he was only an arm's length away and carefully reached out to wipe away the single tear with his thumb. Somehow, explaining it to Valen made Arthur's death easier to accept and understand. Harry's own eyes, the same green eyes that matched those of the child standing miserably before him, were also shiny with tears but he wanted to be strong for his son who was still afraid.

"Valen," Harry now whispered, easing his hand over Valen's smaller hand, engulfing it completely. "It's okay to be scared and sad. It's okay to miss him ... I do."

The dam broke and more tears spilled down Valen's cheeks. He squeezed Harry's hand and he pressed his face into Harry's shoulder, his own shoulders beginning to shake as he cried.

April seemed to take that as a signal or permission, launching herself into Draco's arms. He wrapped an arm around her while she began to wail, his other arm reaching around Severus who pressed his face to Draco's side, quietly sniffing.

Harry breathed an inaudible sigh of relief. Valen wept quietly against his neck, all of the anger gone now and his little body melded to Harry's as if seeking sanctuary. Harry cupped the back of Valen's head with one hand and rubbed his back with the other, murmuring soothing sounds to his oldest child. Turning his head slightly, Harry saw Draco doing much the same thing with April whose sobs filled the room with the dramatic heartfelt sorrow that only April was capable of displaying. Instead of holding her head though, Draco's free arm was wrapped around Sev, drawing him close. Tears fell from Sev's eyes and he sniffled once in a while, but was mostly still and quiet.

They had expected the children to take the news of Arthur's death with tears and grief. Harry knew there would probably be

plenty more tears to come in the days ahead but he felt better about the way he and Draco had chosen to tell them, giving them all a chance to grieve together as a family.

April's sobs died down enough for her to ask with a whimper, "Can granddad Arthur still come to my birthday party?"

Draco tensed, stomach giving a lurch when he realised what his daughter had asked. He opened his mouth to say something but nothing came out. He swallowed hard, looking up at Harry to ground himself, only finding his voice again when he saw those green eyes look back at him. "No, sweetheart," Draco said softly. "We won't be able to see him anymore."

Harry's heart went out to Draco. He could see by the rare emotions on his husband's face just how hard this was for him. His answer to April's question brought silence and Harry nearly closed his eyes knowing that it meant April was processing things and probably wasn't done yet. Sev also appeared to be waiting for April's next question while Valen continued to cry quietly.

"No more?" April asked, her wet face scrunched up in confusion. "Did he dis-tappear?"

Valen cried harder, clutching Harry tightly.

"His body has stopped working, April. He's dead. Dead is gone," Draco tried. He wanted to add "never coming back" but though he knew that was true of Arthur, he also knew that both Sirius and Draco had both died but been brought back. He stuck to what he knew. "He can't ever come back."

It was clear now that April's earlier tears were simply in sympathy with Valen's tears. Now that she understood what her father was saying, April's sobs began anew. Sev climbed up next to her in Draco's lap and laid his head on Draco's shoulder while patting April's arm with his chubby hand. Harry held Valen tighter and lifted his son up in his arms, walking over to the couch and sitting down next to Draco where they spent the rest of the morning answering innocent questions and kissing away tears.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX –

Looking for Trouble

It was a beautiful day in September as Harry and Draco wandered along Diagon Alley with the children. The weather carried hints of autumn as an occasional breeze made everyone shiver a bit or lean closer to one another. Valen and Sev needed haircuts. April refused to allow her hair to be cut and it hung in glossy dark curls down her back. Sev's hair had evolved into a unique combination of his fathers with Harry's black colouring but Draco's silky straight texture. Although Sev clearly looked like his brother and sister, there were times when Harry watched that dark hair swinging around his son's face and couldn't help but think of the man after whom his son was named. It was almost eerie.

Wizards and witches were out in large numbers, also enjoying one of the last nice days until next spring. Harry and Draco ignored the curious looks they received while April smiled at several people and even waved once or twice. Sev stared straight ahead as if he didn't see them but Harry could tell that his son was bothered by being the focus of so much attention. However, all three children had been promised ice cream at Fortescue's if they behaved during the outing and Sev seemed to be taking that seriously as he held tight to Harry's hand and kept walking. April skipped along between Harry and Draco, who studied the parchment in his hand on which he had written a list of what needed to be done while they were out.

"I want two flavours of ice cream, Daddy Harry," April sang out. "Can I get two?"

Harry spied the shop down the street where they always took the boys for haircuts and replied absently, "You know the deal, April. You need to be good while your brothers get their hair cut and then we'll talk about ice cream."

Sev leant around and looked at his sister. "Which flavours are you getting, April?"

"I need to look at the board before I know," April said. She refused to lock herself into a choice until she knew whether or not there were any possible new flavours.

"Oh," Sev said in a thoughtful tone. That made sense to him even if he was aware that April always chose the same two flavours.

"I need some potions supplies too," Draco added, studying the list of supplies in his hand. He smiled as he looked over at his husband. But then his smile faltered when he realised that something was missing from the family chatter. His eldest, Valen, who always had an opinion on everything, including ice cream, hadn't spoken up. Draco turned around, looking and when he didn't see that familiar head of white blond hair, he stopped abruptly. "Valen?"

Harry's smile disappeared as he realised he didn't see Valen anywhere. He spun around where he had stopped, dragging Sev with him while April glanced around uncertainly. Harry tried to recall when he had last seen Valen with them but his mind seemed to be spinning in too many different directions to be able to make sense of his own thoughts.

"Draco?" Harry said, his tone slightly higher than usual. There were so many people and, though Harry searched the crowds desperately, there was no little blond head to be found. "Should we separate to look for him? I can't remember when I last saw him."

"*Merde*," Draco hissed, hand gripping his wand as he began to search the crowd with his eyes, heart speeding up. Draco's face was a mask now as he started to panic. With platinum blond hair, the nine-year-old boy was usually easy to spot. "Stay here, keep April and Sev close," he told Harry. "I will retrace our steps."

"And his magic," Harry gasped, not nearly as good at hiding his panic as Draco was. He could feel his hands beginning to shake. "Look for it!"

Draco nodded, already doing that. His ability to see magic wasn't something he could really turn off any more than his ability to see colours. He made his way back up the street, looking into every doorway and window, trying to spot their son.

Harry's breathing was coming quicker, his body turning in all directions as he looked for any sign of Valen. People were staring at him strangely and others stood in small groups nearby whispering to

each other.

"Daddy," said April, sounding scared. "What's wrong? Where's Valen?"

Harry couldn't even spare a thought to answer her as he looked around frantically. This couldn't be happening, not again. Harry knew, in a distant sort of way, that this wasn't the same as what had occurred nine years ago but his body didn't seem to realise that. His feelings were too close to what he had felt the morning he had awoken to find his baby – Valen – gone. Harry took deep gulping breaths trying to calm himself down. He felt a gentle squeeze on his hand and looked down into Sev's concerned face.

"Daddy?" Sev asked quietly. "Are you all right?"

"I'm just worried about Valen," Harry replied, moving both of his children closer to the wall of a shop and further from the prying ears and eyes of strangers. Harry wondered if Draco was having any luck and hated to be standing there doing nothing.

Draco made his way all the way back to the Leaky Cauldron with no sign of Valen. He was sweating now, despite the cool weather. He turned and stalked his way back up Diagon Alley, still searching but getting increasingly worried and angry. When he reached Harry again, he shook his head. "Maybe we should send a Patronus to find him?" he asked.

Watching Draco return without Valen had sent Harry's heart plummeting into his stomach. "Anything!" Harry said, the panic now creeping into his voice. He was trying hard to stay calm for April and Sev, but Harry knew he was losing it. His baby was somewhere alone and could get hurt or taken. It didn't matter to Harry that Valen was nearly old enough for Hogwarts now; Valen was his baby and he felt as if he would go mad if they didn't find him soon.

"Do it, Draco!" Harry urged. "Please do something!"

Draco tried to control his own fear, something made even more difficult when Harry was agitated. His husband's fear made his magic crackle in a way that prickled across Draco's skin. Draco nodded. "I will. I'll find him," he assured Harry. Draco had never cast a Patronus except in that class or in private with Harry. Now he took a big breath and tried to focus his mind. Think of being happy, he told himself despite the fear hammering in his chest. It was decidedly

difficult to do when upset. He had to focus on a happy memory that didn't include Valen as it just seemed to make him more upset. He focused instead on lying in Harry's arms in their bed, looking up at that silly "H" on the frame. The light was weak as it seeped from his wand but intensified when he thought of kissing Harry.

Harry watched as the lion sprouted from Draco's wand, huge and sparkling silver. It clawed at the air with one massive paw and the jaws opened in a silent roar. April's eyes widened and she took an unconscious step nearer to Harry while Sev cocked his head and studied the lion, moving a little closer to the Patronus.

"Find Valen Malfoy and tell him his fathers are looking for him," Draco told the Patronus, then gave Harry's shoulder a squeeze with his own hand before he sprinted away.

Watching Draco take off after the Patronus was too much like watching him disappear into the Floo when Valen had been kidnapped. Harry couldn't handle waiting anymore and grabbed April's hand, pulling her along as he ran after his husband. April and Sev pumped their own little legs, trying to keep up.

The Patronus went too fast to follow and then Draco realised he should be able to control it. He raised his wand again, concentrating on making the lion wait for him. He ran, dodging between the other people on the street and found his Patronus was waiting for him just past the entrance to Knockturn Alley. Memories of his own forays here, especially as a teen, brought enough fear to make his throat constrict. Knockturn Alley was not a safe place for the son of Harry Potter.

Harry continued to follow, and when he had reached Knockturn Alley, he felt a strong surge of panic. A cold wave of fear washed over him, thinking that Valen was somewhere on this dark and twisted street. He stopped, looking around for Draco.

Without the kids, Draco could move faster than Harry. He was furious and scared. People scattered ahead of him, staring after the Patronus lion. Draco was panting by the time the lion dove through the window of Borgin & Burkes. Draco peered in the storefront and spotted a head of white-blond hair.

"Daddy?" April said, her nose wrinkling. "That lady doesn't have any teeth and she's looking at us with a mean face."

"Just come on, April. Please don't stare," Harry said, searching the crowds that seemed to sneer at him and press in. He moved forward, battling his panic and vowing not to leave without his child. It was hard, though, and his breathing sped up again until he was nearly gasping as he looked around. He felt a tighter squeeze on his hand and looked at Sev again.

"He's okay, Daddy," Sev said in a voice so soft that Harry had to lean closer to hear him. "Valen knows things and he's okay."

Harry started to answer and tell his son that he was probably right when he suddenly spotted Draco across the street. He waved an arm and shouted, "Draco!"

Valen stood holding a mummified hand and staring open-mouthed at the Patronus which was speaking in Draco's voice. Draco glared at his eldest son who then, seeing his father looking through the window, squeaked and dropped the hand. The hand promptly crawled up and grabbed Valen's ankle. The boy shrieked. Draco moved to the door.

Harry faintly heard Valen's cry and tightened his grip on April and Sev as he ran across the street. Draco had already moved inside the door. Harry moved to the spot Draco had just vacated, fearing the worst but breathed a sigh of relief when he saw Valen inside the shop.

