

Late Night Wandering

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Determined to find out what Draco is up to, Hermione attempts to spy under the invisibility cloak. Little does she know she is falling right into his trap. WARNING! Obsessed! Draco LEMONS! Non-Con. Disturbing plot line! Effective 7/23/18 - story in process of re-write.

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Chapter 1

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Warning! This is Dark Draco! LEMON! Non-Con! Don't read any further if you don't like stories that venture into these dark waters. I have taken liberties with Draco and made him evil. Forgive me!

An extra warning for good measure : I realize that this story will not be everyone's cuppa. There are lots of non-consensual sex scenes in this story – but it is NOT a porn without plot. I would recommend not reading this story if this sort of thing bothers you.

Effective 7/23/18 - story being rewritten. No plot changes. LissaDream is graciously BETA'ing as able. Love you, LD!

Chapter One

Hermione was trying to be quiet as she tiptoed beneath the invisibility cloak she had borrowed from Harry. This time she was going to catch the sneaky Slytherin. The map had shown he was lingering right around the next turn of the hallway. He had been sneaking out of his dorm every night for weeks and Hermione was desperate to find out what he had been up to. She was a prefect after all. It was her duty to help the teachers maintain control of the students. As she rounded the corner a hand reached out and grabbed her.

"If you're going to spy on someone, you should at least be quieter than the Hogwarts Express, Granger." Malfoy's voice was his typical sneering drawl.

Hermione froze. Malfoy had a hand over her mouth and his other wrapped around her waist, trapping her arms at her sides and effectively preventing her from moving her wand arm. She struggled as he pulled her a few feet to her right. She heard a door close and the click of the lock. *SHIT!* She was starting to panic.

Malfoy removed his hand from Hermione's mouth and she tried to yell but there was no sound.

"A silencing spell, Granger." He spoke low and menacingly into her ear, as he kept holding her.

She was still under the cloak and couldn't figure out how he knew it was her.

He pulled the cloak off her and waved his wand, causing her hands to be tied and her wand to fall to the floor. "Accio wand."

Hermione watched as her wand flew to him. He was grinning as he caressed his hands along its length, almost obscenely, before slipping it into his pocket.

He started to stalk around her. "So, Granger. What's with you following me around?"

Her eyes pleaded for him to let her speak, but he ignored her and instead slowly dragged his gaze up and down her body. He paused at her chest before looking her in the eyes. She swallowed heavily as her heart began to thrum with its rapid rate.

He cocked an eyebrow. "Perhaps I'm being unfair, and you weren't following me?"

Hermione nodded her head aggressively as if to say; *yes, that was the truth of it!*

His expression suddenly softened, and he rolled his eyes and undid the silencing spell. "What gives, Granger?"

"I wasn't following you. I make rounds under the cloak sometimes to catch students that have snuck out and are doing things they shouldn't be." She took a deep calming breath, relieved to have her voice again... She started to think maybe the best defense was a good offense. "I can't believe you, Malfoy! You had no right to grab me and basically kidnap me!"

"Puleeeease! I didn't kidnap you! I was merely protecting myself from a perceived threat. What is it that creepy Auror always says? 'Constant Vigilance'?" He shrugged. "That's all this is."

He was leaning against a desk and smirking at her. "Tell you what. I'll forget all about this little incident if you will."

She thought about it. He did have a point. If she agreed, she could wait a few nights and perhaps try following him again. She really did want to know where he was going on his late-night wanderings. She sighed. "Fine Malfoy. Now untie me. I have stuff to do."

He smiled at her. "No problem, Granger, but let's drink to our deal." He pulled out a black flask.

"Oh right! Like I'd drink anything you gave me!"

His voice was dismissive and condescending. "You're such a suspicious little chicken shit. Where's your Gryffindor courage?"

He brought the flask to his mouth and was about to sip when she sighed. "Fine, untie me and give me the flask."

He raised his eyebrows and looked at her as if he doubted her. "Give it to me!" she demanded. He waved his wand and she found she could move her arms again. He handed her the flask. She tentatively took it and smelled it.

He rolled his eyes. "Forget it. You're so predictable." With that she took a sip and swallowed.

The minute she swallowed, a lecherous and teasing gleam came over his hardened, steel orbs. "You Gryffindors are so easy to manipulate! You fall for that every time, you know. I keep thinking, tonight's the night she'll refuse."

Hermione's confusion was overshadowed by the feeling of warmth that was overcoming her. Her stomach started to tingle. "What did you...?" but before she finished that thought, something started to stir within;

Desire. Oh, dear Merlin.

Heat. Burning heat and a need to touch and be touched overwhelmed her every sense.

This wizard in front of her was all she wanted.

This beautiful and all-encompassing amazing specimen of a man.

Her breathing quickened as a cool sweat crept over her neck and chest. She slowly stalked towards him, needing to touch him.

He looked at her knowingly. "Oh Granger, Granger, Granger."

"Draco. I want you." Her voice was breathy, and she didn't recognize it. Furthermore, she didn't care. What did it matter? What did anything matter as long as she had him.

He sneered. "I don't know, Granger. I think I'm just gonna go to my room. I'm rather tired."

She started to panic. "No! Please!" She lunged at him and started kissing his neck as her hands began exploring his chest.

He chuckled villainously. "Oh, all right... I guess I'll let you have your way with me," he responded with a teasing tone of pity.

Sweet Merlin! He said he'd stay! Relief flooded through her as she started to push off his robes, her lips continuing to assault his neck,

his jaw, his cheeks. Just when her lips moved to his, he stopped her.

He grabbed her hands. "Oh, little Princess. You know what I'd really like?"

Her face became pleading. "Oh Draco, just tell me and I'll do it or get it for you!"

He leered roguishly down at her. "I'd like you to undress... slowly and do as I say."

Okay. This was easy. She feared he would ask her to do something that would require her to go away. She couldn't bear to leave his side. She smiled sweetly at him and stepped back, pulling off her sweater and starting to unbutton her blouse.

"Do it slowly, Granger." He reminded her.

She nodded and continued to unbutton her blouse at a much slower pace while looking at him with pure adoration.

As she slipped her top off, Draco started to unbutton his own shirt. She unhooked her bra and let it slide down her arms, his eyes immediately drawn to her breasts.

"You have great tits, Granger, play with them for me." Hermione beamed at him, thrilled he found her appealing as she began stroking her nipples.

She watched him slip off his shirt, exercising every bit of her limited control to not pounce on him. He was so beautiful. She simply wanted to touch him, caress him...please him. She started to stalk towards him.

"No, no, no Granger. I didn't tell you to stop. Finish undressing, princess." He reprimanded.

She was so frustrated. She couldn't stand not having her hands on him. A small voice in the back of her head was questioning why she

was feeling this way, but what did it matter? He was all she wanted, and she wanted him now. She kicked off her trainers as she unzipped her jeans, sliding them off as her eyes stayed glued to his beautiful face.

Draco grinned, his eyes moving to the apex of her thighs. "Keep going, Princess."

She bit her lip and slid her knickers down her legs, feeling a touch shy despite her arousal.

"Give them to me." He held his hand out to her.

She bent down and picked them up, walking towards him. He took the knickers and put them in the same pocket as her wand.

He smiled affectionately at her and said, "Kneel in front of me."

She stepped in front of him and knelt. He unzipped his fly and pulled out his hard cock.

Her eyes grew wide. It was long and hard and had a purplish tip. She had never seen one before.

He tapped her nose with it and chuckled. "Ok, Princess, I'd really like you to suck me."

She eagerly stuck out her tongue and started to lick up and down his length, as though he were a popsicle. He teased, "Well, for what you lack in talent you make up for with enthusiasm. Open your mouth wide and take my length *into* your warm mouth. Move up and down, massaging my dick with your tongue. Do NOT let your teeth touch me!"

She opened her mouth as wide as she could and sat up taller on her knees to get herself positioned over him. She lowered her mouth and rejoiced at the guttural moan that escaped him when she clamped her lips around him. Her tongue lashed maniacally along his

hardness as she pumped her head up and down, desperate to please him.

After a few minutes he pulled her to stand and she immediately went to kiss him. He pulled away at first, but then leaned in, letting her have her way. It turned out she was a good kisser. He massaged her breasts as her arms wrapped around him and her lips continued to caress his. When he reached down between her legs he was pleased to find her dripping wet. "I think you're ready for me, Princess," he stepped away from her, "bend over this desk." He gestured towards the closest one.

She was disappointed he was no longer letting her touch him but she eagerly obeyed.

"Grab hold of the edge and hold tight." He demanded.

She gripped the edge tightly and mewled when he quickly stood behind and slid into her hot and tight entrance. "Oh, Merlin Princess. You feel as tight as you did the first time. I love fucking you."

"Ung...oompf...umgh...ahh.." were the grunting sounds that escaped her as he pounded in and out of her mercilessly, caring about nothing but his own release.

Hermione's mind was swimming in bliss. He felt so good inside her and she felt so connected with him. They could just keep doing this forever and she would be happy.

Somewhere inside her mind, a touch of confusion was setting in. What did he mean when he said she felt as tight as the first time? Shouldn't this hurt? She was a virgin. Why didn't this hurt? But these questions were like distant echoes in her mind. At the forefront was a burning desire and need for the wizard standing behind her, using her body for his pleasure. It felt like heaven. She rocked her hips back to meet his, his fingers gripping her hips painfully. He groaned as his grip pulled her back violently as he came. He collapsed on her

back, his breathing fast and his heart racing. He didn't say anything as he came down from his high.

She felt him go soft inside her and found herself disappointed. She did enjoy having him draped over her back, though. The contact felt nice. She felt liquid running out of her and down her thighs. Gods, she wanted to touch him.

He pulled out as he stepped away from her, his voice dismissive as he told her, "Get dressed, princess."

She wanted to cry. All she wanted to do was to touch him and kiss him. He sighed at her lack of compliance. "Get dressed and I'll give you a kiss."

She eagerly put on her bra and shirt. As she was buttoning up her blouse she told him, "I need my knickers."

"No, you don't, princess. I want to keep them. Don't you want me to have them?"

Now that he mentioned it, she did what him to keep them. She wanted him to think about her as much as she was thinking about him.

She pulled up her jeans and slipped her feet into her shoes. After she was dressed she stepped towards him. She just wanted to kiss him and to touch him. *Why did it have to stop?*

"Follow me, princess." He took her hand and she followed him into the hall. He looked up and down the hall and when he was certain no one was around he commanded "Stand right here and don't move."

She looked at him with hurt and confusion. He stepped towards her and kissed her gently before waving his wand to cast a cleansing and contraceptive charm over her.

He took a flask out of his pocket. "Here Princess, sip this." She eagerly sipped from the small, silver flask he tipped into her mouth. It tasted bitter. She started to feel cold.

"Here, you'll need this." He tossed the cloak back over her head and put her wand back in her hand. She was feeling weird and a little nauseated. As reality started to dawn and she was coming into her right mind again, she heard him whisper, "Obliviate," from behind her.

Draco quickly and quietly dashed away leaving the Gryffindor in the exact spot he had grabbed her from thirty minutes earlier. He smiled mischievously as he dashed back down to the dungeons. This was too easy. Three nights this week he'd done this to her. Tomorrow night he might bring Blaise.

Hermione stood there for a minute, her confusion palpable until she remembered she was looking for Malfoy. That's right. He was right around this bend in the hallway. As she walked down the hall she couldn't find him. After several minutes of looking she decided to quit. She would just have to try again tomorrow night.

Chapter 2

Another warning: Do not read if non-consensual sex is a trigger for you or if stories of this nature are not to your liking. There is much more to this story, but it's not going to be an easy journey. You have been warned!

Canon deviation- This story takes place 6th year but Snape still teaches potions. While Voldemort continues to be a looming threat for Harry and the Wizarding world, Draco has not yet taken the mark.

Chapter reposted 7/23/18 - Thanks to LissaDream for her BETA help!

Chapter Two

Hermione was at a loss. When she got back to her dorm and undressed, she noticed some bruising on her hips. She couldn't remember doing anything that would have caused it. She also had forgotten to put on knickers...again. What was wrong with her? Clearly, she was distracted these days. Either that or someone was messing with her. Her obsession with helping Harry as well as investigating Draco's activities while doing work for nine classes was obviously taking its toll on her. She felt off somehow and was surprised to find she had been gone almost an hour and a half when she got back from searching for Draco. It felt like she had only been searching for forty-five minutes or so.

The next morning, she got up and headed down to the prefect's bathroom. The door was warded to block her entrance, so she knew a male must be inside. Otherwise, it would have let her enter. She decided to wait a few minutes. She really preferred the prefects bath to the ones in her dorm. After about ten minutes, Malfoy came sauntering out of the bath and into the hall. As he walked by, he

looked her up and down with a knowing smirk. It was offensive, frankly...like he knew her secrets. His hair was damp, and he smelled good. It was familiar somehow... sandalwood, maybe? She tried not to look at him or have any interaction with him.

When she stepped into the bathroom, she flicked her wand and the swimming pool sized tub quickly filled with lavender scented water. Using the steps, she glided into the inviting and caressing warmth, immediately feeling herself relax. She felt sore; sore from her unexplained bruises and sore between her legs for some reason. Maybe it was from wearing jeans and no underwear.

After a fifteen-minute soak, she went back to the dorm to drop off her bath things and meet up with Harry and Ron. They were waiting for her and the three of them headed to the great hall for breakfast. As Hermione ate, she felt like she was being watched. She followed the pull and caught Draco Malfoy looking at her while whispering in the ear of Blaise Zabini. Zabini was watching her as well and they both had small smiles on their faces. They didn't even care that she had caught them staring. They just went on watching her until Pansy sat down on the other side of Malfoy and their focus turned to her. It was weird, and Hermione felt oddly self-conscious.

She left breakfast a little early, telling Ron and Harry she would catch up with them later. She contemplated going to see Madam Pomfrey about the soreness she was experiencing but feared the witch would assume Hermione had been having sex or something. She didn't feel like having her denials not believed. Madam Pomfrey lectured constantly about students engaging too early and warned of the dangers of an unplanned pregnancy. It was like she assumed the castle was full of hormonal rabbits or something. It irritated Hermione. She was responsible and had no intention of having sex before graduating. She didn't need someone lecturing what she already knew. She got enough of that in her classes.

Her first class was Ancient Runes which she unfortunately shared with Malfoy. He continued with his odd behavior. He wasn't staring at her, but he definitely kept an eye on her and she could feel his gaze.

This continued into the next class as Transfiguration was shared with the Slytherins as well. Malfoy was leering at her more openly and Zabini kept glancing her way, his eyes roving over her inappropriately. She found herself pulling and pressing her skirt, willing it to be a little longer and cover her knees. She felt dirty somehow.

She didn't have any more classes with Malfoy or any other Slytherins that day and the rest of her day improved because of it. At dinner she chose to sit facing away from the dreaded snakes, so that she could eat in peace.

That night she contemplated going in search of the elusive Slytherin but had too much work to do on her Transfiguration essay. Yeah, it was Friday night, but she didn't want it worrying her all weekend. Getting it done now would leave her free to enjoy Saturday and Sunday studying what interested her. When she was finally finished, it was after eleven. She borrowed Harry's map before going to bed and saw that Malfoy was lingering in that same area of the 4th floor corridor he had been at all week, only this time he had Zabini with him. She was almost curious enough to go and try to catch him, but she was too tired.

Saturday, Hermione arrived at breakfast early. She had slept better than she had in almost a week and woke up feeling more like herself. When she dressed, she made sure she had on knickers. The other odd piece of the puzzle was that she was missing some of her knickers. At least two pair, maybe three. It was a Hogsmeade Saturday, so she would just have to purchase a few pair when she could slip away from Harry and Ron. The house elves worked so hard and she didn't want to say anything to them. It was ok if a couple pairs of knickers got lost in the shuffle.

Hogsmeade was a blast. Ginny and Harry had gone off for some alone time and she had spent the afternoon with Ron. Ron had kissed her for the first time a couple months before and things had been slightly awkward ever since – but not today. Today was as if

that kiss had never happened and she was relieved. She determined that she just didn't love Ron that way. She loved him and Harry the same, like they were her brothers. When it started to get late, she told Ron to head back without her as she had to go buy some "girl stuff". Ron had turned pink and told her he would see her back at the castle. She just didn't feel comfortable dragging him into Penny's Pink Palace with her, not that he would have come.

After she had made her purchase, she started walking back towards the castle. It was getting dark and cold. She pulled her cloak tight around her and quickened her pace. She decided to take a short cut through a wooded area that would take about ten minutes out of the return journey. She contemplated not doing it, but there was a small group ahead of her that was taking the shorter path as well.

As she was walking, the small group seemed to disperse. A few had gone on ahead but two were lingering. As she got closer a feeling of dread overcame her. It was Malfoy and Zabini. Malfoy was casually leaning against a tree and Zabini was sitting on a stump. As she got closer she started walking faster, intending to get by them as quickly as possible.

This, however, was not what happened. Malfoy stepped out in front of her. "What's in the bag, Granger?"

"Looks like lingerie," Zabini taunted, now standing behind her. She was trapped.

"Let me pass, Malfoy," she snapped aggressively, thinking it might make him back off.

"Sorry, sorry, sorry." Malfoy started to step aside and continued, "Actually, Granger, the reason we stopped to wait for you is we need your help." She continued to walk, and he continued talking. "We're serious, Granger. Please?" She heard the quiet and non-threatening plea and stopped.

She looked at him on her right, finding he had lost the cocky sneer he usually wore. "What could you possibly need my help with and why would I want to help you in the first place?"

Zabini stepped up beside Malfoy. "Well, we're working on a project and we feel like your involvement would be most beneficial."

Hermione pulled her cloak tighter and started to shiver.

"Really, Granger? Are you a witch, or aren't you?" Draco shook his head in dismay and cast a warming charm over her. She felt like an idiot – why hadn't she thought of that? It was humiliating to miss something so simple and basic in front of the two Slytherins. "What we need your help with is a potion."

"What kind of potion?" she asked, skeptically.

"Well, we're trying to come up with an elixir that will prevent the drinker from doing anything against his or her will. In other words, it would prevent the drinker from being susceptible to the Imperious Curse or to a lust or love potion."

Hermione looked at Draco with surprise. "Wow, that's quite an undertaking. " Hermione was impressed, this went against everything she knew and believed about Malfoy. Why would he want to create such a thing?

Hermione started to walk. "I'm heading back. We can keep talking along the way unless you're ashamed to be seen with a *Mudblood* ." Hermione rolled her eyes as she said it. That word no longer had any impact on her whatsoever. It was a stupid word with a ridiculous meaning. She knew she was a bright witch and knew from her Muggle biology studies exactly what her blood was made of, and it certainly wasn't mud!

Malfoy fell into step on her left and Zabini did the same on her right. "We've set up a potions lab in the Room of Requirement and we'd like to show you all the details when we get there."

She was suspicious. "You're Professor Snape's pet Slytherin, why wouldn't you just use his lab?"

Malfoy pleaded. "He offered, but we wanted our own set up and we need to have access twenty-four/seven. The potion needs constant tweaking. Snape would never allow us that kind of access."

They were getting closer to the castle. "I still don't get it. Why me?" She didn't trust them.

"Because you're smart, Granger. Brilliant, actually. Aren't you curious?"

She narrowed her eyes at the compliment. *Draco Malfoy called me brilliant?* This was getting fishier by the minute. Answering his question, she replied cautiously, "Yeah, I'm curious why you aren't going to Professor Snape for his help."

Zabini finally spoke, "Forget it, Draco. She's clearly not interested. I warned you she wouldn't put aside house rivalry to help us."

This got her attention. She stopped and turned to Zabini. "This has nothing to do with that! I just don't trust you two." She paused. "I tell you what, give me your notes and I'll take a look and give you my input."

Draco rolled his eyes. "Oh yeah, like that's going to happen. It's either you're in or you're out. What's it gonna be, Granger? Are you a Gryffindor or not? Where's your courage?"

She sighed heavily and thought for a moment. "Fine, Let's go." She was curious and besides, what was the worst thing that could happen? Hermione totally missed the looks the boys exchanged.

When they entered the Room of Requirement, it was set up as a small dark lab with a table in the middle. On the center of it, a cauldron was simmering with a golden hued potion. The room had a door to the right, which Hermione was curious about. She started to

walk towards it, but Malfoy's words solved the mystery. "It's just a loo. Sometimes we sleep up here." Sure enough, there was a cot in the corner she hadn't noticed when she first walked in.

She turned towards the cauldron and Malfoy and Zabini slipped out of their outer robes, hanging them on a rack by the door. "So, what's the deal with the potion? Tell me about it." Hermione walked towards the cauldron and peered over the side looking down into it.

Malfoy was standing behind her smirking as he made lewd movements towards her backside. Zabini was chuckling to himself. "Take a good look and tell us what you think is in it," Malfoy suggested as he started to rub his hardening member over his jeans.

"Hmm, it looks like there is yellowroot, based on the hue, but that doesn't make sense. Yellowroot is a key ingredient in that lust potion Professor Snape was talking about last month. But that could be interesting – did you reverse it's properties somehow to create a...?" Gods, she was starting to feel warm. She started to unbuckle her robes, not having noticed the small vaporizer beside the cauldron that was blowing a light mist into her face. A cool sweat started to creep over her chest and neck and she felt a weird tingling in her stomach accompanied by a strong rush of desire washing over her. Before she had time to question herself she turned back toward Draco, urge and need overcoming her like a tidal wave. The desperation for him was unlike anything she had ever felt. Her eyes were blazing as she stepped towards him, her breath quickening. She lunged at him – desperate to kiss him, to touch him. "Draco, you're a genius – this is amazing." Blaise was dumbfounded at Granger's sudden change in behavior.

Draco pushed her off him. "Oh, you've seen nothing yet. I have to admit I was unsure about the mist, but it made sense." Draco and Blaise had stayed back far enough to avoid the spray. With a flick of his wand, the vaporizer turned off.

Hermione was frustrated. Why wouldn't he let her touch him? "Draco let me kiss you. Let me touch you."

He looked maliciously at her. "You want me, Princess?"

"So much, Draco. I'll do anything for you. Please!"

"Beg. Beg me for it and you can have it." He stated imperiously as he looked down at her.

Hermione dropped to her knees, her hands grasping his legs.
"Please, Draco! Please let me touch you. I want to kiss you and please you. I'll die if I can't get close to you."

"Okay, okay. But first I need you to undress, Princess." She looked back towards Blaise with an expression of concern.

"Just ignore Blaise. This is about you and me. He just wants to watch. You don't mind, do you? He's my best friend. I want him to see how magnificent you are."

Hermione's attention immediately moved back to Draco as she started to undress.

"That's it. Take everything off, but give me your knickers. I'd like to keep those." He watched as she took her clothes off quickly and handed him her favorite yellow knickers.

"She's got a tight little bod." Blaise started walking around her. "You sure you won't share?"

"No. Get your own toy. I'll give you the first flask for free, so you can try it out on the witch of your choice. After that, you'll have to pay like the others."

"You're going to make a fortune on this, Draco," Blaise said, his eyes glued to the neatly trimmed curls that covered her mound. "If I can't touch her, can I at least get a good look at her?"

"Princess, please undress me." Hermione eagerly stepped forward and started to unbutton Draco's shirt. She slipped it off his shoulders and started tugging the undershirt he was wearing over his head.

"Easy, Princess. Tell you what. Go open that door over there." He gestured towards the door she had been told led to a loo.

Hermione walked toward the door and opened it. Inside was a large king-sized bed with Slytherin green sheets. Draco and Blaise followed her, both checking out the tight globes of her arse as Draco began to unfasten his jeans. "You know what would really please me?"

"Tell me, Draco! Anything!" She pleaded, turning back to him.

"Climb on the bed and lay in the middle of it. Spread your legs nice and wide and rub that little clit of yours. Show Blaise what delicious little pussy you have. As soon as you come I'll fuck you. How does that sound?"

She hopped up on the bed and immediately did as told.

"Merlin!" Blaise was dumbfounded. "Draco, you're a twisted fuck, but I love you! Salazar, she's positively dripping." Blaise unzipped his pants and pulled out his engorged cock, stroking himself while watching her.

Hermione didn't even notice Blaise because she was so focused on Draco. She was rubbing herself fast and hard and came quickly with a shudder. She had a dazed look and her chest was heaving as she caught her breath. Draco approached the bed, slipping out of his jeans and boxers as he climbed onto it. "Tell you what, Princess. I want you to ride me. Move over." She rolled over and he took her spot laying on his back.

He stroked himself. "Ok, climb on and have at me."

Hermione wasted no time. She climbed on him quickly but was at a loss for what to do next. Draco chuckled. "Such an innocent. Don't you worry – you'll be as well practiced and experienced as a two-knut whore by the time I'm done having fun with you." He eased her down on him. Damn, she felt so fucking good. "Just start moving. Do

what feels good." Hermione started riding him fast and hard, unable to help herself. She couldn't get enough. Draco was watching her tits bounce as she practically hopped up and down on his shaft. He reached forward and grabbed her breasts, massaging them roughly. She leaned down and started kissing him as she rode him. He kissed her back, tangling his hands through her hair.

There was a grunt and a groan at the foot of the bed as Blaise came magnificently while watching them. Draco could feel himself getting close. "Princess, roll off me and lay on your back." She did as he said, and he quickly straddled her chest. "Open your mouth." She opened her mouth and after a few strokes with his hand, he came all over her face and in her mouth. He waited until the spurts stopped and rubbed his tip on her lips before pulling away. "Swallow it. Use your hands to get it all into your mouth." He watched her swallow what was in her mouth before wiping her face and licking her fingers clean.

Draco slid off the bed. When she started to follow, he held his hands up to halt her. "Oh no, princess. Be still for a minute and I'll let you touch me again in a little bit."

She sulked but did as he said. Draco grabbed his clothes and started getting dressed. He turned to Blaise. "Okay, now is the tricky part. We need to be in the exact same spots we were in when she was induced." He turned back to Hermione. "Come on, princess. I need you to get dressed now." She slid off the bed and dashed to his side, staring up at him adoringly. "Grab your clothes and get dressed," he demanded, causing her face to fall.

They walked into the other room and after they were all fully clothed and Draco positioned them in the right spots. He casted the cleansing and contraception charms over her. "Here, drink this." He handed her a small silver flask and she obediently took a sip. He grabbed the flask from her hand and stepped back behind her.

Suddenly, Hermione started to feel cold and a little nauseated. Realization started to come over her and her face turned red. She

started to panic just before Draco whispered, "Obliviate."

He waited about three seconds and then asked, "Well, what else besides yellowroot?"

Hermione was confused and felt really strange. It was like she forgot where she was for a second. "Huh?" she asked in a daze.

"Well, you figured out the yellowroot. What else do you see?"

She looked into the simmering cauldron but found she couldn't concentrate. "Malfoy, I'm not feeling well. Can we do this tomorrow night instead? I can be here at seven?"

"Sure, Granger. We just appreciate your talent however we can get it." He gave her a warm and innocent smile.

She felt weird, but also felt badly for not staying to help them. It was the first time either had ever been civil to her. She would come back tomorrow and help. Right now, she just wanted to get back to her dorm. She picked up her bag and walked toward the door. "See you tomorrow", she said with a wave and left the room.

Blaise high fived Draco. "Man, I can't wait to use this shit on Ginny Weasley."

Authors Note: I know this was a particularly disturbing chapter. It's probably going to get worse before it gets better.

Chapter 3

Chapter Reposted 7/25/18. BETA - LissaDream :) THANK YOU!

Thanks to all who read and review!

Hermione entered the Gryffindor common room to find Ron and Harry deeply engrossed in a chess match. Still not feeling well, she told them she was going up to read and she would see them in the morning. They both grunted in response as they were too involved in their match to pay her much notice. She rolled her eyes and headed upstairs.

When she got back to her room, she felt really off. The nausea had long passed, and she couldn't quite place what she was feeling. She had a headache as well as a slight nervous feeling. She looked at her watch and didn't understand how it had gotten so late. She had missed dinner as well, not that she could eat. She put her new knickers and bra in her dirty laundry pile to be washed.

It was a little early for bed, but she was exhausted, so she decided to change into her nightgown. She couldn't believe it when she slipped off her jeans. Where were her knickers? What the hell? She knew for certain she had put them on that morning. They were her favorite yellow ones with the white stripes. Someone must be playing a trick on her. Perhaps to her dorm mates as well. She would ask Lavender if she was experiencing the same thing. More than likely someone had found a spell that stripped off a girl's knickers or something equally juvenile. She was too tired to figure it out right now, but she would look into it in the morning. Maybe she would start wearing two pair.

She climbed into bed and was comforted when Crookshanks jumped up next to her. She closed her eyes as he purred while softly kneading her stomach, lulling her into a deep sleep.

Draco and Blaise cleaned the lab in the Room of Requirement and were quite pleased with how the evening had gone.

Blaise was amazed by it all. "I still don't understand, Drac. How'd you figure out how to make such a brilliant potion?"

"I listen in class to Severus and I actually read the text book. It was essentially right there in front of us. It just needed a little tweaking and Severus helped as well." Draco placed a stasis charm over the large cauldron and walked over to the smaller cauldron that was on a table by the far wall. He stirred it once clockwise and then twice counterclockwise before adding a stasis charm to it as well. "This antidote is every bit as important. I have no idea how long the effects of the lust potion would last, so this little elixir solves that problem."

Draco turned back towards Blaise and continued. "Also, if you don't want the witch to know you used the potion on her, you'll obviously have to obliviate her. So, I'm not selling this to just anyone. Obliviates need to be precise and the spell caster needs to know how to remove the exact amount of time out of the witch's memory. I'm not going to get caught because of someone else's ineptitude."

"I get it, Drac. You're right. You have to be careful. What did Snape say when you told him you perfected it?"

Draco shrugged. "Nothing much. I think his exact words were, 'Don't get caught'. I gave him some of the potion, of course. Technically, he did help me perfect it and he does know how to brew it."

Blaise collapsed into a chair. "So, tell me – why Granger and how did it go the first time?"

Draco looked at his friend and smiled. "It was fucked up is what it was! I almost didn't do it again." He shuddered. "I didn't choose her until the opportunity presented itself. She walked by while I was trying to enter the Room of Requirement one night last week. It was after curfew so she, of course, got on her high thestral and was

going to dock points and give me detention. So, I used a body bind curse on her and brought her in here. Then I dribbled the potion in her mouth and released the binding spell." He sighed in bewilderment. "I couldn't believe it when it worked so beautifully. You saw how she gets. I was a little shocked at first, but it didn't take long to figure out I could do whatever I wanted to her. She was a fucking virgin though and there was blood." He made a face of disgust.

Blaise laughed at his friend. "So, what's the deal? You going to keep fucking her?"

Draco smirked. "Who knows. Until I get bored, I guess."

"Enough about you. When do I get to try it out?" Blaise asked eagerly.

Sunday

When Hermione went downstairs to the common room Sunday morning, it was early, and the others weren't up yet. She was starving though, so she decided to go to the great hall without them. She felt better this morning and was determined to solve the underwear mystery. She decided to question her dorm mates when opportunity presented. Right now, she was the only one at the Gryffindor table, so she pulled out her History of Magic textbook and started to read.

After a while, it was apparent she was being watched. She looked immediately towards the Slytherin table to find Malfoy staring at her. He didn't have his usual sneer, in fact he looked like he was in deep thought. He seemed to snap out of it and took a quick glance around the room. When he saw no one was watching, he slightly nodded an acknowledgment to her. She was shocked but figured he was trying to be at least a little civil since she had agreed to help him with his project. She gave him a slight nod in return and went back to her reading.

When she was about to leave, Harry, Ron, Ginny and Lavender finally arrived and sat next to her. She thought something might be brewing between Lavender and Ron because they kept sneaking glances at each other. Harry started piling eggs and bacon on both his and Ginny's plates. As he was doing this he looked at a Hermione and asked, "Where were you last night? We waited for you at dinner, but you never showed."

She didn't know if she wanted to share that she was helping Draco and Blaise, so she decided she would sit on that information for now. "I ended up going to the library when I got back. I just wasn't hungry."

She would probably help the Slytherins tonight and that would be the end of it. Which, if that was the case, there was no need to tell anyone. She was, however, very curious why they were working on the potion in the first place. She knew Professor Snape was a double agent who actually supported the Order. Perhaps this potion was something Snape had Draco working on for Dumbledore. Harry suspected Draco was actually a Death Eater, but Hermione doubted it. He may be a cocky brat, but she doubted he was truly that corrupt and even if he was, what interest would Voldemort have in Draco? He was only a teenager for Merlin's sake!

After spending most of the day in the library, Hermione packed up her bags and headed to dinner. She still needed to question her dorm mates about the disappearing knickers. She wasn't very hungry and for some reason was starting to feel a bit anxious about her seven o'clock appointment in the Room of Requirement. She didn't know why, but she figured it was because this was unfamiliar territory and she still didn't entirely trust them. She was playing with the food on her plate when Harry and Ginny arrived.

"I just don't get it Ginny. You were over an hour late to practice! Where were you?" Harry snapped.

Hermione had never heard Harry speak to Ginny like this. Come to think of it, she didn't think she had ever known Harry to be mad at Ginny about anything.

"I told you Harry, I must have lost track of time. I went for a run and next thing I knew, it was almost four o'clock." Ginny was clearly upset, and her tone was apologetic.

"Well, put an alarm on your watch or something. I can't make allowances for you that I don't make for others on the team." He started to put food on a plate for her.

"Don't bother. I'm not hungry"" Her tone had gone from apologetic to angry. She stood up and started to leave.

"Ginny, don't be like that! I'm sorry I got so mad." Harry was starting to backpaddle.

"I'm not hungry. I feel off... I just want to go lay down." She started walking away.

Harry put his elbows on the table and cradled his head in his hands. "Shit."

Hermione looked from Harry to Ginny's retreating form. For some reason she glanced toward the Slytherin table to see Blaise and Draco watching the redhead leave. They were both grinning. Draco's eyes then turned to Hermione before looking away quickly and saying something to Blaise that made Blaise laugh. Hermione peeked back at Harry, who looked miserable.

"I'll go check on her, Harry. I'm finished eating anyway." She wrapped her arm around him and kissed him on the cheek. He gave her a soft smile and replied, "Thanks, Mione."

Draco watched the interaction between Ginny and Potter with pure joy. He knew exactly what they were fighting about. Blaise had tried out the potion on Ginny just a few hours ago. He interrupted her run by pretending to have fallen and twisted his ankle on the trail. She almost ran right by him, but she did the typical Good Samaritan move and stopped to make sure he was okay. Once he was standing, he turned on the charm and engaged her in conversation.

Unsuspecting, Ginny accepted his chivalrous offer of water from his flask. Her change in behavior was as instant as Granger's had been. He had her run with him to a secret dungeon entrance which was very close to where he staged his injury. Draco was waiting for them in a deserted classroom and got to watch as his friend fucked the redhead in every orifice of her body. When he was finished with her, he led her back to the trail and obliviated her perfectly. She would not remember she had even seen Blaise that day, much less stopped to help him.

The two Slytherins laughed as Ginny scurried out of the hall. Draco whispered to Blaise, "I'm surprised she can even walk after today, although she does look like she's walking funny."

The blond's laugh faded though, when he saw Hermione whisper something to Harry before putting her arm around him and kissing his cheek. Draco's forehead crinkled. This just didn't sit well with him. He watched her leave the Gryffindor table and follow Ginny Weasley out.

"Hey, Ginny, wait up!" Hermione yelled after her friend as the younger witch started up the steps towards Gryffindor tower. Ginny stopped and waited without turning around. Hermione came up next her, put her hand on Ginny's shoulder and whispered, "Hey, you ok?"

With that Ginny burst into tears.

Hermione took her friend's hand. "Come on, let's get back to the girl's dorm." Ginny nodded and followed the older girl. They sat next to each other on Hermione's bed. Ginny sniffed and rested her head on Hermione's shoulder.

Hermione's voice was soft and motherly. "What's going on Ginny? What's got you so upset? I know Harry can be an idiot sometimes and he clearly overreacted, but he loves you. He'll get over the fact that you were late to practice. You know he will!"

Ginny sniffled. "It's not that. It's just...something isn't right. Something happened to me today. I just know it, but I don't know what."

"Whatever do you mean?" Hermione asked with obvious concern.

"I feel like I did first year with that bloody diary. I've lost a big chunk of time. At least an hour, I'm thinking an hour and half, and I have no idea what I did during that time! I know I didn't run for two hours. I remember I looked at my watch and it said two-fifteen. I had practice at three, so I knew I had plenty time to finish my run. Then, I don't know what happened. I remember looking at my watch again and it said three-fifty-three!" She started to cry again.

Hermione was at a loss. She pulled her friend into her arms and held her.

Chapter 4

Chapter Text

Chapter re-posted 8/2/18

A big thank you to LissaDream for her fabulous Beta skills!

Hermione held her friend tight. "Ginny, it's ok." She whispered comfortingly. "We'll figure this out. Did you go see Madam Pomfrey? Maybe you fell while running and hit your head and don't remember it. Concussions cause memory loss."

Ginny shook her head. "I don't think I fell... but I do feel kind of sore. My hips and, strangely, my bum hurt. I had a really bad headache when I went to quidditch practice."

"Come on, let's go to your dorm and get your night clothes. Then we'll go to the prefect's bath and you can have a long soak. If you don't feel better, we'll go to the infirmary together."

Ginny smiled at her friend. "Thanks, Hermione."

When they got to the prefect's bath, Hermione filled the tub with verberna infused water as Ginny undressed. When Hermione turned to look at her friend she was stunned. "Look at you! You have bruises all over!"

Ginny walked to the mirror and stared in disbelief. She knew she felt sore, but this was shocking. She had purple bruises on her breasts, hips, and bum. She had some bruising on her thighs and arms as well.

"Ginny, you didn't just fall, you must have tumbled as well. You have marks on the front and on the back of you!"

Hermione signaled towards the tub and helped her friend climb in. "Can you think of any areas on your run where there are any inclines or hills you could have fallen down?"

Ginny slid into the tub and breathed a sigh of relief as the hot water soothed her aching body. "I don't know, Hermione. The running path goes all around the grounds. There are narrow passages, hills and even a few small cliffs the trail passes."

Hermione sat at the edge of the tub and worried for her friend, her mind spinning with possible scenarios as Ginny continued to relax and calm down.

Twenty minutes later, as the redhead was getting dressed, she declared she felt much better. Hermione wanted her to go to the infirmary, but Ginny didn't want to. She was concerned about Madam Pomfrey being overly cautious and telling her she couldn't play quidditch.

"Fine, but you need to tell Harry," Hermione insisted.

Ginny sighed. "I'll think about it."

By the time Hermione made it up to the Room of Requirement, it was seven-fifteen. She didn't know how to get in, so she waited a few minutes until the door suddenly appeared and an irritated Malfoy glared at her.

"You're late!" he scolded.

Hermione was tired and worried for her friend. She had no tolerance for his tone. "Listen, I can just leave. I don't need to be here!" She was going to apologize for being late, but not after that greeting. She owed him nothing.

His shoulders slumped as a slightly contrite look appeared on his face. "I know. I'm just eager for your help. Just come in, please."

She debated for a minute before finally sighing resignedly and entering the lab. When she walked in she was surprised that Blaise wasn't there. "Where's Blaise?"

"He's finishing up that transfiguration paper."

She glanced towards the cauldron and then back at him, her expression curious. "Why are you making this potion, Draco?"

For some reason he liked it when she called him Draco and not Malfoy. "What do you mean? Don't you think it's a worthy undertaking?"

"Of course, I do! It's just not something I thought you would take an interest in." She continued teasingly, "But brewing a lust potion so you can take advantage of unsuspecting witches? That I could see you doing!"

Draco felt his heart start to race. He coached himself internally. Keep it together...she doesn't know...keep calm.

He smirked and crossed his arms. "You really don't think very highly of me do you, Granger?" When she didn't immediately respond, he shrugged as a look of slight disappointment and sadness overtook his face. He hoped he wasn't overdoing it.

Hermione felt a twinge of guilt as he seemed to deflate in front of her. She hadn't believed it possible to hurt his feelings but clearly, she had. "Truthfully, Draco, I don't know you. You've only ever been a jerk to me and my friends. Now, out of the blue, you are being civil and I don't know what to make of it."

Neither said anything for a minute. She offered him a small smile. "But maybe we can start fresh and work on this potion together."

He gave her a small smile in return. She couldn't help but notice how nice that smile was. She was so used to seeing him scowling.

Something she has been wondering came to mind. "So, does Professor Snape know about this potion? You said he offered you his lab? Did you tell him what you're brewing?"

Draco thought carefully how to respond and decided it was best to give the answer Hermione would feel most comfortable with. He would have to tell Severus later. "Of course, he knows. It's just, I want to do this myself. I'm thinking about apprenticing for Potions and this would look great on my resume."

Her eyes lit up instantly. "Oh! Well...that's good then." She looked back at the cauldron. "Let's get to work."

Internally, he breathed a big sigh of relief. He decided he could use meetings about this "pretend" potion as a means to have her when he wanted her. So, in preparation, he had spent part of the day in Snape's private potions library researching how he would truly undertake this potion if he really were making it.

He gestured to the right. "My notes are right over here." He led her to a table where parchment was spread out.

She looked over the list of ingredients he had tried and had yet to try. "How have you tested these so far?"

He was prepared for this question. "Well, Blaise and I have been testing them on each other."

She looked at him in shock. "You've been giving each other love potions?"

"No, Granger! Have you lost your mind? We've been Imperiusing each other."

"What? You've been using Unforgivables on each other?"

"Calm down. Blaise and I trust each other. It's not a big deal and we did give each other consent."

"Have you had any success?"

"No, not yet. It's very frustrating... which is why we came to you." Draco was getting bored of this conversation and wanted to get his hands on her. He picked up the pitcher sitting on the table and poured them each a glass of what looked like pumpkin juice.

He took a pretend sip and handed her the other glass. She looked at it and back at him and then smirked as she asked, "It's not poisoned is it?"

He gave her a lopsided smile. "Really? Come on, Granger," he teased. "Where's that Gryffindor courage?"

She laughed and took a sip.

As usual the change was dramatic and fast. She immediately reached out to touch him. He smiled maliciously at her as the familiar glaze came over her eyes.

He let her touch him and when her lips fell on his, he actually kissed her in return. He felt the beginnings of something like affection for her, but it passed as he started envisioning her naked and at his mercy. He pulled away. "Princess, why don't you take all your clothes off and then you can touch me all you want."