"Don't bring them in here," Draco snapped at Harry over Valen's cries. The boy was shaking his leg trying to dislodge the hand. Draco raised his wand, dispelled the Patronus and demanded the shop keeper remove the mummy hand from his child. Burke, one of the shop owners, rushed forward trying to retrieve the hand before Valen destroyed it.

Harry's eyes widened at Draco's tone, which snapped him out of his earlier panic as Harry realised where he was. Nodding once, Harry stepped backward, keeping April and Sev close to his body as they waited outside. A small crowd was gathering now, muttering to each other and eyeing Harry with distaste. Harry wanted nothing more than for Draco to come out so they could go home where it was safe. April tried to peer through the window, into the shop, in an attempt to see what was happening to Valen. Sev watched the strangers, patting his father's arm with a small but steady hand. Harry wondered

just where Sev learnt to be so calm while everything around him was chaotic as he also tried to peer in the window.

Draco grabbed Valen by the arm and dragged him from the shop. "We should get out of here," he said in a low voice.

Harry stood there, looking down at Valen, with April and Sev pressing in against him on both sides. The fear that had nearly swallowed him only moments earlier now shifted into a simmering anger that caused Harry to clench his teeth and narrow his eyes. Without looking away from Valen, Harry said in a steely voice, "We're going home now."

"I'm sorry," Valen began but fell silent at a look from Draco, who glared at his eldest son, fingers still digging into the boy's arm. "Apparate with them, and I'll take him?" he suggested to his husband.

Harry nodded at Draco, no longer trusting his own voice. Grasping April and Sev by the arms, he took a step back with them and, with a crack, Apparated into the foyer at Malfoy Manor. Sev had a frown on his face; he hated Apparating although he never complained.

"Is Valen in trouble, Daddy?" April asked with a worried look. She loved to torment her older brother but was still protective of him.

Harry gave her a look that stopped her questions but sighed at the hurt look that came over her face. "Daddy Draco and I need to talk to Valen because what he did wasn't safe, that's all. I need for you and Sev to let Aunt Hermione and Uncle Ron know we're home and you can play with your cousins until we come to get you."

April looked like she wanted to ask more questions but Sev tugged at her sleeve and together the two of them headed off to find their cousins. A crack filled the air and then Draco and Valen were standing there.

Draco released Valen and the boy winced, his hand coming up to rub his arm where it had been held. Draco crossed his arms over his chest, glaring at his eldest. "What the bloody hell were you thinking?" he demanded.

"He wasn't thinking," Harry cut in as Valen opened his mouth to reply. "Because if he had been thinking then he never would have wandered off alone and we wouldn't be standing here right now!"

Harry ran a hand through his hair, leaving it pointing in all directions before rubbing his forehead. He took a deep breath trying to calm down and looked at Valen. "Do you have any idea what could have happened to you? Any idea? I don't understand you, Valen; why did you do it?"

Draco saw his son cringe but then try to cover it. "I ... I just ... I wanted to see," Valen stammered.

Draco shook his head. "You have heard the stories about the war. You are our son. There are people who would hurt you Valen, just for that."

"There isn't anything in Knockturn Alley that you need to see," Harry said in a tight voice, the earlier fear still sending his emotions all over the place. When he had seen Valen in the shop, all he had wanted to do was grab his son and hold him close. Now he wanted to shake him, hoping that it might make him think twice next time about wandering away. "You don't so much as cross the street or head to the loo without telling one of us. Ever."

Valen shook, hands balled into fists. "You treat me like a baby!" he yelled.

Draco scowled again, fists clenched. He had some inkling now of why his father used to get so mad at him. The child was bloody infuriating sometimes.

Harry's eyes widened and his face flushed with anger as he stepped closer to Valen, his own hands clenched tightly. "Don't ever raise your voice to me," he hissed, barely moving his clenched jaw to speak. "And I suggest you wipe that look off your face right now! You're still only nine years old and you'll do as I say."

Valen flinched, stepping back. Even Draco was tempted to step back when he felt Harry's magic flare with his temper. The man's angry green eyes had been potent even before the war.

"Valen," Draco said sternly, "go to your room and remain there. Your Daddy Harry and I need to talk before we decide your punishment for today's recklessness."

Harry covered his face with a trembling hand and turned away from Valen, taking two steps in the other direction and breathing deeply. Valen looked between the two of them, seemingly shocked that even Daddy Harry, who was usually the pushover when it came

to the children's misbehaviour, was still so angry. Valen nodded to Draco, turned, and fled to his room.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN –

Dangerous Curiosity

Draco sighed, and reached for Harry, sliding his silver arm around his husband's waist, holding him firmly while he petted Harry's hair with the other, kissing the top of his head. "I now understand some of what my parents complained about," he admitted.

Harry laid his head on Draco's shoulder and stood there in the circle of his husband's arms. The endless images of what could have happened wouldn't stop running through his mind but, even worse, the image of Valen's angry face as he yelled at Harry was the one that kept looping back in over and over.

"I just don't know what to do with him sometimes," Harry said quietly, leaning against Draco. "He's so strong-willed. What are we supposed to do with him?"

"The irony is he isn't really doing anything you or I didn't do as well," Draco said, huffing. "He's curious about things."

"Just because we would have done it doesn't mean he can," Harry replied, pulling back enough to look into Draco's face. "If the wrong person would have seen him" He shook his head, his stomach clenching tightly at even the thought of what could have happened.

Draco had been angry and frightened, but he was calming down now. He could feel Harry still trembling with it though, the man's magic still making Draco shiver. Draco pulled back, "Let's talk in the study," he said, leading his husband to the room and closing the door.

Harry wrapped both arms around his torso and looked at Draco. There were times, with Valen, when Harry felt as if he were flying blind with nothing to guide him and it scared him that he might make a mistake that couldn't be fixed. "We could have lost him today, Draco," Harry said and then gave a strange laugh. "We did lose him! But – but it could have turned out differently and I don't think he gets that."

Draco frowned, reaching out to push his fingers through his husband's hair. He didn't want to further upset Harry but he had to speak up. "My father faced some of these same problems with me, but I don't think his methods will work for us. I was the only son of Lucius Malfoy. Not only wealthy and powerful, but a man with more than a few enemies. And I was easily recognisable for many of the same reasons."

"No," Harry muttered, green eyes flashing. "I'm not interested in his methods but ... I do want to keep our son safe. It's different with Sev and April but Valen is getting older; what can we do?"

"Do you remember me telling you that the day we met in Madam Malkin's Robe Shop was the first time I had ever met anyone who wasn't either a friend of or working for my father?" Draco asked.

Harry nodded, forcing back the small smile that wanted to emerge when he recalled the haughty blond boy in the robe shop.

Draco did smile a little, remembering falling all over himself trying to impress Harry. He had wanted to be close to him even then. "And did you think I hung out with Crabbe and Goyle for their exciting conversational skills?" Draco teased.

Harry snorted. "I figured they were for your protection, actually," He smiled and teased back, "You rather needed it with the way you shot your mouth off all the time."

Just the mention of it, brought back memories for Draco. "Fighting with you was the only chance I had then. You have asked in the past why we never spoke alone together before sixth year. Hard to dodge those two before my dad went to Azkaban," he explained. "And that was nothing compared to the control my father had over my life when I was not at school."

Harry frowned, hating what Draco had gone through as a child. "But I don't want to treat Valen like that."

"Wealthy children have bodyguards, Harry," Draco said. "I think that is true in the Muggle world, as well. Do you know a better way to protect him?"

"A bodyguard?" Harry blurted out, his eyebrows nearly disappearing into his hairline. "Are you saying we should hire a bodyguard for a nine-year-old child?"

Draco sighed, pulling his husband over to the sofa and sitting

down. "I don't know about that, yet. The other thing my father used was his reputation. People were afraid to cross him. Afraid of what he would do if they did."

Harry sat back, looking at Draco seriously. "Well," he said, his voice hard now, "Anyone who harmed any of our children would have to deal with a couple *very* powerful fathers."

Draco nodded. Harry was very powerful and people knew he had defeated Voldemort. Few knew just how powerful he was though. "Yet, most people don't think of the great Harry Potter as capable of revenge."

Harry's eyes narrowed. "I think I can be capable of quite a lot of revenge when it comes to my kids."

"Do you remember what I did to the *Daily Prophet*?" Draco asked.

"Yes," Harry replied. "We still own it."

"And one of the reasons no other paper has pulled anything like that is I made sure they knew we were the ones responsible for firing those involved. This is where using my father's tactics helped us. I have been thinking about letting it be known in gossip that the Lestrage brothers disappeared from custody because of us." Draco watched Harry's face carefully as he explained. Draco knew Harry had not liked it when he had explained why Narcissa might have been afraid of them. Now he was talking about using that power.

Harry frowned as he considered what Draco was saying. "And you really think that would help protect the kids?" he asked.

"I think we are still going to have to be very careful whenever they are out in public. But I think it might help if those who would wish to harm us through our kids knew that Rodolphus Lestrage isn't just missing. If they knew that he died in our dungeon." Draco met his husband's eyes as he said it. It was one of the things that they had kept secret even from most of the people on their side.

Staring at the floor, Harry thought about what Draco was telling him and sighed. He hated giving others more reasons to whisper about him and his family, but the stakes were much higher now than just momentary discomfort. Harry would do anything necessary, or unnecessary, to keep his children safe. He nodded and looked up at Draco. "If it would help our kids and scare away others then I think we should do it."

"Yes, the type of people who would hurt children would be less likely to do so if it meant that we would kill them," Draco answered, stroking Harry's arm soothingly. It was difficult for Harry but Draco was proud the man was letting Draco use his Slytherin instincts to help them. "In the meantime, we will just have to make sure Valen understands the danger he put himself in.

"I know," Harry agreed, now running both hands through his hair. "I just don't know how to get through to him sometimes."

"We will have to be quite strict with the children in public. I know you don't like that part, but it is important to teach them discipline that might save their lives." Draco sighed, feeling an eerie shiver at the way this echoed Lucius again.

Harry made a face at that but nodded. "I know but it's just that -" he sighed. "You're right."

Draco leant forward to kiss and hold his husband for a couple minutes before pulling back again. "So what punishment do we set for our wayward boy?"

"I don't know," Harry said, wondering what would make an impression on Valen. "Maybe take something away from him that he likes?"

"You won't like it," Draco said, sighing.

"Won't like what?" Harry asked, his brows furrowed. "Why would I have a problem with Valen's punishment?"

"I know you love to take him flying, but it's also the most effective thing to take from him," Draco said.

Harry's shoulders slumped and his face fell before he looked up at Draco in resignation. "Yes," he said with a sigh, "but he loves it too and whatever we do needs to make an impact."

"So no flying, not with his own safe-broom and not with us," Draco said. "How long?"

Harry frowned, remembering the times when he wasn't able to fly. "A week?" he suggested. "Maybe two weeks?"

Draco huffed and arched an eyebrow. "How much of an impression do you want to make?"

Harry looked up at the ceiling, head against the back of the couch. "A strong one," he said in a quiet voice.

Maybe Lucius had enjoyed punishing Draco, but Draco did not

enjoy punishing his children. Yet, he needed to find a way to protect Valen from his own impulses. "Then a month," Draco answered firmly.

Harry held his groan in. He knew Draco was right; this was about protecting their children's lives but a month was going to seem very long. "A month," he repeated in agreement, less firm.