She quickly undressed as he leaned on the table and watched her. When he saw she had two pairs of knickers on, he was perplexed. "Hand me one of your knickers, Princess." He was acquiring quite a collection of her underwear. Seeing as she was wearing two pair, however, he realized she was clearly trying to figure out the mystery of her missing knickers. He should probably stop taking them or she might become suspicious of him. This would have to be the last time.

Her lips were on his again and she started rubbing her hands all over his shoulders and chest. He took her right hand and guided it down to the bulge in his jeans and she started to rub him. She unbuttoned and then unzipped his fly before reaching under the elastic of his

boxers and grasping him. Draco noticed that with each dose of the potion, she seemed to become more and more bold sexually. It was as though her body remembered, even if her mind didn't. She continued stroking him as he fondled her tits.

"Enough messing around. I want to be inside you. Come." He stepped away, grabbing her hand and leading her into the room with the large bed.

"Get on the bed – on your hands and knees." She did as instructed, and he quickly hopped up and stood on his knees, so he was in front of her. He slipped his hard member into her mouth and she started to suck him. "Don't let your teeth touch me or I'll be upset, and I'll leave you here alone."

His eyes rolled back in bliss as he started gently pumping his hips while holding her head still. She gagged but he didn't care. He simply moved faster and harder despite her gagging more aggressively with drool running down her chin. Then he lost patience. "Spin around and press your bum up against me." Hermione complied more than willingly but Draco paused, contemplating what he was about to do. He had watched Blaise take Ginny aggressively this way earlier. Blaise had been too rough with his toy in Draco's opinion and had made Ginny cry. It was sick how she had been crying and miserable yet kept coming for more. Blaise had to heal her bum before obliterating her. The memory was a turn off that made Draco change his mind. He slammed into her already wet and ready entrance instead.

Pressing her shoulders down to the mattress, he held her hips on level with his as he pumped in and out of her. She let out little squeals and pants with each thrust, eagerly moving her hips against his, keeping up deliciously. Draco couldn't deny she really was a great fuck. Spreading her cheeks with his hands, Draco watched his cock slide in and out of her pussy, reveling at the white cream that streaked her pink, glistening skin.

After a few minutes, he felt his climax building and with one last slam into her, he came. He fell beside her, out of breath and his heart pounding. Hermione collapsed next to him and slowly rolled on top of him, kissing his mouth and his jaw. She was soft, and her curves felt nice in his hands, so he kissed her in return. He had never really enjoyed kissing, but with her it wasn't so bad. His hands rubbed up and down her smooth back and then slid down where he started massaging her bottom, which felt wonderful in his grasp. Having this witch do his bidding was a heady feeling, she was perfect for him. He felt a great satisfaction when he decided she would become his. Then he remembered her kissing Potter on the cheek and felt the anger return. He slapped her arse, hard. She squealed. "That's for putting your lips on another wizard. You're mine, Princess."

Twenty minutes later they were both dressed and standing at the table where they had been before he gave her the potion. He stopped and considered for a minute. He was a little worried that the gig would be up if Granger kept losing bits of time. She would become suspicious, especially with him constantly taking her knickers. A solution would be needed, but for tonight he decided to set the time on her wristwatch back forty minutes. By the time she figured out her watch was wrong, it would be later. He cast the cleansing spell and the contraception charm before having her sip the antidote potion. Then he cast the obliviate and watched her closely. Her forehead crinkled as her confusion set in.

"You okay, Granger?"

She looked at him uncertainly, feeling a bit foggy.

He smiled gently at her. "You look a bit green, are you okay?"

"I feel a little weird actually." She sat in the chair next to the table and started to reach for the laced pumpkin juice.

Draco quickly stopped her. "Perhaps a little water would be better." He took the cups of pumpkin juice and dumped them down the sink

and then poured her a glass of water. There was a concerned look on his face as he was trying to act the part of the worried friend.

Hermione watched him fill her a glass of water and smiled at him gratefully when he handed it to her.

"You feel well enough to keep going?"

She looked at her watch. She had only been there less than ten minutes. "I'm fine. Just a little headache." She really felt worse than that, but he was being so nice and needed her help so she felt compelled to stay. She believed she owed it to him to help him since she hadn't been any help the night before. This was a side of Draco she was not familiar with and she liked it. For some reason she really wanted this new alliance to work.

Draco picked up on her hesitation. "Granger, it's okay. You have any other free time this week?"

Thirty minutes later, Draco knocked his secret knock on Severus' door. The door opened, and he moved inside only to find Severus sitting at his desk grading papers. The door closed behind him. "So Draco, how's the potion working for you? You're being careful?" Snape did not look up as he spoke.

"It's working great, but I have a couple little concerns."

"Continue." Snape still did not look up.

"Well, I need to come up with an explanation for the loss of time that the witches experience."

"I hardly see how that's an issue, unless you consistently use the potion on the same witch." He suddenly looked up, his eyes rolling a bit as his face contorted and he let out a small grunt. A slow breath escaped his lips. "That will do, Minerva. Be a good witch and come out from under there."

Draco was completely stunned as a disheveled, but fully dressed Professor McGonagall climbed out from under the desk.

"Oh, Severus... Please!" Minerva was trying to sit on Snape's lap. Snape rolled his eyes and pushed her off him.

"Draco, kindly go into the supplies closet until you hear her leave." Draco was laughing hysterically as he dashed into the closet.

Draco could hear low voices and then it was quiet. About five seconds passed before he heard Snape say, "Fine Minerva. You will have the updated lesson plans on your desk by Friday."

"See that you do, Severus, and I'll expect you to chaperone the next Hogsmeade weekend."

"Yes, yes you told me. Now please leave me in peace. I have work to do." Draco heard footsteps and then the sound of a door open and close.

He exited the closet. "Professor McGonagall? You could use that potion on any witch in the castle and you chose that ole hag?" He was dumbfounded, even if he was insanely amused.

Snape looked at him and with no expression replied, "Yes, well. She was yammering away and giving me a headache. It occurred to me there was a much better use for her mouth."

Draco shook his head in disbelief as he walked back to the desk he had been sitting in and took a seat.

"About my problem. I know you said I shouldn't keep using it on the same witch, but I've been using it on Granger...a lot."

Snape's right eyebrow rose, and his index finger slowly tapped his lips as he thought. "Hmm, Miss Granger." After a pause he said, "Is there a reason you feel compelled to use it on her repeatedly instead of experiencing the talents of other witches?"

Draco just shrugged. "I have my reasons. Let's just say, I get great satisfaction out of using the know-it-all."

"Miss Granger is a smart witch. She'll figure out something is amiss if you aren't very careful."

"I know that, obviously... as that's why I'm here. Also, I told her you were aware of my project to make the compulsion antidote. I've got her helping me with it as my ruse to have her at my disposal. Of course, this means I'll have to really start trying to create the stupid potion."

Snape stood and walked over to one of his book shelves. "Read these two in addition to the ones I showed you in my library earlier. I will help you as I am able."

He sat on the corner of his desk after he handed Draco the books. "It would be quite an accomplishment to succeed in this task." He walked around the desk to his chair and sat down, sorting through the papers on his desk. "As far as the loss of time Miss Granger is experiencing, perhaps you can convince her it's happening to you as well. Let her think it's a side effect from the vapors the potion emits as it brews. Add Venus rose-thorn to your list of ingredients. It's known for causing slight memory loss and you can say you are using it for its..." Snape paused to think..."tell her you are using it for its calming effect. Only a calm mind can concentrate and withstand an intrusion like the imperious curse or a lust potion."

Draco nodded and stood. "Thanks, Severus! you're a life saver." He turned and started to leave.

"Draco. Be...careful. Do not get caught. I will not be able to help you if that happens. You will have to move on from Miss Granger if she gets suspicious."

Draco nodded. "I'll be careful."

Chapter 5

Chapter re-posted 8/2/18. The rewrites of this story are slow coming but if you continue reading you'll find the improvement is very obvious. Again, I'm not changing plot, just cleaning up punctuation, grammar and eliminating repetitive words and phrases.

Thanks again to my best friend and fellow smut aficionado, LissaDream for her amazing beta help!

Monday

On Monday morning, Hermione's day started all wrong. When she woke and checked her watch, she thought she had an extra forty-five minutes to sleep. But when she came to the common room, everyone was already gone, and the wall clock said it was already 7:30. She adjusted her watch as she rushed to the great hall to find Ron, Lavender, Ginny and Harry all sitting together. She scooted in next to Ginny and shot her friend an appraising look. "How are you feeling?"

Ginny smiled. "Worlds better. Thanks for helping me, Hermione." Ginny smiled warmly at her friend.

Hermione smiled back and asked, "Are you going to tell Harry?"

Ginny replied she hadn't decided. Hermione felt a strange pull again and turned to see Malfoy and Blaise looking at her, or at least her direction. She wondered how Malfoy would act towards her in Potions today. Monday's potions class was a three-hour Slytherin and Gryffindor affair.

She found that she wasn't particularly hungry and was ready to leave with her friends even though she hadn't eaten. When they stood up,

Harry came around to Hermione's side and put an arm around her as they walked out. He whispered in her ear. "Thanks for talking to Ginny. Things are fine between us and I know you are a big reason."

Hermione smiled warmly at him and ruffled his hair. "Sure, Harry... what are friends for!" Hermione didn't notice the set of angry grey eyes that watched her leave.

As they were headed up the staircase to the Gryffindor common room, Hermione pulled Lavender aside. She spoke very low and quietly, so the others wouldn't hear, "Hey Lavender, I was wondering, have you had any issues with laundry disappearing? Particularly undergarments?"

Lavender gave her a confused look. "Missing undergarments?"

Hermione looked around to make sure no one was listening. "I know it sounds strange, but... oh, never mind. They're probably in my trunk. Forget I said anything." Hermione was more convinced than ever it was a charm because the night before she was only wearing one pair when she undressed. The question was, who? She was beginning to think she should go to McGonagall.

Just then Ron bounded up between them. "How are my two favorite witches today?" Hermione smiled at him distractedly. Judging by Lavender's reaction, it was clear the girl was not experiencing the vanishing underwear problem. She would have to ask Parvati and Ginny later.

When she arrived in Potions a minute or so early, Draco and Blaise were at Professor Snape's desk talking to him. Feeling a little self-conscious as she could feel the three wizards watching her, she headed to her seat. The rest of the class started to assemble and soon Professor Snape was calling the class to order. "Quiet down, quiet down." He didn't have to yell for his voice to be heard. "We will be starting new term long projects today which will account for fifty percent of your grade. I have assigned partners, so please rearrange yourselves accordingly. He started reading out names in groups of

three. Harry was paired up with Neville and Pansy Parkinson and Ron was paired up with Theo Nott and Daphne Greengrass. She heard her name next. "Hermione Granger, Draco Malfoy and Blaise Zabini."

The classroom was bustling as everyone rearranged their seating. There were groans of disappointment about the groupings as well. Blaise and Draco were already sitting at a table in the back corner of the classroom and when Theo Nott vacated the seat between them, she walked over. "Draco, Blaise," She said their names in greeting as she sat down. They looked at her and then smirked at each other. Draco replied, "Granger," with a slight nod.

Professor Snape walked around the classroom, handing each grouping a parchment. When he approached their table, the parchment he handed them had his spikey, black inked script scrawled out: *Continue working on your extracurricular potion* . Hermione was thrilled. Now they could work on the potion during class which would provide them much more time. She was also pleased that Professor Snape was aware of her involvement.

"As you can see, your assignments will take the rest of the term to complete. You will have time in class to work on these during Monday's three-hour lab and you may work on them outside of class time, as well. Your Wednesday theory lesson will continue to be lecture material and no brewing will occur."

Severus watched Hermione's reaction as he grouped her with Draco and Blaise and explained the project requirements. He had contemplated the prior night's discussion with Draco and had determined that if Hermione did become suspicious of anything, she would immediately go to a teacher. He needed that teacher to be himself. It then begged to reason that if her grade depended on said Potion's project, she would immediately come to him with any concerns. While he felt Draco was competent enough to pull off this scheme, he couldn't risk it. He would have to keep an eye on the situation. He had informed Draco before class about the new projects and had told him it was to help Draco successfully invent

and develop the impressive potion. He also said it was to assist that Draco get guaranteed time with Hermione. This was all true, but the real reason was to be able to intervene if needed. Severus was fully aware he indulged his Godson entirely too much, but he was impressed with the lust potion Draco had developed. Yes, he had helped, but it was really Draco's potion and Severus was very proud of him.

Draco leaned a little into Hermione, pretending to be taking an interest in something she was reading in their potions textbook, when really, he was enjoying a little peek down her blouse. Her familiar and delicious scent caused his trousers to tent as the memories of their encounters flooded his mind. He shifted in his seat and forced himself to think of something else. He was immensely pleased. This new seating arrangement suited Draco very well as he really didn't like his witch sitting with other wizards, particularly Potter and Weasley. She was entirely too touchy with them and he would definitely have to do something about that.

"So, Granger. You sure you can't meet tonight? Now that we are getting graded on this potion, I really think it should take priority."

Hermione shrugged. "I have prefect's rounds tonight and I have my History of Magic paper as well as the Arithmancy test to study for." She continued flipping through the text while taking down notes and ingredients. "I'll probably have time tomorrow, if that works."

"I guess it'll have to," Draco responded, trying to figure out a way to see her tonight.

Blaise was writing ingredients on a list and said, "So, I heard they're requiring prefects to patrol in pairs now. It must be frustrating because it takes longer to cover the castle." He was trying to sound like he was just making conversation, when really, he was just checking to see if what Ginny had told him was true.

Hermione responded, "Well, normally I would be irritated by it, but since Ginny made prefect this year she and I patrol together. It's

actually fun." She looked over her list and Blaise's. "So, you guys have already attempted brewing this a couple times, which ingredients should we start with this time?"

Draco took the lists and circled a handful of ingredients. When he was finished she picked it up. "I'll go grab these." Draco watched her as she walked away.

Blaise peeked at Draco, mischievous grin coming across his face. "So, Ginny and Hermione will be together... patrolling...just the two of them."

Catching his friends meaning, a wicked gleam came to Draco's eyes. "Looks like our night just got a lot more interesting."

They started chopping and brewing and before they knew it, class was over. They placed a stasis charm over their cauldron and as Hermione was packing her bag she asked, "Should we keep brewing in both locations? The Room of Requirement lab is really convenient, and it would be beneficial to be able to brew more than one attempt at a time. But will it be too much to keep up with?"

Blaise and Draco exchanged looks. Draco responded, "I think we should definitely keep both going, between the three of us, we can manage." Just as Hermione was about to walk away, Draco stopped her as he shot Blaise a glance. "Hermione, how about you just swing by the other lab during your rounds tonight. Blaise and I will be up there working on it and that way we can keep you in the loop and get your quick input. That is...if you want to."

Hermione thought for a minute. This was now part of her grade and it would be easy just to pop in and check on things. "I can do that. We should be walking by that area around nine-thirty or so."

"Kay, see you then." Draco responded as he finished gathering his things.

Draco watched with frustration as he saw Potter and Weasley waiting for his witch to join them. But then an idea hit. A brilliant one. His mood was lifted as he imagined how it would all play out. The two Gryffindorks wouldn't be a problem much longer.

As Hermione and Ginny started their rounds at nine o'clock, the Slytherin duo were getting prepared. They had contemplated a little witch on witch fun, but decided against it, at least for tonight. Both wizards had their potions in their flasks, ready to go.

Hermione and Ginny laughed and talked as they made their way through the castle. Hermione had told Ginny about the brief detour she needed to take, and Ginny was fine with it. In truth, Ginny was curious about Blaise Zabini. She didn't know him very well, but she had been playing against him on the quidditch pitch for years and had consistently beaten him. She saw the occasional look of hate in his eyes after those matches. He ignored her other than on the quidditch pitch, although she had caught him staring at her a couple times the past few days. It would be interesting to see if he spoke to her tonight.

As they rounded the hall to the wall that held the hidden door, it suddenly materialized, and Blaise appeared. He smiled a friendly hello and gestured for the girls to enter.

Chapter 6

Chapter reposted 8/25/18.

Beta - the amazing and talented, LissaDream. Thank you, LD!

Hermione and Ginny entered the Room of Requirement to find Draco standing in the back of the room stirring a small cauldron. Ginny stayed near the door and gazed wide-eyed at the set-up of the space. It was amazing that a magical room such as this existed. It looked very much like the potions lab in the dungeons, only much smaller.

Draco walked towards them.

"So, how's it going?" Hermione asked.

The blond Slytherin simply shrugged and answered tiredly with a hint of frustration, "Not making much progress. Could really use your help tonight. It's a shame you don't have time to stay a little while."

"Well, I have a few minutes," Hermione offered as she followed Draco over to the small table where his notes were.

As Hermione and Draco chatted, Blaise stepped closer to Ginny. "So, you're a prefect this year?"

Ginny looked up at the handsome, Italian wizard. "Uh, yeah." She had never really noticed how attractive he was. He was usually scowling at her when they were on the pitch, but standing close to him now, she could see why so many witches seemed to fawn over him. He was watching her with a pleasant, non-sneering, and very un-Slytherin look. His skin was a beautiful olive tone, his hair was dark, and his eyes were a golden-amber color. She felt like an idiot when she realized she had been staring.

Blaise was internally rolling his eyes. He could tell she was attracted to him, as were most witches when he turned on the charm. He started to engage her in small talk while also listening to Draco's conversation.

Hermione could see some of the issues right off the bat. They had some additions to the ingredients that didn't make sense. "Draco, why do you have Venus root-thorn here and the amount of the crushed starflower seems off."

Draco gazed at her pleading. "See, this is why we need you! Can't you just stay for thirty minutes?"

Hermione looked back towards Ginny. "I can't Draco, I have to finish rounds with Ginny and then I still have to study for – "

Blaise interrupted, "You know, I could help Ginny finish the rounds. That way you can stay and help for a little while." His look was innocent and harmless when he glanced at Ginny and continued, "I know I'm not a prefect, but at least you wouldn't be alone." His tone became a touch shy. "I mean, if you don't mind."

Ginny looked from Blaise to Hermione and then to the hopeful and pleading look on Draco's face. She shrugged. "Yeah, sure. Hermione, it's fine. I'll just see you at the library when you're finished."

Hermione didn't feel good about this. "Are you sure, Ginny?"

"Yeah, it's fine. I actually don't mind doing it by myself for that matter. I'm sure noth – "

She was interrupted by Hermione, "No! You need a partner. You know the rules."

Blaise looked kindly at the ginger-haired beauty. "Hermione's right, Ginny. If you don't mind a Slytherin for a patrols partner, I'm happy to accompany you." Blaise opened and held the door for her to leave.

Ginny looked back towards to Hermione. "See you in the library, then?"

Hermione nodded. "Yeah, no longer than forty-five minutes."

Blaise and Ginny exited, leaving Draco and Hermione alone. Hermione scanned the ingredients list again. Draco sat down, and Hermione took the chair next to him. He watched her as she checked everything over. Draco realized she was actually quite pretty in a plain sort of way. He would prefer if she were a little more done up like the Slytherin witches. In truth, though, she didn't need makeup and fixed-up hair when he was just going to mess it all up anyway.

Going forward, they would have to start actually getting some work done on the potion in order for his plan to work. After about five minutes of discussing ingredients, he poured them each a glass of pumpkin juice. She absentmindedly drank as he started talking about stirring techniques.

Fifteen minutes later he had her in bed in the other room. Her legs were wrapped around him as he stroked in and out of her. He fell to his forearms and pressed his lips to hers tenderly as he continued his languid movements. He found he quite liked kissing her while fucking her. He also liked watching her. Her whisky eyes were beautiful, and he enjoyed watching her facial expressions as he filled her. Feeling himself getting close, he started to pump fast and hard, pushing himself up, so he could watch her tits sway; they were absolutely perfect. He collapsed beside her after he climaxed, suddenly exhausted. He wished he could just take a nap and possibly have again after a little while, but it wasn't a possibility.

He didn't have much time, so he quickly got them both dressed and back at the table. The contraception and cleansing charms were cast, and shortly after – the obliviate. When she started to come around this time, he was ready. "Whoa, that was weird," he said.

She looked at him, confused. "Huh?"

He tried to mimic the same dazed look she had and replied, "I don't know. I just got lightheaded for a minute and I feel a little funny."

She nodded slightly. "Yeah, me too." She looked at her watch. He looked at his quickly and said, "Merlin, is that the time? I feel like you just got here."

She stood up. "I need to meet Ginny." Her forehead crinkled with worry. Something was wrong. She didn't know what, but something was very wrong.

"Yeah, you should get going," he confirmed innocently.

She opened the door and answered him distractedly. "See you tomorrow."

He watched her leave and was more than a little concerned by the look on her face before she left. It was as though she was trying to figure something out – that was the last thing he wanted her to do.

When Hermione got to the library, she found Ginny sound asleep at the table in the far back corner with her books spread out around her. If she was sleeping that hard, she probably needed it. After about twenty minutes, Hermione just couldn't concentrate. Her head hurt, and she was tired. She decided to wake Ginny and head back to the tower. She shook her friend's shoulder, "Ginny, Ginny...wake up." The redhead was snoring and had a bit of drool coming out of her mouth. "Ginny! You need to go back to the tower and get in your bed." After more vigorous shaking of Ginny's shoulder, the younger girl opened her eyes.

"Hermione?" Her speech was a little slurred from only being half awake.

"You fell asleep. Let's go back to the dorm."

Ginny looked around and started to become more alert as she rubbed her neck. "Wow. I was sleeping hard. I'm really tired."

"Well, come on; let's get you to bed." The two Gryffindors gathered their books and left the library, not seeing the Italian wizard watching them from behind a large bookshelf.

Draco was in deep thought when the door opened, and his cohort walked in. Blaise was smiling and swaggered over to the table where he pulled the other chair back and sat down.

"Judging by the look on your face I take it that went well?" Draco asked with an amused grin.

Blaise scratched his chin. "Oh yeah. Little red is a firecracker. I went easier on her this time, but I swear she gives the best head I've ever had."

He leaned back and put his feet up on the table. "When I was done with her and obliterated her, I just acted like we were finishing up rounds and took her to the library. Before she even had a chance to notice the loss of time, I cast a minor sleeping charm on her. Just in time, it turned out. Her head had just hit the table when I heard someone approaching. I quickly jumped behind the closest bookshelf and up walks Granger."

Blaise noticed Draco seemed a little preoccupied. "What about you. Hermione still getting you off? I'm surprised you aren't bored of her yet."

Draco glanced at him. "Yeah, yeah." He paused in thought. "I think I need to back off Granger a bit. It was weird tonight after I obliterated her. She looked like she was suspicious, like she thought something was wrong. It was more than just being a little confused and having a little headache."

Blaise's whole demeanor changed, and he was suddenly angry. "Draco, fix that shit! We've got a good thing here. Don't blow it. Fuck somebody else. Why does it have to be her all the time?"

Draco reassured his friend. "Relax, I'm on it. She may be suspicious that something's up, but there's no way she knows what's going on." He raked a hand through his hair before glancing back at Blaise and said, "One thing, though. We need more knickers. Did you take Ginny's?"

Blaise chuckled as he pulled the pink, satin panties out of his pocket.

Hermione helped Ginny back to her dorm and then headed to her own. This time she got angry when she undressed to find someone had charmed off her underwear again. She had put on two pair this morning and was now only wearing one. Why did this keep happening? Enough was enough. She was going to get to the bottom of it. She couldn't put it off any longer.

She climbed into bed and contemplated the evening. Something weird happened before she parted ways with Draco. She felt strange and now that she thought about it, it had happened every time she went in that lab. Draco experienced it as well tonight. She would have to talk to them about it. Maybe one of their ingredients wasn't being handled properly or maybe they weren't cleaning correctly and were leaving residue from ingredients on the surfaces. She had assumed Draco and Blaise would be careful of that, but she would mention it all the same. She grabbed her textbook and started studying. She was asleep before she read through the first paragraph.

Tuesday

That's it, Princess. Just take it all in. Suck a little harder. Run your hot little tongue from root to tip. Bend over the bed, Princess. That's it. You like me fucking you, Princess? Does that feel good?

Hermione woke with a start. What the hell was that? She turned her bed lamp on and sat up awkwardly. Crookshanks was curled up and asleep between her legs.

Getting her bearings a little bit, she realized she was sweating and felt sick to her stomach. It was only a dream, but it felt so familiar and real. The voice had been familiar, but now that she was awake, she couldn't place it. She rubbed her eyes. "There had been a smell in the dream... Sandalwood maybe? Malfoy?"

She was dumbfounded. Why would she dream such a thing about Malfoy? The dream was already slipping into the recesses of faded memories, but she could still remember parts of it.

She tried to go back to sleep but her mind wouldn't shut down. Giving up on rest, she studied for her test as she waited for dawn.

When it was finally time to get up, she was on a mission. She was going to solve the underwear mystery. When she came down the stairs she approached Ginny. "Hey Gin. How are you feeling?"

"I feel good. I'm hungry like I ran a marathon, though."

Hermione looked around to make sure no one else could hear. "Listen, something weird is going on. You're going to think I'm crazy, but several times the past couple weeks..." she paused, "...don't laugh because this is serious, but several nights I've undressed at night to find I'm not wearing any underwear."

Ginny didn't laugh but looked at her friend in amazement. "Merlin", she whispered. "It's happened to me twice!" Ginny pulled Hermione closer to the fireplace and away from the stairs. "It happened the day I fell and again last night. I thought I was going crazy!"

Hermione stared at Ginny, not really seeing her as her mind spun with the possibilities. "It has to be a prank of some sort. If your brothers were here I would not exactly know who to accuse."

Ginny grinned. "Definitely up their alley."

Hermione sighed. She didn't want to believe it, but she couldn't ignore years of behavior. She looked at Ginny, her brows raised in

question. "Malfoy?"

Before Ginny could respond, Hermione continued. "It's definitely the sick sort of game he would play, and we were both with him last night." Hermione's eyes narrowed. "Did you see Malfoy the day you fell?"

Ginny thought for a moment. "I don't think so. At least, I don't remember seeing him."

"From now on, keep your eyes and ears open. Someone's playing a stupid prank. I thought Malfoy had changed, but maybe I'm wrong."

Hermione and Ginny stuck together as they headed to the great hall. They were both hungry and ate a large breakfast. Harry, Ron, and Lavender arrived a few minutes after they finished eating. Ron sat next to Hermione and Harry slid in next to Ginny, kissing her on the cheek.

Draco sipped his juice as he watched the Gryffindors, his frustration rising as Hermione engaged and laughed with Harry and Ron. Why couldn't she just stay away from them? Or just hang out with Ginny? That would be okay. They were all idiots and he didn't like her around them.

"You're staring," Blaise whispered. "Stop looking at her."

Draco did his best not to watch Hermione during Ancient Runes or Transfiguration. He knew Blaise was right and he needed to back off. Maybe he should fuck another witch like Blaise suggested.

He decided to skip Charms after lunch and got an eyeful when he arrived in his dorm room to find Daphne Greengrass bent over Blaise's desk with him pounding away behind her.

"Oh, man," Draco groaned. He tried to ignore them as he walked over to his own bed and collapsed onto it. The sound of slapping flesh and Daphne's loud moaning was very distracting. He pulled his

pillow over his head to drown out the sound. After a few minutes, when they were finished, Draco heard Blaise cast the necessary charms before obliterating the witch in the hallway.

Blaise walked back in, tucking his shirt and holding up a pair of white, lace knickers. Draco smirked and said. "I thought we agreed we wouldn't fuck our own witches. Slytherins are supposed to be off limits."

Blaise collapsed on his bed and exhaled. "That stuck up bitch had it coming. I've asked her out four times this semester and she's shot me down every time."

Draco rolled his eyes. "She's engaged, you asshole."

"Like I give a shit." Blaise stood and threw the panties at Draco.

Chapter 7

Chapter reposted 8/25/18.

Thanks again to my best friend and beta, LissaDream!

Draco decided that tonight he would not have sex with Hermione when she arrived. Instead, he would work on the potion with her and try to do away with any suspicions she may have developed the night before. He had thought hard about what he would say and had a plan in place.

When she arrived, they sat at the table and began looking over his notes. She seemed to be staring at the parchment in front of her, but Draco could tell she wasn't actually reading it. She looked like she wanted to say something but was hesitating. He knew needed to act now.

His voice was full of concern and worry. "Hermione, something weird happened last night. I can't really explain it, but I felt really strange and a little sick just before and right after you left."

It was with obvious relief when she met his eyes and responded, "Draco, it happened to me as well and it's happened the other two times I've been in here as well. I've been trying to figure out what it could be." She looked around the room. "Are you cleaning the surfaces really well?"

He couldn't help but get irritated that she would question something so basic. It didn't matter that unclean surfaces was his planned excuse. The fact she could even think he could be so incompetent irked him to no end. It was one thing for him to admit it, but quite another for her to suspect.

Swallowing his pride and his anger, he kept to the script and confirmed her suspicions. "Well, I've been magically cleaning most of the time, but – "

She interrupted him in the swotty voice he despised, "Draco, you know you have to manually clean the surfaces as well! Magic doesn't get up as much residue and can leave traces."

He was scowling internally as she dared to lecture him. He stared at her mouth and watched her lips move as he tuned her out, all while imagining her mouth otherwise occupied. He couldn't help but to laugh internally at the memory of McGonagall and he completely understood what drove Severus to use the old hag in such a way. He had not been able to look at the Transfiguration professor since then which had made class very difficult.

When her lips stopped moving, he spoke. "Yeah, I'm sorry. I know better. It's just... it's only me in here cleaning most of the time and I have other classes and work as well. It's a lot to keep up with. Blaise isn't the best at helping. I'm usually rushing."

He could see the wheels spinning as the apologetic look came over her face. "Oh. Merlin, Draco. I'm sorry! Of course. I'll start helping more. This is now a group project and I'll start doing my share."

Draco internally smirked as he pictured her scrubbing the surfaces naked on her hands and knees. "Thanks, Hermione. I appreciate it." To drive it all home he added, "I'm really grateful that you're doing this with us."

"Let's give the surfaces a good scrubbing now and start fresh," she suggested as she stood and began to roll up her sleeves.

They started cleaning and, despite his best efforts, Draco found he couldn't keep his eyes off her. She was bending over scrubbing and his gaze seemed to remain glued to her backside. A familiar stir within his gut began to plague him.

He swallowed as desire overtook reason. "That area over there probably needs to be cleaned." He pointed to another small table with knives and a couple empty cauldrons.

"Oh, sure." She immediately walked over and started wiping down the surfaces.

After a few minutes, Draco came up beside her and handed her a glass.

"Thought you could use some water," he offered with a small smile.

Thirsty from all the scrubbing, she nodded gratefully and wiped her brow with her forearm before accepting his offering and swallowing down half the glass.

Still irritated from her little lecture earlier, he had her on her knees with her mouth on him within seconds of the potion taking effect. He was not gentle and took pleasure in her struggle as he pulled her hair, forcing her head still, as he rammed himself repeatedly into her mouth. She was gagging and drooling but he didn't care. This is what her mouth was good for, not lecturing him. Just as he spilled his seed, Blaise walked in.

"Fuck, Draco! I thought we agreed you would lay off Granger for a bit!" Blaise was clearly irritated as he sat down and glared at Draco.

Draco pushed Hermione away, refastening his trousers. "Princess, undress and then pick up that rag."

Draco walked towards his accomplice, adamant in his own defense. "She pissed me off and started lecturing me about, well... never mind. The point is, it was necessary."

"Necessary?" asked Blaise.

After undressing, Hermione walked up behind Draco and began kissing his neck and rubbing against him while trying to take off his

clothes. Draco ignored her, swatting her hands away as he answered his friend. "Yes, every bit as necessary as you fucking Daphne earlier today. She needed to be taught a lesson, even if she won't remember it."

He turned back to Hermione, grabbing her wrists to stop her incessant groping. "Princess, the floor needs to be cleaned at my feet. Please get on your hands and knees and scrub really hard. Maybe then I'll let you touch me."

Hermione immediately dropped to all fours and started scrubbing the floor with the rag. Draco grinned viciously as he sat in the chair next to Blaise. "Scrub really hard now."

As she started scrubbing faster and harder the wizard's eyes were drawn to her swaying breasts and soft, lightly jiggling bum. Draco cut Blaise a conspiratorial glance and looked back down at her. "Stop scrubbing and lay on your back facing us."

Her chocolate eyes were hazy with lust as she complied.

"Spread your legs and rub your wet pussy." Draco's eyes glittered with delight as he basked in his control over the witch. Look at what I can make you do. That's it, get your fingers nice and wet. Now, take your index finger and insert it into your arse."

He shouldn't have doubted whether or not she would actually do it, because she certainly did, albeit very awkwardly. This was too good. "Do it faster. Take your other hand and pinch your nipples. That's it, one at a time. Play with them."

Blaise looked at Draco, shifting in his chair. "I have to admit, this is kind of hot."

The wizards watched her for a few minutes and then Draco released his placket and began stroking himself. "That's enough. Stand up and come over here," he commanded with his erect cock firmly in his grasp.

Hermione jumped to her feet and settled into his lap, her mouth assaulting his. He kissed her ravenously as his hands released his erection and began to explore her naked body.

Blaise stood and started to walk towards the door. "Damn, now I need to find a witch." He grimaced as he readjusted himself and looked back at Draco. "You can't keep doing this, Drake. She's going to catch on at some point." He left the room, shutting the door quietly behind him.

In this moment, Blaise's words meant nothing. All Draco cared about was being with his girl. "Stand up, Princess. We're going into the bedroom now. You were a bad girl lecturing me, so I'm going to do something you might not like, but you'll just have to deal with it." He led her into the bedroom and onto the large bed.

"Get on your knees and lay your chest down against the mattress. I want your bum sticking up in the air." He stroked himself and dipped his hard member into her glistening folds. He whispered a cleansing charm on her anus and slowly tried to force himself in. It wasn't easy. "Oh, Salazar this is tight. Fuck!"

Hermione started to pull away, letting out a squeal of discomfort. "Don't move," he snapped, as he roughly grabbed her hips and held her in place. He started pushing himself in and she started to really squirm and let out a soft sob.

Her distress gave him pause. He froze his movements for a moment as a wash of guilt assaulted him. He realized begrudgingly that he didn't want to hurt her like Blaise had hurt Ginny. He immediately withdrew and rubbed her back. "Ok, fine. I'm sorry. I won't make you do that."

Hermione pressed her core back against his cock and rubbed herself against him, her potion driven desire still consuming all her reason and control. He repositioned himself at her familiar sleeve and slipped into her with practiced ease. She let out a mewl of pleasure as he began to rock his hips back and forth at a slow pace. He felt

no need to rush and wanted to relish in this body that seemed to be made just for him. His hands cradled her soft waist as he groaned in pleasure. Her pussy massaged him and gripped him like a vice that never wanted to let go. His balls were tightening and he couldn't control the need to pick up the pace. He started pounding furiously, desperate for release. As he was reaching his precipice, he withdrew and rolled her over before quickly sliding back in so that he could look into her soft, fawn eyes as he filled her. He felt driven to kiss her and came the minute her lips caressed his.

After he caught his breath, he carefully worked out the script for when she came back to reality. He couldn't take her knickers. He would not get away with that anymore. He was certain.

Once she was fully dressed and the charms had been placed on her, he laid her down on the floor next to the table she had been cleaning when he gave her the list potion. He had her sip the antidote and as she started to come around, he obliterated her.

"Hermione! Hermione. Wake up!"

Hermione was feeling dazed as her eyes seemed to focus and widen in surprise. "What happened? Why am I on the floor?"

"Oh, thank Salazar!" Draco proclaimed, worriedly, rubbing his hands through his hair. "Fuck, Granger! You passed out and scared the piss out of me. You were cleaning the table and when I turned around, you were on the floor!" He watched her for a second. "I was just about to call a house elf to get Madam Pomfrey!" He sighed. "Perhaps, I still should," he added quietly, as though talking to himself.

Her head hurt terribly, and she felt foggy. Draco held his hand out and helped her stand. "Are you alright?"

Hermione nodded, "Yes, I think so."

He looked at the table. "Hmm, I was chopping ginger sprouts over here the other day. I'm wondering if I left some residue."

He led her away from the table. Ginger sprouts caused confusion and black outs when being handled if the witch or wizard wasn't very careful and didn't wear a mask. The residue could last for weeks. It was the perfect explanation and perfect for his ruse. "That must be it. I'm so sorry! Are you okay?"

Hermione looked at him with a mix of relief and concern. "Draco, I feel exactly like I did all the other times. That must be what it is."

He led her to the chair Blaise had been sitting in. "Here, sit down." He grabbed the rag she had been using earlier and threw it on the smaller table she had been cleaning, as though it were contaminated. He pretended to get a little light-headed himself and sat down next to her. "Wow, I really think that's what it is." After a minute, he looked at her and she looked like she was better. "Are you sure you're alright? I can take you to the infirmary."

Hermione's head was starting to clear more and more. "Why were you chopping ginger sprouts? They aren't on any of our lists."

Draco shrugged. "It was over a week ago. I know that ginger sprouts can cause confusion. I thought an uncomprehending mind wouldn't be able to follow commands and would therefore be a good addition to the resistance potion, kind of the opposite of the reasoning behind the Venus root thorn. I wanted to try both approaches."

She had to admit it wasn't a bad idea. "Oh, I see."

Now he needed to reassure her. He needed her to trust him. "Hermione, I'll take care of this. I'll get a mask and clean it all up and next time you come this lab will be perfect. Then we can really get to work without you feeling sick all the time. Why don't you go get some rest?"

She smiled gratefully at him. He really was being very sweet. He had changed so much over the past week, seemingly a different person. Working together had forced her to realize he wasn't all bad. It appeared he felt the same about her. The fact she actually considered him a friend made her feel warm inside. She took his hand and squeezed it while giving him a genuine smile. "Thanks, Draco." She stood up and grabbed her bag. When she got to the door, she turned back to him and said softly, "I'm really pleased we're becoming friends."

Draco collapsed into the chair after the door closed. His heart was pounding. She had held and squeezed his hand. She had looked at him the same adoring way she sometimes looked at Potter. She had done these things without the influence of the potion.

He suddenly felt sick with guilt over what he had done to her tonight. He had made her scrub the floor - naked. He had not only made her finger her arse, but had done so in front of Blaise! He had been terribly cruel, and he felt a heady rush of shame wash over him. Humiliating her had been such a rush in the moment, but now he just felt disgust with himself.

He stared at the door. He would never do that to her again. From now on she was for his eyes only. He swore to himself he was going to treat her better, and not use the potion so much. He would take care of his witch from now on. That's what she was, after all; His girl. It was time he started treating her like it. Glancing about, he decided the room really could use a good cleaning and got to work.

When Draco got back to the dorm, Blaise was laying in his bed reading and wouldn't look at him. Their other dorm mates weren't in so Draco could speak freely. He sat on his bed and conceded, "I promise I won't be reckless. I'm going to stop using the potion so much on Granger. She's no longer suspicious and I want to keep it that way. We really do need to work on the potion anyway, so that's what we'll do."

Blaise looked at him with relief. "You sure? You mean it?"

"Yes, I mean it." He collapsed back on his pillow.

Blaise stood up and walked towards him. "Then here." He grinned and threw three knickers at Draco.

"Merlin, Blaise." Draco looked at the panties. "Three?" One pair was rather large. Draco cocked his eye at Blaise while raising the large pair.

"I always wanted to take a big bottomed girl from behind. It was quite enjoyable." He smirked and arrogantly continued, "The other two belong to the Patil twins." He winked at Draco. "At the same time."

Draco's jaw fell. "Blaise, you are a machine."

Wednesday

Hermione arrived at potions the next day and wasn't sure where to sit. It wasn't a lab day, so she didn't know if she should sit with Harry and Ron or with Draco and Blaise. Harry was waving to her as she walked in and just as she started to walk towards him, Professor Snape's signature voice carried through the room. "Please sit with your lab partners. I will not have you switching seats around throughout the semester."

She shrugged at Harry and turned back to see Draco watching her. As she walked towards the Slytherins, she glanced at Professor Snape to see him roll his eyes at Draco. This struck her as odd because Professor Snape never did or said anything derogatory towards his Godson and favorite student.

She took her seat between her two lab mates and waited for the lecture to begin. Draco whispered from beside her. "How are you feeling, Hermione?"

She gave him a small smile. "I'm all better this morning. Thanks, Draco."

He gave her a small grin in return.

As Draco listened to Severus's lecture he found his mind wandering to the witch beside him. He wished he could reach out and touch her. She smelled so good. He whispered, "Will you have time to work on the potion tonight?"

She whispered in reply, without taking her eyes off Professor Snape. "Shh. Talk later."

He felt frustration rising again. Did she really just 'shh' me? He took a calming breath and glanced at Blaise to find the Italian wizard giving him a reproving look. Draco let out a small frustrated huff before refocusing on the lecture.

As they were packing their bags after class, Draco asked her, "So princess, are you coming to work on the potion tonight or not?"

She paused for a minute as a confused look came over her face. Then she turned to him and asked, "What did you just call me?"

There was a crashing sound as a textbook fell to the floor behind her. Her head whipped around to see Blaise giving Draco a scathing look

Chapter 8

Authors note: I realize that in the books, Ginny's birthday is in August. For the sake of the plot, her birthday falls differently in my story. Not much about this story is canon anyway, but I wanted to acknowledge that I knew this was an incorrect detail. Thanks for reading!

Chapter reposted 8/25/18. Thanks to LissaDream for her beta help!

Wednesday continued...

Draco froze. He didn't mean to call her princess, and in his panic, he was completely immobilized.

Blaise gave him a look to kill, but then his face smoothed over and he chuckled. He looked at Hermione, "I guess you aren't aware, but most of Slytherin calls you that behind your back."

She looked confused. "What? Why?"

"Oh, it's just a nickname because you're like Gryffindor's golden girl. You know – best grades, prefect, best friends with the *chosen* one." He said it dismissively, like it was nothing.

Hermione's mouth was hanging open in surprise. She had no idea anyone viewed her in such a light.

Blaise laughed. "It's been your nickname for quite a while, princess. I'm surprised you didn't know."

Hermione's eyes were still on the wizard, full of shock at what he had just told her. Her mouth was still gaping open when he turned away and approached the professor's desk.

"Yeah, it's been your nickname for *ages*, " the blond wizard standing on her other side confirmed with a chuckle. "It's a pretty harmless nickname, really."

She smiled absently at him as she remembered her sex dream. He had called her princess. She felt herself flush with the memory.

"So, I'll see you tonight?" he asked as he started to walk away.

"Uh, sure," she responded distractedly.

She started to follow him out when Professor Snape called out, "Draco, please come see me before you leave."