"And you can't give in because he bats those lovely green eyes at you or draws a cute picture of the two of you flying or some such thing," Draco admonished him.

Harry huffed. "Fine," he agreed.

Draco could picture it and he knew that it would be just as hard on Harry as Valen. So he smiled, grey eyes soft with affection. "You and I can go flying together in the meantime."

"Oh, well then," Harry began, grinning now at Draco as he thought about the two of them flying. "I guess a month will be just fine."

Harry and Draco talked for a few more minutes before deciding that it would be best to check on April and Sev before dealing with Valen. They found their two youngest children outside with their cousins while Ron joined in on the games and Hermione sat on a blanket, reading a book. There was very little to explain to Hermione since April had already shared all of the details of the afternoon. They reassured April that her brother was fine and gave extra hugs to Sev who seemed quieter than usual. Harry knew they would have to talk further with both of them since it was important that all of their children understand the dangers in wandering away. Not that Harry was in any hurry to go anywhere near Knockturn Alley in the foreseeable future.

Once April and Sev began playing again, Harry and Draco Apparated to the hall outside of the childrens' rooms. Draco didn't want Valen to be alone too long, wondering what his punishment would be since he knew his son was probably growing more agitated by the minute. Valen didn't deal well with the unknown, which was probably what drove him to explore Knockturn Alley. Harry pushed the bedroom door open a crack and saw Valen sitting cross-legged on his bed and his arms folded in front of him. Valen was staring at

the floor, his face miserable. As the door was pushed open further, Valen's head snapped up and his eyes widened to see his fathers coming in to his room.

He jumped off the bed and ran towards them, throwing his arms around Harry's waist and pressing his face to his chest. "I'm sorry, Daddy," he pleaded.

Harry winced, laying a hand on Valen's head and turning his face to look at Draco for strength. He had prepared himself to punish Valen but wasn't quite as prepared to see his son so unhappy.

Draco scowled and shook his head at Harry. "Valen, we are glad you see that what you did is wrong. We need to talk to you about it."

Frowning, Harry brought his hands down to grasp Valen's shoulders. "Come on and let's sit down again," he said.

Draco Conjured a couple of chairs and gestured to the bed for Valen to sit down again. Valen shook his head and clung to Harry, a movement that reminded Draco of April.

At nine years old, cuddles and hugs were getting to be a rare thing from Valen and, although the circumstances were not good, Harry couldn't help wanting to hold on to his son just a bit longer. Harry sighed, feeling his heart clench a little as he stood back from his son. "Sit down," he said, nodding.

Valen looked sadly up at Harry, reluctantly released his father, and sat down on the edge of the bed, fingers twisting in the bedding as he sat there.

Draco waited for Harry to sit down. He controlled his face not to show his annoyance with the way his son was behaving. It was difficult to be the parent most likely to hold the line on discipline. He and Harry had both had childhoods full of unreasonable punishments. Yet, Draco feared for his son's future if they didn't teach him now.

Harry sat, glanced at Draco, and then back at Valen. "Now," he said, "we talked about it, and ... we've decided to take flying away."

"What?" Valen gasped, looking gobsmacked. He looked between the two of them, panicked. "You can't!"

"For a month," Harry said, his voice strong. He knew Valen was going to push back on this subject and Harry needed to stay firm. "No flying of any kind for a whole month."

Valen's shock quickly turned to a scowl. "But why?" he pleaded.

"Because you endangered yourself and your family," Draco replied with a coldness he didn't feel.

"My family?" Valen asked, looking genuinely confused

"You led all of us right into Knockturn Alley," Harry said. "There's a good reason we never go there, Valen. It's not safe, and it's definitely not a place for kids."

"Daddy Draco goes in there," Valen retorted and then winced.

"Not with you children with me," Draco answered.

Harry straightened up, looking his son in the eye, not liking this new tone from Valen. "Daddy Draco is an adult, with a wand that he knows how to use to protect himself. You are not."

"I don't need one," Valen said, crossing his arms, his voice as haughty as Draco's ever was.

"Oh, is that so?" said Harry, raising his eyebrows.

Draco's eyes narrowed, wondering what his son was playing at. The hairs on the back of Draco's neck prickled and he had the same eerie sensation as a Sensitive as he had had when he first met Harry. Still he waited to see what his son's argument would be.

"I can do magic without it," the boy insisted, looking smug and proud with a lift of his chin.

"Most kids can," Harry said, wondering why Valen would state something so obvious. Accidental magic wasn't uncommon with so many children in the Manor. "You've been doing magic since you were a baby. April does magic sometimes, and even Sev does. It doesn't mean you can control it."

Valen frowned, looking less sure of himself. "I can make things happen I want to happen."

"What kinds of things?" Harry asked, noticing the way Draco was studying Valen as he spoke.

Valen cocked his head, held up his hand and narrowed his eyes in concentration. A quill flew from his desk to his hand.

Harry's eyes widened and he barely suppressed a gasp. "You can actually make things happen *consciously*?" He turned his head to look quickly at Draco.

Draco saw the magic, felt it on his skin, his mouth going dry when he realised just what his son – his nine-year-old – had done.

Valen beamed, looking smug. "Yes, I can send it back," he said firmly. And did.

Harry sat back a bit heavily, stunned. A large majority of his childhood had been spent with Muggles and he had no real concept of what wizard-raised children might be capable of or if this was normal. He looked at Draco again. "Could you ...?" he asked.

Draco shook his head. "I still can't do much wandless," he admitted, voice a near whisper. Not just wandless, he was thinking, but non-verbal.

Harry shook his head, wondering what this meant for their son. "How long have you been able to do that?" he asked Valen.

Valen shrugged but smiled. "You do it all the time, Daddy Harry. So I have been practicing."

Harry let out a strange half-laugh. "Well," he said honestly, "it's very impressive."

"It is impressive, but it wouldn't be enough if you were attacked by a more experienced wizard who wanted to hurt or kill you," Draco countered, trying to get control of the situation again.

Harry immediately sobered, the smile quickly fading. He had forgotten for a moment why he and Draco were there. "Yes," he said. "That type of magic wouldn't be any help at all."

Draco actually thought it might be if it could be used for *Expelliarmus*, but he wouldn't say that in front of Valen. "The people your Daddy Harry and I fought in the war would be much more powerful than you are yet. And some of them were never captured."

Valen frowned again, looking between the two of them as if not sure whether or not to believe them. "But I thought all the Death Eaters are dead or in prison."

Harry winced a little at hearing that title coming out of his child's mouth. He and Draco had always wanted to protect their children and now they had to tear away some of that innocence in order to keep them safe. "Not all of them," Harry admitted. "There were a lot."

Draco took a deep breath. "Malfoys have always been targets to those with grudges or who want to profit from our fear," he said firmly to his son. "You are my heir and that means you will always have to consider that. It is the price we pay for our heritage."

Harry couldn't exactly add to that, but he nodded, hoping that Draco was getting through to Valen.

Valen looked serious and held his head up, sitting up straighter. "I understand," he said proudly.

Harry wanted to laugh a little. He didn't think Valen could get any more like Draco. "Good," he said. "There's still no flying for a month."

Valen rolled his eyes at that and then nodded. "Yes, Daddy," he said with a heavy sigh.

Harry leant closer, catching Valen's gaze. "Your sister and your brother watch everything you do, Valen, and we're trusting you to think about that before you make your choices. So no more walking off when we take you out?"

Valen took a quick breath, that having apparently hit a nerve. He was quiet for a moment before nodding. "I won't go anywhere alone, without permission," he said.

Draco nodded, recognising the additional caveat. Valen was still curious about things and Draco thought that it wouldn't be long before he needed to start supervising some of his son's explorations. His suspicions were confirmed at the way his son's gaze met his own. "Good," Draco answered softly.

Harry held out a hand towards Valen who took it with a lopsided grin, allowing himself to be pulled forward until he was half on Harry's lap and half on Draco's lap. This wouldn't be the last time Valen broke a rule and Harry knew that. But there wouldn't be too many times left in the future where handing out a punishment could still end with hugs and maybe a few tickles. Valen was growing up and trying to become his own person. If the wandless, non-verbal magic was any indication, he would soon be a force to be reckoned with and Harry knew that it would be more important than ever that he and Draco provide their son with guidance and infinite amounts of love. Today, though – today Valen was still nine and even though he had crossed the line and been defiant he needed to know his fathers forgave him. As Valen leant his head on Draco's shoulder, Harry smiled at his husband and did the same.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT –

Playing to Their Strengths

Severus pointed to the sheet music resting in front of him, looking up at Draco. "*Allegro ma non troppo?*" he asked, hands poised on the keyboard.

"Yes, that's 'fast but not too fast.' It's Italian," Draco answered. Severus could already play piano by ear very well for a six-year-old, but he'd wanted to learn to read music. Draco smiled reassuringly, trying to keep his hands to his side and let his youngest son work his way through the music. Sev was actually picking it up much faster than Valen had. Draco smiled, looking over at his husband.

Harry smiled back, listening to Sev's slightly choppy version of Clementi sonatina. He was proud of the way Sev tried so hard and wanted to learn more about music.

After a minute, Sev hit a wrong note. His small fist clenched in obvious frustration and his face set in a frown.

Draco rested one hand on the small of his son's back. "You have it. I know you can play it. It's just hard to divide your attention between reading and playing."

Sev huffed and then took a deep breath, beginning to play again.

Harry stood from where he was sitting in one of the armchairs of the drawing room, standing nearer to the piano. With a few more mistakes, and a little more encouragement, Sev finished the song, but didn't look extremely happy with himself. Harry recognised the look as one he had seen before when Sev was being too hard on himself.

Draco patted Sev's back. "It's a good start and it will get easier the more you practise."

Sev sighed, slumping a little, and mumbled something unintelligible.

Draco frowned and looked between Harry and Sev. "What is it?" he asked the boy.

Sev winced slightly before looking up at both his fathers. "Valen

can do it," he said quietly.

Harry frowned, a bit confused as he looked from Sev to his husband.

"Valen has had several more years of practise than you have," Draco said. Then, relenting some, "and you are already better than he was at this age."

Sev's grey eyes widened a little. "Yeah?" he said.

"Yes, you are very talented," Draco assured his son, and looked over at Harry, amusement showing in his eyes.

Harry grinned, placing hands on Sev's shoulders. He knew his son struggled a bit with being the youngest and having an older brother with such a strong personality. April's personality was fairly strong too in a different way. Sev's nature was quieter and more contemplative but he didn't seem to see that he was no less a strong presence in the Manor than anyone else. In fact, Harry knew, there were times when Sev was taken more seriously because he so rarely gave an opinion unless he had thought carefully about it.

"Valen's good at everything," the little boy said, releasing a small sigh.

"Well, Valen's older," said Harry. "He knows just a little more, but you'll know all of that same stuff too one day."

"And you will be better at some things than him," Draco added. "Just like I am better at some things than Daddy Harry and vice versa."

Sev looked between them again, his eyes a little brighter. Harry could almost see his brain working as he considered that and accepted it to be true.

"He's right," said Harry, nodding.

"And better than April too?" Sev asked.

Harry snorted. "Yes, at some things," he said. "But you don't have to be better than everyone."