Hermione smiled softly at him as she walked by when he turned back towards Professor Snape.

Draco approached Severus and heard the door close behind him. He turned and noticed all the students had cleared out except for himself and Blaise.

"Draco, you are going to get caught. " Severus' voice was firm.

Draco looked at Blaise and shot him a look as if to say, 'traitor'.

Draco was vehement. "I will *not* get caught. I've already told Blaise I'm not going to use the potion on her very much anymore. I'm going to really work on this potion, with her help."

Snape was watching him closely. After a pause he droned, "See that you do."

Draco and Blaise left Snape's classroom and headed to the Great Hall. "Why did you go blabbering to Severus?" Draco seethed.

"Someone needs to rein you in before you blow it for all of us," Blaise replied defensively but with a grin.

Draco rolled his eyes. " I need more knickers, Blaise."

Blaise smirked. "Well, that my fellow twisted friend can be accomplished quite easily. Why aren't you gathering more yourself?"

Draco considered. Why shouldn't he get more? He said he wouldn't use the potion so much on Granger, and he wouldn't. Perhaps using it on a couple other witches was exactly what he needed. For a second he felt like he would be betraying his witch, but then he remembered that she didn't even know she was his witch. Until she came to understand and appreciate that she belonged to him, he could do what he wanted. After all, it was only a matter of time until she fell for him. He would see to it. He could be quite charming, and she was so easy to manipulate. He walked with a little more pep to his step as he contemplated which witch he would have next.

Hermione went to the Great Hall distracted. Something was amiss. *Why did you have that dream on Monday night, only to have Draco call you princess two days later?* What was her subconscious telling her? Had she heard herself called by that name before but not remembered it? And why was Blaise so angry at Draco? Blaise acted nonchalant about the nickname, but she saw the look he had given Draco. Blaise was livid about something, but it couldn't be about her nickname. Why would Blaise care about that? Hermione shook it off and put it out of her mind as she enjoyed lunch with her friends.

Saturday

The rest of the week was uneventful. Her friends were starting to notice how friendly she and Draco were being towards each other, both during and in-between classes. He no longer smirked or scowled at her. He held the door for her, as necessary, instead of letting it slam in her face as he would have normally done. Hermione explained to her friends that they were working together on their potion's project and it required a certain degree of civility. She didn't disclose that she was actually growing quite fond of the blond Slytherin. She found she looked forward to their potion meetings more and more. They met every evening at seven. The past three nights they had worked diligently until nine. Since he had cleaned

the lab, she hadn't had any more episodes of feeling off or sick. Today was the first day this week that they didn't have plans to meet. There was a Gryffindor vs Ravenclaw quidditch match this afternoon, so they had plans to meet tomorrow.

Today was also Ginny's Birthday. Dobby had delivered a beautiful birthday cake to the Gryffindor common room by Harry's request. They had sung happy birthday to her and, to Ginny's delight, Harry had claimed the real celebration would come that evening as he had a special gift for her. He smiled as he hid his duffle bag behind him, playfully. "I've been keeping your gift with me in my bag, so you couldn't snoop in my room and find it!"

Ginny was glowing with excitement. So much was happening today; the match, her birthday, and whatever Harry had in store for her that evening.

The animated group headed down to the quidditch field an hour before the match. Lavender and Hermione were sitting together in the bleachers wrapped up in Gryffindor gold and red blankets and sipping hot chocolate as they watched the Gryffindor team warm up and do pre-game exercises. As they watched the warm-ups, Hermione saw movement out of the corner of her eye. She noticed Cho Chang come out of the player's building. She thought nothing of it as Cho Chang was a player in today's match. What Hermione didn't notice was the dazed expression on Cho's face as she quickly rushed back to the castle, as if she was desperate to see someone, or more accurately, to touch them.

When the match started, Hermione, as well as the rest of crowd, could tell that something was off about Cho. The match ended quickly when Cho barely even noticed, much less reacted, when the golden orb whizzed right by her broom before Harry grabbed it. It was all over in less than twenty minutes. Hermione actually felt bad for the witch when the Ravenclaw's teammates ignored her, and her classmates booed her, as she exited the playing field. The poor girl looked like she really didn't feel well.

The Gryffindors were ecstatic as they marched back up to the castle. The party was underway as students were secretly drinking mead and firewhisky shots. Lavender and Ron were making out in the corner and Hermione found it didn't bother her in the least. Ginny kept pretending she was going to dig through Harry's duffle bag to look for her birthday present, but he laughed and quickly told her that her present was for her eyes only and it was for later.

The party went on for hours. At about seven o'clock, Harry had dashed off to the loo and Ginny grabbed Hermione pulling her towards Harry's duffle bag. "I want to see what he got me!"

Hermione was the voice of reason and said, "Don't ruin this for Harry. Clearly, he's gotten you something nice that he doesn't want you opening in front of everyone else." Hermione could practically see the wheels spinning in Ginny's head.

"Oh Hermione! Do you think it could be a ring? Do you think he's going to propose?"

Hermione rolled her eyes. "Ginny, you're only sixteen! Harry's only seventeen! It would be ridiculous for you to get engaged so young!"

Ginny frowned and rebutted, "Daphne Greengrass is only a year older than me and she's engaged and has been for at least six months. And, those two Hufflepuff girls got engaged over the summer."

"Oh Ginny! Don't get your hopes up and then be disappointed when Harry gives you a perfectly lovely present. You'll break his heart!"

Just then Harry came back into the common room. He saw the look on Ginny's face and smiled resignedly. "Ok, I'll give it to you now, but we need to be alone."

Ginny squealed with excitement as he grabbed the bag. She, in turn, grabbed his hand and ran up to the boy's dormitory. They couldn't

run to hers because the girl's staircase was charmed not to allow any males up the stairs, except for teachers, of course.

Hermione dropped onto the sofa and sighed. As she peeked around her, she was shocked to discover all the couples that had paired off and were making out in corners and on chairs around the common room. She suddenly felt very lonely and wished she had a love interest.

She stared into the fire, her mind turning to Draco. She flushed with the self-realization that she might fancy him. He was smart and brilliant with potions. He treated her with respect and kindness and actually appreciated that she had a brain and liked to study. Harry and Ron always groaned and moaned when she made study charts and encouraged them to hit the books. Draco had been thrilled when she brought him a premade schedule of all their study and potion sessions planned out for the next 2 months. And she couldn't deny how attractive he was. He looked softer to her now that she had gotten to know him. And he no longer acted arrogant and like he was better than her. She considered he might fancy her as well, but realized it was likely wishful thinking.

Just then a crying Ginny Weasley came flying down the steps and ran back up the girl's staircase. Hermione dashed after her and found Ginny collapsed on her bed in tears.

"Ginny, what's wrong?"

The redhead sniffled. "Oh Hermione! He gave me a red, lace ladies teddy... that was *crotchless*!" She blew her nose. "As he pulled the box out, he said he had been picturing it on me all day."

Hermione was completely shocked. "What?" This couldn't be true. "Ginny, was he joking? Maybe he gave you that as a prank before he gave you your real gift?"

Ginny turned to Hermione. "Hermione, there's more." Ginny hesitated and then burst into tears as she said, "He's the one who

charmed our underwear! He's got dozens of knickers in his duffle bag."

Hermione shrieked, "What?"

"Yes, after he gave me the lingerie, he started frantically digging through the bag as though he were looking for something else. I saw the panties in his bag. When he saw that I saw them, he zipped it up and said it wasn't what I thought." She sniffled. "I needed to get away, so I ran."

This couldn't be right. Clearly, Ginny was confused. Maybe he had more lingerie in his bag for her, but certainly not *stolen* underwear. But why would Harry give her such a tactless gift in the first place?

"Ginny, I'm going to go talk to Harry. I'll be right back. This just doesn't make sense!"

Hermione dashed out of Ginny's room, down the stairs and then up the boy's steps. She burst into Harry's room to find him sitting on the side of his bed looking dazed. Hermione noticed the duffle bag at his feet and grabbed it. She looked inside it and sure enough, there were over a dozen, maybe even two-dozen girls panties. She felt sick when she recognized at least four of her own.

"Harry! How could you!" she scolded.

He turned to her and said quietly, "Footy pajamas. I bought her footy pajamas, with little Gryffindors flying around on them. They were charmed so the Gryffindors could actually move around on the pajamas."

Hermione was dumbstruck. "What?"

In a panicked voice he said, "Hermione, you know me! I would never give Ginny something trashy like that red lace thing." He had turned and was looking at the offensive garment laying on the bed next to him.

"Harry, what about the knickers?" She started pulling them out. She counted twenty pair.

He turned red and proclaimed, adamantly, "I've never seen them before tonight!"

Hermione didn't know what to think. She wanted to believe him – and a big part of her did – but was this not exactly how he would want to look after getting caught? Could this be an act? Perhaps he really *had* bought her the lingerie. Perhaps her reaction made him panic and he in turn made up the bit about the footy pajamas. Perhaps he *had* stolen the underwear, and this was all a lie to look innocent because he'd been caught.

She turned and stared at him and was suddenly ashamed of herself. This was Harry! He would never do this. *Would he?*

"Harry, we need to think. Who would want to frame you?" She touched his shoulder, giving it a reassuring squeeze. "I'm going to walk and concentrate for a bit. It will be alright, we'll figure this out." Needing some air, she walked down the steps and out of the Gryffindor tower and into the castle.

Draco was pacing. He would pay anything to be in the Gryffindor common room right now. Between himself and Blaise, they had taken another ten panties over the past three days. Draco had taken three and Blaise, seven. Draco had used the potion on Cho Chang earlier in the day and had her plant the knickers in Potter's bag. When she told him about the gift box in the bag, he let her give him a blow job before taking her underwear. After he performed the appropriate charms, he obliviated her and sent her on her way. Then he disillusioned himself with the spell Severus had taught him and snuck into the players building during the match while everyone was distracted. He substituted the kinky lingerie he had bought for Princess, for the ridiculous footy pajamas he found in the box. Oh, what he would pay to be a fly on the wall when Ginny opened that box.

Draco thought back on the three witches he had used the potion on since Wednesday. The first had been a hot little Hufflepuff, Trixie Sinclair. She was a sixth year with a reputation for being extra friendly, to put it nicely. Once she was naked and all over him, he got it up and drove it home, but he wasn't really into it. He had managed to fuck her in the ass, though. She didn't seem to mind it too much either. However, she wasn't Hermione, so it didn't quite satisfy him.

The next girl he simply took her underwear and obliviated her. He didn't even touch her. Cho, he had been curious about, so he let her blow him. But he was only doing it to quell his hormones. The only witch he really wanted was his princess and he couldn't help kept getting hot and bothered when he thought about her. These other witches just didn't scratch his itch. He hadn't touched his witch since Tuesday night and he wanted her... *desperately* . He missed fucking his girl, but he knew he couldn't. At least not for a while. So, he let Cho blow him and found that while it wasn't really quenching, it did calm his fire a bit.

Draco continued pacing until he couldn't take it anymore. He needed some air and headed out into the castle.

Chapter 9

Chapter reposted 8/25/18.

A huge thanks to LissaDream for her beta help!

Saturday Night

Hermione walked through the castle lost in her thoughts. It just didn't make sense. She knew Harry. He loved Ginny... positively adored her. He would never give her such a gift. For one thing – it was entirely too forward. Harry was a bit shy when it came to matters of the flesh. It was one of his endearing qualities in Ginny's eyes. Over the summer, Hermione and Ginny had sat up very late one night discussing their views on relationships and sex. They both wanted to stay virgins until they were at least out of Hogwarts. But maybe things between Ginny and Harry had progressed more than Hermione realized? Maybe the lingerie wasn't as inappropriate as Hermione thought? But if that was the case, why would Ginny be so upset?

Hermione had been walking about twenty minutes and suddenly realized she didn't know where she was. She glanced around, looking for landmarks. Something to tell her where she was. As she walked a little further, she realized she was on the fifth-floor south hall corridor where the old classrooms were used for storage. She usually didn't even patrol this hallway because there was nothing back there except old desks, some chalkboards, a couple old infirmary cots, and old metal bedpans. She had never seen any students in this area of the castle. She was about to turn back when she thought she heard voices. Curiosity getting the best of her, she proceeded cautiously.

The voice was soft and deep, and sounded familiar. "That's it. Take it all off ... nice and slow."

Hermione followed the voice to a closed door and pressed her ear up against it. "Okay, now play with those tasty tits for me. That's it. Stroke your nipples."

Hermione was dumbstruck. She wanted to know who was in the room. She gently tried the door, but it was locked.

Next, she heard a female voice, "Can I touch you? I just want to touch you and make you feel good. Please!" Her words were practically a whine and sounded desperate.

Then Hermione heard another male voice, only this one did not sound familiar. "When do I get to fuck her?"

The familiar male voice replied, "Chill. Show me the galleons." Hermione then heard what sounded like a bag of coins followed by the familiar voice saying, "Susan, I'll let you suck my cock, but you have to let Theo here fuck you while you do it."

"Anything, Blaise. I just want you."

Hermione's eyes bulged in shock. That's who the familiar voice was! Blaise!

She kept her ear pressed against the door and heard the sound of furniture being moved. It was quiet for a minute and then she thought she heard the low rumble of whispered voices. It was hard to decipher. It sounded as though the girl was being coaxed. "That's it, take it all. Such a good little witch, showing Theo here what it's like to get laid."

Then the second male voice chimed in, much louder. "Oh, mother of Merlin she feels good."

Hermione had heard enough. She needed to get a teacher. Something was very wrong. She didn't know who this Susan was, but it sounded like Blaise was whoring her out to Theo Nott. Was she drugged? Maybe they were playing some sort of twisted, threesome

sex game? She didn't know but she was going to get help. She ran down the steps trying to think of where the closest teacher's quarters were, when she suddenly hit a solid black mass that stopped her dead in her tracks. She looked up into the stern and sneering face of Professor Snape.

Relief coursed through her. "Professor Snape! Thank Merlin!" She was out of breath and had her hands on her knees as she tried to slow down her breathing.

"Miss Granger. You had best have a reasonable explanation for..."

She interrupted him. "Professor..." She took another breath. "Professor, I think a girl is being...I think a girl might be being attacked on the fifth floor in a south hall classroom!"

Professor Snape looked at her as he cocked an eyebrow, disbelievingly. "Explain."

"There's no time! Blaise Zabini and Theo Nott...they...they..."

With that, Professor Snape forced her out of his way as he dashed up the stairs. Hermione followed closely behind. He yelled loudly back towards her, "Which room?"

She ran up beside him and pointed to the door at the end of the hall on the right. He stared down at her and commanded in his signature resonant and beguiling voice, "Wait here. Do. Not. Move."

She watched as he dashed ahead, waving his wand over the door handle and causing it to open. Professor Snape stepped into the room and Hermione waited.

Draco was missing his witch. He hadn't touched her since Tuesday and he was starting to go stir crazy. As he walked through the castle he became more and more frustrated. Blaise and Snape were being overly cautious. He knew what he was doing. Granger was so

incredibly easy to manipulate. Once she was his completely, he wouldn't have to use the potion on her anymore, but for now, it was necessary.

He felt a small ping of guilt as he recalled all the times he had given it to her and the way he had treated her, particularly the first time. He should have been gentler, but how was he to have known she was a virgin? He had always assumed she was shagging the dorky duo.

Draco shivered in disgust at the thought. No, they would never touch her like that. No one would. Only him. She would be his willingly... eventually. In the meantime, he would use the potion as necessary.

He looked at his watch and headed toward the room of requirement. As he walked, he thought about the knickers. He grinned as visions of Hermione never speaking to Harry again overtook his thoughts. He hoped that was exactly how it would all play out. Hopefully, Potter would be turned in to McGonagall before the morning.

It was frustrating not knowing what was going on. What if no one even saw the panties in Potters bag? Potter could just get rid of them and nothing would come of it. Merlin, what a waste of effort that would be.

Draco arrived at the room of requirement to check on the latest batch of the lust potion. He would be bottling it up tonight and then replacing the contents of the cauldron with what was the most recent recipe he and Granger had come up with. He had told her he was going to start their latest recipe tonight so that when she met him tomorrow it would already be brewing. After about forty-five minutes, he had just finished bottling the last of the lust potion when Blaise came flying in.

"Fuck!" Blaise groaned as he collapsed into the chair closest to Draco.

Draco smirked at his friend. "What's wrong? Some witch resist your charms and not drink the potion?"

Blaise glared at Draco. "It's your fucking bitch of a witch."

That got Draco's full attention. "What?"

"She overheard Theo and I tag teaming Susan Bones."

Draco put down the last flask. "What? She caught you?"

"She overheard us and ran to get a teacher. Thank Salazar she ran into Snape. He made her wait in the hall while he came in to investigate. Theo had just blown his load as Snape barged in, but I wasn't quite there yet." Blaise shook his head in disappointment. "If he had just entered two minutes later. That puffer witch has a nice little mouth on her. I might have to tap that again. Anyhow, Snape flooded us from the fireplace in the classroom to his personal study. He then went back to tell Hermione the classroom was empty and that clearly she had not heard what she thought." Blaise had been speaking very fast and took a big breath before blowing it out slowly. "It's a fucking miracle we weren't caught."

Blaise paused and thought for a minute, "She argued with him, but he said without proof, there was nothing he could do and that more than likely she didn't hear what she thought. After that, Snape came back to his study and obliviated both Theo and Susan before tossing them out into the castle." Blaise laughed. "Theo lost his cherry tonight and he's not even going to remember it... brilliant!"

Draco's mind was whirling as he thought about everything Blaise had just said. "Granger will ask questions. If she's convinced she heard you, she'll investigate." He sat in the other chair. "How come Severus didn't just obliviate her as well?"

Blaise just shrugged, "I asked Snape that and he said he had a better plan and to trust him." He continued. "It doesn't matter...she won't find out anything because Theo and Susan remember nothing and I'm not talking!"

Draco stared at the floor in thought for a minute. "We'll have to get Theo another witch to test him on. He can't use the potion on his own until he's proven he's skilled enough with the obliviation part."

Blaise looked at Draco and shrugged. "Yeah, he's already paid me. I guess I should go put his money bag back in his trunk before he thinks it was stolen. He'll have no recollection of giving it to me." With that statement, Blaise stood up and headed towards the door. He paused. "Draco, it's even more important now than ever that you stay away from Granger. You've done a good job of not using the potion on her the past few days. We can't risk her getting suspicious about anything else."

Draco watched his friend walk out and shut the door.

Hermione was frustrated. She knew what she heard. There was no way she imagined it. But when she went behind Professor Snape to check, the classroom was empty. Something was fishy. Perhaps they heard her and left when she went to get Professor Snape. She just hoped that poor girl was acting of her own volition and wasn't being Imperiused or influenced with a spell or something. Professor Snape said he would question both Blaise and Theo. He had made her tell him exactly what she heard, every embarrassing detail. She would have to trust he would investigate. What a night! And to top it off, she still didn't know what to think about Harry and the knickers.

When she got back to the common room, there were a few couples still occupying a few dark corners, but not many. Harry was sitting in a lounge chair near the portrait and jumped up when she walked in. "Hermione, I've been waiting for you." His tone was desperate and pleading. "I need you to listen to me, please!"

She sighed and looked at him with something like pity. "Come on, let's sit by the fire. There's no one over there."

He followed and collapsed onto the sofa next to her. "I swear to you I never saw that lacy thing or those underwear before tonight. I swear

it. And, I really need you to believe me." His eyes were starting to water.

She believed him. In her heart of hearts, she knew he didn't do this. But why would someone frame him? She took his hand and squeezed it. "I believe you, Harry...but, I think we should go to McGonagall or Dumbledore." She thought for a moment. "What if it's someone who's trying to get you expelled and out from under the protection of Dumbledore? He needs to know."

"No, I need to find out who did this. Then I'll go to Dumbledore and I'll be able to tell him who's responsible." His voice was determined. He then said more quietly, "I think I know, anyway." Harry looked at Hermione. "Malfoy."

Hermione knew he was going to say Malfoy. Malfoy hated Harry more than anyone, but she had been spending a lot of time with the blond and she truly believed he had changed. At least towards her. Stealing underwear and framing Harry just didn't make sense given how much time he was focusing on their project.

"Harry, I understand why you think it was him, but I've been seeing a different side to Draco while working on our potion. Frankly, I'm not of the mindset that it was him." She paused to look into the fire. "You'll need some kind of evidence anyway or you won't be taken seriously."

Harry opened his mouth to argue, but Hermione stood and looked at her friend. "I'm going to go check on Ginny."

He paused and then whispered, "Thanks, 'Mione."

Chapter 10

Reposted 5/7/19

No BETA for this chapter. All errors are my own.

Saturday Night continued...

"Ginny, you okay?" Ginny didn't respond, but her small and quiet sniffles echoed throughout the dark room.

Kicking off her shoes, Hermione climbed onto the bed with her friend to comfort her.

The redhead rolled over and snuggled onto Hermione's shoulder before answering her question. "I'm fine. I'm going to break up with Harry."

"Ginny, stop and *think* for a minute. Listen to me." Ginny's wet eyes peeked up to Hermione's, looking for any semblance of hope that Harry was innocent.

Hermione smiled lightly. "Harry said he had bought you footy pajamas. When you opened the box, it was the first time he ever laid eyes on that red teddy."

Ginny sniffled and didn't say anything. After a minute, she asked with a whisper, "footy pajamas?"

Hermione nodded and answered with a tired sigh. "I believe him. He also said he had never seen those knickers before and...well, I think I believe that, too. I mean...it's Harry, you know?"

Ginny rolled onto her back and stared up at her bed's canopy before glancing back at Hermione. "He did say it wasn't what I thought." Her

forehead crinkled. "But how did they get in his bag? He's had that duffle bag with him for days to keep me from snooping."

Hermione sat up on the side of the bed and rubbed her tired eyes. "I don't know. I guess if a wizard is clever enough to charm off girl's underwear, he's clever enough to get them into Harry's bag." She turned back to Ginny. "Someone's trying to frame him. I just know it. I told him to go to Dumbledore, but he won't until he finds out who did it."

Ginny pushed herself up and grabbed a tissue from her bedside table to dab the tears off her cheeks. Her face was blotchy, and her eyes swollen. "I'm a fool." She shook her head in self-reproach. "Of course, you're right. What was I thinking? I saw the skanky negligee and the panties, and my mind raced with assumptions." She slid off the bed. "I need to apologize to Harry."

Hermione followed Ginny down the steps. Harry was pacing nervously in front of the large fireplace. His face lit up when Ginny flew into his arms, whispering words of apology. Hermione couldn't help the welling in her eyes at the vision of her friends reunited. *What a mess!*

Sunday

Hermione, Harry and Ginny spent thirty minutes over breakfast filling Ron and Lavender in on the events of the night before.

"I thought I had lost my girlfriend and my best girl friend," Harry said with a wink to Hermione. He threw his arm around her shoulder and kissed her temple for about the third time since they sat down to breakfast. "But Hermione believed me." He smiled widely at her. "She knows I would never do such a thing."

Ginny sighed, shamefacedly, "I'm so sorry, Harry. I'm your girlfriend! I should have known better."

Harry reassured her by pulling her into a hug as well. "It's okay. I mean, what were you supposed to think? Of course, you ran away upset. Hermione could see it from a more objective view and even she didn't believe me at first."

"I didn't know what to think," Hermione interjected as she spread marmalade on her toast.

Ron was gob-smacked and completely agreed with Harry that Draco Malfoy was responsible, despite Hermione's insistence otherwise.

"Oh, he did it," Ron stated matter-of-factly. "He keeps looking over here. He's probably trying to figure out why Harry hasn't been expelled."

Hermione couldn't help the natural reflex to turn toward the Slytherin table at Ron's words. Sure enough, Draco was watching them with the usual look of disdain she associated with the Malfoy of old. When he caught her eye, his expression flattened and he nodded slightly before turning to Blaise.

Ron raised a brow at Harry and asked, "What did you do with the knickers?"

"I hid them, of course. I went to the Room of Requirement during the night and told it I needed a place to hide something." He shrugged. "The room it provided me was huge and was filled with all kinds of stuff. I don't think they'll ever be found again if I don't go retrieve them. After I figure out how Malfoy did it and can prove it, I'll go get them as evidence."

Hermione knew better than to argue with Harry. He was so convinced it was Draco. She looked from Harry to Ron, trying to echo the voice of reason. "Well, we need to investigate. We need to ask around. If we can find out who they belong to, we might be able to find something all the girls have in common. Maybe that will lead us to a suspect." She took Harry's hand. "In the meantime, keep your

eyes and ears open, Harry. Whoever did this might have other plans for you."

Draco couldn't believe his eyes. Not only was Potter not expelled, but clearly Ginny wasn't too upset about the lingerie. Maybe Potter discovered it before he gave her the box? And the panties were clearly not discovered either. Potter must have found them before anyone else. *Damn it!* To top it off, fucking Potter kept hugging and touching Princess. *He needs to keep his dirty paws off her.* Draco was seething as he watched the group of friends. *She's mine!*

But then a thought occurred. Maybe he was going about it all wrong. He couldn't turn Hermione against Potter, but maybe he could turn Potter against her. A slight curl at the corners of his mouth hinted at a smile as it all unfolded in his mind. With the loss scar head's friendship, she would come running to her new best friend for comfort. She would come running to him, and that's when he would make his move; when she was feeling lonely and vulnerable. His appetite restored from his revelation, he dug into his breakfast with relish.

Hermione wondered if she was late when she arrived at the Room of Requirement to find Draco was already waiting for her and watching her as she came down the hall.

For his part, Draco was desperate for his witch and was determined to have her. "Hey, Hermione!" He smiled brightly and innocently as she accompanied him into the room.

"Hi, how's it going with the potion?"

"Well, I started it last night and it seems to be the right color," he answered as she stepped towards the potion. He stayed close by her side, watching her as she peeked into the cauldron.

"What ingredient is next? The Venus rose thorn?"

Draco smiled innocently, "Yeah, its chopped and ready. We need to stir counterclockwise twice after we add it. I thought you might like to add it."

Hermione peeked up at him and smiled. "Okay, here goes nothing." She picked up the prepared ingredient and gingerly dropped it into the cauldron. She then picked up the stirring rod and stirred it twice, counterclockwise."

"Imperio." Draco cast the unforgivable while grabbing the flask out of his pocket. "Here, Princess drink this and then you'll feel like yourself again."

Hermione felt peaceful and found she wanted nothing more than to drink from the flask Draco handed her. She took a sip and at the same time, Draco released the Imperius.

Draco felt his own peace wash over him as his witch became his again, pressing herself against him, kissing his neck and nibbling on his earlobe. Using the Imperius had been a spur of the moment decision, but it worked perfectly. His lips fell to hers, aggressively and playfully nipping as he pulled her shirt over her head. He stood back for a second, his eyes drawn to her perfect tits.

Hating the sudden distance, Hermione wrapped her arms around his neck, peppering it with open mouthed kisses. "Draco." she whispered breathlessly.

"I'm here, love," he responded softly, enjoying her attentions.

His fingers unfastened and unzipped her jeans. "Take those off," he commanded gently. He slid off his own shirt as he watched her remove her denims.

"Come with me," he whispered as he grabbed her hand, leading her into the bedroom.

They fell onto the bed, her attentive lips feeling like heaven against his own. The way she kissed him, with such passion and affection, this was the *real* Hermione. This was his *princess*. As she lay on her back looking up at him with total awe and adoration, Draco slid out of his trousers and nestled himself within the cradle of her thighs. After a light press of his lips against hers, he entered her in one needy, quick stroke. She moaned in ecstasy the second he filled her and soft flush of pink flushing over her skin. He swallowed as he observed the obvious rapture on her face. Wanting this to last, he kept himself in check and began to move slowly.

Pushing himself up and onto his hands, he watched her body writhe against him. "You're so beautiful. I want to see you. Climb on top of me." He rolled them over and guided her slick, warm sheath back over his cock. He hissed in pleasure as she leaned forward, thrusting her tongue into his mouth as she rocked her hips, meeting him thrust for thrust.

Draco's pupils dilated with sheer lust when she up righted herself and leaned back on her palms as she continued to ride him. His words came out in pants as his eyes remained glued to her bouncing breasts. "Soon you'll want me all the time, princess. We'll be able to meet here as much as you want."

Hermione began to moan as she leaned forward and over him, quickening her pace and rubbing herself against him in a way that made her womb coil. "Tell me you'll always want me, princess," he choked, his own release fast approaching.

Her eyes were glassed over as she looked at him with pure passion, "I'll always want you." With one last hard grind, Hermione let out a keening mewl as her orgasm tore through her, her body collapsing forward onto his.

"Fuck, Princess. Did you just come? Damn, that felt good. Your pussy is practically milking me." He pulled her head up by the hair roughly and kissed her mouth. "Ok, start riding me again, I'm so close."

Hermione pushed herself up, her face flushed, and her eyes still glazed as she started to bounce up and down on him.

Draco's focus flickered from her chest to her eyes, his words came out strained, almost like a growl. "Tell me you love me and that you love me more than Harry."

"I love you. I love you more than Harry or *anyone* . I only want to touch you... always. I want to kiss you and make love to you." Her mouth crashed on his as her words pushed him over the edge into his own climax. He held her tight, burying his face into her neck, as his hips rocked up and his seed pulsed inside of her.

When he started to come down from his high, he kissed her softly and led her to lay next to him. His heart still thrumming from his release, he closed his eyes and nestled his nose into her fragrant locks. She was still writhing next to him, rubbing herself on his leg. "Hold still, princess. Let's just lay here for a few minutes."

In her lust filled haze, she ignored his directive and rolled back on top of him. Her lips met his and her tongue pressed into his mouth as her hips began thrusting against him more aggressively.

He pulled his head away and held her face still. "Princess, I want you to lay still next to me for a few minutes. If you do, I'll let you touch me again."

She sighed heavily and fell to his side, curling up next to him. After a minute or so she seemed to lose control again and started rutting her pubis against his leg.

He was getting irritated. "Princess, wouldn't it be nice just to cuddle for a few minutes?"

Hermione was in her own world as she kissed down his chest to his stomach before heading further and taking his semi hard erection into her mouth. He looked down at her and at the sight of her lips wrapped around his cock, he felt himself harden more.

"Fine, you want it, Princess? You'll get it." He flipped her over roughly and slammed into her from behind. He grabbed a handful of hair and pulled as he pumped into her hard and furiously. Why the hell couldn't she just be still for a minute! He just wanted to hold her! All witches liked to be held after getting fucked. But not his princess, no! She just wanted more, like a slut. Fine! He would give her more! A deviant smile crept over his mouth as he slid a finger into her puckered hole. "You want it in the ass, princess?" She tensed and looked back over her shoulder at him, confused. "I didn't think so." He removed his finger.

He kept pumping and then when he was about to come he pulled out and rolled her over. He stroked himself and came in her mouth and on her face. "That's what happens to sluts, princess. Sluts who don't know how to cuddle after getting making love!"

He climbed off the bed and started to pick up their clothes, his anger not subsiding. Realizing he needed to regain control, he drew in a deep breath. She had slid off the bed and was starting to come after him again. He rolled his eyes. "Get dressed," he snapped.

He ignored the hurt look in her eyes that frequently peeked at him as she slowly dressed.

When they were both ready, his tone was harsh and abrupt. "Sit down in that chair and don't move. If you move I'll never let you touch me again."

He started pacing and taking deep breaths and talking to himself. *You need to calm down. What the fuck is wrong with you?!* He let out a long slow breath and closed his eyes as reason slowly came back. After a moment, he shook his head in surprise at his own overreaction. *She's under the influence of the potion. That's why she couldn't lay still. You need to calm down. It's not her fault.*

As his rational self slowly returned he started to feel guilty for losing his temper. It wasn't her fault. He walked over to her. "It's okay, princess. You aren't yourself. It's the potion's fault. When you are

mine all the time, things will be better." He started to think about the staging for what he needed to do.

He laid her on the floor next to the cauldron and then lay beside her. He cast the appropriate charms and then gave her a sip of the antidote potion. As she started to come around, he cast the obliviate and then closed his eyes, pretending to be asleep.

Hermione felt weird. She felt like she was in a haze. She looked around and realized she was on the floor. She then noticed Draco a few feet away. His eyes were closed and he wasn't moving. She panicked. "Draco! Draco! Wake up!" She started shaking his shoulders.

Slowly he opened his eyes. He looked at her with a confused expression. "What happened?" He asked, glancing around at a loss.

Hermione was watching him closely. "I don't know. I just woke up and you were passed out next to me." She looked him over for obvious injuries as she started to stand. "Are you okay?"

He nodded. "I think so. How about you?"

She nodded. "I think so." She reached out to take his hand so she could pull him up. "Boy, this potion is becoming quite a hazard," she said wearily.

"Yeah, we should talk to Professor Snape tomorrow and see what he says," Draco suggested as he led her to a chair.

They sat next to each other, quietly for a minute. Hermione was getting a headache, but she remembered that she wanted to ask Draco about Blaise.

"Hey, Draco?"

"Yeah?"

"Umm, I was just wondering. Does Blaise have a girlfriend?"

Draco felt his heart start to constrict. "Why do you ask? You have the hots for him or something?" He teased.

She shook her head. "Oh, nothing like that. I was uh, patrolling last night and I thought I heard him in a classroom with a girl, but the door was locked."

Draco watched her for a couple seconds, contemplating the best response. "Well, Blaise gets around. A lot of witches are after him, so you might have heard him with someone." Draco's mind was racing, trying to find a way to get her off the scent. "You wouldn't believe the propositions he gets. It's embarrassing, actually."

"Really, like what?" She found herself genuinely curious.

Draco internally jumped for joy that she took the bait. "Well, he gets propositions for sex all the time, but recently he had a girl ask him to be with her and another bloke. He's been propositioned to be with two witches as well. Hell, even guys come onto him. It's all pretty crazy if you ask me. He definitely gets around."

Hermione was shocked, her jaw falling. "Wow." She thought about it for a minute. "I guess some really find him attractive. It's weird though, Harry's cute and he's famous and he's never been propositioned like that, at least not that I know of." She hesitated, sucking her lip into her mouth. "He probably wouldn't tell anyone if he was, though."

Draco didn't like to hear her talk about Potter. "Well, I'm pretty beat. I've got a wicked headache and would like to go lie down".

Hermione smiled softly at him. "Yeah, I'm not feeling so good myself." They grabbed their bags and walked out together, him turning left and her turning right. "See you tomorrow, Draco."

As Hermione walked back to her dorm, she was trying to think about the night before. The lingerie, the panties and then the classroom

thing with Blaise. Her head just felt too fuzzy to concentrate. She felt like she was missing something obvious.

The potion was becoming a problem. Draco had cleaned the room and she hadn't had any more episodes in almost a week, and then today they both passed out. She would definitely talk to Professor Snape tomorrow. She wanted to discuss the potion, but she also wanted to know if he found out anything about Blaise and that Susan girl. Based on what Draco said, it all could have been consensual, but her gut instinct told her otherwise.

Chapter 11

Monday

Hoping to catch Professor Snape before class, Hermione skipped breakfast and arrived at potions early. Luck was in her corner because she arrived to find him sitting at his desk, grading papers.

As she tentatively approached him, he addressed her without looking up. "Miss Granger. Something I can do for you?" His words were perfectly polite, but his tone made it clear he did not want to be bothered. Little did she know that her Professor had fully anticipated she would come to him this morning.

"Yes, Sir. Uh, sorry, Sir...I wondered if you had any answers about Saturday night yet?"

His sharp gaze drifted up to hers with an intensity that caused her to swallow. "That, Miss Granger, has been handled and is none of your concern." He looked back down at his papers and started marking.

"But, Sir, the girl...is she ok?"

Snape looked up from his desk and put down his quill as he leaned back and contemplated her. "The girl, as you put it, is perfectly fine. What you heard was a consensual exchange of an adult act, performed by students who are too young to engage in such activities."

She let out a breath. "Oh, well that's good then... that she's alright."

"Indeed." He was still contemplating her. "Please do not take it upon yourself to mention this again to anyone, including involved parties as this is a... *delicate* matter."

"Of course not, Sir."

He continued to watch her and just as she was about to step away, his words stopped her. "I only told you, because you have proven yourself to be a responsible young witch who does not run around giggling and yammering like the other girls your age." He paused. "You have a maturity about you, which...I have come to appreciate."

Hermione felt herself turn pink at the compliment. She couldn't believe her ears. This was the kindest thing he had ever said to her. Actually, it was the only kind thing he had ever said to her. She smiled hesitantly, afraid he would take it back if she didn't control her expression and started giggling with excitement, which was exactly what she felt like doing.

Just then, Draco entered the class room and approached them. He looked at Hermione. "Did you tell him yet?"

The Professor turned his gaze from Hermione to Draco. "Tell me what, Mr. Malfoy?"

Hermione shifted her feet nervously, suddenly hyper aware of herself and wanting to be certain she continued to come across as responsible and adult like.

Draco hesitated a second. "We've had some issues develop with the potion."

"Issues? What kind of issues?"

Hermione spoke up. "Well, sir, we added the Venus Rose thorn very slowly and precisely and then stirred twice counterclockwise." She swallowed. "About thirty or forty-five minutes later, I woke up on the floor to discover Draco passed out as well."

Snape turned his gaze from Hermione to Draco and gave him a hard stare. "Really?" He looked from Hermione to Draco and back again. "Did you suffer any side effects you are aware of?"

"Well, yes sir. I felt very hazy afterwards, like I couldn't concentrate, and I had a terrible headache." She hesitantly added, "And sir, I know Venus Rose thorn in large doses can have some pretty nasty side effects, but we were quite careful and only used a quarter ounce...sir." She watched and waited for him to lose his temper with her for being a 'dunderhead' or a 'blathering idiot'.

He surprised her by simply saying, "I see." He contemplated for a moment. "You are not to go near the potion until I am with you. You will both take me to it as soon as classes let out today. Meet me outside the teacher's lounge."

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir." Hermione turned and walked to her seat. She was surprised when she sat down to see Draco still whispering with Professor Snape. It seemed like they were having a heated discussion about something.

A minute or so later, Draco came and sat in his seat next to her but said nothing as he pulled out his notes.

When Blaise showed up just before class started, Hermione tried not to look at him or treat him any differently than she had before, but she couldn't help picturing him with Theo and another girl. It made her uncomfortable. Blaise and his sex partners were either really perverted and sick or she was a total prude because she just didn't get it. Granted, she was a virgin with no experience, but still. She knew what was decent and what was normal. What they were doing was neither.

Draco, Hermione and Blaise spent their three hours planning out both potions. Blaise had been tending to the one in the potions classroom lab and she and Draco had been tending to the potion in the Room of Requirement lab. While they were nowhere near a completed potion, she felt they were making small progress. If nothing else, they were ruling out what did not work.

She looked from one Slytherin to the other. "I know the two of you were testing earlier versions on each other before I came along, but

these potions are too far from maturity for any experimentation."

Draco internally felt himself getting irritated at her for stating the obvious. He really didn't care for the swotty side of her. But he knew he only had himself to blame. He was the one who had told her the falsehood, after all.

"Oh, absolutely. We won't," Draco reassured her as he rolled his eyes at Blaise behind her back.

After class, Draco's temper ignited as Hermione bounded over to Potter and Weasley, obviously eager to be with her friends. He watched surreptitiously as the three of them chatted amongst themselves as they exited the classroom and headed to lunch.

Harry turned to Hermione as they walked. "So, I need you to write an account of what you did each day you had a pair of knickers disappear."

Hermione nodded. "Okay, I'll try to remember. Are you having any luck figuring out any of the other witches?"

Harry shrugged. "Ginny is asking around. So far, only the Patil twins have come forward."

Hermione did the math in her head. "Both of them? Well, that helps. Four witches so far and twenty knickers. Of course, four of them were mine." She added in a frustrated tone.

"Actually, Hermione... don't you find that odd? Ginny was missing two and the Patil twins were each missing one, but you were missing four! And... you've been spending *a lot* of time working on that potion with Malfoy."

Hermione was losing patience. "Harry, stop! I don't think it's him. For all we know, all the other knickers, besides those accounted for, could belong to one witch. And we don't know how the things were charmed off."

He interrupted her, adding under his breath, "or even *if* they were charmed off."

"What do you mean?" She asked.

"Well, what if the perpetrator is imperiusing witches? Or using a love potion or something. What if they are being taken advantage of?"

Hermione's jaw fell. "Harry, I think I would *know* if someone imperiused or used a love potion on me!" She shook her head in irritation. The thought that she could have been manipulated in such a way was impossible for her to even consider.

As they continued to walk, something inside her stirred and left her uncomfortable. Her dream came to memory. Why had she dreamt such a thing? Then there was what she overheard. That witch with Blaise didn't sound like she was just enjoying the attentions of two wizards. The girl sounded drugged or something. Hermione decided she would keep a close eye on Blaise.

Harry continued. "Would you, though, Hermione? Would you know? What if the perpetrator took your memory away, gave you a potion to make you forget or obliviated you?" His voice and conviction became more adamant as he continued. "Ginny told me what happened the day she went running. She said you both came to the conclusion she fell and hit her head... but what if she was attacked?"

Hermione looked at her friend like he was crazy. "Harry, you are seriously jumping to some hasty conclusions. Stop and listen to yourself!"

Harry shrugged his shoulders. "Yeah, maybe. But it doesn't mean I'm wrong."

They continued in silence the rest of the trek. Decidedly irritated with her friend, Hermione took a seat further down the table between Lavender and Dean Thomas.

Draco had been following the trio since they left potions. Harry and Hermione were having a heated conversation about something. Weasley didn't seem to be involved. Draco got as close as he could without being detected, but just couldn't get near enough to hear what they were saying. But he could tell by their body language that they were in disagreement and he was elated. He was even happier when Hermione chose not to sit with Harry at lunch.

After classes, Hermione met Draco and Professor Snape outside the teacher's lounge and headed to the Room of Requirement. It dawned on her that she had never heard the actual words Draco said to make the room appear. She watched as he paced back and forth three times in front of the blank wall, all the while chanting, "I need the potions lab that meets my needs, I need the potions lab that meets my needs. After he said it a third time, the door appeared.

When they stepped inside, Hermione noticed the door Draco had said led to a bathroom was gone. "What happened to the loo?"

Draco turned and seemed surprised to see it missing. "I don't know. I guess the room knows I'm not spending the night up here." But Draco knew. The room knew he would not require a bedroom this time.

Professor Snape told them both to wait as he approached the simmering cauldron. He waved his wand over it and watched for a minute before turning back to the two of them. "Your potion is stable. Most likely, the addition of the Venus Rose thorn created a brief or temporary vapor or gas that you breathed in. In the future, perform a bubble head charm before adding potentially volatile ingredients."