Draco rolled his eyes at that, but didn't let his son see it.

Harry raised an eyebrow at Draco and shrugged. "Just keep at it, kid," he said to Sev. "One day, you might even be better at playing than Daddy Draco."

Sev's mouth opened a little.

Draco kissed the top of his son's head. He actually thought it very

likely that Sev would do that quite easily. "It's possible," he said, eyes on Harry as he said it.

Sev went back to his practise with renewed vigor, and by the time another half hour was up, he was already playing better. He was beaming as he finished, and Harry ruffled his hair. "Sounded very good to me," he said to the boy, smiling.

"Nicely done," Draco conceded, smiling. They closed the piano. "Time for you to rejoin the others. Master Prentice will be expecting you to work on your Latin today."

Sev sighed a little, but didn't whine like the other children did. Harry was almost certain that he and Draco were raising a Ravenclaw. The boy hopped from the bench and headed for the door.

Draco grinned at his husband and rolled his eyes. April would have screamed bloody murder at the mention of Latin lessons. Draco reached a hand out for Harry.

Harry snorted and took Draco's hand, walking with their son out of the room.

As they strode down the hall and through the house, Eric and Gwen came out of nowhere, screaming and chasing one another.

Harry pulled to an abrupt stop, falling forward but catching himself on Draco's arm.

Draco put an arm around his husband's waist to catch him as Hermione and Ron's twins shot by them. He looked about to see if there was an adult following the children.

Sure enough, Ron was not too far behind them, panting. "Sorry," he said quickly, dashing after the three-year-olds.

Draco chuckled, keeping his arm around Harry and following their youngest son to the small classroom they had set up near the library. There they found Valen, April, Emily and Christophe already hard at work on their Latin lessons and Master Prentice, their middle-aged tutor, reading scrolls of previously completed work.

Sev crossed the room and took his seat next to Emily, who was working very diligently. All the children looked up. Valen arched an eyebrow questioningly. Draco shook his head, knowing his eldest was looking for an excuse to get out of Latin.

Emily glanced up for only a moment, but April smiled, placing her quill upon the desk, and Chris put his quill down as well.

"No, you lot, keep working," said Harry.

Valen rolled his eyes and there was a kind of collective groan from the other children. Prentice got up from his desk and came to the door, stepping out into the hall to talk to Draco and Harry.

"How are they doing?" Harry asked.

"Each to their gifts," Prentice said with a small smile but then sighed. "April still daydreams too much and Valen is more interested in reading than in the language arts. Chris is strong in languages but mathematics still frustrates him. Sev is best in maths but seems to enjoy most subjects. He just lacks confidence."

"Doesn't surprise me at all," Harry said, nodding.

Draco cocked his head, considering. "Maybe a family trip to Europe sometime soon would help strengthen their appreciation in the languages."

Prentice nodded. "Very good idea. Hearing languages spoken by those native to them always helps."

Harry looked at Draco. "To where?" he said. "They already know French."

"I think visiting other countries might be a good idea. Spain, Germany, Italy, maybe others," Draco answered.

Harry shrugged, "Sure," he said. "We could take all of them."

"I will make a list of sites I think would be good for their education," Prentice said and then, at Draco's nod, went back to the classroom.

Harry took Draco's hand again, smiling at him. "Well, I'm sure they'll be excited when they hear about that," he said.

Draco lay back in their big bed with a contented sigh. Six children in bed and another day done. He smiled up at his husband, watching him undress. It wasn't much to watch, though, as Harry simply stripped with magic. He climbed into bed after Draco, laying down beside him.

Draco chuckled, rolling on his side facing his husband. "You still make it look so easy," he whispered.

Harry grinned and shrugged, reaching for a piece of Draco's hair

as he usually did.

"Sev tries so hard to do everything that you and Valen can do but he probably won't have the wandless magic," Draco observed.

"Probably not," Harry agreed with a sigh. "Not that same ability anyway. I hardly have to try."

"Yet, the academic side is his strength. I wonder if he will like potions," Draco mused.

"Very likely," Harry said, smiling.

"Severus Snape would be amused," Draco added. "And April," he sighed, "it's hard to get her to focus long enough to find her strengths."

"I know," Harry said, sighing as well. "What are we supposed to do about that? She has more doodles on her parchment than actual work."

Draco remembered stolen bits of parchment from Harry and smirked. "Sound like anyone you remember?"

Harry snorted and rolled his eyes. "Maybe," he said.

"I doubt my methods of incentive are appropriate for a child, but we will have to look for a way to motivate her," Draco said, right hand reaching to slide over his husband's skin as he mentioned his own methods.

"And what are your methods of incentive?" Harry asked, smirking.

"Oh, I think you remember quite well," Draco purred, fingertips caressing Harry's right nipple. "Why, do you have something new you need to learn?"

"Mmm," Harry let out slowly, waggling his eyebrows. "In a teaching mood?" he asked.

"Always in the mood with you," Draco replied, fingers sliding over to tweak the second nipple, his heart speeding up and his erection firming.

Harry bit his lip, sliding his own hand down over Draco's chest. He liked all of the things Draco had taught him in the past. Each lesson had been ... stimulating, to say the least.

"What do you want to *learn* today?" Draco asked, licking his lips and shivering at Harry's touch.

Harry grinned slyly, moving his hand lower and lower. "I've

always thought *wand* history was exceptionally interesting," he said.

Draco chuckled but then gasped as those fingers moved closer to his arousal. "Well, my wand is particularly fond of you," he replied as said shaft twitched excitedly.

Harry finally closed his hand around that shaft, squeezing gently. "Oh, yes, I can feel that," he said, voice dropping.

Draco's reply was a moan of delight as he fell back onto the pillows and arched his hips into his lover's touch.

Harry watched him, heat gathering in his belly. "What sort of core does your wand have?" he asked teasingly, shifting so that he could move down Draco's body.

"Dragon's heart," Draco answered honestly, knowing that it worked on so many levels for them.

Harry had reached the well-visited space between Draco's long legs and he grinned up at his husband. "Dragon heart string," he repeated, licking slowly over the head of Draco's cock.

"Yesss," Draco hissed and then whispered. The lion tattoo on his hip, rolled excitedly. "And you do like dragons, don't you?"

"Oh, I love dragons," Harry breathed over the soft, red flesh in his hand. "Especially those that are blond."

"You like teasing dragons," Draco said, smirking and lifting his hips again.

Harry met Draco's eyes, grinning as he dragged his tongue across the head again. "Well, of course," he said.

Draco gasped and clutched the bed covers to control himself.

"I love doing this to you," Harry whispered, licking again, "because of the way you look when I do, the way you sound." He reached down with his right hand, letting his fingers trail over the skin of Draco's leg.

"Oh, yes, devour me," Draco encouraged, shivering and the lion mirrored him.

Harry smiled. "Swallow you whole," he replied, eyes on Draco's face as he lowered his mouth over his length.

Draco moaned, one hand coming up to tangle in Harry's hair. "Oh, so good," he whispered.

Harry flicked and pressed his tongue, taking in every drop of pre-come, drowning in every movement Draco made, every sound he

released. "You want me to fuck you?" he breathed, kissing down Draco's shaft and then up his abdomen until he could lick at the lion across Draco's hip.

"Want you to practise dragon riding, my hero," Draco managed to gasp, writhing under him.

"Ooh," Harry purred, sliding up Draco's body to slip his tongue into Draco's ready mouth. He reached behind himself with slicked fingers, not wanting to waste too much time on preparation.

Draco trembled, hard and eager for Harry. He sucked on his lover's tongue, one hand still curled in the man's dark hair.

Harry moaned into Draco's mouth, cock throbbing between their bodies as he stretched himself. "Fuck, gonna ride you so hard," he whispered, taking fingers out and sliding even more up Draco's body.

"Yes, my love, ride me," Draco agreed, his silver hand reaching up to caress Harry's shaft.

Harry hissed and moaned, sliding a hand into Draco's hair as he moved down onto his cock.

Draco still gasped at that first moment when his lover's body stretched, the head of his cock breaching Harry's entrance and then the tight ring sliding down his shaft, warm heat swallowing him. His eyelids fluttered and he moaned loudly, fingers tightening in his lover's hair.

"Oh, Merlin, yes," Harry let out in a low growl, sitting up to push himself down on Draco as far as he could.

Draco shuddered, writhing under his lover. He felt Harry's body and magic pulse around him and it was still the best feeling he knew. "Yes, Gods, yes," he cried out.

Harry tilted his head back, his eyes closing as he shifted and rolled his hips down against Draco's hips and the thick cock inside him.

Draco moaned, pressing his feet against the bed so that he could thrust up into Harry as the man began to move on top of him. He wrapped silver fingers around Harry's cock, stroking the man's flesh in time with their movements.

"Yes, Draco, fuck," Harry moaned loudly, grasping his husband's shoulders as he rocked a little faster, his cock spurting a bit.

Draco gathered that slick pre-come on his metal fingers, using it

to make them slide better and rubbing the head of Harry's cock with the thumb on each up stroke. He was panting now as Harry rode him faster, making his body shudder with every move.

"So good," Harry gasped, not slowing. "So good, Draco!" He leant back, using one hand to hold himself up against the mattress and thrust up into Draco's hand.

Draco's right hand slipped from Harry's head as the man leant back, so he grasped his thigh instead, still working his cock with the other and thrusting up into his lover's body.

Harry's cries grew louder, his movements faster, less coordinated. Draco's hand slipped and squeezed and pulled, and the heat was rising, and it was so *fucking* good. Before another five minutes had passed, Harry was coming, thrusting himself into Draco's lap repeatedly.

Draco came screaming and thrashing under his husband, filling Harry's body with his seed as Harry's slick come coated his hand and his belly.

"Fuck," Harry released in a strangled groan, panting heavily as his eyelids drooped.

Draco was still panting and reached his right hand up to draw Harry down to him, cupping the back of his head.

Harry sighed, feeling Draco's heartbeat as he kissed him.

Draco hummed into the kiss and shivered with the aftermath of their magic entwined, sparking in his body. When he drew back it was to look into those green eyes he adored so much. "You make me feel like a dragon," he said. "Like I am invincible to anything but your love, my lion."

Harry smiled at him. "Then I'm doing my job," he whispered, pushing Draco's slightly damp hair back.

Draco felt such peace at moments like this that it was almost hard to believe. He had the most wonderful husband in the world, three amazing children and a lot of good friends. "Very good at it," he whispered.

Harry's smile grew into a grin. "You're not so bad yourself, you know," he teased.

Draco sighed contentedly, his cock had softened now and he wriggled a bit, slipping from inside Harry and feeling the sticky mess

between them. "Cleaning Charm or nice hot bath?" he asked, arching an eyebrow.

"You make a nice, hot bath sound good," Harry replied, kissing the corner of Draco's mouth.

"You make everything good," Draco responded. He gave his husband a quick kiss and gently smacked his arse, encouraging him to get up.

Harry rolled lightly to the side and pushed himself up off the bed, standing naked and stretching.

Draco shook his head, smiling at the glory that was his husband – naked and just shagged. He Summoned his wand, walking to their private bath and starting it. "So I think the trip is a good idea," he said, looking back over his shoulder as he removed his silver hand.

"Yeah, me too," said Harry. "Maybe it'll help April actually pay attention."

"Do you think Ron and Hermione can come along and bring their kids, too?" Draco asked, setting the silver hand on the sink counter. "Or is travelling with six kids tempting fate?"

"Six kids," Harry sighed. "Well, we could bring Bill and Fleur too if Bill can get off work."

"Seven kids, but at least the parent to child ratio goes up, along with having another multilingual adult along," Draco said, starting to think through the complications of taking that many people on a trip through several countries.

Harry frowned thoughtfully and shrugged. "Whatever works best," he said. "That would be a lot of people."

"We might want to hire someone else to help with the children on the trip," Draco said. "Maybe even Prentice himself if he is willing to help continue their studies as part of the trip." Draco turned off the taps, testing the water.

Harry put a leg in the tub. "We could do that, I suppose," he said, letting his second leg join the first. "At least for going out, keeping them safe."

Draco slid into the tub as well, sighing happily at the feel of the warm water. "And it might be nice to have someone to watch the kids while the parents go out occasionally."

"Could one person handle *seven* kids?" Harry asked, raising an

eyebrow as he slide next to Draco. "I don't know if I *want* one person to handle seven kids."

Draco chuckled, turning around with his back to Harry, a usual hint he wanted his back washed. "Hopefully the kids would be in bed asleep," he said. "But, maybe we could hire a second person as well."

"Would probably be a good idea," said Harry, lathering up a flannel and then pressing it to Draco's back. As he moved the soft cloth over Draco, Harry considered another option. While it had taken Molly time to move past Arthur's death, she was doing much better and staying involved in the lives of her children and grandchildren. Harry couldn't think of anyone more comfortable in large groups of children than Molly Weasley. Harry kissed Draco's shoulder and murmured, "What about asking Molly to go with us and help out?"

"Mmm," Draco hummed happily at his lover's attentions. "It's very much worth considering. The more I think about the trip, the more of an adventure I think it will be," he continued. "Maybe we could manage to catch some of the International Quidditch games."

"Now, *that* would be fun," said Harry, massaging as he washed.

Draco bent his head, pulling his long hair to one side in front so Harry could get his upper back and neck. "Ron might even be able to consider the trip a business expense since he could promote the brooms."

Harry nodded again. "He's always looking," he said. Their friend's business had grown quite a lot in the last few years. Some of the more minor Quidditch teams had even begun using his brooms over the latest Firebolt models.

Although the idea of the trip was primarily for the children to see other parts of Europe, the more Draco thought about it, the more he saw it might be good for the adults as well, both fun and good for their various enterprises. For Molly, it would be a way to help and enjoy her grandkids. "Then I will start working on the plans tomorrow. It might be good business for us as well," he said.

Harry nodded again. "Might be very good," he said. "Could help Fred and George too; get their names out more internationally." In recent years, he'd signed on as the twins' partner – more to help them with his 'name' than for more money himself. He'd done the same to

help Ron out.

Draco leant back, turning his head to kiss Harry gently. "And this may be the last family trip before Valen starts Hogwarts," he added.

Harry frowned slightly, sighing. "He's ten," he said quietly, sounding as if he'd only really just thought about it, though he had thought about it before.

Draco turned around putting his legs over Harry's and his arms around him to hold him close. "Yes, not so young anymore," he agreed.

"Can you believe that?" Harry asked, holding Draco's sides. "He's *ten*."

"Ten going on thirty," Draco said with a huff. "Smart, beautiful, thinks he knows everything, and enjoys pushing the limits." He shook his head. "McGonagall might want to consider early retirement."

Harry chuckled, shaking his head. "And," he took a deep breath, "I will finally admit it aloud – probably in Slytherin. A Slytherin came out of me."

Draco laughed happily, half a dozen crude remarks occurring to him at his husband's declaration. He slid his hand beneath the water and up his thigh. "You like Slytherin inside you," he teased.

Harry smirked at the familiar line. "Yes," he said, "but that is entirely different." Then he chuckled again. "Even if he is in Slytherin, I'm sure he'll make a good one. You're not so bad."

Draco gave a look of mock offence. "Oh, so I have completely lost my bad boy image?" His tone belied his hand moving up so caress Harry's arse.

Harry waggled his eyebrows. "Well, not completely," he said in a teasing tone. "But, being married to Saint Potter might have tarnished that image a little."

Draco snorted. "Yes, Gryffindor Paragon whose language and perverted nature would scare Hippogriffs into a stampede. Gods, I love you."

Harry laughed loudly at that. "And I love you," he said.

– CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE –

A New Passion

Tonks' house was pretty big, what with her being married to a rock star and all. It looked relatively normal on the outside, but the inside was nearly as loud as her hair and her husband's band. It was exactly as one would expect a rock star's house to look, and Tonks fit right in.

Harry and Draco had been there before, but it seemed different every visit. The foyer walls had been a shocking yellow the last time they'd come. Now they were violet.

"It was so cool, Don," said April, as the man she was talking to helped a pregnant Tonks through the door. "You guys sound even better in person!"

Donaghan chuckled. "Thanks," he answered.

Harry smiled. They'd just left a Weird Sisters concert and it was the first time the kids had ever gone to one. It had been loud, and it had been filled with screaming fans, bangs, and sparks. Harry had found it rather enjoyable.

Draco's favourite part of the evening had been dancing with his husband, even if people kept bumping into them and they had to keep an eye on their children. He had worried they might get trampled at points. Their children had seemed to have a lot of fun as well. Valen appeared to have inherited Draco's moves and, given that he was still only ten, that was a bit disturbing.

Harry almost pulled the door shut behind him, but then noticed his exceptionally quiet son poking along. Sev had been silent since the concert's end. Harry was getting an awed vibe from him. He didn't know why the boy would be so awed. He'd never been to a concert before, true, but it wasn't the first time he'd seen Don play.

Roxy, Tonks' daughter, was bounding around, hair currently neon green as she appeared to still be dancing despite the fact that the concert was over. She bounced up to Sev. "Dance with me!"

Sev startled, drawn out of his thoughts. "What?" he asked absently. It was odd. He usually played very well with Roxy, as she was only a year younger than he was.

"Dance," Roxy insisted, grabbing both of Sev's hands and pulling him into the middle of the room.

Harry sat on the fuchsia sofa, watching the two children.

"There's no music," Sev pointed out, then looked over at Donaghan, that expression of awe passing over his face again.

"The music's in your head, Sev. Can't you hear it?" Roxy asked.

Draco smiled, sitting beside his husband, patting his leg and watching the children.

"I always hear music," Sev answered, almost smug in his words. "But it's better when you can *really* hear it." He looked at Don yet again.

The man grinned, standing up. "Well, if your ears aren't bleeding already from the concert, I can put some music on." He walked across the room to the impressive Muggle stereo. "What sort of stuff do you like?"

Sev's eyes were suddenly alive with excitement. "Well, I can play Mozart and Beethoven, and I listen to you lot on the wireless, and Nan likes Celestina Warbeck, but I don't like her much," he said very quickly.

Don chuckled again. "I've got a lot more than that here." He opened a glass door on their entertainment system, revealing hundreds of CD cases.

"What's that?" asked Sev, cocking his head.

"It plays copies of the music off discs," Roxy explained.

Draco arched an eyebrow as his eldest son sat down beside him.

"Yep," Don agreed, getting down to his knees to pull the CDs out.

Harry hadn't seen a CD in a long time. Not since living with the Dursleys. Well, he'd watched Mr Weasley try to play one in a toaster once before. Harry smiled to himself at the memory.

"Is it Muggle music?" Sev asked, getting to his knees to look on in fascination.

"Yeah," Don answered. "There's not nearly enough choice in wizarding music, since our world is a lot smaller. And the Muggles

have really excellent stuff. Have you ever listened to anything Muggle?"

"In films, I guess," said Sev, not looking up from the shiny, colourful music cases. "But you can't really hear it well most of the time."

Draco listened. He hadn't had much more experience than his son as far as Muggle things went.

Tonks laughed. "Just don't put on any Nine Inch Nails," she told her husband, flopping down in a nearby chair.

Don rolled his eyes and snorted. "Nah, none of that. Do you like rock then?" he asked Sev.

Sev nodded, excited again.

"Well, all right." He began pulling CDs out and piling them on the floor. "We'll start you out with the classics. We've got The Beatles, and the Rolling Stones, and The Doors, and Led Zeppelin, and the Eagles"

Sev watched eagerly as Donaghan showed him each album cover and recited each band name. The cases were shiny and colourful, each one more exciting than the last.

"Ever heard of any of them?" Don asked.

Sev shook his head. "They're all rock music?"

"Yep. They're all rock music. Older stuff, but still the greatest."

"Beetles? Rocks? Doors?" Draco asked, looking in confusion to his husband to explain this one.

Harry laughed. "They're bands," he said to Draco's baffled expression.

"What's the best?" asked April.

"Well, I like the Stones myself," Don answered. "But I suppose there is no real 'best', unless you're going by how many albums sold."

"Am I going to like this?" Draco whispered, leaning in to kiss Harry's cheek.

"Did you like the concert?" Harry replied, amused.

Draco nodded. "It was pretty good. I like dancing," he said. "I mean, it isn't Mozart, but it is fun."

Harry was still amused. "Well, this isn't Mozart either," he said. "It's not as loud as the Weird Sisters, though. You might like it."

Don stood with one of the CDs in hand and walked over to put

it into the player. They all sat in silence for a few seconds before the music began, and it sounded as though Mick Jagger was in the room with them. The song 'Miss You' came from the speakers surrounding them, and Sev was obviously entranced. His fingers began to play out a rhythm against his thighs and he appeared to be listening carefully as though he could separate each musical instrument in his head.

"I think we are in trouble," Draco tried to say to his husband over the noise.

Harry grinned, taking in Sev's wide eyes with delight. "Or we are witnessing the beginnings of a rocker."

Draco made a pained looking face. This was not what he had in mind for his son's future. "You're going to break it to him that electric things won't work at the Manor?"

Harry winced and sighed. "Do I have to be the one?"

Valen leant over both of them. "I'll tell him," he said smugly.

"Ah, older brother to the rescue," Harry said sarcastically. "I'm sure you would."

"Hey, the Manor has its rules," Valen said as if that justified it.

Harry rolled his eyes and pushed Valen playfully. "Let Sev have his fun. He might not even ask." Harry doubted that, however.

"Dance!" Roxy was shouting and jumping up and down.

Sev was listening almost so intently, Harry didn't know if he would have room for thought to dance. But the boy stood up and began to move, looking even more lost in thought.

They listened to almost the entire 'Some Girls' album, then Don played at least one song from the other CDs he'd taken out. Sev never lost interest and asked dozens of questions; questions about everything. Who were the band members? How long had they been around? What instruments did they use? Who played what? Who, in Don's opinion, played the best guitar?

Don answered all with amusement and enthusiasm, and turned to Harry and Draco when Sev abandoned questions to look at even more CDs. "Future musician here?" he asked.

"He plays several instruments very well already," Draco said proudly, "especially the piano." He smirked at the last bit, glancing at his husband.

Harry laughed and blushed, catching an odd questioning look

from April. "Yes, especially the piano," he agreed. "I'm starting to think he could play anything he picks up, though."