Hermione was opening her mouth to speak, when the professor interrupted her. "Even when using small amounts, Miss Granger."

It was like he had read her mind and knew what she was going to say. She nodded. "Yes, sir."

He started to leave and turned to Hermione. "Miss Granger, I wonder if I might speak with you a moment."

"Certainly, Professor." She followed him out into the hall curiously, leaving Draco behind feeling irritated.

When they were in the hall, Professor Snape waived his wand and cast a privacy and silencing spell, so that they could not be heard. "Miss Granger, I just wanted to say, that even though you are not in my house, should you ever find yourself in need of a teacher, you may come to me. Of course, Professor McGonagall is an outstanding witch who can assist with any crisis, but I hope that you will find me an acceptable substitute should she not be available, or should you ever be in need."

Hermione was taken aback briefly. After the initial shock, she couldn't deny the warmth that crept through her. She seemed to finally have his approval and good regard after all these years. "Thank you, Professor." She paused as her mind whirled, a situation immediately coming to mind. "There is an issue I might need assistance with, but at this time, I feel it's too soon to involve a teacher." She didn't really feel that way, but it was Harry's decision and she would respect it.

"Are you sure, Miss Granger?"

"Yes sir, quite sure."

"Well, you will find my door is always open should you require my assistance...or advice." He bowed to her slightly. "Good day, Miss Granger." With that, he turned and left quickly, his black robes billowing behind him.

"What was that about?" Draco asked when she stepped back into the conjured lab.

Hermione shrugged. "Nothing important. I never knew Professor Snape could be so kind."

This was news to Draco. Since when had Severus been kind to Granger, or any other Gryffindor for that matter? Draco would have to visit his Godfather later and see what he was playing at.

Draco shrugged, "Yeah, Severus is a good guy once you get to know him."

Draco watched her for a minute. He felt his desire start to stir and swallowed. It would be really foolish to potion her right now...even though he really wanted her. He suddenly felt bold. "Hey Hermione?"

"Yeah?" She replied, not looking up from the notes she was reviewing.

"Would you be interested in going to Hogsmead with me this Saturday?" His voice was shy and soft. Hermione had never heard him sound so vulnerable. She wondered if she had misunderstood him. *Did he really just ask me out?* What would Harry and Ron say? They would be furious with her. But, in truth, she really did like Draco and just this past Saturday night had been thinking she might even fancy him.

"Ummm." She was torn how to respond but knew she needed to say something.

"Never mind, it's okay," He said in a defeated voice.

"Actually, I was going to stay behind in the library this Saturday, but I'd be happy to go with you to Hogsmeade." Screw Harry and Ron. Draco was her friend and, who knows, maybe he could be more. He wasn't the monster he used to be. Harry and Ron both had girlfriends and she was left as the fifth wheel all the time. Besides, she could tell Harry and Ron she was using the opportunity to get information out of him.

"Really?" He looked at her with genuine surprise and a racing heart.

"Sure." She smiled softly at him.

Monday Night

Hermione and Draco had a night off from the potion because it needed to simmer for seventy-six hours from when they added the Venus Rose thorn. They wouldn't need to add anything until Wednesday afternoon. So, they had parted ways after leaving the Room of Requirement earlier.

She was hanging out in the common room, nestled in an oversized chair with her potions textbook on her lap. Lavender and Ron were cuddled up on the couch and Harry and Ginny were studying together at the table in the corner. As she peeked about the room, her thoughts drifted to the knickers and what Harry had said, which in turn got her thinking about Blaise.

"Hey, Harry, you mind if I borrow your map?" She asked.

"Sure, it's in my bag." He reached in his duffle and pulled it out. She stood and walked over to him.

"Thanks."

He smiled at her and went back to his homework.

Hermione took the map up to her room, where she climbed onto her bed and drew the curtains. She spread the map out and searched. There he was. Blaise was in the Slytherin common room with Draco, Daphne Greengrass, Pansy Parkinson, and Theo Nott. But then Blaise's footprints began to move. She watched as he left the common room, walked the long hall, and then continued up the steps out of the dungeons. She watched with increasing curiosity and anticipation as he made his way down halls and up staircases. He didn't stop until he reached the Astronomy tower where he met up with Trixie Sinclaire. Even Hermione knew about that witch. She had a reputation the whole school knew about. Trixie and Blaise left the tower and stayed together as they made their way back down to the dungeons.

Hermione watched as their footprints went into a classroom where there were two other sets of footprints. Theo Nott and Vincent Crabbe. She observed Trixie's footprints stop and stay in one spot as the wizards seemed to move around and approach hers. Hermione got a sick feeling in her stomach.

Deciding she needed to act fast, Hermione ran down the stairs and back up into Harry's room where she grabbed his cloak and stuffed it into her bag. She walked through the common room without speaking to anybody and exited into the castle. As soon as she was in the hall, she threw the cloak over her head and dashed down to the dungeons. She was out of breath by the time she got there. She crept as quietly as she could until she reached the classroom, which was down a deserted hall. As she got closer she heard voices.

"Trixie, you're so hot...oh yeah, just like that." Hermione wasn't sure who's voice it was.

It was quiet for a minute. She could hear some muffled voices but couldn't make out any words. She pressed her ear closer to the door and heard one of the males say, "how much for..." and then it was muffled again. *Damn it!* She couldn't hear! She gently tried to open the door but it wouldn't budge. She whispered "*Alohomora*", but still nothing happened. She contemplated running to get Professor Snape but was afraid by the time they returned the classroom would be empty, like last time.

Hermione sat on the floor by the door, keeping herself covered with the cloak. She really was starting to wonder if Harry was right. What if Blaise was doing something to these witches to make them compliant. She leaned toward the door and pressed her ear to it, once again.

She heard Trixie's voice. "I just want to please you... let me touch you." Hermione's heart started to race. It was just like the other student, Susan, whichever Susan it was. But Professor Snape said it had been consensual. Was this consensual as well? Was this the

same girl? Maybe Trixie had been polyjuiced to look like Susan on Saturday? Was this still just some perverted sex game?

Blaise's voice sounded soothing. "That's it, Trixie. You're such a good girl. Now it's Vince's turn."

This was too much. She needed Professor Snape. When she stood and turned to leave, she spotted a group of Slytherins coming down the hall. *Shit!* She ducked into a small cubby behind a statue as they walked by. As soon as they passed, she took off at a full run towards Professor Snape's office and classroom. She knocked urgently, but there was no answer. She knocked again and when he didn't answer, she looked up and down the hall wondering if his private quarters were nearby. She knocked on two other doors, but still didn't get an answer. She started to run up the stairs, thinking she would find another teacher but then stopped. She shouldn't risk being gone so long. She would have to handle this herself. Maybe wait until they came out of the classroom and then confront them. Or, just interrupt them and bang on the door. That would at least make them stop. She turned and headed back down the stairs.

When she got back, the door was open and the classroom was empty. She stepped inside but found no evidence of anyone having been in the room. A sigh of frustration escaped her lips. She hadn't been gone more than ten minutes! How could they already be gone?

Chapter 12

Tuesday

Tuesday morning, Hermione lay staring into her canopy curtain. It was just so perplexing. By the time she had gotten back to her room the night before, the map had showed Trixie was already in her room. Vincent, Theo and Blaise were in the Slytherin common room alone and Draco was in his dorm room. Whatever it was that had happened, it appeared that Draco had no part of it.

If only Professor Snape had been in his office! Then she remembered. The Professors had a staff meeting every first Monday of the month. She rubbed her eyes in frustration, irritated that she didn't know what was going on. She couldn't help feeling that Trixie was being used.

The way she saw it, all she could do is try to catch them again. She would have be more prepared next time. Tonight, while doing prefect patrols with Ginny, she would check the map frequently and if Blaise left the Slytherin common room, or did anything suspicious, she would have Ginny with her as a witness. Tomorrow, before potions, Hermione would fill her professor in on what she had overheard.

Draco was watching Hermione at breakfast. She seemed to be in deep thought and wasn't paying much attention to her friends around her. This pleased him immensely. He was also very excited about their date on Saturday. Things were falling into place.

He tried not to stare. but watching her brought back so many delicious memories. He needed her. But what could he do? He had to be so careful to avoid suspicion. It was true he would be seeing her on Wednesday, both in class and in the room of requirement, but it was becoming too complicated to take her during their scheduled get togethers. It was too risky and he had to stage too many

scenarios to cover his tracks. Perhaps, simplicity was key. He could just take her like in the beginning. He could pull her into a classroom, potion her and then obliviate her.

It seemed so easy now that he thought about it. He would lust potion her on the days they didn't work on their assignment. He should have just done that all along. He would be with Hermione on the days they worked on their project. During those get togethers, he would work on seducing her and help her realize he was what she wanted. Where as, on the off days, he would use the lust potion and be with princess. It would be the best of both worlds.

Today was an off day, so he would have his princess.

Blaise showed up and sat beside him. Draco turned to his friend. "What's up?"

Blaise grinned. "You missed it last night, Drake. That hot little piece Trixie is a piece of work."

Draco shrugged, "yeah, I fucked her at the start of term."

"Well, Theo and Vince definitely got their galleons worth. Thinking tonight we'll get a bigger group. Make some real money."

Draco rolled his eyes, "and you accuse me of being reckless."

Blaise responded dismissively, "I got this. These blokes won't tell anyone. They want to keep coming back. Besides, by doing it this way, we aren't selling them the potion, which could lead back to us. They get to fuck the witch, we make the galleons, the witch remembers nothing." Blaise tipped his juice to Draco as if he was toasting, "gonna make a shitload of galleons."

Draco just shook his head. "Don't get caught."

Hermione was in the library. She put her quill down after finishing her essay and rubbed her eyes. Looking at her watch, she was shocked to find she had worked through dinner. It was seven o'clock and she and Ginny had patrols in two hours. She gathered up her books, unaware of the disillusioned blond wizard that had been watching and waiting for her to finish. She slung her back pack over her shoulder and headed out into the castle. As she left the main corridor and turned into a side hallway, a hand reached out and grabbed her, pulling her into a closet.

"What the?!" She yelped as she saw the blond wizard standing before her.

"Hi Princess." Draco said with what hoped was a seductive smile.

Hermione started to panic. That nickname! She felt sick all of a sudden. She tried to calm herself as she stared at the grinning wizard. "Draco, what the hell?! Why did you pull me in here?" Suddenly, his lips were on hers. She froze, unable to comprehend what he was doing. After a second, his warm and tender lips moved against her rigid ones. She gently pushed him away.

"Don't be like that. Don't you like me, Hermione?" He asked resignedly.

Her chocolate irises softened as her hands lightly touched his chest. The words fell easily from her mouth and she found them to be true. "Draco, I like you, I really do!" She looked around the confined space. "But this isn't my idea of the best place for a first kiss."

He tried to look contrite and glanced down at the floor. "Yeah, I'm sorry." He looked up, his steely grey eyes pleading, "I've just been wanting to kiss you for so long and when you said you'd go to Hogsmeade with me, I thought..."

"Draco, let's see how Saturday goes. You can give me a proper kiss then." She smiled up at him shyly.

He smiled at her warmly in response as he nonchalantly tilted his wand at her and whispered the unforgivable, "*Imperio*." He watched the change of her expression as her mind went blank. He handed her a flask. "Drink this."

As she drank the potion he shrugged. "Well, it was worth a shot. At least I know you fancy me. Guess I'll have to romance you on Saturday and not rush things."

He unbuckled his belt, unzipped his jeans and then forced her to her knees as he freed himself and guided her mouth onto him.

He closed his eyes and exhaled. "Oh, princess...you're getting better at this." After a couple minutes he pulled her to her feet and spun her around. She was still in her uniform, so he reached under her skirt, pulled down her knickers and bent her forward. He slipped into her already wet sleeve and grabbed her hips as he pumped into her fast and hard, needing release. It didn't take him long, as he had been fantasizing about this scenario while he had been watching her study.

When he was finished, he cast the needed charms, gave her the antidote potion and then shoved her and her book bag into the hall and whispered, "*obliviate*." He dashed out behind her and headed the other way.

Hermione felt weird. Her hand shot out to brace the wall. She didn't know where she was. She looked around. *Oh, yeah*. She had just finished her paper. She looked at her watch to see it was quarter after seven. *Huh*. Wasn't it just seven o'clock? Her head hurt and she felt funny. Perhaps she shouldn't have skipped dinner.

She went up to her dorm to lay down and get a rest before rounds. It felt like she had only been asleep for a few minutes when Ginny was shaking her awake. "'Mione, wake up."

She opened her eyes, her voice thick from sleep. "What time is it?"

"It's quarter after nine. When you didn't meet me in the common room, I came up here and found you sound asleep." Ginny felt guilty for waking her. "Just go back to sleep, 'Mione. I'll do the rounds alone."

Hermione sat up, "No! Absolutely not. I'm fine." She let out a yawn. "Let me change into jeans and a sweater." The castle was drafty at night and she didn't feel like walking around with cold legs. While she was changing she told Ginny she wanted to bring Harry's map. "We might have to stop to spy on someone."

Ginny's face lit up. "You want me to bring my Sneak-O-Scope?"

Hermione beamed. "Ginny, that's brilliant!"

"Fred and George made new ones that actually record!" They left Hermione's room and started walking toward Ginny's.

"Really? Recording Sneak-O-Scopes?"

"Oh yeah! Fred and George said it's their *new and improved* model. You can set them up and then leave them hidden in a room. Later you can grab them and listen to whatever happened while you were gone."

Hermione looked concerned. "That hardly seems ethical." Then she shrugged, "however, it could be very useful."

Fifteen minutes later, the two prefects started their rounds. Hermione had checked the map before they started and saw that Blaise was in his room. Ten minutes into their rounds, she checked again and saw that Blaise was on the move. She watched him walk to the library where he met up with Trixie again.

"Ginny, follow me."

Ginny followed Hermione as they headed down to the dungeons. Hermione checked the map again, and sure enough, Blaise and

Trixie were heading for the dungeons as well. They were coming from a different direction and would be using a different set of stairs, so Hermione grabbed Ginny's hand and led her down the closest staircase. They didn't have the cloak, but they were prefects, and it was their night to patrol, so no one would question them being down there. Hermione pulled Ginny into a small classroom, shut the door and cast a silencing spell.

"Ginny, I think Blaise might be imperiusing or putting a spell or something on witches, and then he's having sex with them. I think he might be doing this for the benefit of other wizards as well."

Ginny's face turned white. "What?"

"I'll explain more later, but whatever happens, you can't tell anyone. Promise me you won't say anything and will let me handle it!"

Ginny stared at her friend, her jaw slackened in shock. After a minute nodded. "Of course, Hermione."

Hermione checked the map again and saw Blaise and Trixie were in the same classroom as the night before, but there were seven other wizards. Five Slytherin and two Ravenclaw.

Hermione and Ginny slowly paced down the hall and stood outside the classroom door. Ginny pulled the Sneak-O-Scope out of her pocket, whispered the enchantment to make it record and slid the tiny cord under the door.

Ginny and Hermione put their ears next to the little headpiece.

"So, twenty-five galleons and you can fuck her, twenty for her to suck you, ten to touch her and if you want something else you'll have to ask." There was some movement. "Right Trixie?"

"Whatever you want, Blaise. I just want to touch you and please you."

"If anyone isn't interested speak up now and I'll oblivate you. No harm, no foul. However, once the deed is done, you are sworn to secrecy. I got this idea from that brainy, bitch Granger... So, if you agree, you sign this form. If you ever talk about this or tell anyone at all, you'll get welts and blisters all over your knob and you'll never fuck again."

Hermione heard comments and nervous laughter. "So, what's it going to be. You want her or not?"

An unidentifiable voice asked, "She won't remember, right? She won't recall any of this?"

Blaise's voice was reassuring. "She won't remember a thing. She'll have no idea any of this happened."

There were some low mumbles and they could hear the sound of footsteps and rustling parchment. "Okay, Trixie. Start undressing, nice and slow and give me your knickers."

Hermione whispered, "Ginny, stay here. I'm going to get Professor Snape."

Ginny nodded and put her ear back to the headpiece.

"Trixie, play with your tits for a bit." There was a spell of silence. "That's it."

Another voice rasped, "fuck, that's hot."

There was some shuffling of feet. "Ok, five extra galleons lets you go first. Who wants it?" She heard Blaise laugh. "Well, you can't all go first. Okay, okay. Come on Vincent, you had to go second last night." Ginny could hear footsteps. "What's it going to be?"

Coins were being exchanged and a deep voice whispered, "I'm going to fuck her."

"Okay, she's all yours."

The same deep voice commanded, "Lay back, Trixie, and spread your legs."

She heard what sounded like a zipper and the whisperings of the other wizards in the room. Then she heard a squeaking sound, like bed springs, and what sounded like Vincent, "Ahh, Trix, you feel so good."

The squeaking continued, and Ginny heard another voice say, "She's got great tits."

There was laughter as another voice said, "I can't wait to get my hands on them."

Suddenly, Ginny was shoved aside as a set of black robes appeared and whispered a spell, blasting open the door. Ginny and Hermione looked into the room to see a stunned Blaise standing off to the side, Vincent Crabbe with his pants down, buried into Trixie who was on a transfigured bed that was obviously spelled to be just the right height for Vincent. She was on her back and her calves were on Vince's shoulders. The other wizards were standing around the bed watching. Some had their cocks in their hands, clearly waiting their turn.

"No one moves!" Professor Snape's voice caused everyone to freeze.

"I was just watching."

"I didn't touch her."

The boys were panicked and were already starting to defend themselves.

The Professor turned to Hermione and Ginny. "Find the Headmaster." Ginny left the Sneak-O-Scope as she ran with Hermione towards the Headmaster's tower.

Chapter 13

Chapter reposted 5/19/19. This chapter did not have a beta. All mistakes are my own.

As you read the story, you will find that Hermione seems naive and many of you might be frustrated. This is actually addressed as the story continues. Thanks for reading!

Wednesday

Hermione, Ginny and Harry were exhausted. It was after two in the morning and they were just now getting back to their common room after the night of endless questions. Despite their exhaustion, they didn't feel like sleeping because they hadn't had a chance to talk everything through amongst themselves. They had been instantly separated and questioned by Dumbledore.

Then the Aurors had arrived. Thank goodness, Tonks had been one of them. Professors McGonagall, Sprout, Flitwick and Snape were all there as well.

Hermione had been completely forthcoming with everyone with the exception of one thing; She did not disclose anything Professor Snape had told her Monday morning in his classroom. It was enough to recount all that had happened Saturday night, which had included her getting Snape involved. The man would have to answer for his own actions, or lack thereof. But his conversation with her before class on Monday was private and what he told her was in confidence. She would not betray his trust.

When she told them about the knickers in the duffle bag, Professor McGonagall had been sent to retrieve Harry as well as the knickers. Hermione also told them about her personal experience with her panties disappearing and how she thought they had been being charmed off. That was the worst part. She felt like an idiot and she

knew the professors and Aurors thought she was foolish and naïve for assuming such an innocent explanation. In hindsight, and in light of what she had caught Blaise and others doing, she realized now that she had been a complete fool.

At the end of all the questioning, Blaise, Vincent, the knickers and the Sneak-O-Scope were taken into custody by the Aurors. The details had not been fully disclosed, but Trixie had been under the influence of a drug or potion of some sort. She had been taken to the infirmary and her parents had been called.

"This is so huge," Ginny said. "Who knows how long Blaise has been doing this," she continued in a shaky voice. Her eyes were moist and wide with worry when she whispered, "I was alone with him last week when we patrolled together...what if?"

Harry grabbed his distraught girlfriend and held her tight. "It doesn't mean he did anything to you." Despite his intention of reassurance, the words sounded false and untrue. He kissed the top of her head, trying to contain the fury that was brimming below the surface of his emotions.

Hermione was thinking out loud. "Frankly, it could have happened to me to for all I know. You, me and the Patil twins are all missing knickers. If he's the one who's been taking them, which I think we can assume he has...then what else did he do to us?" Hermione felt her own panic begin to swell. Her vision became blurred from her own tears. She closed her eyes, willing herself not to fall apart. It was when Harry reached for her, pulling her into the hug with Ginny, that she allowed herself the luxury of crying.

Just then, Professor McGonagall walked into the common room with three doses of Dreamless Sleep potion. She looked at them wearily and with no small amount of sympathy. "Drink these and go to your rooms." She rubbed her forehead. "This is all just a big mess. In all my years, I never..." Dropping her hand, her eyes softened with affection as she studied her charges. "Get to bed you three. You'll need a good night's sleep for all that's to come."

Draco was sound asleep when he was awakened by his godfather.

"Draco, Draco. Come with me."

He begrudgingly got up and followed Severus to his private quarters, realizing something significant must have happened. Snape had never retrieved him in the middle of the night before.

"Everything okay?" Draco asked as he yawned.

Severus shot him a lethal look. "If you consider Blaise and Vincent being arrested by Aurors as 'okay', then yes, everything is 'okay.'"

"What?" Draco's jaw fell as the probability of what had happened crashed down on him.

"Blaise was caught selling Trixie Sinclair's services to seven wizards."

"Oh shit." Draco collapsed into the wing chair as Snape rolled his eyes at his godson's understatement.

"Miss Granger and Miss Weasley caught them."

Draco shook his head, "I knew you should have obliviated her Saturday night! Because you didn't, she kept sniffing around like a dog looking for its buried bone."

Snape's glare was piercing. "Don't...blame...this...on...me, Mr. Malfoy."

Draco sighed, "I'm not blaming you. Blaise was reckless. I warned him this morning at breakfast."

"Yes, well, we need to have a plan, and we need to be consistent and on the same page. So far, nothing has come back to you. Frankly, I'm more implicated than you because I didn't do anything after Miss Granger came to me Saturday night." The professor

sighed heavily and sat down. "I can talk my way out of that easily enough, though. As far as Miss Granger knows, I didn't actually catch them Saturday night."

Draco didn't say anything, he simply stared into the fire as all the possible implications began to wash over him.

"Apparently, Miss Granger overheard Blaise, Trixie, Theo and Vincent last night as well. She tried to come get me, but I was at the weekly staff meeting." He rubbed his tired eyes. "It's amazing Theo hasn't been arrested. But Miss Granger has no proof against him about Saturday or last night."

Severus was staring into the fire as he continued to think. "Draco, you need to hide every bit of that potion. It cannot be found amongst your things. I think you'll be protected as long as you aren't caught with any of it." He turned to look at his godson. "Do that first thing you go back to your room tonight. Get rid of your notes about it as well. All your research, everything... it needs to be where it can't be found. The antidote as well. Blaise will have to take the fall for this. I was able to speak with him privately for a few moments. He won't betray us. Of that I am quite certain."

Snape stood and walked to the bar where he poured two fire whiskys. He handed one to Draco. "One more thing, and this is very important, Miss Granger must not suspect you of anything, Draco. You need to be the concerned friend. She needs to trust you... confide in you." Snape consumed his drink in one swallow. He rolled his eyes as he said, "I will play my part as well and be the doting Professor."

Hermione woke up the next morning and lay in bed, dreading what the day would bring. How would this be handled? As word got out, witches would be panicking and wondering if they were among the victims.

Hermione rolled onto her side. Or, perhaps nothing will be shared with the student body? Maybe it will be classes as usual? After a moment's contemplation, she exhaled a deep breath. *Only one way to find out.*

She slipped out of bed and grabbed her shower things and uniform before heading to the prefect's bath. When she entered the common room, her question was answered. There was a sign that said classes would be cancelled and breakfast was mandatory. Everyone was to report to the Great Hall no later than eight-thirty that morning. Hermione looked at her watch. She had just enough time for a bath.

When she arrived at the prefect's bath, the door would not open for her, which meant a male was inside. After about five minutes, just before she was going to give up, Draco walked out looking miserable. He froze when he saw her. He swallowed and simply said, "I didn't know, Hermione. I had no idea my best friend was such a monster."

She watched him warily for a moment, wanting to believe him but questioning if she should. When his eyes started to glisten with moisture, Hermione felt his words were more than likely sincere. She stepped towards him and took his hand before pulling him into a hug. "Oh Draco," she whispered with a heavy sigh. What else could she say?

He froze for a second's pause before his arms reciprocated with what Draco deemed was the appropriate show of disbelief and hesitation. When her hold on him tightened in response, he internally beamed with pleasure. This might all work out in his favor quite nicely if he played his cards correctly.

Thirty minutes later, Hermione was sitting next to Harry and Ron in the Great Hall when Dumbledore appeared at the podium and began to speak. "By now, many of you are aware of what happened last evening. In case what you heard was a fabricated version, or in case you haven't heard at all, I will be telling you an abbreviated, but

factual, version of events. It is not necessary, nor your right, to know every detail. Blaise Zabini and Vincent Crabbe have been taken into custody by Aurors. Six other students have been suspended and sent home. Trixie Sinclair's parents have withdrawn her from the school and taken her home."

There were loud mumblings around the Great Hall as students started whispering amongst themselves and looking around to try to figure out who the six suspended wizards were.

Dumbledore gave them a moment and then continued. "It appears, and I say appears, because all wizards and witches accused of a crime are innocent until proven guilty." He stopped and slowly gazed about the room for effect. "It *appears* that Mr. Zabini had acquired a potion that when given to others caused them to lose their better judgment and become susceptible to the suggestions and desires of the wizard giving the potion. It also appears this potion was given to Miss Sinclair in the presence of not only Mr. Zabini, but Vincent Crabbe and six other wizards. Suffice it to say, events transpired that rendered the arrests and suspensions necessary."

There were loud exclamations of shock and outrage. Dumbledore spoke loudly over the crowd. "Please remain calm. Your heads of house will be visiting your common rooms where more questions will be answered." With that, Dumbledore stepped down from the podium and the students rose, anxious to get back to their house where they could discuss everything and hopefully, get more information.

Hermione stood and Harry took her hand, leading her out of the room with his other arm around Ginny.

While they were waiting for McGonagall, Ron said quietly. "What I don't get, is why the knickers ended up in Harry's bag."

Harry shrugged, "Well, Malfoy was surely in on it all. He's Zabini's best friend, after all. Malfoy probably took them and planted them on me."

Hermione couldn't help herself. "Just because Blaise did these things, doesn't mean Draco was in on it. I saw him this morning. He was absolutely devastated."

Ron replied dismissively, "Yeah, devastated because he's afraid the truth will out, and his involvement will be proven."

Harry nodded in agreement. "Also, Zabini sucked at potions. There's no way he brewed something that could do that. Malfoy, on the other hand, is great at potions. It makes the most sense that he's involved."

Hermione was irritated. "How do you jump to these wild accusations without any proof? Blaise could have purchased the potion in Knockturn Alley!"

Ron rolled his eyes, "Hermione, we have plenty of proof. Look at Malfoy's behavior, his bigotry and his hatefulness over the past five years. He's got you fooled... all of a sudden being nice to you because he needs your help with this potions project."

Hermione knew it was pointless. "Well, I think you're wrong. Draco has become my friend. I even told him I'd go to Hogsmeade with him on Saturday."

Harry and Ron both shrieked , *"You what?"*

Just then McGonagall walked in.

Talking turned to yelling as everyone was trying to be heard to get their questions answered.

"One question at a time, please!" McGonagall insisted. Hermione could see how tired the Professor was.

"If you won't tell us the names of the suspended students, will you at least tell us their houses?" Dean Thomas asked.

She responded, "Their names are not a secret. Four were from Slytherin and two were from Ravenclaw." She paused and then sighed. "Terry Boot and Michael Corner from Ravenclaw. Theo Nott, Gregory Goyle, Justin Harper and Adrian Pucey from Slytherin."

Hermione was angry that Theo Nott had merely been suspended. He should have been arrested as well. But she had no proof that what she heard Saturday and Monday was what she thought it was. They only had proof of the events the prior night, thanks to Ginny's Sneak-O-Scope.

"Do we know if the potion was used on any other witches? Have any others come forward to say they had been potioned?" Parvarti asked.

"We do not know. We do not know if the potion had been used prior to last night. However, it is possible, as there has been a witness to a possible attack against another witch. I will not say her name, so don't ask. I will say that she denied having been involved, so either the young lady was obliviated afterwards, or the witness was wrong."

She paused and continued. "Clearly, it is our hope that this was an isolated incident. We do not have all the facts yet as interrogations and the investigation are still in full swing. At some point today, an owl post will be sent to all parents or guardians with a brief explanation of what has happened."

The Gryffindors continued looking at each other and whispering amongst themselves.

McGonagall looked around the room. "If any witches have been attacked, or fear they may have been, please see Madam Pomfrey." She then added. "There are certain diagnostic tests she can perform that might help..." Professor McGonagall swayed. Harry and Neville were closest and jumped up to assist her into a chair.

"I'm sorry," The professor said with exhaustion and sadness in her voice. "I'm so sorry this has happened. I just feel sick." The students

all gathered around their head of house and offered her the same emotional support they were offering each other. She was one of them at this moment. Not a teacher, not the deputy headmistress... just a Gryffindor.

Chapter 14

This was a very hard chapter to write. It deals with characters finding out they were raped. This had to happen at some point. The worst part is the beginning of the chapter. The area below the Wednesday Evening heading is slightly easier, but still rough. I tried to not make it too heavy and I think therefore their reactions aren't as realistic as they probably should be.

Reposted 5/28/19

Wednesday continued...

Hermione and Ginny discussed it and decided they were going to see Madam Pomfrey. At first, they both had declined, but after a couple hours of rehashing everything, they decided it was best to find out. So far, no other witches from Gryffindor were going to the infirmary.

"Girls, come in." Madam Pomfrey gestured for them to enter. She had set up a corner of the room with flowers, juice, and cookies behind a privacy screen. Susan Bones and her aunt and uncle were exiting another part of the infirmary with Dumbledore. That answered the question about which Susan had been assaulted.

The matron witch led them to the designated corner where she saw to their comfort before speaking in a soft and kind voice. "So, I don't have a lot of tests to offer. I can test to see if you are a virgin and I can test for pregnancy or diseases of the personal nature. I have other tests I can also run that will determine if you have been under the effects of any mind-altering potions recently, and I can test for any obliviation damage as well." Noticing their concerned expressions, she offered reassuringly, "obliviation does not cause damage unless it done very frequently over a long period of time. It's unlikely, but I can test for it, if you like." She paused and then picked

up a pamphlet she had written. "This hand out lists symptoms one might experience after being given a mind-altering potion or after being obliviated. Feel free to take one if you like."

Hermione and Ginny's eyes met each other before Hermione looked back at Madam Pomfrey and asked in almost a whisper, "Would you mind just checking if we are still virgins?" She bit her lip and continued. "That's really the most important thing at this point as it will answer our biggest question... were we attacked?"

The medi-witch nodded and patted Hermione's hand tenderly. "Of course, dear." She looked from one to the other. "Who would like to go first?"

"I will." Hermione said, her voice a touch stronger.

"Ok, just come over to this cot and lie down."

Hermione did as instructed, watching as Madam Pomfrey cast a silencing spell and then pulled the curtain far enough to ensure Hermione's privacy. Hermione turned her head away, not watching as a spell was whispered and a wand was waved over her abdomen and pelvis.

Hermione felt the weight of the cot dip and the comforting warmth as Madam Pomfrey took her hand and held it firmly. "My dear, you are not a virgin." Hermione was silent and just stared at the older witch as it sunk in. Her stomach dropped with heaviness as it all tumbled over her. She had been raped. There was no controlling the tears and the sobs that overcame her.

Madam Pomfrey quickly whispered, "Dobby." When the elf appeared, she said softly, "please get Professor McGonagall and bring her here right aw..."

Hermione interrupted her, "No! No. Let Professor McGonagall get some sleep. She was up all night, I'm sure. I'll be fine." Hermione sniffled as she forced herself to regain some control.

"Hermione, you need someone."

"No," she shook her head as tears streamed down her face.

Just then Professor Snape arrived with three Slytherin witches. Madam Pomfrey stood and walked towards them, pulling the curtain the rest of the way around Hermione's cot, but not before Professor Snape saw her crying. She heard Madam Pomfrey speak kindly to the three witches, telling them she would be with them shortly. She could then hear the deep tenor of Professor Snape's voice speaking very quietly with the medi-witch. A minute later, the curtain was pulled back slightly to reveal her potions Professor. His face softened at the sight of her and she burst into sobs.

Pulling the curtain closed behind him, he conjured a chair and sat beside her. "I'm so sorry, Hermione. Judging by your state, I will assume Madam Pomfrey gave you bad news." The use of her first name sounded so strange coming from him. She didn't respond but willed herself to stop crying. He pat her hand with his own. "This, Miss Granger, is an acceptable reason to cry. You do not need to be strong and in control right now." His words impacted her unlike she would have ever imagined. She rolled onto her side facing him as gasping sobs wrenched from her petite frame. He was still resting his hand on hers, so she grabbed it and held it, relishing the support as he held her hand in return as she cried.

After a few minutes, her tears slowed and she felt herself regaining control of her emotions. She released his hand and pushed herself to sit up, leaning back against the metal headboard. "Thank you, Professor." She dabbed her eyes and nose with a tissue. "I'm okay now. It was a shock...even though, even though I suspected."

"Of course, you have no need to explain. This is all just so...unfathomable." Hermione could see how tired he was. "Blaise will be going to Azkaban for a very long time, Hermione. He will be punished severely for this egregious act."

Hermione didn't want to think about that right now. "I need to check on Ginny."

She sat on the side of the cot and stood up. Bracing herself with a confident posture, she stepped past the curtain Professor Snape was holding for her. There was a curtain pulled around another cot across from Hermione's. Looking to her right, she noticed the three Slytherin witches sitting where she had been sitting earlier. She could only assume Ginny was behind the pulled curtain. Professor Snape excused himself and walked over to his three witches.

Madam Pomfrey stepped out from behind the curtain with a very grim look on her face, which told Hermione all she needed to know. Hermione approached. "Can I see her?"

"Of course." She then turned back towards the curtained cot and pulled it back enough to ask. "Miss Granger would like to see you, is that alright?"

The muffled "yes," was all Hermione needed to hear. Instantly, she dashed around the curtain and climbed onto the cot, pulling the crying redhead into her arms. They held each other tightly and a few minutes later, Harry and Ron came in. The boys pulled up chairs and sat next to them..

Harry's voice was soft. "Madam Pomfrey sent Dobby to get us." His eyes were starting to water while Ron's face was beat red with fury.

Ron whispered, his voice slightly choked, "well, I think we can tell what your results were."

Hermione pushed herself up and sat on the side of the stretcher. "I think the worst part, is not knowing when, or where or how many times," a sob escaped, "or with how many wizards." Ron looked anguished as he pulled Hermione to him and held her tightly. A tear escaped down Harry's cheek as he climbed into the cot and held Ginny.

Wednesday Evening

After a few minutes to get themselves together, Harry and Ron escorted the two girls back to Gryffindor tower. After much protest, the boys agreed to leave the two of them to themselves for a little while. They were sitting in Ginny's dorm room, still upset, but the real emotion taking hold at this time was anger. They felt violated, deceived and enraged.

Rage at Blaise, rage at themselves and distrust of the school in general. How could something like this happen?

They had been given the option of notifying their parents, but they chose not to. If they decided to press charges, then their parents would have to be notified, as they were not of legal age. However, their appointments with Madam Pomfrey were confidential and the results would not be disclosed to anyone without the witch's consent, no matter the circumstances.

After a while, they realized they were hungry and decided to go to dinner. They knew Dobby would happily bring them dinner to their room, but they also knew they needed to keep up appearances or others might make assumptions.

When they arrived, the Great Hall was buzzing with chatter. Students were looking around trying to ascertain if any other witches or wizards had left the school. Hermione didn't notice any glaring absences and didn't feel the need to go so far as a head count...unlike Lavender who was listing everyone unaccounted for on a piece of parchment.

Draco was uneasy. He trusted that Blaise wouldn't rat him out. After all, Severus had said he had talked to the wizard and Draco could only imagine what that meant. In truth, he didn't hold much sympathy for his friend. Blaise had been reckless and it was his own fault he got caught.

Draco felt his anger escalating again. *Damn Blaise!* Prostituting the witches! He was the one who had been greedy, fucking too many of them. He was the one who wanted to sell sex for money, Draco had just wanted to get his rocks off a few times. He never meant for any of this to happen and in hindsight, he should have stopped Blaise, instead of just warning him.

Draco had asked Severus why he hadn't just obliviated everyone Tuesday night...Hermione, Ginny, Trixie and the seven wizards. But Severus had said it was just too many and too risky, not to mention the sneak-o-scope. Of all the luck! Draco had no idea such a device even existed.

Draco watched his witch all through dinner. She was withdrawn, sad and disinterested in what was going on around her. Did she know she wasn't a virgin? Is that why she was so detached? Had she been to the infirmary? Draco felt a flush of incredible guilt seeing her so despondent. He didn't want her to be upset. *Fuckin' Blaise. It was all his fault.*

When Hermione got up to leave she was alone. Draco could see the others hadn't finished eating. It looked like her friends were asking her to stay but she shook her head no. Weasel stood up to walk with her, but she put her hand on his chest to stop him. Then she turned and walked out of the Great Hall.

Hermione just wanted to be alone. Actually, she had some questions but didn't know who to ask. Professor Dumbledore or Tonks would probably be best, but she didn't want to disturb Dumbledore as he had the whole school to worry about and Tonks wasn't around. She decided she would talk to Professor Snape. She turned left to head toward the stairs that led to the dungeons. She had just seen him in the Great Hall and figured he was probably still eating, but she would wait for him.

As she walked, her blond friend came up beside her and accompanied her. He offered a light smile, "Hi Hermione."

"Hey," she responded barely above a whisper, unwilling to say anymore in this moment.

She felt guilty for doubting Draco, but a piece of her questioned his involvement in all this. That dream had been about him, not Blaise. But, then again, it was just a dream. Maybe it was because she kind of had feelings for Draco that she had dreamed it was him instead of Blaise...Wait, did she even like Draco back then? She couldn't remember. She was so overwhelmed by it all. It would be so much easier if she knew she could trust him.

Draco's concern seemed to be honest. "Are you okay?" When she didn't answer, he stopped and grabbed her arm gently, forcing her to stop as well. "Look at me." He said softly, yet demanding.

She stopped and tried to hold back the tears as her eyes met his.

His eyes grew wide at her expression and Hermione knew that he knew. "Hey...It's ok." He whispered as he pulled her into a bear hug. She felt her strength crumble as he held her tight and rubbed the back of her head. The tears could not be held back.

"C'mon. Let's go somewhere we can talk privately." He took her hand and pulled her down the steps. When they arrived in the dungeons, he gazed around, thinking about the best place to go. He peeked back at her. "No one's in my dorm. All my dorm mates have either been arrested or suspended."

Red flags were waving in her brain. "Draco, I don't think..."

The blond's expression and tone were sincere and pleading. "Hermione, it's safe. You're safe with me. No one will mess with you from Slytherin."

After a few minutes, she answered in a tired whisper. "Okay, just for a little while."

Draco continued to hold her hand as he led her into the Slytherin common area. It was empty. Leading her down another small set of stairs and down a short hallway, they arrived in his room. She glanced in awe at the large window that had a spectacular underwater lake view. She could see the giant squid and a couple merpeople swimming in the distance. Continuing to take it in, she noticed four empty, made beds without trunks or personal items. Draco pulled her over to his own and she sat next to him.

"Why are you crying, Hermione? I mean, I know this is all terrible, but...but, please tell me you're...you're okay, right?"

She turned towards him. "I don't know, Draco." She tried not to cry. "Madam Pomfrey, she...she did a test." Hermione sniffled, and Draco handed her one of his monogrammed handkerchiefs. "I don't know if I was simply raped and obliviated, or if I was given the potion that was given to Trixie and then obliviated... I don't know which or how many wizards have touched me, I don't know when, or where... or..."

Draco pulled her into a hug. The reality of it all crashing on him. Seeing her like this devastated him. He wanted to tell her that it was only him, and never Blaise or any other wizard. But she could never know. At least not now. Maybe one day he could tell her, after they had been together a long time.

"There's more. I'm so stupid." Hermione balled her hands into fists and slammed them onto her own thighs. "I noticed a few times, when I undressed at night, that my underwear was missing. It never even occurred to me something so sinister could be occurring. I thought some clever little wizard had learned how to charm off witch's knickers." Hermione let out a sigh with a brief laugh. "At least four times, Draco! It happened at least four times. Blaise took Trixie's panties as well. So, it would beg to reason, I was assaulted, at the very least, four times."

She turned to look at him. "I'm ashamed to admit it, but I even thought maybe you were the one taking the underwear for a brief

spell. But then I got to know you and realized you wouldn't have."

Draco took both her hands in his. "Hermione, I would never, ever do such a thing. I know I've been a jerk and I know I've done some despicable things in my life, but I would never take a witch against her will. My mother raised me to respect women. I would never do that...and I especially would never do that to you."

He ran his hand through his hair, his expression bewildered as he looked at the empty beds. "I just can't believe Blaise, my best friend, would ever do such a thing." He let out a heavy sigh. "Blaise knows me. He knows I would have gone bludger on his arse if I found out what he was up to." He shrugged, "I guess that's why I didn't know."

Turning to her, his eyes were full of regret. "But, Hermione, I fear it's my fault, just the same."

Her forehead crinkled in confusion. "What do you mean?" She asked him hesitantly, not sure she wanted an answer.

"I like you, Hermione. I like you so much and have for a long time. That's the real reason I wanted your help with the potion. I mean, yeah you're smart and brilliant, but you're also beautiful and kind, and I've had a crush on you for a while." He was playing with a string on his robes and looking down. His voice had become quiet and hesitant.

"Why would that make any of this your fault, Draco?" She asked him tenderly, taking his hand in hers.

He turned to her. "Because, Blaise knew how I felt. He made fun of me for it...you know, you being the princess of Gryffindor and a brainiac... But over time, he liked you, too. I had first dibs on you, though, being as I was the first one to express an interest."

When she frowned and looked confused, he offered as explanation, "Blaise and I respected each other's designs on witches. We always have." Draco started to pull off his robe leaving him in a t-shirt and

jeans. "He told me last week I had to make a move or he was going to. I just wonder if he attacked you because I wanted you and he couldn't make a play because he knew I like you. So, he...he." Draco didn't finish, his voice quivering.

Hermione said with conviction, "rape is an act of violence, Draco...not affection. If he liked me, he wouldn't have raped me." She stood, unable to sit any longer. "Besides, I have a feeling he did this to a lot of girls." She shook her head in confusion. "I need to go. I'm tired. I just..."