Sev grinned over at the adults.

"I am sure he could," Draco said proudly. He reached to hold Harry's hand. "But can we handle it?" he teased.

"I believe I could," Harry smirked. "Can you?"

"I think you two could handle just about anything," Tonks declared. "Even a rocker in the family!"

Sev's eyes glittered with possibility. "Where do you buy these, Don?" he asked, holding up one of the shiny disks.

"Muggle music shops," Don answered. "But you've got to have a CD player to get them to work."

Sev looked pleadingly over at Harry and Draco.

Valen snorted. "Here it comes."

Draco sighed, not actually wanting to disappoint Sev.

Harry ran a hand through his always-tousled hair. "Well, son," he began, "it's Muggle. You know Muggle things don't work around a lot of magic."

Sev's lower lip stuck out just a little, as it always did when he was about to get upset. "It wouldn't work at home?"

Harry sighed. "There's just too much power around us at home."

"Manor wouldn't let it. It would be jealous," Valen said in a way that suggested he agreed with the Manor.

Sev looked crestfallen and April huffed at Valen. "You're such a prat," she complained.

"He can play any instrument he touches, why does he need a Muggle thing?" Valen retorted, shrugging.

Harry shook his head. "I'm sorry, Sev," he said. "We would get you one if we could."

Sev looked to be trying to keep himself from getting even more upset. Harry knew that Sev rarely asked for anything for himself or showed such blatant excitement on his face and he wished there were a way to give him what he wanted.

"Well, hold on there," said Don with a crooked smile. "Sometimes I've got to be in places with too much magic and my Muggle equipment doesn't work right. I had a CD player specially made. *Technically*, it's not exactly legal, since it's a Muggle object that's

been tampered with, but it's not going to leap up and snap a Muggle's nose off if they happen to pick it up. They wouldn't be able to tell there was any difference at all. If it's all right with your dads, I can let you have it."

Draco thought fondly of Mr Weasley and knew that if he were still with them Sev would have to worry about the player being dissected. He arched an eyebrow and looked at Harry.

Harry smiled, staring at what he thought of as Sev's 'begging face.' With his grey eyes and silky black hair, it was a face that was hard not to give in to. Harry was only relieved that Sev hardly used that expression. "Well, I'm pretty sure the authorities won't arrest you," he said. "It's all right with me if it's all right with your father."

Draco rolled his eyes and sighed. He could hardly resist in the face of such pressure. But he did have a concern. "How loud is the thing?"

"It's a portable and has headphones," Don answered. "He'll be the only one that can hear it."

"How does it work?" Valen asked, apparently unable to maintain his scorn over his curiosity.

"Well, it usually runs on batteries," said Don. "But the one I have is adapted so that magic powers it. It should actually work exceptionally well at your place."

"Can I please have it, Father?" Sev asked, looking up hopefully at Draco.

"I suppose," Draco answered guardedly but smiled at his son's enthusiasm.

Sev beamed, leaping up from the floor to give Draco a hug, wrapping both arms strongly around Draco's neck.

Don laughed at him. "I'll go up and get it," he said, leaving the room.

"Did you have music like this when you were young?" Draco asked his husband, still holding a happy Sev.

"Sort of," Harry answered. "Dudley was the one with the music, but it didn't stop me from hearing it."

Draco returned Sev's hug and sat back watching the boy's excitement. His unrestrained enthusiasm reminded Draco of Harry.

Don entered back into the room a few minutes later with the

portable CD player in hand and Sev jumped up again to see it and thank Don as if he were giving him a golden ticket to paradise. In Sev's case, Harry supposed he sort of was. Don gave Sev CDs to borrow as well until he could get his own, all of the ones they'd listened to that night, and Sev thanked him even more profusely.

By the time Sev learnt how to work the player, how to control the volume, and how to wear the headphones, it was going on almost two in the morning, and April had fallen asleep sprawled across the sofa, her feet in Draco's lap.

"Merlin," said Harry, looking at his watch. "We're probably keeping you lot awake."

"Don't worry about it," Tonks assured them. "We keep odd hours."

Draco smiled and gathered April into his arms. "We should get the children home and in bed."

"Yes, definitely," Harry agreed, getting to his feet. He threw an arm around Valen, who looked like he might collapse with April. "Come on, Sev."

Sev was still wide awake, examining the player.

Valen leant against Harry, grumbling about his brother going "mental."

Draco noticed that Roxy was curled up on the rug on the floor. "Thank you for a great evening," he told Don and Tonks. He shifted the girl in his arms and headed towards the Floo.

"Great having you," Donaghan replied. "Have fun with that, Sev," he added.

Sev grinned and nodded, inside robe pockets bulging with his CDs. Harry smiled to see the way his eyes shone and knew that his son had, quite possibly, just discovered his passion.

– CHAPTER FORTY –

Sensitive Topic

Harry was warm and content, lulled by the rhythmic movement of Draco's chest as his husband took in deep even breaths. Harry opened his eyes, blinking in the pale, early sunlight falling across their bed, and promptly curled his tongue about the nipple right near his mouth, smirking.

Draco's chest rose in a deep breath, followed by a small moan. He wasn't entirely conscious yet, but his body was instantly alert – nipples pebbling in response to that clever tongue and cock echoing the arousal.

Harry grinned somewhat sleepily, shifting atop his husband so that he could move down. He paused to quickly swipe his tongue in Draco's navel, but dipped lower to mouth Draco's forming erection.

"Mmm," Draco hummed in sleepy appreciation, fingers of his hand sliding over his husband's shoulder and into his hair.

"Good morning," Harry responded huskily, his voice hoarse from sleep. He slid hands over Draco's thighs, spreading them apart.

Draco felt warm, languid and aroused. It was one of his favourite ways to wake up. He drew his knees up, spreading his legs for his husband. "Feels like a good morning," he drawled, small smile on his lips as he half opened his eyes to look down at Harry.

"As it should," Harry said teasingly, stretching his tongue out over Draco's balls as he slicked his own hand to prepare him. As relaxed as he was, it didn't take a lot to prepare Draco. He sighed in delight as Harry's slick fingers pressed into him. Harry slid back over Draco's body, tilting his husband's head further up so that he could be granted better access to his pale throat, and then moved smoothly inside him, arms strained on either side of Draco's shoulders. Draco's response was a gasp and a happy sound that his husband occasionally compared to a cat, arching hips and neck up to meet Harry.

"Goodness, I have you purring this morning," Harry whispered,

his eyes half lidded and pleased as he set about a lazy pace.

"Oh, yes, love," he gasped, his body rocking with his husband's thrusts. It was such a pleasant rhythm and Harry's magic pulsed gently with it.

Harry rained kisses down across Draco's neck and over his lips, reaching to throw the blankets off with one hand, as they were twisted up and restricting his movement.

Draco was panting now, hand returning to the back of Harry's neck, fingers curling into his hair. "Yes, yes," he chanted.

"Fuck," Harry hissed, pushing himself up and grasping Draco's sides. He moved faster, beginning to feel that he was very much going to earn his morning shower.

Draco released Harry's hair and reached between them, fisting his own cock. He didn't need it to come but liked the feel of it, his body spasming around Harry's cock with each thrust now.

Harry really should have paid more mind to the sounds of thumping and yelling, but in his current state it could have been inside his head for all he knew. He didn't stop thrusting, but did jolt when the bedroom door flew open with a crash and an accompanying, "DADDY! TELL HIM TO STO-"

Harry's eyes widened in horror and met those of his ten-year-old daughter's, who was standing rooted to the spot in her nightgown, black hair wild with sleep.

On her heels, Valen came bursting through the door, shouting "Don't listen to her, I ...," and managed to just barely avoid barreling into the back of his sister before veering off to stumble to a stop beside her. His green eyes grew wide before his cheeks turned pink.

Harry scrambled backwards, pulling free from Draco. His own face was burning hot as he reached frantically for the blankets that he'd thrown off just minutes before.

Draco flushed in both shock and the fact that he was suddenly completely exposed – legs spread and hand on his cock – to both his eldest children. He didn't know whether to be mortified or amused by the children's shocked looks or his husband's fumbling.

Valen let out a string of hisses that Draco didn't need anyone to translate to know he was furious as he closed his eyes and turned away.

Harry was too embarrassed to scold Valen for swearing, even if it was in Parseltongue, and then even more embarrassed when he saw that he had hogged all of the covers to himself and left Draco sprawled naked. Sheepishly, he offered Draco the blanket and took a deep breath. "Er, we'll be out in a minute," he tried, voice a tad higher than usual.

Valen didn't wait, running from the room.

April remained still, but then began to slowly back away, as if her parents might start up again if she made any sudden movements. As soon as she reached the door, she too turned and fled after Valen.

Harry slumped down to the mattress, his face still flamingly red. Draco stared after their children and then at his husband – and began to laugh. Harry stared at Draco in shock, wondering what on earth he was laughing at. "What's funny?" he asked weakly.

That certainly did help, causing Draco to laugh harder, hand clutching his stomach now instead of his cock.

Harry couldn't join in as he usually did, only able to see April's shock and Valen's horror as if their faces were burned onto his eyelids. "Merlin," he said just as weakly as before.

Draco forced himself to get control. He didn't know if it was actually funny or it was just his reaction to the embarrassment. He shook his head, rolling out of bed. "I suppose we had better get dressed and go after them," he said, voice heavy with resignation.

"You mean we actually have to say something about it?" Harry asked, eyebrows shooting up as fresh embarrassment seemed to wash over him with the thought.

Draco was in the process of re-attaching his silver hand. He paused looking up and both eyebrows raised. "We don't?"

"I don't know," Harry answered, his voice still off. "We do? What do we *say*? Sorry you had to see us shagging like mad. It might be better to knock the next time around."

Draco flushed and gritted his teeth to keep from laughing again. He didn't think Harry would take that well. He stood with both hands on his hips now, considering his options. "Well," he said slowly, "why not?"

"Won't it embarrass *them* too?" Harry asked, yet again picturing Valen's face.

"Well, we could try ignoring it, but I am not sure that will go over well either," Draco said. April might ignore it, but he seriously doubted Valen would.

Harry released half a groan, knowing without Draco having to actually tell him that both of their children would probably behave awkwardly around them if they pretended nothing had happened. "Do we say something?" he asked hollowly. "Or do we wait for one of them to ask?"

Draco brought his hand up to rub his temples. The morning had started out so nice but now he was getting a headache. "I really don't know, I suppose we could wait and see."

Harry flopped onto his back, missing the days when his children couldn't walk and wouldn't know what their parents were doing even if they did happen to see them at it. "I guess," he agreed.

Draco smiled down at him. "I suppose we are lucky it didn't happen sooner. We should probably put Locking Charms on the door."

Harry had to agree and so he did, nodding. "Let's go then," he said, sitting up and holding out a hand for his dressing gown. "I suppose we can eat breakfast and see what they do."

Harry tried his very best to enter the dining room for breakfast as routinely as he could, taking his usual spot and reaching across to make tea. As usual, Ron and Hermione, along with all of the children, were already there.

Hermione was nearly always the first to rise. "Good morning," she offered cheerfully enough, setting plates of eggs in front of the toddlers, Gwen and Eric.