Draco looked up at her. "Don't go, Hermione." His voice was sweet and pleading. "I just laid my feelings out...please tell me if there is hope."

Hermione was uncomfortable. She wanted to leave. It was all too much. "Draco, I don't know what's up or down at this moment. I really like you, a lot...and before all this, I could have... But right now, I just, I just don't know."

Draco stood and faced her. "Can I just... just this once?" He stepped towards her gingerly and shyly before tilting her chin up and lowering his mouth to hers for the gentlest of kisses.

She closed her eyes, finding his lips soft and warm. It was a comforting kiss. It felt natural. His scent was familiar and somehow, she felt safe. She slowly kissed him back as he gently wrapped his arms around her and pulled her close. Their kiss deepened. Her hands moved up, threading into his silky, blond locks. His hands moved to her waist as he pulled her even closer.

Draco was the first to pull away. He leaned his forehead to hers. "I've wanted to do that forever."

Chapter 15

Another heavy chapter, especially the end. Bear with me...

Wednesday Evening continued...

A slight, tentative smile washed over her. "That was nice, Draco."

Pulling her close, he smelled her hair and relished the feel of her familiar body in his arms. It wouldn't be long before she would willingly be his in every way. He drank her in... her warmth, her softness, her smell. She was the strongest of aphrodisiacs and he couldn't temper it, or at least he didn't want to. Dipping his head, his lips brushed hers again, this time with a little more urgency and need. His tongue slid along her lower lip, seeking entry. He swallowed the slight moan that escaped her mouth, his hands delicately caressing down her back.

With a breathless gasp, she pulled back, her hands pulling his from their trajectory towards her bum. Her voice was slightly husky. "Let's take this slow, ok?" She looked up, meeting his piercing gaze. "I just...I'm not..."

His expression softened with her innocent vulnerability as his hand cupped her soft cheek. "There's no rush, love. We'll take things at your pace, ok?"

He could see the relief his words caused and welcomed the tight embrace she enveloped him in. After a minute, she pulled away, her brows pinched together, proving her thoughts had moved from their tender moment to something less pleasant. "Draco, I want to talk to Professor Snape. I have some questions for him. How about you and I see each other tomorrow? We can work on the potion after classes, maybe? We'll have to let one of the potions go, though. Without a third person, it will be hard to maintain one in the dungeons as well as one in the room of requirement."

Draco had already resigned himself to not potioning her on the days they worked on the assignment, so he no longer had need of the room of requirement anyway. "Yeah, I guess we'll just focus on the one in the classroom lab and not fool with the room of requirement anymore." He held his hand out to her. "C'mon. I'll walk you to Severus's study."

Draco briefly contemplated giving her the potion but realized now was not the time, even though he was aroused and really wanted her. She was falling for him as he knew she would. He would have her willingly soon enough, and if she was prudish about sex, he would just potion her. He promised Severus he would hide the potion and he had. But he kept a small amount hidden nearby that he could access quickly if he needed it. It took a great deal of restraint not to have his way with her, here and now.

Hermione couldn't get over this wizard walking beside her. He had changed so much. More likely, this was the *real* Draco; the Draco without the tough and bullying exterior. Now that she had found his soft underbelly, a part of himself he kept heavily guarded, she felt more affection towards him. He had really opened himself to her by admitting his feelings. It can't have been easy. He was so supportive and sweet, and it touched her to know he had been harboring feelings for her. She had enjoyed the kissing, it had surprised her just how much. Maybe all would be ok, after all. What had happened was terrible and mortifying, but maybe with her friends, and someone like Draco at her side, she could get through it.

They approached an entrance further down the hall than Professor Snape's classroom. Draco knocked and grabbed her hand, giving it a squeeze of support. When the professor opened the door, his black, assessing gaze darted from Draco to Hermione, his expression instantly softening. Draco internally smirked. Severus was quite the actor.

Hermione spoke, suddenly insecure about knocking on his door. "I'm sorry to bother you, Professor, but I wonder if you have a few

minutes to talk?"

"Certainly, Miss Granger. Please come in." He stepped aside and gestured for her to enter. As she started to walk in, he cut a glance at Draco. "Mr. Malfoy? Are you visiting as well?"

Draco shook his head. "No, I just wanted to see Hermione safely to your door."

"And now that you have, leave her to me. I will see her safely to her common room after we are done speaking."

Draco said goodnight and headed back to his dorm as Professor Snape shut the door.

"Can I offer you a beverage, Miss Granger? Some tea?"

"No thank you, Professor." Hermione looked around at the professor's private study and was in awe. He, like Draco, had a large window which had a spectacular underwater view of the lake. It was dark outside, yet for some reason the water held light and the view was beautiful. There were several tall bookshelves lining the walls and filled to capacity. He had a large fireplace with a leather sofa and two wingback chairs, creating a comfortable sitting area around the warmth of the hearth.

He gestured for her to sit and when she chose one of the wingback chairs, he took the other.

"I'm sorry to bother you, but I didn't know who else to ask. I know Professor Dumbledore is very busy with this situation."

"It is no trouble Hermione. Please ask any question you like."

"I'm... I'm really struggling with not knowing what happened to me. I wondered if there might be a way for you to use occlumency on me to get to the memories. Maybe you could then put them into a pensieve for me to view?" Hermione started ringing her hands

together and her voice started to tremble as she spoke. "I've tried to remember, but I can't, and I just hate not knowing."

Severus leaned back in his chair, letting out a tired sigh. "If your memories have been obliterated from your mind, they are lost. I cannot retrieve what has been removed."

"I see." She swallowed. "Would there, perhaps, be a way, to ask or force Blaise...to place his memories of his attack on my person into a pensieve for me to view?"

He studied her for a moment, considering the implications and intricacies of what she was suggesting. "Are you sure you want to know, Miss Granger?"

Hermione looked at her hands and replied softly, almost a whisper, "no." She looked up at him, "but, I would like to know if it's an option."

"That, Miss Granger, I cannot answer. It would be up to Blaise and his legal counsel. They would never allow him to do anything self-incriminating, at least if he is pleading not guilty."

"Can he be forced to take verituserum?"

"He cannot be forced. However, it is frowned upon and considered an admission of guilt to refuse." The professor paused for a moment. "If he has more in his history to hide, he will likely refuse and simply plead guilty to the crimes he has been accused. Then again, he might agree to the serum if he confesses and has nothing left to hide. Especially if it will reduce his sentence."

"What if... what if, I agreed to *not* press charges. I haven't yet. I've given my statement, but I've not filed any charges yet. Would he consider just...just telling me what happened to me?"

Snape leaned forward and spoke very sternly, "Miss Granger, why on earth would you ever offer him such an out?"

She sighed. "He's going to likely be accused of rape by multiple witches. I'm just one of many. He will still be punished."

"But, he won't be punished for what he did to *you* specifically."

Hermione's resolve crumbled, a small sob escaping her mouth, "but that's just *it* , I don't even know what he did to me!" She blinked back her tears. "For all I know, he didn't even touch me, but whored me out to a room full of boys." She started openly crying. Snape stood and crossed towards her, sitting on the end of the sofa that was close to her chair. Out of her pocket, she pulled the handkerchief Draco had given her and dabbed her eyes and nose.

He spoke softly, using her given name. "Hermione, there are going to be counselors arriving for the students tomorrow. I want you to talk to them." He patted her hand. "If after speaking to them, you still want to bargain with Blaise for his memories, I will help you in any way that I can. Perhaps Blaise will make this easy on everyone and plead guilty. Perhaps he'll provide pensieve memories to his victims in return for a shorter stint in Azkaban." He leaned back and watched her. "Have you discussed any of this with your parents?"

Hermione looked up. "No! Absolutely not. They'd pull me out of this school so fast."

Snape studied her. "I suggest you take comfort in your friends. Take comfort in Draco, whom I know has come to care a great deal for you." He stood up and walked to the bar, pouring a glass of muggle brandy. He walked back and handed it to her. "Here, drink this. It will help you sleep tonight."

"Thank you, Professor." She took the glass and sipped it.

"Hermione, I don't mean to upset you, but I want to caution you. If you decide to press charges, you will need some sort of proof that he assaulted you. Missing underwear and a sudden loss of virginity doesn't prove that you were raped. It's all circumstantial unless you can get proof."

Hermione considered what he said and sipped her brandy. "I understand. Of course, you are absolutely right." She swallowed the last of it. "Thank goodness Ginny brought that sneak-o-scope. At least he won't be able to deny what happened last night. I'll testify for Susan and Trixie if they decide to press charges for the other attacks that I overheard."

She gazed into the fire. "I wish someone had witnessed my attack and would come forward for me."

Her comment gave Snape an idea. It was risky but might work.

Twenty minutes later, Professor Snape was walking back to his chambers after escorting Hermione to her common room. Hermione had provided him with a lot of insight into how she would proceed. He now knew she was driven by her need to know what happened. The problem lies in the fact that Blaise was never with Hermione and therefore can't produce a memory, even if he wanted to. Perhaps Draco could provide Blaise with a memory that he could say was his own. However, that would be very risky and tricky to pull off. If only there were someone who would provide false testimony or witness...

He entered his chambers and prepared for bed. The best-case scenario would be if she somehow decided to try to move on and put this whole thing behind her.

Thursday Morning

Hermione headed to the common room, anxious to find Ginny. Ginny was not in her dorm when Hermione returned the night before and she wasn't in her dorm this morning. There was a sign in the common room that said classes were cancelled today and tomorrow. Counsellors were arriving and would be available to all students and any parents, who would likely start arriving at any minute since the owls were sent out late yesterday. Hermione shook her head with visions of panicked adults coming to check on or retrieve their daughters. She hoped her parents got her owl which told them not to

worry and not to come. She lied and told them she wasn't involved in any of it. Hopefully, they would believe her and stay away.

Just then the portrait door opened and in walked Ginny and Harry, holding hands and looking like they had both just woken up. Harry waved at Hermione as he yawned and headed up the stairs to his dorm room. "Hey 'Mione", he mumbled groggily.

Ginny smiled at Hermione and gave her a look, that practically screamed, *Harry and I had sex!*

Hermione's jaw dropped and then morphed into a smile. "Tell me everything!" Hermione demanded. Ginny collapsed in a fit of giggles next to her on the sofa.

Ginny stopped laughing and looked at Hermione, a look of pure joy on her face. "Well, last night Harry and I were laying in his bed talking. And I told him that one of the things that upset me was that he wasn't my first." Ginny put her head on Hermione's shoulder. "And then he said that he could absolutely be my first, because I wasn't really there when I was attacked. I was physically there, yes. But not mentally, and that meant that I was really still a virgin in his eyes."

"Oh, Ginny, that's so...that's so great! What a great way to look at it!"

Ginny nodded. "I love him so much, 'Mione. I told him I wanted to make love to him. That I wanted *his* touch to be my most recent physical touch, not the touch of a monster... So, he took my hand and led me to the room of requirement. It was so beautiful. The room had a huge, beautiful bed, there were candles and a bathroom with a huge claw foot tub." She yawned and then continued. "He was so tender, and loving, and he held me all night. He kept telling me how much he loves me and how beautiful I am. He said what happened to me was unspeakable and terrible, but that he would always consider himself to be my first."

Hermione hugged her friend. "Oh, Ginny. That's just perfect. I'm so happy for you both."

After Ginny went up to bed, Hermione thought about her own situation and wished she loved and had someone who loved her as much as Ginny and Harry loved each other. Her mind went to Draco. He had been very sweet last night, and she really did like him. Perhaps if she had sex with a wizard by choice it would help her move past what had happened. She wished she could just forget it had ever happened, but she knew herself and knew it wasn't possible. She could usually find the answer to any question. But the questions that were haunting her right now might never be answered. How was she supposed to live with that?

The more she thought about it, the angrier she started to feel. How dare someone do this to her! She was desperate to know if it was only Blaise or Blaise and one other...or was it a group of several? Was one of her potential attackers someone she spoke to every day? A Gryffindor perhaps? Cormac McGlaggen maybe? She knew he wanted her.

She also felt dirty. She had taken a bath after she left the infirmary the day before and again last night after Professor Snape walked her back to her common room. This morning she had taken a shower instead. But she still felt filthy and used and simply...unclean. It was all just...too much. *Oh, Gods. I was raped!* All rational thought and self-control left as panic once again claimed her. Her heart started to pound, and her vision blurred. The tears started to fall down her cheeks and she balled up on the sofa, closing her eyes to the world.

"Mione?"

She could hear Ron's voice but just couldn't bring herself to look at him.

A hand reached out to touch her shoulder and she swatted it away. "Don't touch me." She demanded, anger in her voice as the tears fell and her eyes remained closed.

"I'm going to get help. Stay with her." It was Ron's voice.

She heard Neville reply. "I'll watch her Ron, go get McGonagall."

She felt herself rocking back and forth on the sofa. She just wanted to lay in this ball and be left alone. Her mind started to race. She could leave this school. She could go where no one knows her... where she would never have to worry about being in the presence of someone who had raped her and her be none the wiser. She could go to America. There were good wizarding schools there as well, or maybe France.

She heard a deep and soothing voice. "Mr. Weasley, I will handle this. I told you, Professor McGonagall is meeting with the Headmaster and a group of parents. I will take care of her."

Ron's voice was panicked. "Just leave her, I'll take her to the infirmary."

Hermione felt strong arms lift her and she felt herself being cradled and carried. Without opening her eyes, she knew who had her. She was simply too tired to fight. After what felt like a while, she could tell they were going down steps. She slowly opened her eyes to see familiar black robes and buttons. After a second, she peeked up to see Professor Snape's face. His expression was tense.

"Professor, I'm ok. Just put me down. I... I want to leave. I can't stay here."

"Shh, Hermione. It's going to be alright. I'll take care of you. Close your eyes."

His voice, it calmed her. Where he used to terrify her, now he brought her peace. She closed her eyes and took a deep calming breath as she nestled into his shoulder. Maybe it would be ok. Professor Snape would help her.

Chapter 16

Thursday morning continued...

Hermione felt herself being lowered onto something soft. The soothing tenor of the familiar voice made her feel safe. "Hermione, can you open your eyes?"

She forced them open and found herself lying on the sofa in Professor Snape's private study. He was sitting in one of his wingback chairs watching her closely. The minute her focus adjusted, he stood and walked over to her.

His usual hawk stare shifted to a softer gaze that reflected understanding. "Drink this. It's a mixture of a little calming draught with a clarification potion that helps to clear the mind so that you can think straight."

Hermione sat up and took the potion from him. She swallowed it down quickly and handed the cup back to him.

The dark wizard watched her, anxious to see where the potion would lead her. Would she still want to leave Hogwarts? Would she decide to press charges? Snape realized giving her the potion might be a risk as it could give her the clarity to put all the pieces together. If that happened, he would, regrettably, obliviate her once more. He was certain that all the obliations were having a cumulative effect and were hindering her ability to reason and concentrate, which was not a bad thing in this situation.

Hermione stared into the fire as her mind started to clear. For the first time in two days she felt like she could really think. Within moments, her mind felt sharper than it had felt in weeks. She breathed a sigh of relief and met her professors eyes, offering him a small smile. She rubbed her forehead as she thought back over everything that had been going on the past few weeks.

"Professor, would you happen to have a scroll and quill I could use?" She wanted to get her thoughts on paper.

"Certainly, Miss Granger." He stood and walked to his desk where he retrieved a piece of blank scroll and a quill. He brought them to her, charming a sofa pillow into a hard surface for her to lean on.

Thinking for a moment, she began to write.

1. Harry's defeat of Voldemort and the wellbeing of friends and loved ones.
2. Education
3. The potion. Ironical that it would have helped against the very potion Blaise used against me and others. It might help witches avoid what has happened to me.
4. Relationship with Draco.
5. justice against Blaise.
6. Finding out details of what happened to me.

She contemplated number six. Why was it at the bottom and not at the top? Why was it so far down the list? Last night and this morning, knowing what happened was all she could think about. However, now, with a clear mind, she realized that finding out exactly what happened was not going to change anything. Blaise was going to Azkaban, of that she had no doubt. Knowing did not equate to erasing. It had happened, and perhaps not knowing the gory details was best. Maybe one day she would seek out answers. Right now, what was important was perfectly clear.

She handed the quill back to the Professor and smiled softly at him. "Thank you. I feel much better...shockingly so, actually."

"I'm very pleased to hear that, Miss Granger. You seem...more yourself."

"I feel more like myself than I have felt in weeks. That's quite a potion you just gave me." She gave him a knowing look. "I imagine it comes in very handy to a double agent trying to keep his calm and his wits about him."

He nodded and smirked. "You have no idea." He leaned back in his chair. "Would you care for some tea? You also must be hungry as you haven't eaten breakfast." Before she could answer, the Professor called out, "Simpy."

A house elf appeared instantly. Snape turned to the elf. "Good morning, Simpy. We require some tea and pastries. And if there is anything left over from breakfast that is more substantial, it would be appreciated." Simpy bowed and was gone.

Hermione leaned back, relaxing into the sofa and smiled at him. "Thank you, Professor. I must admit, I feel privileged to be witnessing this side of you. I always thought you didn't like me. Most of the school is terrified of you, which I'm sure you're perfectly aware of."

The normally foreboding wizard grinned. "Yes, well, most of the students *should* be terrified of me. I'm actually quite evil."

Hermione laughed. "Yes, evil indeed! Taking care of the biggest Gryffindor 'know it all' of them all and helping her by listening, offering kindness, support, and advice. Yes, *quite* evil."

The corner of his mouth tweaked into a semblance of a smile as he mused internally at the irony of the conversation. While he didn't particularly like Miss Granger, he had to admit that there was something about her. Once she had been given the clarifying potion, she became quite reasonable. He glanced down and was able to see her list. She was very practical, indeed. No longer steered by emotion, but by logic. A very Slytherin way of thinking. He couldn't help but to find it appealing. His focus flitted back to her face as he continued to assess her. She was rather attractive - now that he

thought about it. He shook off where his mind was wandering just as Simpy reappeared with a large breakfast tray.

The elf laid out eggs, bacon, sausage, toast, pancakes, juice, tea and pastries on the coffee table. Hermione watched as her professor loaded her plate with some of everything and handed it to her. She offered a soft thank you and began to eat, suddenly feeling ravenous.

Just as they were finishing breakfast, there was a knock at the door. Snape took his time setting down his napkin and making his way to open it.

It was Draco. He walked in and froze at the sight of Hermione sitting on the couch. He offered a stiff smile at her before turning to Professor Snape, a small accusatory glint in his eyes. "I see Hermione is still here." The blond turned back to Hermione, his voice slightly strained. "Did you not feel well enough to go back to Gryffindor Tower last night?"

She looked at him confused, before realizing the misunderstanding. Before she could correct him, Professor Snape beat her to it. "Miss Granger spent the night in the comfort of her dormitory last night. She is merely back here this morning to continue our conversation."

Hermione offered Draco a big smile. "Are you hungry? I missed breakfast and one of the house elves just delivered a feast."

Draco smiled warmly as he sat beside her, kissing her cheek. "No. I already ate."

Snape sat in his chair and found himself speechless when Draco picked up the tea pot, refilling her cup while inconspicuously dropping a couple drops of something into it. Snape tried to maintain his composure as he shot Draco a death glare.

Hermione had missed it completely. In that moment, she had realized her list was sitting out and quickly picked it up, tucking it into

her pocket. Draco watched her as she lifted the refilled cup to her lips and took a swallow.

Her eyes glazed over immediately and she turned to Draco, flinging herself at him and kissing him.

"For fuck's sake, Draco! How reckless can you be?" Snape bellowed. He was flabbergasted. "You are going to get caught! I will not go down with you when that happens!"

Draco started pulling off Hermione's shirt as he replied, "It's been days. I need her."

When her bra came off, Snape swallowed as his eyes couldn't help looking. He felt himself start to harden at the sight. "Did you have to do this right in front of me?" he scolded.

Draco smirked as he was helping Hermione out of her jeans. "Feel free to leave, Severus. This won't take too long."

But Severus didn't leave. He sat back, crossed his legs and watched the show on the couch in front of him.

Draco had Hermione completely naked with his pants down and her mouth on him. He leaned back and was gripping her hair, guiding her head up and down, a look of relieved bliss on his face. "Ohh, Princess...that's it. That's my girl."

Next, he pulled her up and spun her around so that she was facing Snape before pulling her onto his lap so that she was straddling him. He gripped her hips and guided himself into her as Hermione moved up and down on him vigorously. Her bouncing breasts were putting on quite a show for the professor. Draco reached around and was massaging them as he pumped himself up and into her furiously.

Snape was quite aroused and tried desperately not to let it show. She was quite lovely...all flushed with flawless, pale skin. She had pert, but full breasts, a flat stomach and... he forced himself to look

away. Draco suddenly stilled and let out a grunt followed by what sounded like a growl as he came.

More in control of himself, Snape turned his gaze back towards the pair. He was dumfounded by Draco's brazenness and seeming lack of impulse control.

"Okay, Princess. Time to get dressed," Draco whispered. Hermione was having none of it and was trying to kiss Draco as she rubbed herself against him.

"Do as I say Princess, and you can touch me again." With those words, the blond had her compliance. She was dressed with a cup of plain tea in her hand in no time. He sat her exactly where she had been, next to him on the sofa, and whispered the cleansing and contraception charms. He gave her the antidote and then obliviated her. As she started to become aware, her forehead crinkled.

A moment passed and Snape leaned forward, "Miss Granger, are you alright?"

Hermione looked up at him, confusion evident on the planes of her face. "I think so. I feel like I did when..."

Snape interrupted her. "Oh, Miss Granger, I forgot to warn you, and quite forgot myself, how bad it can be in the beginning."

Hermione looked at him questioningly, as did Draco. He further explained. "The clarifying potion I gave you can have nasty rebound effects as it wears off. It can make you feel the very opposite of clarity and leave you feeling quite befuddled. Once you use the potion a few times, the rebound is much less significant."

Draco shot Snape a look of appreciation.

Hermione gave him a small smile. "That explains it. I was about to say I felt just like those times in the room of requirement." Hermione tried to concentrate. It felt like she was missing something...

something important. But she couldn't think straight. *Damn* . She had enjoyed the effects of that clarification potion!

Twenty minutes later, Hermione and Draco were leaving the dungeons and as they were coming up the steps, Ron and Harry were standing at the top. Hermione saw Harry slip what looked like the marauders map into his pocket.

"There you are!" Ron exclaimed.

Harry approached her, reaching his hand out to her, "Come on 'Mione. Professor McGonagall is looking for you."

Hermione turned to Draco. "Draco, let's meet up later to work on the potion." Hermione could see he was irritated that Harry and Ron had come to get her, but he seemed appeased by her offer to meet him later.

"Sure, two o'clock good for you?" He asked, his expression innocent.

She smiled. "I'll see you then."

Hermione's hand was then grabbed by Harry and he pulled her up the stairs, rather aggressively.

As soon as they were out of earshot of anyone else, Harry turned to her. "Hermione! What are you doing with Malfoy?!"

She looked at him confused.

Harry continued. "We came to get you after we found out Snape didn't take you to the infirmary."

Ron added, "I tried to stop him from taking you, but he wouldn't listen."

Hermione then remembered how she had come to be in Professors Snape's study. "It's okay, he helped me. I feel much better."

Her two best friends looked at her in disbelief. "He helped you?" Harry asked incredulously.

"Yes, and I feel much better. So, everything is fine. Professor Snape and Draco have been really supportive and helpful."

Harry shook his head at her in stunned disbelief. "What are you thinking, Hermione?"

Ron joined in on the lecture. "With everything going on, and what you've been through, why in the name of Godric would you want to be alone with them? For all you know, they were in on it with Blaise."

Hermione felt her anger rising. "It's Professor Snape. He's a *teacher*! Draco is my friend...and frankly, maybe more!" She looked from Harry to Ron. "They are helping me deal with all this. Professor Snape has been wonderful and supportive."

Harry and Ron were staring at her like she had lost her mind. Harry whispered, "Hermione, use that magnificent brain of yours and think! And we're your friends too, Hermione. We've been your friends for a long time!"

She looked at them both and smiled resignedly. "Look, I'm not stupid. I'll be careful, and I love you both and appreciate your concern, but you are wrong about Draco and Professor Snape." She exhaled. "Where's McGonagall?"

Harry got a confused look on his face and then said, "oh, she's not really looking for you. We just said that to get you away from Malfoy."

Hermione rolled her eyes and started walking towards Gryffindor tower, Harry and Ron in tow continuing to argue with her.

When Hermione got back to her dorm, she felt exhausted. She didn't sleep well the night before and the big breakfast as well as the rebound effect of the clarifying potion had her feeling tired and

headachy. She laid down and was asleep within minutes of her head hitting the pillow.

When she woke up, it was twelve-thirty and she felt much better. She thought back on the morning and couldn't escape the feeling she was missing something, something big. She pulled the piece of paper out of her pocket. The clarifying potion was magnificent. It really helped her think and she would like to get her hands on some more. It was a potion she knew nothing about and had never heard of before today.

Heading down to the common room, she found it full of parents visiting their Gryffindor daughters; Molly Weasley among them. The matronly witch spotted Hermione and dashed over to her, giving her an all-encompassing hug. "Are your parents here, dear?" She asked, looking around the room.

Hermione shook her head. "No, Mrs. Weasley. I told them not to come. I'm fine."

The older witch looked at her, concern in her eyes. "Are you sure? Have you been to the infirmary to be checked? I know it's scary but it's best to know."

Hermione hated to lie, especially to Mrs. Weasley. "Yeah, I went." Hermione left it at that.

Mrs. Weasley looked at her with relief. "Well, that's good then. This is all such a nasty bit of work. Arthur says the whole ministry is in an uproar."

Hermione just wanted to be alone and away all the frenzied parents. "I need to head to the library." Mrs. Weasley smiled at her understandingly and walked back towards Ginny and Ron, who were sitting on the sofa with Harry. Harry waved Hermione over, but she pointed to the portrait door and mouthed, "library." Harry nodded and went back to conversing with Ginny.

Just as Hermione was about to leave the common room, Professor McGonagall walked in.

"Can I have your attention please." She looked around the room, giving everyone a chance to stop their conversations and look at her. "Effective immediately, no student is allowed to walk in any of the castle corridors alone. You must travel in groups of two or more. Also, there is now a seven pm curfew."

There were mumblings and groans of protest on that last part.

"Until the investigation is concluded and we are confident all guilty parties have been apprehended, we must practice safety in numbers."

"Why do we have a curfew?"

"Even if we are in pairs?"

"What about Chess club?"

"I have an astronomy assignment."

The questions were coming at Professor McGonagall from all directions.

She stood her ground. "These new rules have been put in place for your protection. If you have a specific reason why you need to be somewhere other than Gryffindor tower after seven pm, please see myself or a prefect. Prefects, you may grant access at your discretion, but students may not be out alone."

Hermione decided to go back up to her dorm room as she really just wanted to be by herself. Having someone go with her to go to the library defeated the purpose.

When she got back to her room she laid on her bed where Crookshanks promptly curled up next to her. She tried to think of what it was that was bothering her. Her mind had been so clear

earlier. It had become muddled again after the rebound of the clarifying potion. She started to make a connection. It was the same muddled feeling earlier today as the times in the room of requirement. It was also the same muddled feeling when she left the library the other night, and as she thought back, didn't she have this same feeling several nights in a row a few weeks ago when she had been trying to follow Draco? Back when she thought he was up to something?"

Her mind made another connection. Did her underwear disappear on any of those nights? She pushed herself up in bed. Realization dawning. Yes! She had missing underpants on those nights she tried to follow Draco as well as at least one of the nights she had become muddled while in the room of requirement. If she could narrow down those dates, perhaps she could find a witness. Someone who might have seen her with Blaise, or another wizard. She would have to look at a calendar.

She peeked at her watch and saw it was one-thirty. She was supposed to meet Draco at two o'clock in the potions classroom. She would need someone to go with her. She walked into the common room finding everyone was engaged in conversation. Ron was talking to Lavender and Harry and Ginny weren't around. She spotted Neville reading in a corner chair. She walked over to him, hoping he would help her. "Hey Neville."

He smiled at her. "Hey Hermione. Are you feeling better?" His question threw her but then she remembered hearing his voice when she was having her mini breakdown on the sofa earlier. "I'm much better, Neville...thanks."

He smiled. She asked, "Hey, Neville. Would you mind going with me to the potions classroom? I'm supposed to meet Draco at two o'clock to work on our project, but I can't go down alone."

Neville looked like the very last thing he wanted to do was head to the potions classroom. He asked her, hesitantly. "Will...will Professor Snape be there?"

Hermione smiled reassuringly at him. "I highly doubt it. If he shows up, I'm sure he'll leave you alone. Just bring your books and you can study at one of the desks."

He thought for a minute, "okay, sure."

She beamed at him, "Thanks, Neville."

Draco was in the Slytherin common room where Severus had just announced the new curfew and traveling in pairs rule. He stared at a blank space of wall as he contemplated. This could present a big problem for him and he was quickly losing patience. He sighed as he stood and meandered back to his room. Saturday was only two days away, and while he was certain that after a day of romancing her she would finally be his, he wanted her now!. He was furious when Harry and Ron had showed up and taken her from him. She was his! Sitting on his bed, he ran his hands through his hair and made a decision. Once she acknowledged she belonged to him, he would keep her away from them. He could not allow their influence to continue. He still needed to work out how to turn them against her. She didn't need them. He would be all she would ever need.

Chapter 17

Thursday Afternoon

Hermione and Neville arrived in the potions classroom to find Professor Snape sitting at his desk and Draco standing next to him. Sensing Neville's tension, Hermione offered him a reassuring smile.

As the professor stood, he met her gaze and offered, "Ahh, Miss Granger. I see you found someone to come to the dungeons with you. I was going to come retrieve you if you didn't show."

Hermione glanced at her fidgeting friend before responding, "Yes, Neville was kind enough to walk down with me."

"Yes, how helpful to have such a... capable wizard by your side." The derision in his voice was unmistakable and Hermione felt a pang of guilt for being the cause of Neville having to endure it. She also felt no small amount of disappointment in her professor. Why couldn't the man leave poor young wizard alone?!

Hermione could hear Neville's breathing quicken and quickly added, "He's going to study while Draco and I work on our potion."

Professor Snape started to walk towards the door. "That is...acceptable. Draco, come next door to my study when you are done and I'll escort you back to Slytherin." He then turned towards Hermione. "Miss Granger, please send for me if you are in need...of anything."

Hermione thought there was something odd in the way Professor Snape was looking at her, but she couldn't place it. She watched in trepidation when he then looked towards Neville. He seemed about to say something, no doubt condescending and mean, and found she was relieved when he held his tongue and simply left.

Hermione and Draco made a new brewing schedule and narrowed down the recipes they were going to attempt. They didn't trust that Blaise had been keeping up with the current potion in the classroom, so they dumped it and started it fresh. By four-thirty, their hands and arms were tired from slicing and chopping.

Hermione was pleased with their progress. "It's like a fresh start. And, with only one cauldron, it will be easier to keep our notes organized."

Draco agreed. "Yeah, I just hope we can figure this thing out. It would be such an accomplishment."

He took hold of her hand under the table and held it, his thumb stroking the back of hers. Hermione's eyes met his to find them watching her. It struck her what a beautiful shade of grey they were.

"Hermione, are...are you guys about finished? I need to go the library before dinner and..."

Hermione turned toward Neville and smiled at him. She had practically forgotten he was even there. "Sure, Neville. I'm all done, thanks for doing this."

She started to stand but Draco still had her hand firmly in his grasp. She looked back at him to find his focus on Neville and his expression livid. "Draco? Everything ok?"

His face immediately relaxed, and his attention shifted back towards her, smiling as if nothing was wrong at all. It struck Hermione as very strange and she tried to think of what Neville had done that would make Draco angry. The way his face morphed from anger to a friendly smile was bewildering.

After they packed up their bags, Hermione and Neville walked Draco to Professor Snape's study and then the two of them went to the library. Dinner wasn't until six, so they had some time. Once in the library, Hermione wanted to see what she could find out about

clarifying potion. She knew there was nothing about it in her potions book, so she assumed it was a NEWT level potion or higher.

She finally found it mentioned in a book about potent and addictive potions. "Clarifying potion, while very effective, is also very addictive. It includes ingredients that are illegal in the muggle world and highly restricted in the magical one. One such ingredient, being from the cocoa plant, is a stimulant which gives a euphoric feeling. When this stimulant is used in small amounts, with the proper co-ingredients, including powdered dragon claw and armadillo bile, and is stirred and mixed properly, it brings great clarity of thought. This clarity of thought, while extremely useful and advantageous, can lead to repeated use of the potion, ultimately leading to addiction and dependence. For this reason, it's use should be limited and taken in only extraordinary circumstances. Side effects can include uncompromising decisiveness, rapid speech, headache, dilated pupils, and a sense of wellbeing or euphoria."

Hermione sat back in her chair. It was surprising the professor had given this potion to her. It definitely helped, and she was grateful, but she was surprised all the same, given it was restricted. She also noticed the article mentioned nothing about the rebound effects Professor Snape had mentioned and which she had experienced. She was hesitant now as to whether she should use the potion again. She really felt it would help her figure out whatever it was she was missing. It might be worth the risk if the potion could help her concentrate and focus enough to figure out or remember more details about the times she felt "off", not to mention help her recall the days her knickers disappeared. This in turn might help her figure out when she was attacked and by whom. While she was certain Blaise was the main culprit, she couldn't shake the feeling that others were involved.

She began to feel guilty as she remembered her prioritized list. If she used the potion again, it should be to help Harry or to work on the project potion. Clearly, she couldn't use it very often, and using it for the purpose of the greater good would be more responsible. In any

case, all this debate of proper usage was moot anyway because she didn't know how to make the potion and doubted Professor Snape would let her take it again.

It was almost dinner time, so Hermione and Neville packed up their bags and headed to the Great Hall.

They arrived to find Harry, Ginny, Ron and Lavender were already there and slid in next to them. Feeling nostalgic, Hermione watched her friends, her heart filling with love as she looked around the table. Her priority list had driven home the point that **they** were what was important. Harry defeating Voldemort...her helping him, as well as her friends getting through this war unscathed. That was what she needed to be focusing on.

When they finished eating, she felt the pull of being watched and caught Malfoy staring at her again. He gave her a small smile and a wave as she looked at him. Pansy and Daphne both noticed and gave Draco a strange look before looking at her and then whispering to each other. Draco just kept watching her, seemingly oblivious to his fellow Slytherins starting to notice. It was very odd, and if she was honest, just a bit disconcerting the way he was watching her. She offered him a return smile and turned back to her friends.

Friday

Friday found Hermione wanting to spend time with Harry, Ron and Ginny. It was raining out, so the four spent their day in Gryffindor tower doing classwork. Hermione was disappointed in herself because she realized her work had been subpar the past couple weeks. She looked over her notes and felt they were sloppy and not as detailed as they should have been. Her charms essay she had completed a few nights before was unacceptable and she would have to redo it. Thank goodness classes had been cancelled for three days and she hadn't handed it in yet.

She thought back to the clarifying potion and couldn't help but to wonder if it was still helping her somehow. She had that brief

rebound period of feeling off and being unable to concentrate in Professor Snape's study, but when she had woken up from her nap, she once again felt more aware and clearer of thought than she had before taking the clarifying potion. That clarity seemed to still be with her.

Contemplating what she should be working on, she remembered she wanted to look at a calendar and try to figure out the dates her knickers had disappeared. She pulled out her planner and looked over the past few weeks. Perhaps she should start with figuring out the days she had episodes of feeling off. She penciled in the dates she could recall and then added the days she had underwear disappear. She was stunned to realize her knickers had disappeared five times, not four. But Harry only had four pair. Where was the fifth? While she wasn't 100% sure her dates were all correct, she felt fairly confident they were.

She ran through it again in her head. Her knickers had disappeared three times before she started working on the potion with Blaise and twice since. Underwear disappearing coincided with the three times she had been following Draco a few weeks ago and twice on nights she had been in the room of requirement and had felt off. There had also been other nights she had experienced episodes in the room of requirement but had not lost knickers.

Looking over her notes, she added the recent night when leaving the library and then yesterday in Snape's study. The room of requirement episodes had been explained by the potions ingredients not being cleaned properly. Yesterday's episode was the rebound effect of the clarifying potion.

She leaned back in her chair. Something bothered her. Why did every single episode, no matter the cause or when or where it happened, leave her feeling the exact same way? Shouldn't there be differences? Maybe something was wrong with her? Maybe it wasn't the potions ingredients or the rebound effect. What if she was sick? What if she had a brain tumor? What if her 'episodes' were unrelated to the knickers? No, she didn't believe that. They had to be related.

Perhaps she should visit Madam Pomfrey again though...just to be sure.

Later that day, Hermione went down to the common room to find Tonks talking to Ginny and Harry. The redhead turned to Hermione, excitedly. "Tonks brought me back my sneak-o-scope."

"Yeah, it's been wiped of the recording, but the ministry made a copy first. So, you can have it back," Tonks explained before asking, "Hermione, you got a minute?"

Hermione nodded, "sure." They put on their cloaks and headed outside to the lake where they would have privacy. Tonks wanted to review everything again and asked Hermione a lot of the same questions she had already answered.

"What's going to happen to Blaise?" Hermione asked when there was a lull in conversation.

"Well, that all depends. He confessed to the attacks against Trixie and against Susan Bones, but insists he didn't attack anyone else. The thing is, between you and me, there are other witches who have come forward suspecting they may have been raped, and he's denying them all. We think he's only admitting guilt for Trixie and Susan because we have proof of one and you as a witness."

Unable to hold it back, and desperate for someone else to talk to, Hermione started to tear up. "Tonks can I tell you something as a friend... and not an Auror?"

Tonks's expression was one of concern before morphing into one of undersnading. She knew what Hermione was going to say. "Oh no, don't tell me."

Hermione wiped the tear that escaped her bottom left lash. "Madam Pomfrey checked me and I'm not a virgin." Taking a deep breath followed by a slow exhale to maintain her composure, she continued. "I've been raped, and I don't know by how many, but I think I've

figured out when." Hermione proceeded to share all her notes about her "episodes" and her missing knickers.

Tonks listened closely and asked many questions. She then gave Hermione a long and hard look. "I think you're right to go see Madam Pomfrey, but I don't think you have a brain tumor, Hermione. I think you've been obliviated many more times than you realize. Your 'episodes' as you call them, sound like the after effects of obliviation, and I wouldn't be too sure my cousin isn't a guilty party as well." She sighed, resignation and sadness in her voice, "I'm sorry Hermione, but I don't think you were reacting to unclean surfaces in that lab. I think my evil little cousin..."

Hermione interrupted her. "But he likes me! He asked me to go to Hogsmeade this weekend." Hermione went on to explain the conversations she and Draco had shared as well as his confession about his feelings for her.

"Hermione, I could be wrong. But what if I'm right? We are talking about Draco Malfoy!"

Hermione started to feel uneasy. She wanted to defend Draco. But was she being naive? And if she was... Her mind started to race. Had Harry and Ron been right? Could Draco be involved in all this? She was with him far more than Blaise. But Draco had been nothing but kind to her...attentive and sweet. However, if she was completely honest, he had been just a touch odd as well. The thing with Neville and then at dinner last night. And those nights she was trying to follow him...what if he caught her spying on him but she doesn't know because he obliviated her. She began to feel sick to her stomach.

Tonks and Hermione went to see Madam Pomfrey together. Hermione explained her symptoms she had been having; The inability to concentrate, the feeling of having lost time, the queasiness and the exhaustion. She also explained about her subpar homework which she just discovered and how her class notes were not to her usual standard. She did not mention the

clarifying potion as she didn't want to get Professor Snape in trouble when he had been so helpful.

Madam Pomfrey listened to Hermione very carefully and then told her plainly, "you are describing classic obliviation symptoms, Miss Granger." Hermione felt like the walls were caving in around her. If she was obliviated after the library as well as all those times in the room of requirement, Draco *had* to be involved. And she had believed him! She had trusted him! She...she had liked him. She wanted Tonks and Harry and Ron to be wrong. There just had to be another explanation!

"I would like to run some diagnostic tests on you. It won't take long, and it won't hurt, but you will need to..."

Just then the door to the infirmary opened and Professor Snape walked in. "I brought you this month's potions." He said as he entered and then paused at the sight of Tonks and Hermione sitting with Madam Pomfrey.

He gave a small bow. "Forgive me, I did not mean to interrupt."

Hermione gave him a small smile. Madam Pomfrey stood and rushed over to him. "Thank you, Severus. I'm almost completely out of calming draught." She took some of the potions from him and he followed her, helping her get them on the shelves. With a wave of his wand, all the potions organized themselves and were lined up perfectly. Madam Pomfrey smiled at him. "Wonderful, thank you."

"Certainly. Always happy to help." He looked towards Hermione and Tonks and then back to Madam Pomfrey. "Is everything alright?"

The mediwitch was about to answer when Hermione interjected, "Professor, actually I would like you here. I, I..." She paused because Tonks was staring at her and slightly shaking her head.

But it was too late. Snape walked over and replied, "I am at your disposal."

Madam Pomfrey took Hermione's invite as a go ahead to bring him up to speed on their conversation. He stared expressionless as the older witch relayed all of Hermione's symptoms. He seemed surprised when he asked, "There were other times you had these symptoms besides when you were in the lab with Draco?"

Hermione nodded. "Yes, sir. Three times before I started helping Draco and Blaise with the potion, as well as the other night after leaving the library and ..." she paused.

Tonks jumped in and finished her sentence, "and again yesterday in *your* study." Tonks maintained eye contact with him, watching for a reaction, but Snape was talented at deception and his face gave nothing away.

He merely replied, "that was a rebound reaction to a calming draught and mild clarifying potion I gave to Miss Granger to help her clear her mind of a hysterical state."

Hermione smiled at him. "And I remain grateful to you, Professor. I think that potion is still helping me. I felt 'off' in your study and for a little while after, but when I woke up from taking a nap, my thoughts and concentration remained much clearer than they had been in weeks. I can't explain it. Is it possible the potion could still be affecting me?"

Madam Pomfrey looked from Hermione back to Snape. "Hmmm, I've never heard of a rebound from a calming draught or a clarifying potion." Her tone was not accusatory. It was academic, as if she were curious. "Of course, my experience with clarifying potion is minimal."

Professor Snape looked at her with a pleasant expression, "it is...my own personal recipe. It has less dangerous side effects than the versions that can be found for purchase." He then turned to Hermione, "I would be surprised to learn it is still helping you Miss Granger, but perhaps it has somehow cleared your brain of some of the residual effects from being obliviated."

"Well, let's not waste any more time." Madam Pomfrey gestured for Hermione to lay down. Hermione sighed as once again she found herself being examined. Madam Pomfrey whispered several spells, waving her wand in between and hovering it over Hermione's head. She stopped and looked at Hermione and then at Professor Snape. She shook her head, despondently.

"Hermione, it is just as a Tonks suspected. We will have to do some concentration exercises to determine the extent, but you are suffering from obliviation dysfunction."

Professor Snape stepped closer to Hermione, looking at her with concern as he responded. "Are you quite sure, Madam Pomfrey?"

She nodded her head yes, and responded, "quite sure, Professor." She shook her head. "She must have been obliviated at least four or five times within the past two weeks, possibly more." She noticed Hermione's panicked look. "Don't you worry, my child. We will start treatment right away to minimize or prevent altogether any permanent ...side effects."

Hermione looked at Professor Snape, her face contorting to match her words. "Malfoy!" She spit the name with venom as undeniable anger mixed with hurt and betrayal rose within her. she shot up in the bed and swung her legs over the side. "I'm going to kill him. How could I be so stupid!" In that second, she wasn't sad, she wasn't even shocked, she was furious. It all fell into place. All of it. It had to be him, maybe Blaise and others as well, but Draco had to be involved. The nights she followed him, all those times in the room of requirement, the library the other night. Even yesterday. Doubt crept into her mind as she looked at Professor Snape. She shook that off. No, he was a teacher. Even if he was Draco's Godfather, he would never harm a student. He would never harm her. She peeked up at him. Would he?

Chapter 18

Friday Afternoon

Hermione watched Professor Snape as her mind reeled. No, she didn't believe he was involved in any of this, but she would keep her eye on him, just the same. It was suspicious that the episode in his study the day before felt *exactly* like the others. Perhaps it was precisely what Professor Snape said it was; a reaction to the clarifying potion. But Hermione now found herself incapable of putting her trust in him completely.

Madam Pomfrey gaped at Hermione, surprised by the girl's change in demeanor and accusatory tone. "Now, now dear. It's best not to jump to conclusions with accusations such as this, I realize you and your friends don't get along with Mr. Malfoy, but..."

Professor Snape, maintaining his gaze on Hermione, interrupted the mediwitch in a quiet and contemplative voice, "No, Poppy, I'm afraid I have to agree with Miss Granger. Mr. Malfoy could very well be involved."

Hermione couldn't have been more shocked by the professor's words. She expected him to rush to the defense of his Godson and favorite Slytherin. Her faith in him was renewed.

Snape seemed to ponder his thoughts for a moment and then asked, "Miss Granger, if you are able to remember the specific times and dates you felt..."

"I have it right here, Professor. I was showing them to Tonks," Hermione interrupted as she pulled the notes from her pocket that listed everything she could remember and piece together.

She was about to hand them to him when Tonks stopped her. "Not so fast, Hermione. I think you should consider discussing and

disclosing this information with my department...in an *official* capacity. It would be best not to discuss your notes with anyone else."

Hermione looked at Tonks and then back at Professor Snape, her expression uncomfortable.

The professor reassured her. "Yes, Miss Tonks is quite correct, Hermione. Perhaps you could just share with me the generalities of your memory's and leave the specifics for the Aurors."

Hermione gave him a small appreciative smile. "Yes, sir. I would appreciate your opinion. Could we talk later though? I feel a bit overwhelmed right at the moment."

She looked at Madam Pomfrey. "Is there anything you can do to help me recover faster from the obliations? I really need to be able to concentrate and while I feel more like myself than I have in weeks, I still feel like I'm not able to piece everything together as well as I should be able to. Now that I know I've been obliterated, I can recognize that I'm not myself, and nor have I been for a while."

Madam Pomfrey glanced from her to Professor Snape and back again. "Well, not really, dear. Time is the best healer and we can work on concentration exercises, which will help a great deal as well, but they take time." She gave Hermione a word of caution. "It is imperative that you not be obliterated again. Make sure you are always with someone you trust and are never alone."

Hermione nodded. "I will. I'll make sure I'm always in a group or with a teacher." Hermione looked determined. "When can we start the concentration exercises?"

Madam Pomfrey sighed, "It would be best to start as soon as possible. How about tomorrow morning. If you could come every morning for about 15 or 20 minutes before breakfast, I feel that would be a good start. We will build up to twice a day."

Tonks stood and looked at Hermione. "I think you should make an official statement, Hermione. Let me go get the rest of my team working on this from the Auror office. Give us your statement so that it can be investigated properly. I can get them right now."

Hermione thought about Tonks's words, but it didn't sit well with her to file a report with the Aurors, at least not yet. She took to heart what Professor Snape had mentioned to her before about needing proof, and she had no evidence against Draco. There was no actual proof she had ever even been attacked. Yes, she had been obliviated. Yes, she was missing knickers and was no longer a virgin, but that didn't mean that Draco, or Blaise, or who knows who else, had raped her. Everything would be considered circumstantial. She rubbed her eyes and then pinched the bridge of her nose. If only she were herself and could *think* more clearly. She might be able to remember something that would prove to be solid evidence.

After a moment of thought, Hermione looked at Professor Snape and then at Tonks. "I need to think about it. I need to be sure... and have some kind of evidence before I accuse anyone. Otherwise, I'm just giving that person a chance to cover his tracks. Best he not know I'm on to him."

Her focus shifted to her teacher. "Professor, I realize Draco is your Godson, but can I trust you to not mention my suspicions to him?"

Professor Snape considered for a minute and then replied, "If Draco is guilty of such horrendous acts, he deserves whatever punishment he has coming his way... However, please be sure before you levy such heavy accusations against him or anyone else. Reputations and lives can be ruined by false accusations of this nature." He glanced at Tonks and then back at Hermione, "I will not alert Draco of your suspicions, but I will be watching him very closely. If he is in fact guilty, we must stop any further attacks against you or any other witches he has his designs on." He paused and then added, "I really hope you are wrong about him, Miss Granger. I agree it seems likely he's involved, but he has intimated to me that he has feelings for you

and a desire for more than friendship. This kind of behavior contradicts what he has shared with me where you are concerned."

Hermione considered Professor Snape's words. He was right. She needed to be sure. One hundred percent sure before she accused Draco. If she was wrong, it would be terribly unfair to point the finger at him. But in her heart of hearts, she knew Draco was guilty. It explained the dream she had a couple weeks ago. "Yes, Professor. I agree and will not accuse anyone without being quite sure."

Tonks looked at Hermione and then Madam Pomfrey. "We need to alert the headmaster that attacks might still be occurring. I know he implemented the curfew and the corridor rules for the student's protection in case Blaise wasn't the only perpetrator, but what Hermione has presented, means there is no question. There is someone else attacking witches and we need to protect the students."

Professor Snape and the mediwitch nodded in agreement. Madam Pomfrey spoke up. "I shall alert him that witches, who wish to remain anonymous, are still complaining of possible attacks with evidence of obliviation." She then looked at Hermione. "He will want names, but he won't hear them from me." She gave Hermione a small reassuring smile. "Please come back in the morning before breakfast to begin concentration exercises and see me immediately if you have any episodes of lost time, bad headaches, or feeling off in any way."

Hermione stood. "Yes, Mam. I promise I will."

Tonks walked Hermione back to the Gryffindor common room where she found Ron, Lavender, Harry, and Ginny all waiting for her. She sighed heavily as she walked over to them and Tonks bid her farewells to the group.

Ginny saw the look on Hermione's face. "What's wrong, 'Mione? I mean...aside from the obvious."

Hermione wasn't ready to share with Harry and Ron what she had figured out, at least not yet. She would tell them soon, but right now she just wanted to keep it to herself while she was still figuring things out. She smiled lightly at her friends. "I'll be back down in a minute, I just need to write down some things that Tonks and I talked about... you know, girl stuff. Ginny can you come with me?" Ginny smiled and eagerly followed her up the steps.

The redhead shut the door and followed Hermione to her bed, sitting down next to her.

Hermione took her friend's hand. "Ginny, you're the only friend I feel I can really share everything with." Hermione proceeded to tell Ginny everything. She told her about the clarifying potion, the rebound effect, the night after the library, all the episodes in the Room of Requirement as well as the nights she had followed Draco. She showed her the piece of paper with all her notes which narrowed down dates and corresponding dates of missing panties. She told her what Madam Pomfrey said about being obliviated and, last but not least, her suspicions about Malfoy."

Ginny stared at her friend in total shock. "Oh 'Mione. If it's him, if it's Draco...he's...you've been alone with him so much!" She paused and stared without seeing at the floor before peeking back up at Hermione. "It does seem kind of obvious it's him," she added softly.

Hermione deflated. Her shoulders slumped as she fiddled with her bed covering. Her words were soft and resigned. "The worst part is, I really liked him. And... I believed him." She fell back on the bed and stared at her canopy.

Neither witch said a word for a few minutes. Then Hermione pushed herself up on her elbows, her voice was stronger and her eyes more sharp. "I need proof, Ginny." She turned to her friend. "We need to set a trap."

"How?" Ginny was in deep thought as well. "When do you see him again?"

Hermione contemplated. "Well, he wanted to see me today, but I said no because I wanted to work on other homework assignments and spend time with you, Harry, and Ron. So, I guess I'll see him tomorrow when we go to Hogsmeade."

Ginny's jaw fell. "Hermione, you can't go with him to Hogsmeade! It's too dangerous!"

"I don't have a choice Ginny!" Hermione snapped, the words coming out with more impatience and venom than she intended. She immediately regretted it. "I'm sorry." Her eyes met Ginny's. "I don't mean to talk to you like that. I'm just so...so angry and confused and... hurt." She sat up completely and dropped her head into her hands.

Ginny wrapped her arm around Hermione's shoulder. "It's okay, 'Mione. You've had a shock figuring all this out." Ginny chewed on her lip for a minute. "How about if Harry and I follow you and Draco around in the invisibility cloak?" When Hermione didn't object, Ginny continued, "You could just act like everything is normal. If he's been attacking you as much as you think, he's bound to do it again tomorrow. But Harry and I will be there to stop him."

Hermione thought for a minute. "Well, it does have merit. You would have to stay close...all day."

Ginny smiled. "The minute he does anything to you, we'll be there to stop him and act as witness."

Hermione thought for a minute. "I don't know, Ginny. Let me think about it."

Ginny pointed out, "if you break your date with him, he'll want to know why and might become suspicious you are on to him."

Draco was irritated. He hadn't seen his witch all day. Severus was being difficult as well and Draco had managed to avoid him because

of it. Ever since he had potioned Princess the day before in front of Severus, the wizard had been all over him about being reckless. Unfortunately, he could no longer avoid his godfather. Severus had left him messages that he needed to speak with him about an urgent matter. So, now he was having to wait for Severus to come get him so they could talk. This whole buddy system while in the corridors, it definitely shouldn't apply to him and he resented having to wait for Severus to come get him.

Fifteen minutes later, They were in Severus's study. Draco was stunned when his godfather turned to him and bluntly stated, "Miss Granger knows, or at least strongly suspects, you have been attacking her and obliterating her. She is going to try to gather evidence against you."

All color drained from the blonde's face as the words sunk in. A cool sweat accompanied the panic that was overcoming him. His voice was practically breathless. "What? How? How could she possibly know?"

Severus shook his head. "It's amazing she didn't figure it out sooner, Draco." He collapsed into one of his wingback chairs, rubbing his temples. "She is seeing Madam Pomfrey for concentration exercises starting tomorrow and as her mind starts to clear, over time, it is possible she will remember more. She has figured out dates she was attacked, and she has reconciled those dates to be when she was with you. I do not have the specifics yet as Tonks prevented her from confiding in me completely, but I intend to get more information out of her tonight."

A look of quiet acceptance crept over Draco's face. He shrugged and smiled at the man who was like an uncle to him. "I love her, Severus. I think... I think she loves me too, but she doesn't know it yet" Draco's forehead crinkled as he thought and started pacing. "I just need a day with her. Tomorrow in Hogsmeade... I can...she's mine, Severus!" The blond rung his hands as he paced, his voice becoming more urgent. "She won't care about any of it, because she'll love me and then it won't matter that I gave her that stupid

potion." He turned and met Severus' dark and bewildered stare. "She won't care because she loves me!"

Snape stared at his godson and for the first time, saw how truly mad Draco was.

Chapter 19

Friday Evening

Severus poured himself a firewhisky as he contemplated the mountain of a mess Draco, and potentially he himself, had landed in. Long, calloused fingers pinched the bridge of his nose as the beginnings of a migraine settled in. He had hated to do it, but what choice did he have? His Godson was delusional. And worse, he was a loose cannon. Obliviation had been the only answer. How the boy could even imagine that Miss Granger would ignore the fact that she had been drugged and raped...repeatedly. As if she could possibly forgive, much less love, Draco after finding out. Nope. It was impossible and Severus Snape had not survived years as a double agent and a Death Eater to be brought down by a lust potion and a delinquent, sex crazed, teenager. It was time he distanced himself from the boy. He needed to come out of this blameless and that meant Draco and Blaise would take the fall alone.

To cover all the bases, Snape used Legilimency on the younger Malfoy before obliterating him. A firsthand look at all of Draco's crimes and conversations allowed Severus to perform specific memory modifications. All of the encounters between Draco and Severus where the potion had been discussed were now lost to Draco. Many removals were only parts of conversations. For instance, Draco would remember Snape waking him and telling him about Blaise being arrested, but he would have no recollection of being told to get rid of the potion. Snape also obliterated the memory of Draco seeing him with McGonagall. There now nothing in Draco's memories linking Snape to any of it. Draco would have no knowledge of Snape even being aware the potion existed. This meant he also had to obliterate Draco's memory of having sex with Hermione in his study the day before. It was risky removing so many memories, but it was necessary. Snape was skilled at this specialized art and was convinced he could do so without harming the boy.

The professor walked to his favorite wingback chair and collapsed into it as he continued pondering the situation. He had only used the potion himself one time and that had been on Professor McGonagall. In truth, he had imagined many scenarios where the potion would serve him in the future. He still had some of Lily's hair, after all. He had held onto it all these years with the thought he might polyjuice a whore, but he could never quite bring himself to do it. This potion, though...in combination with the polyjuice, would conjure a Lily who wanted him. It wouldn't be a whore pretending. Visions of the red head beauty throwing herself at him caused a significant heat to creep up his chest. He took another swallow of his drink, forcing himself to put thoughts of his own desires aside.

Perhaps Lucius should be informed about Draco? After a moment's thought he rejected the notion. No, best to let the chips fall where they may. The Malfoy's had received the same notification as everyone else, but Draco had owled them insisting he was not involved and for them not to worry. Snape needed to distance himself from the Malfoy's in this particular situation.

Instead, he would be Hermione's ally and, now that Draco couldn't implicate him in any way, he should be in the clear. He knew Blaise wouldn't say anything, not after the threat Snape lay at the Lad's feet. *What a mess* .

After dinner, Hermione and Ginny pulled Harry and Ron aside and headed to the room of requirement so they could talk without being interrupted. The girls filled Harry and Ron in on everything. To say the two young men were upset would be an extreme understatement. They were furious and heartbroken for their friend. They were more convinced than Ginny or Hermione that Draco was guilty. Harry was also incensed at the thought that Draco might have attacked Ginny. He didn't mention this to her, as he didn't want to upset her any more than she already was, but he would avenge her. He would avenge her if it was the last thing he did.

The foursome discussed their plan. Part one was gathering evidence and part two was seeking revenge. Draco would pay dearly for what he did.

Saturday Morning

Draco woke up feeling strange. He had gone to bed the night before with a terrible headache and he felt like something was off. He just couldn't quite place it. He shrugged it off quickly, however, when he remembered that today he had a date with Hermione. He immediately perked up and he could barely contain a childlike smile as he dressed with care. He would look handsome for his witch. He arrived in the Great Hall for breakfast to see Hermione sitting with her friends at the Gryffindor table. What was surprising was how they all turned to look at him as he walked in. He immediately saw this as a positive. She must have told them about her date with him, which could only mean she didn't want to hide their budding relationship. By the end of the day, she would be his completely, he was certain.

He decided that since they knew, he would approach her, showing that he wasn't interested in hiding anything either. He confidently walked towards and came up beside her. "Hi, Hermione."

She turned to look at him and he was surprised by her expression. It wasn't the warm smile he was used to, but an awkward half-smile. Forced. She looked tense. Draco felt she was probably really nervous.

"Hi, Draco." She responded. Her voice didn't sound normal. She almost sounded irritated.

"What time do you want to head to Hogsmeade?" He asked as he glanced at her friends, wanting to see their reactions. It was no surprise to see nothing but disdain. That was fine, he knew they hated him, and it didn't matter. Hermione would want nothing to do with them soon enough. He would turn her against them or them against her. One or the other.

Hermione peeked at Ginny and then back at him. "Umm, ten?" She responded.

"Great, I'll meet you at the front door of the castle at ten." He smiled at her and turned, walking back to the Slytherin table to the shocked faces of his fellow Slytherin classmates.

Hermione watched him walk away. Her stomach was in knots. She wanted to be wrong about him. But she knew she wasn't and she was nervous about being alone with him. What if he had a room set up like Blaise? Maybe he was planning to whore her out today to a group of adolescent boys. She felt nauseated at the thought.

Ginny took her hand. "It's okay. Harry and I will be shadowing you closely. You won't be alone with him. When he starts to give you the potion, Harry and I will be there to intervene. We'll grab you and the potion and take it to Dumbledore. You'll be safe. We'll have evidence against him, he'll be arrested and that will be the end of it."

Hermione looked from Harry to Ron and back to Ginny. "I want revenge Ginny. Sending him to Azkaban isn't enough."

Harry smiled at her. "Don't you worry about that, 'Mione. We'll have revenge." Hermione nodded at him and then looked back at Draco to see he was staring at her.

Hermione dressed for her date with care. She wore a pretty, blue, cashmere sweater paired with her newest jeans. The outfit looked good on her and gave her a dose of confidence - something that she felt desperately short of right now. She ambled down to the main castle door at five minutes before ten, with Ginny and Harry close behind under the cloak. Ron and Lavender were already in Hogsmeade where they would be tailing from a distance. She tried to make her expression as normal as she could so that Draco wouldn't catch on that she was on to him.

The blond was already there when she arrived at the entrance. She was caught off guard by the seemingly genuine warmth in his eyes as he offered a shy smile and said quietly, "I've been looking forward to this all week."

She gave him a tentative smile in return, that she prayed looked natural, as Professor Snape walked up behind them. "Miss Granger, Mr. Malfoy," he offered with a nod.

"Good morning, Professor." Hermione replied. Draco turned back towards Snape and offered him a tilt of the head and a quiet hello.

The Professor walked with a quicker pace and moved on ahead of them as the couples and small groups of students made their way toward the village.

"So, where do you want to go first?" Draco asked as he nervously shuffled his hands into his pockets. He wanted to grab her hand and hold it but lost his nerve at the last minute.

"Um...Honeydukes?" She asked tentatively. Internally cringing, she realized she was acting completely unlike herself and needed to snap out of it or the mandrake was going to be out of the pot. She took a breath and, trying to sound more like herself, added, "And I definitely want to go to Tomes and Scrolls."

Draco laughed. "Of course, you want to go there."

He led them towards the candy store. "So, what did you do yesterday?" He asked as he held the door for her.

Hermione felt thrown off. He was acting so normal. He was being nice and what if she was wrong about him? What if he had never attacked her? She sighed internally and answered his question. "I, umm, I studied and hung out with Harry, Ginny and Ron."

Draco nodded. "Yeah, I did the same... Finally got that Charms essay done. I also swung by the potions lab and checked on our

potion. It was still that dark green color. I'm thinking we can add the daisyroot tomorrow."

Hermione was feeling guiltier and guiltier the longer she was with him. By the time they left Honeydukes and then Tones and Scrolls, it was lunch time. Draco had been nothing short of a gentleman all morning. He had not acted weird, he had not touched her and had not tried to get her to eat or drink anything. He had been considerate and engaging and, as the morning had progressed, she had fallen back into the easy conversation she was used to when with him. She knew Harry and Ginny were close and as their date progressed she felt less and less like she needed them. But she knew she could not risk sending them away. The day was still young.

Draco had noticed Hermione was acting strangely and couldn't miss her constantly looking back over her shoulder. It didn't take him long to figure out they were being followed. He had spotted Ron watching them from a distance and had thought he heard someone directly behind them at one point but turned to not see anyone. He was fairly certain Harry was following under that invisibility cloak that Draco had caught Hermione under a few weeks before. He didn't know why they were being followed, but he wouldn't let it deter him from his goal for the day. And, if Hermione hadn't succumbed to his charms by the end of their date, he would potion her and enjoy her just the same. Willing or not, she was his. He could wait for her to fall for him if necessary. However, he was fairly certain she would be his by the end of the day.

They headed into The Three Broomsticks and Draco was thrilled to grab the last booth at the back of the pub. Hermione had tried to grab a table by the door, but another group had snagged it before she could claim it. The only table left was the one Draco desired. It was in the very back of the pub and in the corner.

They sat down and ordered a couple butterbeers. Neither of them were very hungry so they sipped on their drinks while discussing their potions project.

Draco was fairly certain Harry and Ginny weren't too close at the moment. The area their table was in was a small space and it would be hard for two people hiding under a cloak to maneuver through the obstacles to where they were without being caught. He noticed Hermione looking over her shoulder, back towards the rest of the restaurant.

It was time he planted the seed he had decided on. "Hermione, can we talk?"

She looked back towards him, her heart beating nervously. She didn't know where Harry and Ginny were. "Um, sure Draco."

He gave her a small, awkward smile and spoke quietly, his voice lacking his usual confidence and bravado. "I...I just want you to know, that I'm crazy about you. I meant everything I said in my room the other day. I also respect that something terrible happened to you. If I could lay my hands on Blaise, I'd kill him for what he did." He swallowed heavily before taking her hand into his, gently stroking his thumb along hers. "Also, I'm worried there might be someone else attacking witches."

Hermione's eyes shot up to his. "Wh..what?" She did not expect him to say this.

He met her surprised gaze and continued. "A couple Slytherin witches think they've been attacked since Blaise was arrested. I told them to go to Dumbledore or Madam Pomfrey, but they won't."

"Why not?" Hermione asked, curious.

He sighed. "It's stupid, I know, but pureblood witches have to be virgins on their wedding night or their marriages can be dissolved. Even if a witch has been raped, a lot of pureblood wizards won't marry them. The Slytherin girls that confided to me don't want anyone to know they aren't virgins." He shook his head in sadness. "One of the witches is engaged."

Hermione scoffed. "That's so hypocritical and ridiculous." Hermione felt her temper rising at the injustice. "Ginny and Ron never mentioned this rule!:

Draco shrugged, "Well, it's really only practiced by the...more elite of the pureblood families. No offense to your friends, Hermione, but they don't really associate with the circles where this comes into play."

"Well, I'm glad they don't! They would never want to associate with people who think and act that way!"

Draco looked chagrined. "I know...and I used to be one of those pureblood hypocrites. I'm ashamed to have ever been like that. But I don't believe in all that pureblood stuff anymore. And I certainly don't think a witch isn't worthy because she's been raped or isn't a virgin." Hermione was staring at him so intently, he knew she was searching in his depths for evidence he was lying. He maintained his innocent façade. "Anyhow, the point is, there might still be attacks going on. Just be careful and don't let yourself be at risk by being alone."

Hermione said nothing as she continued to study his face. He seemed so sincere. But he was probably lying to protect himself and he was probably guilty.

He swallowed heavily before adding, "One more thing... and please don't get mad. Let me finish before you go ballistic on me when I tell you this."

She stared at him, once again lost in her own convictions which were seriously being hammered with doubt. "Okay... you can tell me."

Draco rubbed his jaw and looked into his glass of butterbeer before continuing with hesitation. "A witness saw Potter come out of a classroom alone with another witch who later found out she had been attacked."

Hermione's eyes grew large with bafflement. Slowly she started to smile. And then she started to laugh. That was the last thing she had inspected him to say and it was the most ridiculous accusation she had ever heard, "Oh please! There is no way Harry has anything..."

Draco interrupted her. "I'm not saying he does, Hermione. I may not be Potter's biggest fan, but even I find it unlikely. However, the witness saw him come out of a classroom on the third floor with a witch who later figured out she had been attacked. It was at night... after curfew. The witness said it looked like he obliviated the girl and then ran off under his invisibility cloak."

"Why didn't the witness come forward...or the witch?" Hermione asked disbelievingly.

Draco looked at her like she was daft. "Come on, Hermione! Do you think *anyone* would have believed that Harry Potter would do something like that? And if a Slytherin came forward, it would be assumed it was just someone working on behalf of 'you-know-who' to get 'the-boy-who-lived' expelled." He paused and continued. "The witch doesn't want to come forward because she can't let it be known she's not a virgin, and the witness isn't coming forward without the witch's consent." He looked around and then added as an afterthought, "He stole her knickers as well."

Hermione was dumbfounded. Could this be true? "I don't believe it." She sat back and crossed her arms. "Harry would never do something like that."

Draco looked at her and shrugged. "Well, like I said, I find it hard to believe. But...regardless...be careful, Hermione." He reached forward and took her hand again. "You're really important to me. I know you don't feel the same about me, but...but I.."

Hermione was confused. This was the Draco she had grown to care about. He was so sweet and so concerned about her. She interrupted him. "I...I like you as well, Draco." She sighed. "But, truthfully, I just don't know who to trust or what to believe anymore."

He looked at her, sadly. "I know Hermione. Blaise is such an animal. Just be careful... because he might not be the only animal out there."

Chapter 20

Reposted 8/13/19

No Beta for this chapter.

Saturday Mid Day

Draco was looking over the menu as Hermione contemplated him. After spending time with him today, she couldn't help questioning her convictions. He had been nothing but a gentleman all morning and she had enjoyed his company immensely. Certainly, he would have attempted something by now if he was planning on it, wouldn't he? Why spend hours walking around Hogsmeade and pretending to like her? Was she wrong about him? Was it all just circumstantial?

Taking a swallow from her glass, she shifted uncomfortably when his smoky, grey eyes lifted up to hers. "Aren't you going to look at the menu?"

"Oh, umm, I'm not really that hungry," she responded, trying to ignore the little flutter in her stomach. *Merlin, Hermione*. She couldn't help it, though. She was so hyper attuned to him today, that she found herself noticing nuances about him that she had missed in the past. Little things. Like how he blushed slightly when his hand brushed up against hers as they walked. And the way his hair was a bit longer, and he would swipe it back from his eyes frequently. His facial features had always seemed so sharp, but today she really noticed how much softer the angles of his face had become. He still walked with his typical Malfoy swagger and had the same aura of confidence that had surrounded him since his youth, but it was less exaggerated now and less for show. It was just his way and he wore it well.

"Granger, you need to eat. Don't be one of those girls who never eats around blokes."

Hermione's eyes grew wide and she let out a bark of laughter. "As if! I eat plenty! And I eat with Harry and Ron practically every meal."

Draco rolled his eyes as the predictable smirk crept over his mouth, "That's true. You make a fair point. If I had been subjected to watching Weasel eat daily, I might be turned off to food as well." His eyes glittered with mirth.

Rolling her own eyes, Hermione pointedly ignored his jibe at her friend and picked up her menu. It was simply a ruse, though. Something else besides him to look at and focus on. After all, this might be a man who had raped her. Repeatedly. Even though she didn't want to believe it, she could not ignore what was unlikely to be coincidence. All those times she had felt "off" in his presence, particularly in the Room of Requirement, matched *exactly* how she felt all the other times. The logical side of her brain screamed that Draco was guilty of attacking her multiple times: including when she was following him, in the Room of Requirement and after the library that night.

But what if all that was wrong? What if someone else attacked her the nights she was following Draco? She hated herself for acknowledging it, but Harry did know she was out with his cloak...alone. What if those times in the Room of Requirement it really was a reaction to the ingredients? And, after all, Harry did have all those knickers in his bag. She sipped her butterbeer feeling at a complete loss for answers.

Hermione suddenly noticed movement to her side as a couple of students stood to leave from a nearby table. She watched as Ginny and Harry slid into the now empty seats. Harry shot her a look of concern and mouthed, "Sorry." She figured they had been unable to stick close under the cloak. This was the next best thing.

Draco spotted Harry and Ginny and offered, "Your friends just sat down over there."

Hermione followed his gaze. "Yeah, I saw," she responded simply, as she continued to pretend to peruse the menu, her mind whirling with everything.

"I don't mind if you want to invite them to join us. I mean... I would like to get to get to know your friends." He shrugged dismissively. "But they probably want nothing to do with me. I mean, Potter and I don't have the best history." He looked up at her. His expression earnest. "I would make an effort though... you know, to be civil, if it would make you happy."

Hermione literally felt ill. What was she to make of this? "Draco, I appreciate that. I really do...but, not today. I'm actually not feeling very well." It was true. She had had a slight headache all morning, ever since she had visited Madam Pomfrey before breakfast. The concentration exercises hadn't taken long, but they had been taxing.

His look became one of concern. "What's wrong?"

"I just don't feel very well. Can we just go back to the castle? Or, you stay, and I'll go back? I don't want to keep you from having fun in Hogsmeade."

"Don't be ridiculous, Hermione. Like I'm going to let you walk anywhere alone!"

She didn't know what to do. If they left she would be alone with him until Harry and Ginny could catch up. She knew she shouldn't leave herself that vulnerable. But it wasn't like she couldn't defend herself, now that she was on guard. But a bigger part of her was starting to trust Draco again. She needed to think, and she needed to get away from everyone to do that.

Draco threw enough coins on the table to cover their drinks as well as leave a generous tip. He stood and held his hand out to her. She

didn't want to make a scene by refusing to leave with him, so she took a leap of faith and took his offering, letting him lead her out of the restaurant. She could feel Harry and Ginny's eyes on her as she left.

Draco kept her palm in his as they walked through Hogsmeade and headed back towards the castle. They were drawing a lot of attention from the other students who were shocked to see the duo holding hands.

Professor Snape approached them from across the street. "Heading back to the castle so soon?"

Draco responded. "Hermione's not feeling well, so I'm taking her back."

The Professor gave her a concerned look and she knew what he was thinking. After their discussion the day before in the infirmary, he was certainly wondering why she was with Draco and was probably concerned as to why she wasn't feeling well. He was likely worried she had been attacked again. She needed to let him know she was okay.

She looked up at his concerned face. "I'm fine, Professor. I don't feel nearly as badly as I have felt on occasions in recent weeks. This is just a mild headache and I don't feel like being out in the crowds."

He studied her for a minute. "I would be happy to escort you to the castle, Miss Granger." He looked at Draco. "That way Mr. Malfoy can continue to enjoy the day."

Hermione felt Draco squeeze her hand a little tighter. "It's alright, Professor. I've seen everything I came to see. I'm ready to go back as well." Draco said reassuringly to his godfather.

Hermione looked around. More than likely Harry and Ginny were caught up with them by now. Certainly, it was safe to go back with

him. She really was beginning to doubt Draco had attacked her, anyway.

Offering Draco a small appreciative smile, she looked up into the concerned black orbs of her teacher. "Thanks for your concern, Professor. Have a good day," she added as she turned away, allowing Draco to lead her back to Hogwarts.

As they walked, Draco offered her occasional worried glances. "I'm sorry you don't feel well. Do you want to go by the infirmary?"

Hermione shook her head, no. "I just think I need to go where it's quiet."

They entered the school and Draco led her up to Gryffindor tower. As they approached the portrait of the fat lady, Draco pulled her aside and into an alcove. He glanced up and down the corridor to confirm no one was around before pulling her close by the waist.

Hermione knew she should push him away, but she didn't want to. The way he was looking at her caused her stomach to do a triple lindy. He lowered his face and gave her a feather soft kiss. It felt nice. She threaded her fingers up into his silky locks as his hands started to rub her back. Their mouths hungrily met once again. Unfortunately, the sound of voices and footsteps interrupted them and Hermione backed away.

Draco let out a sigh and tried to hide his frustration as Harry and Ginny came walking towards them.

Hermione smiled shyly up at Draco and then turned to her friends. "Hi guys."

Harry was looking at Draco with an expression of loathing as he responded, "Hi 'Mione."

Ginny and Harry watched as Hermione said goodbye to Draco and thanked him. Suddenly it dawned on her. "Wait, Draco. You don't

have any one to walk you back to the dungeons! You can't walk by yourself."

Harry chimed in with a scowl. "I'm sure Draco will be just fine and can take care of himself." Hermione quickly gave Harry a disapproving look.

Draco shrugged. "It's okay. I'll be fine."

Harry harrumphed and rolled his eyes. Hermione found herself getting really irritated with her friend. She looked from Harry back to Draco. "Draco, let's go to the library. I'll run in and grab my books and then we can grab yours."

He brightened immediately. "Really? Do you feel up to it?"

She smiled. "Yeah, I want to touch up my notes and read ahead for Transfiguration. Plus, I haven't done anything on the Ancient Runes project due next month."

Draco grimaced. "Oh yeah, I forgot about that. I should get started on it."

Ginny rung her hands and looked at her friend. "Uh, Hermione. You mind if I tag along? I've got some work to catch up on as well."

Harry immediately drew himself up and stepped closer to Ginny, wrapping his arm around her waist. "Well, if you're going, I'm going." There was no way Harry was letting Ginny be anywhere near Draco without him being there as well.

Hermione looked from her friends back to Draco. "Is that okay, Draco?" She asked hesitantly.

His face showed no sign of irritation. "Sure, I told you I wanted to get to know your friends." Draco turned to Harry and Ginny. "I know there has been bad blood between us, but I like Hermione and that

means if I want to spend time with her, I should get to know you two. I'm willing to make a fresh start if you are."

This was too much. "Hermione, what the hell are you doing?" Harry snarled. He couldn't take it anymore and wasn't going to pretend. "Malfoy, I don't know what you did or said to her, but we all know you've been attacking her and who knows who else."

"Harry, that's enough!" Hermione said firmly as she moved between the two wizards.

Draco's look became livid. "Oh, that's rich coming from you, Potter. You were witnessed obliterating a witch after curfew. A witch who later found out she had been attacked!"

Harry's jaw dropped. "How dare you!" He grabbed Hermione's hand. "Hermione, you are not having anything to do with this filth anymore." Harry's words were so full of loathing. She had never heard him talk like that or be this angry.

Hermione pulled her hand from Harry's. "Stop it! Both of you!" She looked from Draco to Harry and back again.

Ginny was looking uncomfortable and was peeking up at Harry, contemplating. Probably thinking about what Draco had said.

Hermione sighed an exhale of exasperation. "You know, I don't know what to think anymore. I honestly don't think either one of you would do such a thing. But this yelling and accusing doesn't prove anything or help the situation." She took a calming breath. "I'm going to the library. Anyone who can be civil is welcome to join me. I leave in five minutes." With that she walked through the portrait to grab her books. Ginny ran after her leaving Harry with Draco in the hall.

Hermione walked back out a couple minutes later to find Draco standing alone with a busted lip and a torn shirt.

She rushed over to him, "Oh Merlin! Did you two fight?"

Draco was dabbing his lip with one of his monogram handkerchiefs. He shrugged. "He just hit me. I didn't fight him back." He shook his head. "That boy has anger issues, Hermione."

Hermione turned as Ginny and Harry stepped out of the portrait. Harry looked perfectly fine. No evidence of having been in a fight. "Did you hit Draco?" Hermione demanded.

Harry's jaw dropped.

Hermione's voice rose an octave and her words came out quickly with raw anger. "Why did you do that? What's wrong with you?" Her face was one of disbelief.

Harry looked confused. "What?" he looked at Draco and back at Hermione. "I didn't touch him, Mione!" His look went from innocent to outrage. He gave Draco a hateful look. "You sneaky, slimy, arsehole."

Hermione had enough. "You know what. I'm fine, guys. I'm going to study with Draco. You two go do your own thing." With that she grabbed Draco's hand and headed down the hall, leaving a shocked Harry and Ginny behind.

As Hermione held his hand and led him towards the dungeons, Draco was beyond happy. This day could not have gone any better. It was a stroke of brilliance on his part to rip his own shirt and give himself a charmed busted lip.

"Hermione, slow down. It's okay. I'm fine."

She turned to him. A worried look on her face. "I'm sorry Harry did that, Draco. He's...he's just worried about me. He thinks you're the one who attacked me, and truthfully...I thought that as well...for a while. Until today, actually."

He froze. His look was one of hurt and shock. "I would never, EVER hurt you, Hermione."

She looked up at him. "I... I think I know that, Draco, it's just.."

Time to turn the tables. He hoped this would work. "You *think*? " He interrupted her. "That's not good enough, Hermione." He shook his head. "I can't... I can't pursue a friendship or, or anything more with you if I'm constantly worried you don't trust me." He ran his hands through his hair and looked like he was figuring something out. "I'm sorry, Hermione. I can't do this." He glanced back the way they came. "Come on, I'll walk you back to Gryffindor."

Hermione panicked. She liked this wizard. She really liked him...and despite everything, she believed him. "Draco! Stop!"

He kept walking.

She pleaded softly, a small sob escaping her. "Please, Draco."

He paused and turned back to see the look of anguish on her face. Making his big romantic move, he rushed to her, picking her up and crashing his mouth to hers. She flung her arms around him as he pushed her up against the wall. She kissed him back, fiercely. It felt so good in his arms, familiar somehow. His kiss, his mouth, his body. His smell. She couldn't get enough.

He pulled back and set her back down on her feet. Catching his breath, he leaned his forehead against hers. "I need you to trust me, Hermione," he whispered.

"Oh, Draco. I do...I do trust you!"

Chapter 21

Standard disclaimers still apply.

No Beta for this chapter.

Saturday Afternoon

Draco took Hermione by the hand and walked quickly toward his dorm. He needed to move fast before she had a chance to change her mind. Afraid she was already questioning herself, he suddenly halted and after confirming the corridor was still clear, he maneuvered her against the wall again. He was relieved to see her face was still flushed and her pupils were still enlarged with desire. Gently pressing his lips to hers, he then pulled back and whispered, "Hermione...I ...I"

She looked up at him. "Shh. Just kiss me, Draco."

Her words ignited an inferno in his veins. His mouth crashed on hers, claiming her as his mind reeled with the reality that she would finally, truly be his. When her fingers laced together behind his neck, he couldn't stop himself from pressing himself against her, just a little bit, as he nibbled on her lower lip. His arousal was obvious but it couldn't be helped. He needed her...now. With every ounce of control he could muster, he forced himself to take a step back before he did something he would regret. This was a delicate moment and he needed to handle her just right.

"C'mon," he whispered as he quickly took her hand. She rushed to keep up with his large and quick strides as he led her to the Slytherin lair. Her free hand pressed against the pounding behind her rib cage as her mind spun with what was happening.

When they arrived, Draco peeked into the common room, disappointed to find it was full of first and second year students. He would not be able to take her to his room after all without her being seen. That wouldn't do. He had no choice but to tell her to wait for him as he rushed in to grab his books.

He moved as fast as he could, knowing he needed to strike while the iron was hot. A quick Accio had his book bag in his hands and he was immediately on his way back to her. His mind plotted quickly. There was an unused classroom a few doors down. It would have to do.

Despite his rapid return, he arrived back at her side to find her pensive and tense. Clearly, she was starting to think everything through. His chance had passed. He studied her face and ran a hand through his hair. He internally shrugged off his disappointment. Fuck it. He would just potion her later on. But not now. Now he needed to keep the game in play.

He grinned softly at her. 'Let's go get some studying done, okay?'

She looked relieved and smiled back at him. "Sounds good." They held hands as they walked towards the library.

Hermione started to panic when Draco disappeared into the Slytherin common room. Perhaps she had overreacted towards Harry? She couldn't believe he had hit Draco! And then to deny it! Harry's temper today was much more volatile than she had ever remembered. She hated herself for it, but found herself wondering if Harry *had* been involved with any of the attacks. He definitely didn't seem like himself lately. But it didn't seem logical. Harry and Blaise weren't friends. It would be exceedingly unlikely that they were both attacking witches and stealing knickers and not be co-conspirators. Did Harry somehow have access to Blaise's potion?

She scolded herself for even considering it. No, Harry wasn't involved. It was simply impossible. The witness who saw Harry either

didn't see Harry and was lying...or maybe they saw a polyjuiced Harry? If polyjuice were in any way involved in all of this, then it just took things to a whole new complicated level. And frankly, she was tired of thinking about it.

Just then Draco walked out and gave her a small smile. He didn't force himself on her or try to coerce her. He just looked at her adoringly, and understandingly. It was reassuring. Despite her earlier conclusion, she was now convinced that he wasn't lying. She told him she trusted him, and she was going to. Here he was, willing to spend his afternoon on a Hogsmeade Saturday in the library with her.

Thankfully, her self control and sense had come back just in time. Ten minutes earlier she was in such a state that she might have had sex with him, but now that she had a minute to stop and think, she realized that would be a mistake. She needed to not rush into anything. She really liked Draco and didn't want to move too fast and muck it up.

As she held his hand and they walked, she felt a sense of calm. This was right, she just knew it. His hand felt good in hers. They made their way into the nearly empty library and headed to a hidden table in the back. Hermione was relieved to see that Harry and Ginny weren't there. Although, they could be hiding under the cloak, but she found she didn't care either way.

She and Draco tossed their books on the table and sat next to each other. She placed her hand over her mouth to disguise her chuckle as he spread his books and notes out and then lined up his quills, exactly like she did. Unable to resist, she kissed him on the cheek. He beamed at her and kissed her back, only this time on the lips. His mouth lingered a bit and after a second, she gave in and shyly moved her lips, causing him to instantly react. He shifted more towards her and pulled her closer, his tongue darting along her lower lip, requesting entry. When her mouth compliantly opened, he groaned as he deepened the kiss.

Hermione knew she should stop. They were in the library for Merlin's sake! But she found she didn't want to stop and let herself do what she wanted, and not what she was supposed to, for once in her life.

It took a tremendous amount of discipline, but after a minute, Draco pulled back. "We are in the library. This is inappropriate," he whispered tenderly. In truth, he would have taken her right then and there but he was weaving a web and he needed to do it right or it would all unravel around him.

Hermione swallowed and looked from his mouth to his eyes. "Yeah, you're right. Sorry," she offered breathlessly as she turned away, slightly embarrassed.

"Hey, believe me, I could kiss you all day long, but I don't want to..." He hesitated.

Hermione waited for him to finish.

He thought and then said in a rush, as if it made him uncomfortable, "I don't want to do anything that will trigger anything for you...for what happened to you. I... I want to kiss you, Hermione. I mean, of course I do, but...I also respect you and don't want to rush anything and I..."