Harry gave her a smile and a nod, glancing in April and Valen's direction. April was staring accusingly, and Valen ... Valen was staring at his plate, apparently attempting to make his face as impassive as possible.

Draco had to cover his mouth to stifle a smirk as his son employed one of his own techniques for handling difficult situations – trying to make it look like he didn't care.

"What?" Harry asked April, feeling odd under the cool stare, even though he was the parent and she was the child. He felt as though

he'd been caught at something completely unreasonable and he flushed all over again. To his immense surprise, April's nose flared with her attempt to hold in a laugh and then she snorted into her food, looking half embarrassed yet highly amused.

Draco was right there with April, working hard to keep his earlier laughter from returning. He sipped his tea, trying to use it to focus and cover his reaction at the same time.

A flush was creeping up Valen's face despite his effort to look unaffected. His mask slipped into a scowl.

April stole a glance at her brother and then couldn't hold it in any longer. Her face was Gryffindor red, but she began laughing like a maniac, wriggling about in her chair as she did.

Sev dropped his fork in surprise.

"Did I ... miss something?" asked Ron.

Harry didn't know exactly why it was so funny. He'd heard Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon once at thirteen and had been absolutely disgusted. Though he supposed there was probably a bit of a difference there. After a moment, he couldn't help that his lips quirked up with his daughter's peals of laughter.

Draco couldn't hold against that and joined his daughter in laughing. Ron's question just made him laugh harder, thinking, after all, that Ron had seen it before.

Valen's face was red to his ears but instead of laughing, he got quickly to his feet and, stiff-legged, marched out of the room.

Harry watched Valen leave, but didn't know what he was supposed to do about it.

"What's happened?" said Hermione, smiling at the laughing but looking very confused as well.

Harry sighed. What would it hurt, really? "They walked in on us," he said, pointing to April, who was positively dying now, and to the door through which Valen had left.

One side of Ron's mouth drew up in mild distaste. "Poor kid," he said, shaking his head. "It happened to me once."

Harry's face reddened.

"Oh, no, that's not what I'm talking about!" Ron said quickly in response. "Though that was bad enough. I mean, I walked in on my parents once."

"Walked in on what?" asked Emily, staring at April as if she were mad.

"Nothing," Ron and Hermione said in unison.

Harry tried to picture Mr and Mrs Weasley Merlin, that *would* have been bad.

Draco had tried to take a sip of his tea and now the mental image of Mr and Mrs Weasley resulted in him choking on it. His eyes were watering from both laughing and the pain now.

Hermione shook her head at all three men, then stared at the door again where Valen had gone. "Is he upset?" she asked, a small note of concern in her voice.

Draco did his best to calm down, focusing on his eldest son. Given Draco's own reactions to embarrassment, he had some suspicions as to why Valen left the room and why he was angry. He nodded to Hermione.

Harry frowned. "Should we get him?" he asked, feeling less embarrassed now than he had initially.

"Oh, he's going to be a baby about it," said April, who had also calmed down now and seemed not the slightest bit perturbed anymore.

Draco looked to Harry. "Do you want me to talk to him? Or do we let him calm down?"

"I'm not incapable of talking to him, too," said Harry. "Even if it is embarrassing. And I don't want to talk to him now if it will only make it worse, or at all if we don't need to ... I guess."

"Let him get himself ... under control," Draco advised, smirking again. "Then we can both talk to him if you want."

Harry wondered at that smirk, but shrugged and nodded, pointedly ignoring Sev's interested expression and April's still-there amusement.

Valen avoided Harry and Draco both for the rest of the day, leaving lunch and dinner quickly and barely speaking a word. He sulked around and made Harry feel bad, and still didn't bring the subject up.

When everyone in the house was lounging around as they usually did for the last bit of the day, Valen wasn't there. He was probably up in his room. Harry didn't know why it was bothering Valen so much,

but there were so many things about his son that were so Draco-like that Harry just didn't get it sometimes. He nudged Draco with one shoulder as he moved from the floor to the sofa after a game of Exploding Snap with April, Sev, and Emily, and then leant against the blond. "He's still not down here," he said, frowning up at the ceiling.

"I suppose we should go find him," Draco said. "You ready for this?"

Harry blew his fringe up. "I guess so," he said, making to get to his feet.

Draco waited until they were up the stairs and in the hall leading towards the family wing before taking his husband's arm and gently urging him to stop. "You want to talk about it first?"

Harry turned his head and looked at Draco in confusion. "About what?"

Draco pursed his lips. "Do you know why he is upset?" he whispered.

"Well, I figured it was because he was embarrassed," Harry whispered back.

Draco arched an eyebrow. "He most likely is, but maybe not for the reasons you think. Has our son ever shown any nervousness about sex before?"

Harry frowned. "He's eleven," he said. "It's not exactly a topic for conversation."

"But he hears people joke about our ... passion all the time. He knows what we do. But do you have any idea of what might be more embarrassing for him than walking in on us?" Draco asked, flushing slightly at his own awkward memories. Especially given he was Valen's age when he experienced his first, and lasting, crush on Harry.

Harry's eyes widened, and then he figured he should've thought of this earlier. "You don't think he ...?"

"Remember how I react to being embarrassed?" Draco added, seeing that Harry was getting it now. Embarrassment usually resulted in arousal for Draco.

Harry closed his eyes and wondered if the blush might ever leave him. "What are we supposed to say to *that*?" he said, having not the faintest clue. He would've been mortified in Valen's position, and

even more so if someone tried to *talk* to him about it!

Draco was momentarily distracted by how cute Harry looked when *he* was embarrassed. And Draco wasn't sure of what to say either. He certainly wouldn't use his own father's methods. The truth was that Valen didn't just see what his parents were doing; because he was a Sensitive, he walked right into the magical energy of it. In the long run, his son would have to learn more control than most boys because of it.

Harry let out the breath he was holding slowly. "I – I don't want him to feel like he did something *wrong*," he said. "Or keep avoiding us. I mean, Merlin." He opened his eyes again and stared at Draco, his brows creasing in the middle.

Draco smiled, reaching to stroke that little crease and then kiss his husband's forehead, lips pressed to where the scar still marked him. "Valen is probably confused right now and it might help if he felt free to ask questions," Draco said, trying to think back to what would have worked better for him. "We can offer and if he doesn't want to talk about it, leave it be."

Harry nodded. "I suppose that would be safest," he agreed.

Draco leant in and gave Harry a brief kiss. He took his husband's hand as they walked to the door of their son's room. Draco took a deep breath and let it out slowly before he knocked. There was a long pause and the snakes that decorated the door writhed. Draco suspected that his son communicated in some way with the door serpents because he didn't ask who it was, calling "come in" instead.

Harry exchanged a quick glance with Draco before reaching for the doorknob and entering into the room.

Valen was sitting on his bed wearing that same impassive expression with which he had begun breakfast. Yet, there was a set to his shoulders and his gaze didn't quite meet his fathers' eyes.

Draco came right to the point. "Do you want to talk about it?"

Valen shrugged. Which Draco took for as close to a yes as the eleven-year-old was going to get at this point.

"You can," Harry offered, trying not to sound like an idiot. "Anything you want, because, you know, that's what we're here for."

Valen's lips twitched and he pressed them together in an apparent effort to control them.

Draco sighed and Conjured a couple of chairs for himself and his husband. He sat down and leant forward on his elbows. He didn't look directly into his son's eyes, giving him a little space by looking at the floor between them. "When you were a baby the energy would sometimes wake you," he began. It seemed a safer way to acknowledge Valen's reaction than saying he knew his son had been aroused by what he had felt.

Harry attempted to fend off his own embarrassment for Valen's sake. He sat down next to Draco. "Every time," he agreed, thinking back to that first time that Valen had pulled himself up with help from the side of his cot.

Valen did flush then and shifted on the bed. He glanced nervously up at them before returning his gaze to his feet.

"It's normal for a Sensitive to feel things other people don't," Draco continued. "It will be something you will have to contend with, especially when you get to Hogwarts."

Harry waited for any sign of Valen wanting to say something, but he didn't, so Harry supposed he should go next in this awkward conversation. "Well, you know I'm not a Sensitive," he said. "But I've been with your father for quite a long time, and I know very well how the ability is for him sometimes. I suppose it's not something you can really control ... so don't, er, feel bad about it or anything."

Valen seemed about to speak, lips parting but then closing again.

"You really can ask," Draco prompted and his son glanced up. Draco had the impression Valen suspected him of reading him now. Not entirely unfounded given Draco really couldn't turn off being a Sensitive any more than Valen could. He had just learnt not to react as strongly.

Valen huffed. "Does this mean ... mean I am ... well, you know?"

"Does it mean you're what?" Harry prompted.

Valen scowled. "Like you and father," he snapped.

"It depends on what way you mean by that. Is preferring men what worries you?" Draco answered, trying to modulate his voice to sound neutral.

Oh. Merlin. Harry hadn't thought this conversation would come up for a long time. How was it that Valen seemed to do everything far too soon?

Valen nodded, wearing that odd combination of looking worried and angry at the same time that he seemed to have developed lately.

Draco nodded. "First, I think Harry's magic is powerful enough and our bond strong enough that any Sensitive would react to it." He paused and was gratified to see his son relax a little at that. Unfortunately, Draco didn't feel comfortable leaving it there. "But if you did turn out to have feelings for another male, would that be a bad thing?"

Harry thought it would be pretty odd if Valen thought it would be a bad thing. The boy did have two fathers.

Valen looked like he was thinking really hard, eyebrows furrowed and lips pressed tight.

Draco had to really work not to smile at the expression that was so like Harry's when he was confused. Valen was definitely his own person, but Draco still delighted in the way he drew aspects from both of his fathers.

Finally the boy huffed again. "I just don't like not having a choice," he complained. "I want to decide who I get."

Harry resisted the urge to snort, but just barely. "Why wouldn't you have a choice?" he asked, smiling.

"Father said he didn't," Valen accused.

Draco tried not to laugh. It was true. He had felt the insane pull towards Harry even when they met at eleven and years of resistance had finally crumbled when he kissed him.

Harry lifted an eyebrow, smirking at Draco. "Well, I don't think it was physically *impossible* for Father to have picked someone else. He just happened to fancy me quite a lot."

The blond in question grinned. "If it helps any," Draco began cautiously because he knew Harry had not always been comfortable about it, "I found, and still do find, quite a number of people physically attractive, both men and women. I just found, and still find, Harry is much more than that for me."

Valen looked suspiciously between his parents for a minute. "Both?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "You don't have to like one *or* the other. You can like both if you happen to like both."

Valen was clearly thinking about that and studying their faces

now instead of looking away. "Good, because I want to choose who I like and what I do about it."

The stubborn set of the boy's chin was something Draco could be proud of even as it amused him. "I am sure your dad and I can support that," he assured the serious child.

"I'm sure we can," Harry agreed, reaching to playfully shove Valen's shoulder.

Valen snorted. "Okay, but ..." he grimaced again. "Sorry I barged in too."

"Well, technically April did," said Harry with a wince. "But it's okay. Just remember to knock the next time you need something."

"Oh, you can count on that," Valen assured them, rolling his eyes.

Platform Nine and Three-Quarters

Valen stood straight and proud in his new robes and schooled his features, trying not to show how acutely uncomfortable he was, and clutching the travel cage of his snake, Seriph. He was absolutely certain that no other student on the platform would be surrounded by so many people. It was mortifying.