Hermione interrupted him, speaking slowly, figuring out her thoughts as they came out of her mouth. "Draco... You're so considerate. The truth is, I wish I could just forget what happened to me, but I don't think I ever will. And, spending time with you, like this, studying...and doing *normal* things...it helps somehow. It just proves that what happened isn't life ending. The earth continues to spin on its axis and the sun continues to rise in the east. You hold my hand and I feel like I might be able to be normal after all. You kiss me and I feel my stomach flip with excitement. It just, it feels good to be able to feel that way. Despite what happened, despite the unknowns about it all, I know I can be happy again...because I'm happy with you, Draco." She said that last part shyly, almost in a whisper.

Draco swallowed the enormous frog in his throat. The affection he felt for her in this moment was consuming. She was finally becoming his...the right way. Maybe he wouldn't have to potion her again. Maybe he could put all that behind them. She would be willing and under him in no time. She was finally understanding that she belonged with him. Before he could help it, he started imagining her naked; her mouth, her lust filled eyes.. her tightness. He exhaled lightly. He needed to stop, or he would act impulsively. He had her on the line, but he needed to keep reeling her in.

He took an inconspicuous and calming breath and willed himself to maintain control. "Hermione, I'll do whatever I can to help. You just have to trust me. You have to tell me if I pressure you into something to soon or something you don't want. This is new...what we have between us and I don't want to move too fast." He paused. "But..but you're mine now...right? I mean...you're not seeing anyone else? You just want to be with me, right?" His look was so vulnerable, it made her heart melt.

Hermione smiled and bit her lip. "I'm yours, Draco. I'm not dating anyone else."

Hook, line and sinker...Draco internally smirked. She admitted it! She was really his. Take that Potter! If only he could fuck her right here on this table. He wanted to claim her. The surge of adrenaline going through him was intoxicating.

"You're so fucking beautiful, Hermione...and amazing and brilliant and you just said you're mine! I'm so happy right now."

Hermione was watching him with anticipation as his look became predatory. He grinned at her. "You're mine." He pulled her to him with force, but not enough to hurt her. She felt his strength as he essentially lifted her out of her chair and onto his lap. He held her face as he kissed her aggressively.

Hermione kissed him with as much intensity as he kissed her. One of Draco's hands held her head possessively as his other slithered

under her sweater and rubbed the bare skin on her back. Her hands were in his hair. He subtly inched his fingers around to her stomach, and was about to stroke her bra clad breast, when there was a loud crash from a few rows over.

Remembering herself and where they were, Hermione leapt off his lap and into her chair. Her breathing was ragged and her heart was racing. If anyone saw her face, they would know what she had been doing. She was an open book.

She watched Draco collect himself out of the corner of her eye. He seemed so calm and non-plussed. Typical Slytherin, she mused. Cool and confident, giving nothing away.

She internally shook her head as she focused on her books in front of her, "we'd best start doing schoolwork."

His lip curled into a smirk. "Yeah, that would probably be wise."

They spent the next three hours revising, while occasionally stealing glances at each other. Every now and then, Draco would reach out and take her hand or kiss her cheek. It was only mildly distracting and Hermione was able to get a lot done. She really enjoyed Draco's sweet attentions, however.

When it was time for dinner, they packed up their bags and started to leave the library. "I'll walk you back, Hermione and then I'll head right to the Great Hall. I won't be by myself very long," Draco offered, reassuringly.

Hermione didn't like the thought of him walking alone. "No, let's both go to the Great Hall, then we can head back to our common rooms with our classmates after dinner."

His heart skipped as he smiled at her, "okay." She was basically suggesting they come out as a couple to the whole school. Short of getting in her knickers, this day couldn't have gone any better.

When they walked into the Great Hall, there were whispers and catcalls. They had created quite a stir in Hogsmeade being seen holding hands, but as Draco predicted, this made it glaringly official. Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy were a couple. She was his. And now everyone knew it.

He gave her a reassuring wink before walking to the Slytherin table on the right as she walked to the Gryffindor table on the left. None of her friends were at dinner yet, so she sat alone at their usual spot and read over more of her notes from potions class.

She heard the sound of laughter and glanced up to see Ron and Lavender approach holding hands and Harry and Ginny following behind, but with tense expressions. Ron and Lavender sat across from her and Ginny sat to her left. Harry sat to Ginny's left and didn't say anything to Hermione. It was awkwardly silent. No one was speaking, and the tension was stifling.

Hermione didn't want to be at odds with Harry and after a few minutes offered, "Harry, can we talk?" She said it just loud enough for him to hear as she leaned over Ginny.

Harry ignored her and didn't answer. Ginny gave Hermione a sympathetic look and shrugged as Hermione pulled back from leaning over her and sat up straight. She was uncomfortable and wanted to get away. She wasn't that hungry anyway. She spotted a couple fourth years standing to leave so she stood to follow them, softly announcing she was going back to the common room.

"Wait, can I come with you?" Ginny asked, hesitantly.

Hermione looked at her curiously. "Of course. Why would you even ask such a silly question?"

Harry's eyes shot up at Ginny in disbelief. She turned to him and said in a scolding tone, "You're the one being a brat. She just tried to talk to you and you ignored her. I'm not ignoring her just because

you are." With that, Ginny took Hermione's hand and led her out of the Great Hall.

Ginny pulled Hermione back to her dorm instead of Hermione's. She knew for a fact her dorm mates had plans that evening and wouldn't be back till much later. They would have privacy to really talk.

Ginny pulled Hermione over to her bed. "Spill! What's going on?"

Hermione collapsed back on Ginny's bed and let out a sigh. "Gin, Draco didn't attack me. I just know it. I know the evidence points otherwise, but it's all circumstantial and I know he wouldn't hurt me like that. He's crazy about me, and the truth is, I'm crazy about him, too."

Hermione rolled onto her side, facing her friend who was still sitting up, looking down at her. "He was so sweet today. If he hadn't put the brakes on at one point, I probably would have had sex with him."

"Hermione, Harry swears he didn't hit Draco. He swore on the graves of his parents! And, you know that's not something he would do! Think!"

Hermione looked at her friend, cautiously, debating whether she should share her minor suspicions. Or, if not suspicions, what Draco said anyway. After a moment's contemplation, Hermione told Ginny everything Draco said about the witness seeing Harry, about the Slytherin, pureblood witches who wouldn't come forward and about the Slytherin witch who wouldn't speak out against Harry.

Ginny's eyes were wide with shock. "Hermione, that witness is lying! You know Harry wouldn't do that."

"Yeah, I know...I also considered someone was polyjuiced to look like him, you know to frame him." She hesitated. "But, Gin, it would explain the underwear."

Ginny wasn't having it. "A polyjuice frame job would explain the underwear as well!"

Hermione had to admit that was a very real possibility. She knew in her heart Harry was innocent.

"It's neither one of them, Ginny. I just wish we knew who it was!" Hermione sat up. "I wonder if we could set a trap somehow?"

She turned to her friend. "Do you have the sneak-o-scope Tonks brought back?"

The redhead looked at Hermione, curiously. "Yeah, it's in my trunk. You need it?"

Hermione's mind was whirling. "Well, I think I was attacked when leaving the library last week. There's a closet right next to where I felt strange and got that signature headache. What if..." she thought for a second. "What if I hung out in that spot, we put the sneak-o-scope in the closet and you hid under the invisibility cloak. We'll let it be known to both Draco and Harry that I'm going to be alone...I don't know how, without making it obvious, but we'll figure out something. If it's one of them, they'll likely jump at the opportunity." She watched Ginny for a moment. "I trust Draco, Ginny... and I trust Harry...but I want to rule them both out. What do you think?"

Ginny thought for a minute, staring intently at Hermione. "Let's do it! Let's do it, Hermione. It will put this all to rest where Harry and Draco are concerned."

Ginny jumped out of bed and grabbed the sneak-o-scope.

Hermione took it from her. "So how do I use this thing anyway?"

"It's easy. To make it record you say '*Cartus*'. To make it play you say '*Canto*'. You wave your wand like this." Ginny flicked her wand with a little swirl and said, "*Canto*" over the sneak-o-scope.

Hermione nodded in understanding and smiled at her friend. "I like this plan, Gin." Hermione's shoulders sagged, and she collapsed back on the bed again. She thought for a minute. "Either Draco or Harry is lying about Draco's torn shirt and busted lip." Hermione continued, "I've never seen Harry as angry as he was this afternoon when Draco accused him of attacking that Slytherin witch."

Ginny chewed her lip. "Yeah, it takes a lot for Harry to lose his temper like that."

Hermione thought back to Grimmauld Place between fourth and fifth year and how angry Harry had been when he thought he had been excluded from everything and left at his aunt and uncle's completely in the dark. "He got really mad that summer after fourth year. Not that I blame him."

Ginny's eyes lit up. "Oh yeah! I forgot about that! But that was nothing compared to earlier today."

The two girls sat in silence for a minute. They were interrupted by the sound of a familiar man's voice coming from the sneak-o-scope. "If you tell anyone, Blaise, and I do mean anyone at all, I will polyjuice your mother into a captured muggle, give her the lust potion, and set her loose at the Dark Lord's next revel. She won't survive the night. Don't think I won't! Not a word. You take the blame for this alone and I had nothing to do with it. Am I clear?!"

The shaky voice of Blaise Zabini responded. "Yes, Sir. Crystal."

The voice of Dumbledore could be heard next. "Severus! What's going on in here? Miss Granger and Miss Weasley came and...oh, boys. How could you! Severus get a blanket for Trixie. Cover the poor girl." There were scuffling sounds. "Miss Weasley, Miss Granger, please get Professor McGonagall and tell her to contact the authorities. It appears a student has been raped."

Ginny and Hermione stared at each other in total shock. "Ginny!" Hermione exclaimed. "That was Professor Snape's voice!"

"Oh, Merlin! Hermione! Snape! Oh my God!" Ginny grabbed the sneak-o-scope and waved her wand over it. They listened to the recording again, which didn't start for several minutes after the incantation.

Hermione understood. "Ginny, when we ran to get Dumbledore, we left the sneak-o-scope. It kept recording after we left. And it kept recording until we took it with us to get McGonagall!"

Ginny looked at Hermione in total shock. "But the Aurors, they erased the recording."

Hermione interjected. "They erased the recording of the attack, but clearly they stopped listening too soon. They must not have heard that last part! They thought the recording had ended!"

Hermione grabbed her friend's hand. "Come on! We have to go to Dumbledore right now!"

AN:

The recorded attack happened in chapter 12 if anyone wants to go back and re-read that part.

Chapter 22

No Beta for this chapter. Apologies for all grammatical errors.

Sunday Evening

Just as Hermione and Ginny ran out of Ginny's dorm, Hermione froze. "Wait, Ginny. We need to think this through."

Ginny looked at her friend with a confused stare. "What is there to think about? C'mon let's go!" Ginny started to walk but Hermione held her back.

"Ginny, no! Wait. Think about this!" Hermione turned back into Ginny's dorm, pulling her friend with her. Hermione shut the door and walked to the window, looking out in thought.

"I don't understand. What are we waiting for?"

"The greater good, Ginny," Hermione replied simply as she turned back to the redhead. "If we turn this in to Dumbledore, what do you think will happen?"

"Umm, the Aurors will come and arrest Snape?" Ginny resounded impatiently.

"And, if that happens, what happens to The Order of the Phoenix? What happens to Harry?"

Ginny sighed heavily, clearly impatient. "What are you getting at, Hermione? Spit it out!"

"There is no way Dumbledore will let the Aurors take Professor Snape away. He's too important. He's Dumbeldore's double agent who has the ear of Voldem...you-know-who." Hermione couldn't bring herself to say the name. Hermione collapsed on Ginny's bed.

"If we go in there, with this evidence, Dumbledore will probably confiscate the sneak-o-scope and then obliviate us."

Ginny looked at her friend like she was crazy. "What are you talking about? He wouldn't do that! Dumbledore's first priority is this school and his students! Snape is probably still attacking witches!"

Hermione shuddered at the thought, remembering the episode she had in his study only days before. It felt like ice water in her veins as the ramifications settled into place. She recalled all the recent interactions with her potions Professor, including how all of a sudden he was being nice to her... Letting her confide in him. Advising her and offering his assistance with handling Blaise. Even agreeing that Draco might be guilty of attacking her. All the while, it was him! He had known all along. That first night she heard Blaise and Theo raping Susan and he was the one she had run into when going for help. He had run ahead of her and said the room was empty! She realized with disgust that he was probably on his way to rape Susan as well when she ran into him.

She ran her hands through her hair. "Oh Ginny, this is bad. This is so bad. We have to stop him, the question is, how?"

"I still don't understand why you think Dumbledore won't do anything?" Ginny sat next to Hermione, looking at her with pleading eyes. Willing her to see the sense of going to the Headmaster.

"Ginny, my gut tells me that if we take this to him, he'll obliviate us and destroy the evidence against his most important spy. Without Snape, Dumbledore knows nothing about the Death Eaters or about 'you-know-who'. There's no way he risks that." She sighed as she stared at the floor. "It doesn't mean he won't do anything to Snape, but whatever he does, we'll never know about it."

"Well, maybe that will have to be good enough! We need to trust that Dumbledore will handle it, even if he does obliviate us."

Hermione turned and stared at Ginny. "There's one way to find out." Ginny watched wide eyed as Hermione paced the floor and shared her thoughts. "We need to find a way to copy the recording." She thought for a minute. "Owl your brothers and ask them for another sneak-o-scope or recording device. We'll make a duplicate so we have a copy of the recording." Her eyes lit up as her plan began to take shape. "Then you take the original to Dumbledore and explain that you just heard it. Tell him the truth; that you stumbled on the continued recording by accident and it's obvious that it was missed by the authorities or it would have been erased with the rest of it. Only leave me out of it. Tell him that no one else knows. Tell him you came to him right away. Tell him you forgot about needing a buddy in the halls in your excitement and haste to go to him." Hermione chewed her lip as she resumed pacing. "I'll wait for you to come back. You'll either come back remembering or you'll come back obliterated."

Ginny gave her friend a horrified look. "Why do I have to be the one who might get obliterated? Why can't you go to Dumbledore?"

"Ginny, it's your sneak-o-scope! What would I be doing with it? Also, I've suffered enough obliviation damage. I'm already having concentration therapy with Madam Pomfrey."

Ginny sighed. "Okay, okay. You're right. It should be me."

Hermione sat back down next to her. "If you come back obliterated, I'll play the recording for you and bring you back up to speed. If I'm wrong and Dumbledore calls the Aurors, then that's even better."

Both girls were quiet as they thought through everything. "So, what do we do if Dumbledore does obliviate me? What do we do about Snape?"

"I don't know, I guess we'll owl Tonks. I'm not sure if we should go behind Dumbledore's back, though." Hermione started twisting a strand of her hair. "We'll have to think about it. I wouldn't mind a little

revenge against Snape, seeing as Blaise is in Azkaban and there is little we can do to him, at least right now."

Ginny looked at her friend, the reality of the possibilities settling in. "Oh Hermione. What if Snape raped you, or me... or who knows who else?"

Hermione felt queasy at the thought. "We now know Snape knew about the potion. We have no evidence he used it on anyone. It's possible he only knew of its existence. However, common sense begs to reason he did use it given how he threatened Blaise. And he probably used it on me the other night when I left the library and then in his office the other day. But there could be others involved as well. I hate to say it, but Harry had all those knickers and there's that witness who saw him."

Ginny chimed in, "Yes, and Draco is a possibility as well. Even if the evidence is all circumstantial, we can't rule him out...and, *he* is Snape's Godson. They could have been in on it with Blaise. Also, it would be very unlikely Harry would be involved in anything with Snape seeing as they hate each other."

Hermione sighed in resignation. "I know what you're saying makes sense, but I just don't think Draco had anything to do with this."

"And, I don't think Harry had anything to do with it." Ginny replied.

"No, I don't really think he did, either. We simply need to rule them both out. We'll lay our trap as planned and I guess I'll be the bait." The girls shared a determined look.

Monday Morning

Hermione woke very early, unable to sleep. She tossed and turned as she thought about everything. She and Ginny had agreed not to share the sneak-o-scope recording with Harry or anyone else for the time being. When they were completely convinced Harry wasn't involved, they would share the intel.

She willed herself to go back to sleep, but it was pointless. Then she started thinking about Draco. She didn't believe he was involved and realized she was taking a leap of faith in trusting him implicitly. She questioned her own sanity for that trust. However, she would set the trap for him and Harry to be sure. Of course, even if neither took the bait, it wouldn't mean Draco or Harry hadn't attacked her in the past. It really didn't prove anything, unless one of them showed up and tried to attack her.

Her watch said it was only four forty-five in the morning. She was due to meet with Madam Pomfrey at seven and then breakfast at seven-thirty.

She really wanted a soak in the prefect's bath. She sat up and contemplated. It was too late, or too early, for anyone else to be up and about. She quietly went to her trunk and grabbed her toiletry bag and clean clothes for the day. She slipped on her robe and slippers and headed down to the quiet common room, happy to find it empty. Even the fire was almost burned out, with only a few orange embers left. The house elves would be around soon to rekindle it and get it roaring again.

She headed out into the castle, the fat lady scowling for being woken at such an indecent hour and rambling about her interrupted beauty sleep.

Hermione kept to the shadows of the already dark corridors as she quickly made her way to the prefect's bath. She was able to step right in as thankfully, it was unoccupied. In her haste to dash in unseen, she failed to close the door all the way. Therefore, anyone else who arrived would consider the bathroom to be unoccupied.

The tub, or more accurately, the pool, rapidly filled with water set at just the temperature Hermione preferred, her favorite verbena bath oils making the water silky and full of luxurious bubbles. She quickly undressed and eased her way into the soothing water. She was finally able to relax as the heat loosened the tension through her shoulders and her neck. She sat on the underwater bench and

rested her head against the padded edge of the pool. She closed her eyes and felt herself drifting off to sleep.

Draco couldn't sleep. He hadn't fucked his witch in days and he needed her. He had really wanted to find a way to potion her the day before but it just didn't work out. He had come such a long way with her, though. She was finally his. Now he just needed her to put out willingly. He could feel the arousal stirring in himself as he thought about her naked, on her knee's pleading to let her touch him. He closed his eyes and slipped his hand under the elastic of his pajama bottoms, and then down to his hardening member. He began stroking himself as he imagined her full lips and soft, hot tongue on him, sucking, licking, stroking...

"Uhhh, it's not the same." He said to himself out of frustration. He didn't want to wack off to the thought or memory of her, he wanted her...now...in the flesh. He sat up on the side of his bed. A relaxing bath or shower, that's what he needed. He grabbed his toiletry kit and his clothes for the day. He threw a towel around his shoulders and headed towards the prefect's bath.

When he got there, the door was cracked. He pushed it open and froze. There, just about fifteen feet in front of him was his witch. Her eyes were closed and she didn't stir when he walked in. He quietly shut the door so as not to wake her and make his presence known.

He stared for a moment. She was so beautiful. Her chestnut locks were up and she had wisps of soft tendrils framing her face. Her skin was flushed from the hot water. The oils in the bath water made her skin glisten. Her breasts were floating at the surface of the water, surrounded by bubbles, but her nipples peaked through.

It was too much. He was going to have her and it was going to happen now. He slowly put his things down, contemplating how to proceed.

He stepped backwards, towards the door and made a noise. Then he threw his hands over his eyes. "Oh Merlin! I'm so sorry!" He exclaimed.

Hermione jumped from her nap and covered her breasts with her hands as she submerged deeper under the water. "What the?!" She yelped in shock.

Draco turned his back to her. "I'm so sorry! The door was open. I didn't know anyone was in here."

Hermione realized he must be speaking the truth because of how the bathroom was charmed to not allow anyone of the opposite sex into the bathroom when the door is closed. "It's okay, it's okay, I'm finished." She looked up to see Draco had his back to her, with his hands over his eyes. She couldn't help but notice the smooth skin of his back with its toned musculature. Not bulky or too thin. His pajama bottoms were low on his hips and she found the vision quite appealing.

Shaking her head in dismay at her train of thought, she swallowed and looked around the room. "Give me a sec, okay? Don't turn around." She swam over to where her towel was and turned her back to him.

There was a mirror in Draco's line of vision that give him a clear view of her naked form behind him. She turned slightly to her side and he could just make out the swell of her breasts as she wrapped the towel around her glistening body. His hands were over his eyes, but the fingers were cracked, and he felt himself harden at the view.

Once she was covered, she turned back to him. "I'll just grab my clothes and step into a stall to change, then the bathroom is all yours." Hermione waved her wand over the tub/pool and whispered the incantation to drain the water.

Draco still had his back to her. "What are you doing here all alone, Hermione? It's not safe." His tone was slightly scolding. He knew she

wasn't in danger of being attacked, but she didn't.

"I could ask the same of you." She responded, slightly irritated.

"I'm sorry. You're right, but so far I haven't heard about any blokes being attacked, but you, on the other hand..."

Hermione knew he was right. "I know, I just wanted a bath and no one else was up. So, I figured I'd get down here and back before the castle started to stir." She grabbed her things and started to walk. She had to move past him to get to the bath stall.

"Are you decent?" he asked, still pretending to be the gentleman.

"I have a towel on. You can turn around."

He dropped his hand spun around. She was only a few feet away. She stopped walking when he turned, meeting his eyes. Her gaze went down his chest, taking him in. He was beautiful. There was no question about it.

He swallowed at the sight of her. Her shoulders were wet and glistening. The towel was wrapped around her and tucked just at her breasts, giving her more cleavage than she realized. Water dripped down her neck and he watched as the drips fell between her breasts. He felt his cock twitch.

"Is it bad that I really want to kiss you right now?" He asked, his voice soft and his face innocent as he met her brown eyes.

She swallowed and paused for a minute before taking a small, hesitant step closer. He perceived that as a yes and moved to her quickly, wrapping his forearm around her waist and pulling her close. She gasped up at him as he tenderly gave her a soft kiss on the mouth.

He rested his forehead against hers and whispered. "Gods, Hermione. You are so beautiful."

She knew it was wrong. She was naked with only a towel on, but she let him kiss her. He was so sweet and gentle, and beautiful and perfect. She hesitantly and shyly lifted her mouth back up to his and kissed him. His response was immediate as his mouth moved over her's hungrily. She threaded her hands in his hair and he pulled her up tight against him. His lips moved to her jaw and he breathed in the smell of her as he trailed kisses to her neck and then down to her shoulder.

Hermione knew she should step back and put a stop to this. It could get out of hand. But she didn't. His hands started to rub her back, over the towel and the towel started to loosen. He trailed kisses back up to her mouth. His hands continued rubbing the towel over her waist and the towel shifted, slipping from her. She was pressed up against him enough that it didn't fall completely, but her breasts became exposed. She immediately reached to stop the drop of the towel, but Draco was too quick for her. He spun her back against the wall and dipped his mouth to her right breast. He touched the tip of his tongue to her nipple, giving her goosebumps despite the flush of heat that rushed to her gut.

She was all sensation and threw her head back as he started to suck her hardened peak. His hand began to caress her other breast.

Her voice was breathless, "Draco, we should stop. This is too much."

He didn't stop. He continued to massage her breasts as he fell to his knees. He peeked up at her. His face was flushed, his voice raspy with desire. "Let me touch you, Hermione. We don't have to have sex. Just let me make you feel good." She hesitated, his look was so earnest. Before she could refuse him, he pulled the towel off her body and buried his face into her sex. She shuddered and gripped his head with her hands as he licked her folds and then took her hardening nub into his mouth. Pleasure like she had never imagined left her frozen. After a minute, she heaved a gasping breath and threw her head back as the sensation only became more intense. He forced her legs further apart as he nestled his tongue in her opening, drinking her in.

It was too much. She didn't think she could stand much longer. As though he could read her mind, he kept his mouth on her as he reached into his bag, pulling out his wand. He cast a cushioning charm under her and gently used his strength to bring her to the floor, laying her back on the now cushioned tile. He forced her legs open and continued to work her; licking, sucking and nibbling on her clit. His fingers joined the exploration and gently nudged inside of her. Her orgasm ripped through her, leaving her trembling and gasping. He kissed her thighs and up her stomach as she caught her breath. Her was back to her breasts as conscious thought began to slowly return to her.

She was stunned. She had just let Draco Malfoy go down on her! And it had been spectacular! She peeked down at him as he devoured her nipples. "That was...that was incredible," she whispered.

A teasing, sexy grin played over his mouth. "Oh, was it, now?" He chuckled, causing her to laugh. He pulled back from her and she pulled the towel around herself as she sat up. As he started to stand, she noticed his erection under his pajama bottoms. She had never seen, much less touched a man's erect penis before, but she felt it would be wrong to not try to reciprocate. She grabbed his hand and looked up at him as she came to her knees, offering him shy smile.

Draco stared down with concealed satisfaction at the familiar sight before him. Hermione on her knees. Only, this time she wasn't potioned. He had enjoyed tasting her and feasting on her pussy. She had just bathed, and had tasted like verbena oil. He had hoped she would want to reciprocate and that had been his end game all along if fucking wasn't in the cards. When she had told him they should stop, he knew this was his only option. He couldn't pressure her into sex after she had said that. So, he gambled and made it all about her. Now he would find out if his plan worked. If it didn't he would imperius her and just fuck her.

"Draco, can I touch you?" She asked shyly, insecurely.

He smiled and shook his head, "Just because I did that, doesn't mean you have to do anything. I just wanted to make you feel good," he said softly, looking at her with pure adoration.

"But I want to make you feel good too, Draco," She was reaching for the elastic of his pajamas and started to pull them down. Her eyes stayed on his as she maneuvered the fabric over his erection and then down his legs. She inched up to him and offered shyly, "I've, I've never done this before. You'll have to tell me if I do something wrong."

He internally laughed. If she only knew she had been sucking him off for weeks and had actually become quite good at it. He was curious to see if her subconscious would remember the techniques she had picked up. He watched as she gingerly licked the tip of his cock. It twitched and she paused. After a second she looked back up at his face and then took as much of him as she could into her mouth, which was only about two thirds of him, but it felt great and he sighed, throwing his head back as she began to work him. He held her head with his hands as she started going up and down on him more quickly. He whispered, "you can use your hand for the rest of it if you want."

She did as he instructed and brought her right hand up to the root. He placed his hand over hers and guided her motion up and down as she got a good rhythm going with her mouth. Draco's eyes rolled back as she worked him. She was definitely good at this, she was just a little tentative and shy about it. He looked back down at her as she worked him, and he felt his climax building. "I'm going to come, Hermione. Pull back if you don't want it in your mouth." As he said it, he held her head in place gently, willing her to want to swallow, but she used more force and pulled back. Just as she pulled away, he came spectacularly all over her face.

It was beautiful, and he internally loved it as he ejaculated all over her. He even managed to get some on her tits which added to the enjoyment. "Oh Merlin, Hermione! I'm so sorry!" He reached down, pulling the towel loose from her and wiped her face with it. Then he

wiped her chest before handing the dirty towel back to her, relishing that he got one more look at her naked body.

Hermione took the towel and looked at it before it occurred to her she could cast a cleansing charm on it. She pulled her wand out of her toiletry bag and cast the charm before wrapping it around herself. She felt like she needed a bath again. Draco helped her to stand and kissed her on the cheek. Then he walked towards the tub in his naked glory and started his bath with the sandalwood oil he liked. He turned back to her and smiled as she picked up her things and headed into the stall to get dressed.

She realized it was silly to get dressed in the stall after he had just seen every bit of her, up close and personal, but she did it just the same. She cast the cleansing charm on herself and then got dressed. When she came out, Draco was soaking in the tub with his head laying back against the edge of the pool, sitting just like she had been when he came in earlier, on the underwater bench.

"I guess I'll see you later in Potions," she said. He opened his eyes and looked at her and smiled. "Okay, see you later then." He closed his eyes.

Hermione found she was slightly irritated. The least he could do is thank her or tell her that he enjoyed it. She had just given him a blow job for Morgana's sake, the very first blow job she had ever given! He could have kissed her goodbye as she left. He also didn't seem too concerned that she was leaving to walk the corridors by herself. She looked at her watch. It was six-thirty. She threw the door open and pulled it closed behind her, making her way back to Gryffindor tower.

Chapter 23

Reposted 9/19/19 - no beta for this chapter.

Monday Morning

Hermione made it to breakfast at seven-thirty and found her friends were already there. Harry still wasn't looking at her, much less talking to her. She sat down next to Ginny who shrugged at her in acknowledgment of Harry's dismissive behavior.

After a few bites of toast, Hermione whispered to her friend, "Did you owl Fred and George? About a recording device?"

Ginny nodded and whispered back, "Yeah. Hopefully, they'll send something soon." She turned to the older Gryffindor, studying her face. Hermione seemed preoccupied. "What's up? Everything okay?"

Hermione grinned. "I'll tell you later." She glanced around the table to find Ron and Lavender talking quietly amongst themselves across the table. Dean and Neville were engrossed in a Gobstone's strategy debate and Harry was sitting on the other side of Ginny, staring at his plate with a frown.

Enough was enough. She stood up and darted around Ginny, so that she could speak directly to her bespectacled friend. Her words were quiet but firm, "Harry, stop this! We need to talk this out and you are coming with me right now!"

He turned to her with a hardened face and snapped, "Oh I am, am I?" He made no move to stand.

"Well, if my friendship means anything to you, anything at all, you'll come with me." She rebutted.

He turned away again and wouldn't look at her. She let out a heavy sigh, her prior show of bravado failing her as she responded sadly and with a light tremble to her voice, "I miss you, Harry." When he still wouldn't respond, she turned and dashed out of the Great Hall.

Draco was watching his witch with great interest from across the room. He could tell that Harry was ignoring her and he couldn't have been more pleased. This was all going perfectly. He had won his witch and soon enough she would be his completely. Another week and she would be willingly sleeping with him. Harry would no longer be in her life. Then he would use influence and manipulation to keep her away from her other friends. She didn't need them. He was all she needed and the sooner she understood, the better.

He had been thinking about how his parents would react to him fucking a mudblood. It was unfortunate that she wasn't a pureblood, or even a halfblood for that matter. But it was no matter. He would marry Pansy or Astoria, or whomever his parents deemed appropriate, but Hermione would be in his heart. She would be his mistress and he would take good care of her. She would want for nothing. Once she realized just how much she loved him and needed him, she wouldn't mind being the spoiled mistress of a Malfoy. Being the mistress of a Malfoy was a step up from being married to another mudblood or halfblood. Hell, it was a step up from being married to most purebloods for that matter.

His interest was peaked when he noticed Hermione stand and then lean down and whisper something to Potter. A flash of heated anger ignited in Draco's chest. Why was she speaking to him? She had no business having anything to do with him. His fury escalated when Potter suddenly stood and ran after her.

Hermione couldn't help the tears that were forming as she dashed out the Great Hall. Was Harry really dumping her as his friend? She had just made it to the steps when Harry caught up with her.

"Hermione, wait!" He yelled.

She turned back to him and when he saw the moisture in her eyes, all his frustration with her vanished. "Oh, 'Mione," He whispered as he grabbed her and pulled her into a strong hug. "I'm sorry." He held her tight but couldn't stop the truthful words from spilling. He needed to get through to her. His voice was determined. "Draco is scum, Hermione. How can you believe I would hit him? He's manipulating you! You need to stay away from him!"

Hermione was a bit startled by the harshness and biting tone of her best friend. She pulled back and met his eyes to find his face was turning red. He had such a temper these days and she needed to calm him down. Deciding there was no point in arguing and escalating things, she placated, "Okay, Harry. I'll stay on my guard around him. Just calm down. Let's go get our books for potions or we'll be late."

This seemed to mollify him a little bit. As they were walking up the stairs, he exasperated, "I can't believe you're his potions partner. Maybe Snape will reassign groupings with everything that happened. Theo was Ron and Daphne's third. Maybe, maybe he'll put the four of you together."

Hermione secretly hoped this wasn't true. She liked working with Draco. They worked well together and both put forth a lot of effort for good marks. Ron was not very good at potions and, while she hated herself for feeling this way, she knew Ron would hold them back, as would Daphne. Daphne wasn't a good student and only earned Acceptable marks in her classes. From what Hermione knew about the Slytherin, she had no aspirations for a career. She was engaged and would probably be spitting out little wizards and witches within a year of marriage. Hermione just didn't understand witches who felt that way. Hermione wanted a career when she graduated. She would think about marriage in another twenty years...maybe.

As Harry, Ron, and Hermione headed to potions, Harry tried to pry information out of her about her relationship with Draco.

She felt it would just anger him too much if she told him anything and instead tried to reassure him. "Harry, I don't really know yet, okay? I really like him, but I'm not going to jump into anything and I'm going to be on my guard as you asked. I don't think he attacked me but I'll be smart, I promise."

"Hermione, I don't want to fight with you anymore about him. But I wish you would snap out of whatever spell he has you under." His voice sounded defeated.

Ron was being unusually quiet and didn't say much until right before they walked into the classroom. He looked at Harry and then at her before gently grabbing her arm. Bewildered, she stopped walking and turned to face him. He spoke quietly and determinedly, "'Hermione, we love you. We'll always love you and be your friend. Just, *p/*lease trust us and think long and hard about what you're doing." He looked at Harry and added. "We'll stop fighting you on this, because we don't want our friendship to suffer...and frankly, Draco isn't worth losing your friendship over."

Hermione studied her two best friends, and seeing the love in their eyes, pulled them each into a hug. "I love you both, and I appreciate your concern. And I'll be careful... I promise." They nodded in acknowledgment and the three headed into Potions.

Draco was already there when they arrived. He was smiling at her as she walked over to their table. "Hi Hermione." He took her hand and held it under the table and leaned over, whispering in her ear. "I can't stop thinking about this morning. That was amazing, Hermione. You're incredible."

Hermione felt the irritation she had held toward him ebb away. He was finally saying the words she had wanted to hear earlier.

She bit her lip and smiled shyly. Hermione didn't normally fish for compliments, but she really wanted to know if he enjoyed it. "Really? I was worried you weren't, I don't know, maybe I didn't..."

He interrupted her, leaning in. "Oh, stop it right now. You were amazing." He grinned devilishly. "But, I mean, if you feel the need to practice, I'm happy to help out. You know, whatever you need."

His playful smirk made her laugh. "Well, if I can fit it into my study schedule maybe I'll do just that."

Draco clutched his hand over his heart and leaned back in his chair. "Oh, I think I've died and gone to heaven." He then sat up and beamed at her, surprising her when he leaned in and kissed her cheek.

The kiss on her cheek had not gone unnoticed and the catcalls started up again. Hermione turned pink as she looked around the room. Her smile faltered and her face paled at the look of disgust on Harry's face. What she didn't see was Draco giving Harry an evil stare and then a smirk before leaning in to kiss her cheek a second time. When he gave her the second kiss, she turned back to find him giving her a warm smile.

Just then Professor Snape walked into the class room. "Quiet down, quiet down." He paced through the tables and continued. "In light of recent...events. I realize the groupings in the class may be...unfair." He turned to Ron and Daphne and then Draco and Hermione. "Grow up. Life isn't fair. You will continue in your current groups as assigned." He walked towards his desk. "Get to work."

Hermione and Draco exchanged looks of relief and started deliberating their most current recipe. Three hours later, they had made progress. They had ruled out several ingredients and had started two cauldrons of two different recipes. Both were simmering and coming along nicely. Draco had volunteered to come by and check on them daily as he was in the dungeons regularly and it would be easy for him to swing by. Hermione felt that was unfair as more responsibility was placed on his shoulders than hers, but he insisted it was easy for him and he didn't want her worrying about having to find a hall buddy to accompany her.

They were packing up their books when Professor Snape approached them. "Miss Granger. Please stay behind class for a minute, I wish to speak with you." He looked at Draco. "Draco, please wait at the back of the classroom, you may then accompany Miss Granger to the Great Hall for lunch."

"Certainly, Professor." As Draco sat, watching Hermione follow the Professor to his desk, he found himself curious why Snape would want to talk to her. He contemplated his Godfather. Perhaps he should confide to Snape his usage of the potion on Granger. He knew Severus wouldn't care if he used the potion, after all, the man helped Draco develop it. In hindsight, Draco was a bit surprised in himself that he hadn't discussed using it with his Godfather. Then again, Severus had been quite undone about Blaise's use of the elixir. He had come and gotten him the night Blaise was arrested and had been less than pleased that Blaise had been abusing the potion and whoring out witches. Severus would advise him that now was not the time to be using it in light of recent events. And the fact was, he probably wouldn't be using it too much more anyway, now that Hermione was his and would be meeting his needs willingly. Although, the potion did have its appeal. He internally acknowledged there would likely be times he would still want to potion her. He was crazy about Hermione, but Princess had her appeal as well.

Hermione didn't want to be alone with the professor. She was glad Draco would be in the room but wasn't sure if that actually helped or not. Snape would probably just obliviate Draco as well. She hesitantly followed Snape to his desk.

He turned to her and said soothingly and quietly, so Draco couldn't hear. "I just wanted to be sure you are alright, Miss Granger. I'll admit I was quite surprised to see you alone with Draco in Hogsmeade on Saturday." He looked over her shoulder towards Draco and then back at her.

Hermione would not show fear but she also would not show her hand. "Thank you, Professor. I appreciate your concern. I no longer suspect Draco. I don't know who's still attacking witches, but I don't

think it's him." She looked up at him and unable to stop herself added, "It could be anyone, Professor. It's probably someone whom no one would ever suspect would do such a thing."

Snape studied her face. She had a certain look of defiance about her and it peaked his interest. It seemed like she wasn't being entirely forthcoming. "Well, my offer stands, Miss Granger. If you wish to talk, my door is always open." He really wanted her to confide in him. He gave her as earnest a face as he could muster, and it shocked him when she seemed to cringe a little.

Hermione was disgusted with her teacher. She was more convinced than ever he was involved in all this. He wanted her to confide in him. She could picture the chain of events perfectly. He would lure her into his study, encourage her to share all her memories and pretend to care and act like he was on her side. Then he would rape her and then obliviate her, as he likely had, at least a couple times before. Snape and Blaise...Those were her two attackers, and of course any others they might have whored her out to. She hated this wizard in front of her. She would see him suffer for what he had done. She tried to keep her expression neutral as these thoughts rushed through her mind.

"Well, I should probably go. I don't want to hold Draco up."

"Of course. Good day, Miss Granger." He watched as she walked away and took Draco's hand before walking out of the classroom. Snape sat at his desk staring at the now vacant door frame. Something was afoot, and he needed to find out what it was.

"So, what did he want?" Draco asked Hermione curiously as they headed towards the Great Hall.

"He just wanted to be sure I was okay. He knows I was attacked."

This was news to Draco. "Oh." Draco was trailing through his memories. He couldn't recall any discussions between himself and his Godfather about Hermione, other than discussions about the

potion he was working on with her for class. Draco realized there would be no real reason for Snape to discuss with him the fact that Hermione had been attacked, other than for just gossips sake, and Snape wasn't a gossip.

As he held Hermione's hand and walked beside her, he started remembering that morning in the prefect's bath, then he remembered the thrill of the first time he had fucked her. While it was regrettable she didn't have the memories of their many times together, it was probably for the best. He recalled, with a twinge of guilt, how rough he had been with her the first time when he took her virginity. He wished he hadn't done that. He turned to her and innocently asked, "So, you want to study after dinner? I could meet you in the library."

"Actually, that sounds good," she responded with a soft smile.

When they walked into the Great Hall for lunch, he kissed her on the cheek and headed to his table as she headed to hers. They were drawing less attention now as it was no longer breaking news that they were together.

She headed over to her friends and sat beside Ginny. The redhead had an excited look on her face and whispered, "Fred and George sent me a recording device."

"Brilliant, Ginny." The wheels started spinning. "What's your next class?"

"Um, I actually have a free period." she responded eagerly.

"Well, I have History of Magic, but I'll claim a headache so that we can work on our plan. Does that work for you?"

Ginny nodded enthusiastically, "Yeah, let's do it."

The girls inhaled lunch and dashed up to Ginny's room, eager to get started.

Ginny shut the door and pulled out another Sneak-O-Scope. "This is what they sent... with their blessing," she giggled. "They said they were proud their little sister was developing an interest in mischief and trickery."

"Wait, you didn't tell them why you needed this, did you?"

"No! I just told them I had a scheme at play and asked if they had a recording device I could borrow."

Hermione smiled, "perfect, Ginny. They would have never said no to that."

Ginny and Hermione copied the recording of Snape from the original Sneak-O-Scope onto the extra.

Hermione tucked the extra recording into her school bag. "Best if I keep this one, just in case Dumbledore comes looking for anything."

Ginny shook her head at her friend. "I still don't think Dumbledore will obliviate me."

Hermione ignored her. "So, I told Draco I'd meet him at the library tonight."

"Does that mean you want to set the trap tonight?" Ginny asked.

Hermione contemplated. "I think I'll lay the groundwork tonight." She thought for a minute. "I'll tell Draco I can't see him tomorrow night because you and I have permission to work late in the library. I'll then add that you are actually going to run off with Harry for some alone time, but that I told McGonagall you'd be with me so that she would give permission. I'll tell him that I'll be perfectly safe as everyone will be in their dorms after eight and that I won't stay in the library past 9. I'll tell him I need to use a couple references that can't be checked out." She paced. "You'll be with me under the cloak and will follow close with the Sneak-O-Scope, ready to record if anything happens."

Ginny thought for a minute. "What about Harry?"

Hermione considered. "I think it would be better to lay the trap for one wizard at a time. We'll do Harry the next night."

Ginny added, "In fairness, one or both of them might show up just to walk you back to Gryffindor out of concern for your wellbeing."

Hermione smiled. "Well, that would be really nice if they did that." She sat on Ginny's bed. "The truth is, even if neither attacks me, it doesn't mean they haven't in the past. Really, the only way we get a definitive answer is if one of them tries to poison me." She looked at Ginny. "I hate this. In truth, I don't really believe either of them are guilty." She sighed as she faced the window.

Ginny shrugged, "I agree. Especially about Harry." She lay back on her bed and stared up at her canopy. "So, when do I go to Dumbledore?"

"How about tonight? Right after curfew?"

Ginny looked nervous. "Okay. I really hope he doesn't obliviate me."

Hermione put her arm around her friend. "Don't worry, if he does, I'll give you some headache potion and bring you back to speed."

Ginny nodded and rethought through their plan, suddenly remembering breakfast when Hermione had seemed distracted.

"So, you told me at breakfast you'd tell me why you seemed distracted. What was up with that?"

Hermione felt the familiar rush of warmth to her face and neck as she blushed from the memory.