His fathers were there, of course, as well as April and Sev. Had it just been them, it wouldn't have been so bad. But it *wasn't* just them. Most of the entire bleeding family was there. Nan Molly, his grandmother Narcissa, Uncle Ron, Aunt Hermione, Emily and the twins, plus Uncle Bill, Aunt Fleur, Chris and Brigitte. He had to be the only kid there with so many people to see him off.

They were all crowded closely around him, and Nan Molly kept telling him how much he'd grown. Unless he was very much mistaken, he'd seen her just a few days before and she hadn't seemed to notice so much then. His grandmother, Narcissa, simply gave him an occasional soft smile and reached out once to brush a stray lock of hair from his face.

Valen tried to endure it all with grace but he was getting increasingly nervous as others on the platform stared and pointed in their direction. It was nothing new, of course. You couldn't really go anywhere with Harry Potter and not get that reaction, but Valen wanted to meet people as himself, not as the 'miracle child' of the famous heroes.

"Don't worry about them," said Harry, grasping Valen's shoulders. His voice sounded kind of strange, like he was trying to hide something behind it, but he wasn't very good at that. "It should die down in enough time."

Valen nodded and sighed. "I know, Dad," he said, worried that

Harry would break down crying or kiss him or something equally embarrassing. Valen could feel his dad's magic pulse with his emotions. Harry always seemed to get emotional about 'his firstborn' doing anything new.

Behind Harry, Valen's father, Draco, stood, one hand unobtrusively resting against his husband's side and the other holding Sev's hand. Sev did look like he would cry. "You write us tonight and let us know which House," Draco said with a classic smirk. Harry rolled his eyes, glancing back at Draco.

"Write me too," added Chris with a grin.

"Oh, you know he will," April sneered. Her arms were crossed as she tapped her foot impatiently. Valen knew she was only angry that she couldn't leave for school yet. Valen knew she would miss him. They'd had their own private talk the previous night.

Valen's expression slipped a bit when he looked at Chris. "Everything," he promised the other boy. Going away without Chris was actually harder than leaving April in some ways. "I will check it all out for you both," he assured them. Then Valen's green eyes rested on Sev and he held out his hand to his younger brother.

Sev sniffed, his eyes still watering a little. His smaller hand curled around Valen's fingers, looking up at him seriously.

Valen had to work hard not to tear up himself then. "You, I expect, will keep me better informed about home than anyone," he said softly.

Sev's eyes welled up then. "Yeah," he whispered, looking down.

April was standing close and uncrossed her arms, laying a hand on Sev's shoulder. "You know he'll be okay," she said, actually showing a small smile.

"You're not actually worried about me, are you, Sev?" Valen asked, smiling.

Sev shrugged, looking up when he, apparently, thought it was safe to do so again. "You're going alone," he said, his voice trembling a bit as if that were something very bad.

To a degree he would certainly not admit to anyone else, Valen agreed with Sev. Valen was the eldest child among his large family and their friends. He didn't know any children older than himself. And that did make him nervous. He didn't show it. He smiled at Sev.

"Uncle Remus and Uncle Sirius will be right there," he assured him. "Who's going to mess with the werewolf's nephew?"

Sev did smile a little then. "Yeah," he said.

"Let them know to write us if anything goes wrong or ... something," said Harry, his voice tight sounding. Valen could see the ripple in his magic, as Harry tried to reign in his feelings.

Valen appreciated the effort. He shook his head but smiled, looking up to meet the grey eyes of his father before turning back to his dad. "I know, Dad," he said. "And I am sure they know." He glanced behind him at the train. "I should get aboard before it leaves without me," he said.

Harry frowned a little before he nodded. "Don't ... do anything I wouldn't. Well, don't do some of the things I would either." He sighed, smiling and frowning at once now. "Love you, kid." He reached out and ruffled Valen's hair affectionately.

Valen winced and almost laughed when Draco winced too. Neither of them liked their hair messed up. Valen smirked. "No sneaking around or starting secret societies?" he asked.

Harry chuckled. "Only if you have good reason," he said.

"I'll keep that in mind," Valen drawled but smiled back. He glanced again at the train, feeling increasingly like everyone on the train was watching the scene with his family. Everyone on that side of the train, at least. Valen wouldn't have been surprised to see the Hogwarts Express listing to one side.

Aunt Hermione came forward then as Uncle Ron tried to keep Eric and Gwen from running back through the wall to the Muggle side. Hermione was smiling as she handed Valen a wrapped package that she had been holding. "Just a little something I thought you should have," she said. "It's the most recent edition of *Hogwarts: A History*."

Valen took the package and arched an eyebrow. "Thanks, Aunt Hermione," he said and then stepped back. "I have to go," he said to them all.

Uncle Bill shook his hand before Aunt Fleur kissed him on both cheeks and then Nan Molly tried to squeeze the life out of him. He received hugs from his little cousins, and Uncle Ron actually got a moment to say goodbye as well. Once the Weasleys stepped back, his

grandmother, Narcissa moved forward looking elegant as always. Valen smiled at her. He had spent time during the past two summers with her in France and the two of them had developed a strong bond. Leaning close, she placed her hands gently on Valen's shoulders and kissed his cheek.

"You are your own person," she whispered, her blue eyes smiling at him. "Create your own history, Valen."

Valen nodded and whispered back, "I will, Grandmother."

He watched as she moved away and patted Draco on the arm before stepping to one side. Valen's brother and sister seized that moment to come closer.

Sev squeezed him almost as hard as Nan did, and April gave him a quick hug as well, hissing Parseltongue in his ear, "*Good luck.*"

"*Take care of them, Brat,*" he hissed back to his sister and then turned to say his last goodbye to his fathers. Draco even stepped forward with Harry to give him a brief hug.

Harry hugged Valen a little tighter and a little longer, but at least it wasn't *so* bad. "Write a lot," his dad said. "Let us know what's up."

Valen didn't trust himself not to gush or cry or something equally horrifying so he hugged his dad and stepped back, picking up the snake cage again and making his way to the train. He took a deep breath, excitement fluttering in his chest. It was exhilarating and frightening to be leaving the safety of the Malfoy Manor and his parents. He hoped that people would want to get to know who he really was, that he would make friends. Remembering his grandmother's words and still feeling the hugs from his fathers and siblings, Valen squared his shoulders and headed for the Hogwarts Express. With his family standing behind him, Valen climbed up the steps, eager to embrace his adventure.

Author's Note

On November 30, 2006, *Sayingsorry_bh* posted a request in a Harry/Draco LJ comm for someone to write with. I thought it would be fun to do a "what if" story starting in the bathroom scene of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. She chose to write Harry's point of view, and I chose Draco's. We started something that day that became *Harry Potter and The Bound Prince*. We posted the first chapter on Jan. 7, 2007, and the rest of five novels (750,000 words) by July 11, 2007. Today, we post the last of the seventh novel in the series. That brings *The Bound Prince* series to completion at over a million words (1,011,000). Did we really write that much? I still can't believe it. Hit counters on some of the archives show us that that the first book in the series has been read at least 250,000 times. The popularity of this series still awes me.

There are two incomplete spin off series that may yet come after this one – *Theo's Story* and *Eros' Child*. Those stories, when they are complete, will not be Harry/Draco stories, told instead from other points of view. So, *The Bound Prince* story is complete.

I want to thank everyone who helped in this project. First, my original co-author, *Sayingsorry_bh*, whose partnership in this amazed and delighted me. To, *Brkenhalo241* who came in first as a beta, but then stepped up to help finish as co-author and continues to delight me in our other projects. Thanks to our betas – more than a dozen people who have worked on these novels, finding our mistakes and making suggestions, from the original drafts all the way through the pdfs. And to the readers whose enthusiasm has kept us writing and continues to inspire me to more.

We hope you have enjoyed taking this journey with us. We still love to hear from readers and hope you will share with us your experience of reading them.

Slashpervert

About the Authors

Slashpervert has been reading and writing fan fiction long enough to remember why they call it “slash” – back when it was still published in “fanzines,” printed via mimeograph or copy machines, and sold at science fiction conventions. In “real life,” *Slashpervert* is a journalist and social scientist, who has written and published hundreds of articles and a handful of books. *Slashpervert* also writes original fiction under the name D.M. Atkins.

Sayingsorry_hh has been writing for nearly her entire life, but only recently began writing slash – though she has been reading it for years. Currently, ‘writer’ is most definitely the most definitive term for her. Apart from fan fiction, *Sayingsorry_hh* has an original novel for teens she’s been working on for quite some time.

Slashpervert and ***Sayingsorry_hh*** began writing together in November 30, 2006. They adapted the RPG format to use as a style of co-writing in which each writes the perspective of one of the main characters. (For example, in *The Bound Prince* series, *Slashpervert* wrote Draco and *Sayingsorry_hh* wrote Harry.) They have written a dozen novels together.

Brknhalo241 is fairly new to fan fiction. She's always written her own short stories since elementary school and then entered the world of fandom by becoming a beta for *Slashpervert*. She felt fortunate to have the opportunity to assist in the completion of *Harry Potter and The Charming Prince* and has also co-written an original novel for the joyboyisland website.

All the books in *The Bound Prince Series*

***Harry Potter and The Bound Prince* – Book One of The Bound Prince Series** – Draco kisses Harry in the bathroom at Hogwarts. They are unprepared for where that will take them. But willing to find out.

***Harry Potter and The Secret Keeper* - Book Two of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco must find a way to live together now, figure out where they will live, and how they will continue Harry's fight against Voldemort, including the search for the Horcruxes. As if that weren't enough for them to deal with, Lucius Malfoy (and his fellow Death Eater prisoners) escapes from prison and comes looking for his son.

***Harry Potter and The White Queen* - Book Three of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco continue to explore what their relationship means as they search for and destroy Horcruxes. The Order of the Phoenix continues to fight as the war escalates and lives are lost.

***Harry Potter and The Beloved Incubus* – Book Four of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco are married and expecting a baby – meanwhile the war has escalated. They have to find the remaining Horcruxes before too many more lives are lost.

***Harry Potter and The Serpent King* – Book Five of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco, with the help of Ron, Hermione, and their extended chosen family, have destroyed nearly all the Horcruxes. They are preparing for the final confrontation with Voldemort when a family member is kidnapped and the day is upon them to take the fight to the madman.

***Harry Potter and The Dragon's Treasure* – Book Six of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco survived the war and defeated Voldemort. Now, they are married, have a child and should be leading a happy life. Yet, issues from the past create unexpected pitfalls to building their new life in this time of peace.

***Harry Potter and The Charming Prince* – Book Seven of The Bound Prince Series** – Harry and Draco have the peace and happiness of which they dreamed. This is an extended epilogue to *The Bound Prince* series with “snapshots” of Harry, Draco and their children's lives in the ten years after book six.

Other Books **by *Slashpervert* and *Sayingsorry_hh***

A Love So Belated – Harry goes to the Manor to return Draco's wand to him and begins an unlikely friendship. But what happens when friendship changes to desire?

A Heart So Ravenous – Sequel to ***A Love So Belated***. Draco sets himself on a path to please both Harry Potter and his parents. Will he survive it?

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