"Umm, I uhh, ran into Draco in the prefects bath this morning."

Ginny's eyes grew wide. "And?"

"Well, it was really early...like five-thirty, and apparently I didn't shut the door all the way and he walked in on me in the bath." Hermione said the last part really fast and collapsed back on the bed.

"He what?" Ginny shrieked.

"He was a perfect gentleman and covered his eyes. It was an accident. Obviously, I hadn't closed the door all the way or he wouldn't have been able to walk in. You know how the charm works."

"So, what happened? Something happened, right?"

Hermione turned beat red. "Um, we, we gave each other oral sex."

Ginny's jaw fell. "'Mione! Wait, at the same time, like sixty-nine?"

Hermione looked at her friend confused. "Sixty-nine?" Then she got it. "Oh, Merlin no! He did it to me and then I did it to him."

Ginny grinned. "How'd you like it?"

Hermione grinned back. "It was amazing."

Ginny nodded at her friend. "It is, isn't it? Harry has this little trick he does with his tongue where..."

Hermione threw her hands over her ears, "Stop! Don't tell me. Dear Merlin, stop!" Hermione shook her head. "Too late. You've planted a visual... oh, make it go away!"

Ginny laughed and then a look of surprise came over her face. "Wait, you went down there alone?"

Hermione just shrugged. "I went down at 5am. I knew no one would be up that early."

Ginny gave her friend a reprimanding look. "Well, clearly you were wrong since Malfoy was up."

"Yes, he ran into me ALONE in the bath and didn't attack me. It would have been the perfect opportunity. I'm telling you, he's innocent. "

Ginny shot her friend a smirk, "I wonder what he would have done if you hadn't given him that blow job?"

Hermione had to concede the point.

Chapter 24

Reposted 10/1/19

No Beta for this chapter.

Monday Evening

Draco held Hermione's hand as they headed to the Library from dinner.

"Is it wrong that I can't get this morning out of my mind?" Draco asked in a soft voice.

Hermione shyly smiled. "Yeah, it's been on my mind today as well."

Draco decided to push a little bit. "So, does that mean you might be up for a repeat performance?" He had a villainous grin on his face and was wagging his eyebrows.

Draco watched her reaction carefully, not wanting to push too hard, too soon. He had been thinking about her mouth on him all day and was eager to have her do it again. The sooner she was comfortable with giving head, and the more routine it became, Draco was certain having sex wouldn't be far behind.

Hermione gave him one of his own signature smirks in response. "Well, not tonight...but never say never." She laughed when he sighed heavily and pretended to stumble in exaggerated heartbreak. Thrilled with her playful tease, he pulled her to him, kissing the top of her head.

They walked into the library and headed to the same back corner table they had used Saturday afternoon. He sat to her left and they each spread out their books, scrolls, and quills.

After a few minutes, Hermione was engrossed in her History of Magic textbook when she felt a warm hand on her knee. Ignoring it, she continued to read. His fingertips lightly swirled on her skin and began to slowly head up her leg. When his touch reached the top of her left thigh, she placed her hand over his and turned to the blond, whom to all appearances was deeply engrossed in his Herbology textbook.

She smiled flirtatiously at him. "Just what is it that you think you are doing, Mr. Malfoy?"

She was absently chewing on her quill and when Draco turned to her, his eyes were drawn to her mouth and then back to her eyes. "Hmm?" He asked. The picture of innocence. "Just studying, Miss Granger." He responded quietly, but matter of factly. His eyes went back to the textbook in front of him.

She smirked. "Really? So, studying involves your hand inching up my thigh?"

He tried to suppress his grin and maintain a serious façade as he replied, still not looking at her. "Oh, I'm just keeping you warm. I uh, thought I noticed goose bumps on your knees." He turned back to her and added with an innocent expression. "You know, just trying to be the attentive boyfriend."

"Oh, I see. Well, you are very attentive indeed. Perhaps a tad, too attentive." She said with a playful, admonishing tone. She slid his hand off her leg and went back to reading her text.

Draco would not be deterred. His hand moved right back to its preferred spot as he leaned into her and whispered, "You know, It's very important you let your boyfriend do his due diligence to take care of you and see to your needs." He kissed her ear lobe lightly and then bit down on it playfully.

Hermione let out a small laugh, unable to deny the flush of warmth that overcame her. His fingers continued to move and brush along

the side of her knickers. She started to push his hand away again when his other hand stopped her. "C'mon, Hermione...Where's that Gryffindor courage?"

Hermione met his eyes and a seeing their intensity, felt a rush of heat. Peeking around them to confirm no one was around their secluded spot, Hermione gave in to her reckless impulse. She felt a rush of empowerment as she let the repressed part of herself come out. That part of her that was always denied. Her eyes glittered as she leaned back and spread her legs ever so slightly, allowing his left hand to stroke between her thighs. She let out a soft breath of air and shivered as a few fingers slid under her knickers and began rubbing her. Draco was turned towards her, so that it looked to an observer like he was simply whispering in her ear. His thumb rubbed her clit and he slowly slid one and then two fingers into her warmth.

Hermione's eyes fluttered at the amazing sensation his touch was eliciting. His fingers were moving in and out of her as his thumb rubbed her deliciously. She spread her legs wider as he started to work her vigorously. Her breathing became ragged and she let out a small mewl.

Draco whispered, "I wish I could climb under this table and bury my head between your thighs. It's utopia down there."

His hand was starting to get tired, but he didn't relent, and after a couple minutes, Hermione shook and let out a small squeal as her orgasm hit. Draco smiled and bit down on her neck before whispering, "Shh, my brave little Gryffindor. You'll give us away."

Hermione's heart was racing, and her breathing was fast as she started to come down and look around her. She couldn't believe she had just let Draco do that to her...in the library! She sat up straight and closed her legs as her breathing became normal.

She watched in shock as Draco slid two fingers from his left hand into his mouth and drew them out slowly, before resuming his reading. As though nothing had happened.

She looked down at her own textbook and was much too distracted with what they had just done to be able to concentrate. She internally scolded herself. *What is wrong with you? You're acting like a slut!* She swallowed, and another part of her brain responded. *You are not a slut! You are an almost of age witch who is finally doing what most of the other witches your age have been doing for over a year!* As she pondered, she tended to agree with that second and more logical part of her brain. Why should she keep denying herself? She turned to look at Draco who was still reading his textbook.

She looked around them nonchalantly and saw that just like a moment ago, there was no one around them or paying them any mind. A thought came to her and she went with it. She dropped her quill and leaned down to pick it up, pausing for a second before throwing caution to the wind and dropping under the table.

She noticed Draco jerk in surprise and then he stilled. She spread his legs and crawled up between them. She noticed the growing bulge in his trousers as she ran her hands from his knees to his thighs. She cautiously and shyly began to unsnap his pants but was having difficulty. Suddenly Draco's hands came down in front of her and unsnapped and quickly unzipped his pants. He maneuvered his hard member so it sprang from the confines of his clothing. His hands then disappeared back to the top of the table as Hermione took him in her mouth and began to suck him. She moved her hands and her mouth up and down him, willing for this to all be over quickly as she was becoming worried about being caught. It was when one of her hands starting playing with his balls that she felt his cock harden a touch more before her mouth was suddenly receiving spurts of hot fluid. He had reached under the table, holding her head still as he pumped his hips slightly, emptying the last of his load down her throat. She had no choice but to swallow the offensive liquid and found it didn't taste quite as bad as she thought it would.

She started to crawl backwards, away from him and she noticed his hands quickly tuck his now soft member back into his pants before quickly re-zipping and re-snapping them.

Hermione slowly and cautiously climbed out from under the table and pulled herself into the chair next to him. She let out a breath and a sigh of relief at having gotten away with it before she turned to him and saw the smile on his face.

He leaned into her and kissed her cheek and then whispered. "I thought I should hold your head on me so that we didn't make a mess like earlier. I would have hated to ruin your sweater."

She nodded and smiled back at him.

"That was amazing", he added. He then looked at his watch. "It's almost eight. We need to get back before curfew."

They gathered up their books and headed towards the library exit. Fortunately for both of them, there were a couple other Slytherins and Gryffindors leaving at the same time so they were each able to head back to their respective common rooms with others.

Thirty minutes later, Hermione was in Ginny's dorm. "Just do it now, Ginny. It's after Eight o'clock. Tell him you were messing with the Sneak-O-Scope and the minute you heard the recording, you knew you needed to bring it to him right away. Explain that it was obvious the authorities had missed the last part with Professor Snape."

"You make it sound so simple." Ginny was pouting but when she saw the determined look on Hermione's face. She sighed. "Okay, I'm going, I'm going.-"

Ginny grabbed her backpack and tossed the recording device into it and dashed out of the dorm. For authenticity sake, she ran down the steps and through the common room quickly like she was truly in a mad rush. Once through the portrait and into the corridors, she sprinted as fast as she could towards the Headmasters tower.

When she reached the gargoyle, she froze. She stared at the gargoyle and started sprouting off names of candies as quickly as

they came to mind. "Lemon drop. Bertie Botts Every Flavor beans. Acid Pops. Cockroach clusters. Choco.." She didn't get to finish the last type of candy because the gargoyle moved and Professor Dumbledore appeared in front of her.

He smiled down at her, his blue eyes twinkling. "Miss Weasley. I was just leaving for a staff meeting, but it would appear, judging by the desperate look on your face that you are in need of my assistance?"

"Yes, Professor...please." She looked around to make sure no one was coming. The twinkle in his eye dulled as he recognized the seriousness of her demeanor and slight fear in her behavior.

"Come, Miss Weasley." He gestured up the stairs and she dashed up to his office.

He entered behind her and indicated for her to sit. He walked around his desk and sat, looking at her with concern. "I'm all yours, Miss Weasley," he offered as he gestured to the candy dish full of lemon drops.

Ginny shook her head, denying the desire for a lemon drop. "Professor, I... I just discovered something and ran up here immediately. I should have grabbed a hall buddy, I was in such a rush, I just didn't pause to think."

Professor Dumbledore leaned forward over his desk, his fingertips steepled as he looked at her.

Ginny quickly looked away, knowing his skill at legilimency and not wanting him to figure out her scheme. "Sir, I was cleaning out my bag and I pulled out the Sneak-O-Scope that was returned to me. I was waving my wand over it, practicing making it record and play and then tossed it aside as I finished going through my bag." Her words had come out quickly in her nervousness and her mouth became very dry.

"I, I heard...Sir, the Aurors. I don't think they heard the entire recording from that night...or, at least, they didn't erase all of it." She swallowed again as she placed the device on his desk.

He looked at the scope and then back at her. "By all means, Miss Weasley." He gestured for her to continue.

Ginny waved her wand over the scope and said, "Canto."

There was silence and Professor Dumbledore raised his eyebrows as if questioning her. She responded, "It will be a couple of minutes before it plays. The Aurors erased what would be playing now."

Professor Dumbledore nodded at her and looked at the scope. Snape's voice could suddenly be heard. "If you tell anyone, Blaise, and I do mean anyone at all, I will polyjuice your mother into a captured muggle, give her the lust potion and set her loose at the Dark Lord's next revel. She won't survive the night. Don't think I won't! Not a word! You take the blame for this and I had nothing to do with it. Am I clear?"

Blaise could be heard responding, his voice shaky. "Yes, sir. Crystal."

"No one would believe you over me. No one!" Snape's threatening tone added.

Dumbledore's voice could then be heard. "Severus, what is going on in here? Miss Granger and Miss Weasley came and... oh, boys. How could you! Severus get a blanket for Trixie. Cover the poor girl. Miss Weasley, Miss Granger, please get Professor McGonagall and tell her to contact the Authorities. A student has been raped."

When the recording stopped, Ginny watched as the elderly Professor in front of her leaned back in his chair. His lips pursed and his eyes closed as he let out a heavy sigh. He opened his tired orbs and looked at Ginny. "Who else heard this recording, Miss Weasley?"

Ginny shook her head, her mouth now dry as sawdust as she lied to the Headmaster. "No one, Sir. I ran to you the minute I heard it."

Professor Dumbledore watched her for a few seconds and then stood. He walked to his large picture window and looked out over the Hogwarts grounds, clearly in deep thought.

After a moment he turned back to her. "I need to speak with Professor Snape. He very likely has an explanation for this." He paused and looked at her. "It is unfortunate..."

"Miss Weasley, are you alright?" Ginny blinked as she found Professor Dumbledore was leaning over her.

She looked up at the Headmaster, confused. "Sir, what am I doing?" She looked around the room, becoming agitated.

Professor Dumbledore smiled down at her. "I apologize Miss Weasley, but I just obliviated you. You came to me with some information you recently obtained, which I am beyond thankful for. However, it was dangerous for you to retain this information and for your safety, I obliviated you."

He sat on top of his desk, in front of her, his face expressing kindness and concern. "I want you to know you have not been attacked, and you have come to no harm. I merely erased about 30 minutes of your memory. I am admitting this to you, because I don't want you to go back to your dorm feeling off and having lost a chunk of time, thereby coming to the wrong conclusion that you were attacked. No harm came to you." He paused and walked to a side table where he poured her a glass of water.

He handed her the glass and she drank the water greedily as her mouth was very dry. She handed him the empty glass and stood. "Thank you, Professor."

He studied her closely. "Are you alright, Miss Weasley?"

She gave him a small smile. She understood perfectly what had happened and she was eager to get back to Hermione. "I'm fine, Sir. I understand and thank you."

He smiled down at her, the twinkle returning to his eyes. "I shall escort you back to Gryffindor, Miss Weasley."

She nodded. "Thank you, Sir."

Chapter 25

Reposted 10/9/19. No Beta for this chapter.

Monday Evening

Hermione was not surprised by Ginny's news. After all, she had predicted it. "I knew it, but it irritates me all the same. And obliviation is illegal without consent. He just admitted to a crime!"

"Well, at least he had the decency to tell me he had obliviated me," Ginny responded as she collapsed onto her bed and let out a yawn. "Besides, he's Albus Dumbledore. Being the headmaster, I'm sure he's allowed leniency when it comes to protecting the school. At least that's what he'd say he was doing."

"Hmph, well, we'll see about that," Hermione responded as she looked out the window at the night sky. Lost in her thoughts, it was a couple minutes later when she peeked back at Ginny to see the redhead was barely able to keep her eyes open. It was late. Nothing would get solved tonight. "Get some sleep, Gin. We'll make a plan tomorrow."

When Hermione got to her room she quickly changed and climbed into bed. Her mind was spinning, deliberating the next course of action. She was certain professor Dumbledore would be keeping a close eye on Ginny going forward, which really wasn't a big change as he always watched the students closely whom Harry associated with.

She rolled on her side and Crookshanks jumped up next to her, curling up behind her knees. Her mind wandered to her boyfriend. Hermione couldn't help the small smile that crept over her mouth. Who'd have ever thought it? Draco Malfoy...her first real boyfriend. She felt like it was a right of passage to be celebrated and that she

should be able to share it with her with her friends. Unfortunately, none of them trusted Draco. Not even Ginny, for that matter. Until whomever was still attacking witches was caught, Draco would be under suspicion. She had to admit, even if to no one other than herself, that despite all her assurances otherwise, there still existed the small possibility that Draco was guilty. She shuddered at the thought. She didn't want to believe it. Her heart screamed that it was impossible.

Tuesday morning, Ginny walked Hermione to her morning appointment with Madam Pomfrey and studied while her friend performed her memory exercises.

The mediwitch offered her charge reassurance. "You are already improving, Hermione. Even though we just started, I have seen vast improvement since our first session a few days ago. I have every reason to believe you won't suffer any permanent obliviation damage."

Hermione let out a breath of relief. "Thank you, Madam Pomfrey. I'm feeling more like myself every day." And she was. It was slow coming, but she could feel her focus sharpening with each day. "Thank you so much for helping me," she added as she noticed how worn and tired the mediwitch was looking. All these girls being attacked was taking its toll on the healer.

"It's what I do, Hermione. It's my pleasure and reward to see you get better."

Hermione offered her a small smile as she gathered her things and walked over to Ginny. "You ready for breakfast?"

As they walked, the mother hen within Hermione became concerned. "How are you feeling this morning? No headaches or fuzziness? Did you feel like you were able to concentrate when you were studying just now?" Hermione didn't suspect Ginny had been obliviated enough to have any lingering effects like she had experienced, but

she did feel concerned and rather guilty for sending the redhead to Dumbledore the night before.

"I'm fine, 'Mione. Stop worrying," Ginny dismissively responded. "I feel absolutely normal." When they walked into the Great Hall, Harry, Ron and Lavender were already halfway through their breakfast. Hermione looked to her right and spotted Draco's eyes on her. He smiled and gave her a small wave which she returned before following Ginny to their friends. She was anxious to see if Professor Snape would appear at breakfast. She wondered if Dumbledore had confronted him about what he heard on the Sneak-O-Scope recording and if anything would come of it.

She watched the head table as she spread butter and marmalade on her toast. So far, neither Dumbledore nor Snape had made an appearance.

While she had originally planned to turn the extra recording over to the Aurors, she realized now that it would complicate things. Dumbledore would know Ginny had lied to him and would probably suspect that Hermione and Harry were in on it as well. Hermione didn't want to do anything that would cause a strain between Harry and Dumbledore. In the grand scheme of things, Harry's defeat of Voldemort was the most important task at hand.

She stared into her eggs as her mind wandered to what Draco had said in Hogsmeade. What if it was true? What if Harry had raped a student? What if he had raped several students and had taken their knickers? She sighed heavily before immediately feeling guilty. Harry just wouldn't do that! It was ridiculous and a betrayal of their friendship to even consider it. And clearly the Aurors didn't find him capable of anything sinister either as they had believed him completely when he had said the panties had just appeared in his bag. No. Now that her ability to think clearly was coming back to her, she knew without question that Harry was innocent.

She took a bite of egg as she continued to ponder. No, more than likely it was just Blaise and Professor Snape. Hermione paused mid

chew feeling sick with the possibility there could be others. Like maybe... Draco. She had to admit it was more likely Draco would be involved in such a scheme with Snape and Blaise than perhaps anyone else. She swallowed the bitter thought. No, she trusted Draco. He wouldn't do that to her.

Hermione arrived to Ancient Runes to find Draco had saved her a seat. He greeted her with a grin and when she sat down, he took her hand. "So, you want to meet up in the library after dinner tonight? We can get some studying done before curfew," he added in a hopeful tone.

Perfect. Her mind raced with the plan she and Ginny had discussed. She put the plan in motion. "Sure. But I'll actually be staying in the library past curfew tonight." He got a questioning look on his face and she continued. "It's for Muggle Studies. I have a paper due and I need to use a book that can't be checked out. Ginny will stay with me." Hermione then lowered her voice and continued. "At least, that's what we told McGonagall. Ginny's actually going to be with Harry. But I'll be fine by myself."

Draco just nodded at her, his mind spinning with the possibilities. It would be the perfect opportunity to poison her. No one would be in the library after curfew. He could lure her into a classroom. While he was enjoying Hermione's blow jobs, he was missing Princess and he was really missing fucking her. But he had something else he had intended to do after curfew, so he would have to think about it.

Hermione had a hard time paying attention in class as she thought about what would happen tonight. She had planted the seed. Would Draco try to rape her? Was she wrong about him? Her heart said no, but her logic wasn't convinced. Only hopeful.

The rest of the day went quickly and before they knew it, they were back in the Great Hall for dinner. Hermione could feel eyes on her and turned just as Draco approached. He had just opened his mouth to say something when he tripped and fell into the table between Ginny and Harry, although more on Harry than on Ginny.

"Watch it!" Harry declared angrily as the blond grabbed Harry's shoulder, using it as leverage to lift himself.

Draco looked apologetic. "So sorry. Accident." He lifted his hands off the Gryffindor and held them up in apology. "Sorry."

He turned to Hermione, his face flushed with embarrassment at having slipped.

She gave him a warm, reassuring smile as he explained his arrival. "Was thinking of heading to the library and thought maybe you were ready to go as well?" He asked, simply.

No one around them said anything as they suddenly seemed very interested in their plates. "Uh, yeah. Sure. I just finished eating. Let's go." She spun around on the bench and grabbed her book bag, giving a small wave and smile to her fellow Gryffindors. "See you later."

They responded in kind and as she started to walk away from the table, she couldn't miss the look of disgust on Harry's face. Why couldn't anything ever be simple?

Draco grabbed her hand as they walked to their destination. "I think we might be making headway on our potion. I stopped by to check the cauldrons on my way to dinner. The second one isn't doing much, but the first one is developing a pearly sheen." He looked at her excitedly. "I think we might be able to test it soon."

Hermione couldn't help her excitement. "Really? Already? That's great!" It was going to be such an achievement!

He added, "Well, I'm sure we'll have to make adjustments. It would be a miracle if we have it not only finished but perfected so early in the process."

She agreed. "Still, even having a potion already at a testing phase is quite an accomplishment." She squeezed his hand.

They walked back to their favorite table and spread out their things.

After a few minutes of studying, Draco's hand landed on Hermione's knee, giving it a squeeze before starting to move up her thigh.

She pushed his hand away and turned to him, saying softly but adamantly, "Draco, I really have too much to do tonight. I need to focus. I'm sorry."

"No problem, Princess." His was smiling but the way he said 'Princess' bothered her. She had not forgotten her dream and for some reason whenever he called her that, it made her feel slightly shaky and ill.

She and Ginny had discussed the importance of not giving in to his advances tonight. It was important he was left wanting more when he left her in the library at curfew. He would be more likely to attack her if he wasn't already sexually sated.

Before long, it was seven forty-five and curfew was just about upon them. "I guess I should go." Draco said hesitantly. "I really don't like you being left here all alone," He added, his face crinkled with worry lines on his forehead.

"I'll be fine. Ginny will be here soon and will stay for a little while before running off with Harry." She responded confidently and reassuringly.

He stood, gathering his things, his look of concern not going away.

She smiled up at him warmly and placed her hand over his. "Hey, I'll be fine."

He looked down into her beautiful fawn eyes and leaned down to kiss her goodbye. Just as he pulled back, Ginny arrived, out of breath.

He nodded in greeting to the new arrival and winked at Hermione as he sauntered off. There was a small group of Slytherins who were waiting for him to head back to the Slytherin common room.

Ginny sat down, and said quickly and quietly, "I don't have the cloak! I can't find Harry and the cloak is gone as well. I don't know where he is." Her voice was strained and mildly panicked.

Hermione thought for a minute. "Well, it is his cloak. And, it's not unreasonable for him to use it." She sighed, "it's just unfortunate he's using it tonight as it means we can't carry out our plan." She looked at her friend. "We need to decide if we are taking the recording to Tonks or not."

Hermione shared her concerns with Ginny and confessed she no longer believed Harry a suspect. Now that her concentration was improving, and her mind was clearing, she knew more than ever that Harry was innocent. She was disappointed in herself for ever doubting him. But, in fairness, she had been through a lot the past couple months and had been raped. She couldn't fault herself too heavily for her doubts, especially given the evidence and her lack of ability to think straight. However, she did still believe Harry had anger management issues and that he had hit Draco on Saturday.

After more discussion, the two witches agreed they would go ahead and share all their intel with Harry. They decided they wanted Harry's opinion on the next course of action because Snape being arrested would definitely be a blow to the Order and the ability to defeat Voldemort. Unless, of course, the professor was actually a spy against the light. Hermione would have never questioned his loyalties before, but now she didn't know what to believe about him. Harry certainly didn't trust the man. He never had. Perhaps Harry would agree with Dumbledore and feel it was too risky to turn in the evidence against Snape.

But what if he attacked another student? No. That was unlikely. Hermione had enough faith in Dumbledore to believe he had already addressed it. There was no question the headmaster would protect

the students. He would not let the Potion's Professor attack again. Of that, Hermione was quite sure. So going to the Headmaster had not been a complete waste. Regardless, Hermione wanted the man to pay for what he had done. Severus Snape had not only attacked her, but he had gained her trust and confidence. He had completely manipulated her. She hated him.

Draco left the witches behind, his plan hopefully working perfectly. When he got back to Slytherin, he changed into his black shirt and trousers and dissolutioned himself. He had slipped the note into Harry's pocket during his pretend trip and fall. Now, he would find out if Harry would show or not. Draco stuck to the shadows and made his way out of the castle and to the quidditch pitch building. He walked in and was happy to find Harry already there, waiting for him. Draco didn't hesitate. "Petrificus totalis" spilled from his lips as he pointed his wand at the Gryffindor.

Harry immediately lifted his wand to counter an "expelliarmus", but it was too late.

Draco shook his head as he chuckled. "You make this too easy, Potter." He walked over to Harry and reached into the Gryffindor's pocket, finding a piece of parchment. The Marauder's Map. Draco looked at the parchment and his face lit up when he saw what it was. "What is this? I can see where everyone in the castle is. Well, this will come in very handy." He tucked the parchment into his own pocket.

Draco reached in Harry's pocket again and found the note asking him to meet him so that they could discuss Hermione and hopefully come to a truce. Draco burned the note with a flick of his wand. "We don't need evidence that I requested your presence tonight, Potter." Draco sat back and studied the frozen Gryffindor. "Did you tell anyone you were meeting me?" Of course, Harry couldn't answer. "No, I doubt you did." He pulled the map back out and confirmed there was no one around them. It was after curfew and everyone was in their common rooms and dorms. Tucking the map back in his

pocket, he smirked cruelly as he said, "I'll just need your wand and some of your hair."

After taking what he needed, Draco pulled the larger black flask out of his pocket and dropped two strands of hair into the liquid. He then pulled a smaller silver flask and put one of Harry's hairs in that one. He put the silver flask in his pocket. He waited the required two minutes and then sipped the potion out of the black flask, cringing as his body morphed into that of the Gryffindor. "You taste disgusting, Potter." After a minute, the transformation was complete. "So, I'll be back in a bit, Potter. Don't go anywhere," he taunted before casting another Petrificus Totalis on his victim for good measure - with Harry's own wand this time. "I like your wand, Potter. It seems to like me too." He grinned evilly at the frozen Gryffindor and took his glasses and slipped them on. "Ah, much better." He then pulled Harry's stiff form to a closet, pushing him in and shutting the door.

Draco grabbed Harry's invisibility cloak, pulled out the map and thought about who the victim would be. Romilda Vane was walking out of Gryffindor tower alone. Perfect.

Draco threw the cloak over his head and dashed to the castle. Once inside, he rechecked the map. Hermione and Ginny were leaving the library and Romilda was heading his way. He ran up a flight of steps and hid in an alcove. He heard Romilda coming and cast a silencing charm with Harry's wand as he grabbed her and pulled her into a classroom. Her scream was muffled. He pulled off the cloak and stepped back from her.

Her look became confused. "Harry! What are you doing? Why did you grab me?"

He smiled at her, suggestively.

She turned pink. "Harry, what is this?"

He knew his voice wouldn't sound like Harry's so he tried to speak as little as possible. "I want to fuck you."

Her face became alarmed. "What?"

"I've wanted you for ages, and you're next on my list." He stepped towards her and grabbed her before taking the little silver flask out of his pocket and prying her mouth open, dropping some of the solution on her tongue. He had added Harry's hair to the lust potion so that whoever drank it would lust after him or in this case, Draco polyjuiced as him.

As usual the response was immediate. He was curious what she looked like under her robes. She was all over him. He had her undress and fondled her a bit, but just didn't feel the desire to fuck her. She wasn't Princess. But he wasn't there for his own satisfaction. He was there to frame Potter. So, he had to do what he had to do.

He stroked himself and was shocked to find Potter was quite endowed. He wondered if it would feel different fucking a witch as someone else. He had Romilda suck him for a couple minutes and then bent her over a desk and fucked her from behind. It felt good, he had to admit. It was quite a rush fucking this witch as Potter. Although, he would rather be fucking his Princess.

When he was finished, using Harry's wand, he cast a contraception charm but not a cleansing charm. He took her panties and then had her dress. He gave her the antidote and next, with Harry's wand, he cast an obliviation charm, but he didn't do it properly, not wanting it to work completely. He wanted her to remember being grabbed, remember being forced to take the lust potion, remember giving him head and remember at least part of him fucking her. As she was recovering he gave her a minute before throwing the cloak back on, hoping she was alert enough to catch a glimpse of him. Then, as soon as he was under the cloak, he ran out of the castle.

Adrenaline was coursing through him as he dashed back to the quidditch building under the cloak. He pulled Harry out of the closet, putting the panties in Harry's bag. Then he put the Marauders map back in Harry's pocket as well as the silver flask with the lust potion.

He then disillusioned himself and cast a hover charm on Harry after tossing the invisibility cloak over him. He guided Harry back to the castle and took him inside through one of the hidden entrances.

Once they were closer to the main hub of the castle, Draco pulled out his own wand and reversed the *perfidius totalis* spell. Before Harry had a chance to react, Draco used Harry's wand to cast an obliviation charm on the Gryffindor. As Harry stood there, dazed from the spell, Draco tucked Harry's wand back in the Gryffindors pocket and then ducked into the shadows, still disillusioned.

If all went according to plan, Harry would remember nothing but would have the potion, the panties, a wand that would show he cast the spells on Romilda and Romilda would remember most of Harry raping her. By morning, Harry would be in Azkaban.

Chapter 26

No beta for this chapter, Reposted 11/19/2019

Late Tuesday Night

Hermione had just fallen asleep when she was awakened by loud voices and commotion coming from outside her room. She and Lavender looked at each other with curious expressions as they threw on their robes and slippers. Parvati was still asleep. That witch could sleep through anything. The two girls dashed down to the common room and were stunned to muteness at what they found. Harry was being taken away by Aurors. His arms were bound behind him and his wand had been taken away. He looked like he had just woke up and seemed baffled at his predicament. Dumbledore looked shaken and was arguing with the Aurors that there was clearly a mistake. He demanded the men allow him to make a simple Floo call to clear up the obvious confusion. Professor McGonagall was almost in tears. But the authorities were indifferent to the pleas and emotional displays around them. They had their orders and would bring the young wizard in to custody.

Spotting a flabbergasted Ron, Lavender ran to his side. Ron tried to reassure his friend, his voice breaking as he proclaimed "Harry, we'll get this straight. Whatever this is, we all know you're innocent."

Hermione remained speechless as her mind spun with possible reasons this could be happening. Ginny suddenly arrived at her side and threw her hand over her mouth in shock as she gasped, "Harry! What?"

Regaining her ability to speak, Hermione broke from Ginny and ran up to her best friend, just before the Aurors pulled him through the portrait. His panicked green eyes met hers. "Harry," was all she managed to say before he was gone.

She turned back to the room. "Professor, what happened?" She asked the Headmaster.

He hesitated and looked around the room. Only Harry's dorm mates, herself, Ginny and Lavender were present. He looked at McGonagall who nodded at him. His voice was tired. Defeated. "He's been accused of attacking a witch."

"What?" Hermione choked out in shock, a feeling of dread washing over her. "I..I don't believe it!"

He shook his head. "Neither do I, Miss Granger. Neither do I." With that, he swept out of the common room.

The Gryffindors all stared at the portrait door after Dumbledore left. Ginny turned to their head of house. "Professor, please! Tell us what happened."

Professor McGonagall looked at their dumbstruck faces. She sighed heavily. "All I can tell you is there is evidence against him -significant evidence - that he attacked and raped a student tonight. They are taking him to the Ministry for preliminary questioning and, unless he tells them something that makes them change their minds, he'll be taken to Azkaban where he will stay until the Aurors finish their investigation and either release him or charge him."

Ginny seemed to lose the will the fight gravity and dropped onto the sofa, silent tears falling down her cheeks. Hermione and Ron approached and sat on either side of the distraught witch, Ron holding her hand and Hermione rubbing her back.

Professor McGonagall straightened up and said resolutely, "Miss Weasley, I do not for one minute think Mr. Potter is guilty of these charges. Professor Dumbledore will get to the bottom of this. Mark my words." She then said in a softer tone, "Try to get some sleep. Tomorrow will be...well, it won't be easy dealing with the backlash as this gets out." With that she turned and left Gryffindor tower.

Hermione wanted to speak with Ron and Ginny alone. "Um guys? Do you mind giving me some time with Ginny?" She looked around at Neville, Seamus, and Dean. The boys nodded and started up the stairs, talking amongst themselves. Hermione spoke to their retreating backs. "Don't say anything about this to anyone. Not until Dumbledore or someone else makes it public knowledge." The three of them turned back to her and nodded.

Hermione grabbed Ron's hand when he started to stand. "Ron, you stay." Lavender looked put out, so Hermione smiled softly at her. "You can stay as well, Lavender. I don't mean to exclude you."

Ron smiled softly at Hermione, clearly appreciating the gesture toward his girlfriend. Lavender walked around the sofa and sat on the other side of Ron.

Hermione looked them each in the eye. "Listen, we all love Harry. And I find it very hard to believe he would attack or rape anyone. It goes against everything I know about him... but there was a witness who saw him obliviate a female student after walking out of a classroom with her a couple weeks ago. It was late. After curfew. The witch later found out she was no longer a virgin."

"Hermione, this is Harry!" Ron exclaimed.

"Ron, I know! Just hear me out." She took a calming breath and continued. "The witness didn't come forward because he wouldn't do so without the witch's consent, and the witness didn't think he would be believed anyway because it was Harry Potter." She leaned back on the sofa and rubbed her eyes. "So this attack isn't the first I've heard against him and he did have all those knickers in his bag."

Ron looked at Hermione with disgust. "I can't believe you, Hermione. How could you even think he could be guilty."

Hermione responded defensively. "I don't want it to be true, Ron! I don't want to think it's even possible! But the truth is, it is! However, it's also very likely he's been framed, and frankly that's where I'm

leaning. I have to believe in him because he's my friend and I love him and would want him to believe me and fight for me if the tables were turned."

Ginny nodded at Hermione. "We need to know what evidence they have against him and who was attacked."

Hermione stared into the fire. "McGonagall is right. Dumbledore will not let this go. He believes in Harry and will fight for him. We need to assist Dumbledore. We need to ask him what we can do to help."

Hermione turned to Ginny. "That means we can't do anything that would make Dumbledore not trust us." Ginny looked at Hermione in understanding. They would not be telling the Aurors about the recording of Snape, at least not until the mess with Harry was cleared up.

Ron looked at Hermione, confused by her comment. "Why would we do anything that would make Dumbledore not trust us?"

Hermione just shrugged and replied, "Good. We're all on the same page."

Lavender stood, pulling Ron up with her. "C'mon. We all need to get to bed. Tomorrow we'll focus on this, but we'll be no help to Harry if we are too tired to think straight."

Ginny shook her head. "I'll never get to sleep."

"Well, we have to try." Hermione stood and held her hand out to Ginny, pulling her up.

Wednesday morning the quartet walked into the Great Hall, not knowing what to expect. Would there be another big announcement? Would classes be cancelled again? They were surprised to find nothing out of the ordinary. Professor Dumbledore was jovially smiling and laughing with the professors at the Head Table.

Hermione felt anger rise at the sight of Professor Snape sitting amongst them.

"Okay, something isn't right. Why is Dumbledore acting like nothing has happened?" Ron whispered to Hermione. Everyone at the Gryffindor table was looking normal and Seamus, Neville and Dean were just talking quietly amongst themselves and eating. It seemed everything was just like any other morning.

"I don't know, Ron. It's odd Dumbledore is behaving this way and hasn't made an announcement." Just then Dumbledore stood and started to walk out of the Great Hall, cutting a glance at Ron, and then her as well, as he left.

Hermione turned to Ron. "C'mon Ron."

Ron looked at her confused. "I haven't eaten yet!"

"Ron, come on! You can eat later!" Hermione demanded, impatiently.

Ginny stood, "I'm going with you."

Lavender started to stand, and then stopped, admitting to herself it was not her place to be overly involved. "You guys go on. Let me know what I can do."

Hermione smiled at her. "We'll fill you in, later. See you soon." She took Ron's hand and led him and Ginny out of the Great Hall.

Draco was glued to the events unfolding at the Gryffindor table. He was perturbed his witch hadn't even glanced his direction in the Great Hall, but he also noticed Potter was nowhere to be seen. Perhaps Hermione was too distracted by events unfolding. He grinned internally. Potter had clearly been arrested. He looked up at the Head Table and was confused by Dumbledore and McGonagall's demeanors. He thought for sure they would both be crying in their porridge over the arrest of "the chosen one." It didn't make sense

that they were so unbothered. He watched Dumbledore stride merrily out of the Great Hall.

He looked back at the Gryffindor table and felt his anger start to rise at the sight of Hermione holding Ron's hand as they walked out of the Great Hall! What the fuck! He had just gotten rid of Harry. Was he going to have to deal with Ron as well?

"I don't understand. Where are we going?" Ron asked. Hermione was walking fast and pulling him behind her.

She replied impatiently. "To see Dumbledore. Didn't you see the look he gave us?"

Ron was clearly confused. Hermione rolled her eyes. "Just come on," she said with a huff.

When they arrived at the Headmaster's tower, the stairs appeared for them right away. They didn't have to provide a password.

Dumbledore was sitting at his desk as they walked in. Three chairs were already placed in front of Dumbledore's desk. He gestured for them to sit.

Ginny couldn't wait. "Professor, please! What's going on? Where is Harry?"

Dumbledore looked grave. "He is at the ministry, being held in the Auror office. I was able to convince them it would be very unsafe for Harry in Azkaban given Voldemort's possible dealings with the dementors."

Ginny's voice was shaky. "Professor, I know he didn't attack anyone! I just know it!"

Dumbledore looked at her, sadly. "Unfortunately, Miss Weasley, neither yours, mine, or anyone else's belief in Harry is enough to get him out of this mess."

Hermione cut to the heart of the meeting. "What can we do, Professor? Whatever you need, we'll help."

He smiled at her. "Well, firstly...Did any of you see Harry last evening between seven o'clock and half past eight?"

The three Gryffindors looked at each other and then back at the Professor. Hermione shook her head. "No, sir."

Dumbledore leaned back in his chair. "Mr. Weasley, where were you last evening during that time frame?"

Ron's ears turned pink. "I was with Lavender." He paused and then mumbled quickly. "In the Room of Requirement." Hermione and Ginny both glanced at him, realizing what he and Lavender had probably been doing.

Professor Dumbledore wasn't fazed. He thought for a minute. "I'll need to check with Seamus, Neville and Dean. Perhaps one of them will recall him being in his dorm."

Ginny spoke up, quietly and hesitantly. "Actually, Professor, I looked for him at around quarter til seven and then again at around quarter til eight." She swallowed. "He wasn't in his room either time."

He studied her, his disappointment obvious. "I see."

He slowly met each of their eyes before confessing, "I cannot stall telling the student body much longer. The Board of Governors is being informed this morning what has happened." He continued. "It is my belief that Harry has been framed. I am hopeful that by acting normal and not giving anything away, the culprit will show his hand...perhaps out of frustration."

Ron interjected. "He was probably framed by Malfoy!"

"Why do you say that, Mr. Weasley?"

Ron shrugged, "Because he hates Harry. Because he is probably working for Voldemort to destroy Harry." He looked at Hermione. "Tell him, Hermione. Tell him what we all thought, including you, until the prat bewitched you!"

Hermione couldn't believe Ron had just said that. Her retaliatory glare made him cringe.

Professor Dumbledore stared at Hermione. "Miss Granger? Something you wish to share?"

She looked at the elderly professor before responding. "Ron, is bringing up something that I no longer believe to be true. There was a time I thought Draco had," she paused, "had attacked me."

Professor Dumbledore's jaw dropped. "Miss Granger? Were you attacked?"

She thought before answering. "Professor, are you held under the same obligation as Madam Pomfrey to not share personal information about a student without that student's consent?"

Professor Dumbledore leaned forward. "You have my word, Miss Granger. I will not share anything you tell me that is of a personal nature to anyone without your consent. Please tell me what you know. I can only help Harry if I have all the information."

Hermione contemplated for a minute. She didn't trust Dumbledore completely, but she did trust that he cared about Harry and she owed it to Harry to do anything she could to help him.

Hermione proceeded to tell Dumbledore everything. She told him she had confirmed she had been raped. She told him about her conversation with Tonks. She told him about all the times she thought she had been obliviated, including the nights she had been following Draco. She told him about working on the potion with Blaise and Draco and the several times in the room of requirement lab she had felt 'off.' She went on to clarify she thought that it was

from the lab not being cleaned properly. She also told him that Draco had passed out as well and how they had gotten Professor Snape to check out the potion after that happened. She told him about the night she thought she was attacked when leaving the library and about her possibly being obliviated in Snape's study and about the clarifying potion. She told him about Harry hitting Draco and then Harry's denying it. She reluctantly told him about her prior suspicions she had held against Draco but added that she believed him innocent. For good measure, she also shared Professor Snape's sudden friendliness and interest towards her and all the times she had confided in him. In short, she left nothing out except her knowledge of the recording of Snape on the sneak-o-scope. That, she couldn't tell him.

When she was finished, Dumbledore didn't say anything.

As Hermione ran through everything in her mind that she had just confessed, she secretly and internally, once again, started to question her faith in Draco. She knew she believed him, but she also knew there was an awful lot of circumstantial evidence against him. She was starting to get a headache.

"Miss Granger, thank you. Thank you for confiding all of this to me." He spun his chair around and looked out the window. He was facing the grounds but said, "Is there anything else you three think I should know?"

The three of them looked at each other before responding that they couldn't think of anything. Dumbledore turned his chair back towards them, but before he could speak, Ginny asked, hesitantly, "Professor, who is Harry accused of attacking?"

Dumbledore waited a second and then responded, "Romilda Vane."

Hermione asked, "Can you tell us any more, Professor? Please? We won't tell anyone outside of this room anything you tell us not to."

The professor contemplated and responded, "Since you placed your trust in me, Miss Granger, I will place my trust in the three of you." He sighed heavily and continued. "I can't tell you everything, but suffice it to say, she remembers him grabbing her and forcing potion into her mouth, she remembers being under the influence of the potion and most of the physical attack on her person. She even remembers him casting his unsuccessful obliviation charm on her before hiding under his cloak and running off." He paused before adding, "they also tested his wand with *priori incantatem* and the most recent casts of his wand had been two obliviation charms as well as spells that corroborated her story. He had her undergarment in his bag and the antidote and the lust potion in his pocket."

Hermione, Ginny and Ron all exchanged worried glances. Hermione looked questioningly at the professor. "Why would he cast two obliviation charms?"

Professor Dumbledore smiled at Hermione. "That's an excellent question and it's the reason the Aurors aren't more convinced of his guilt. It seems Harry himself was obliviated. The Aurors think he might have accidentally obliviated himself, or maybe even on purpose if he thought he was going to get caught. But there is also the possibility that someone else used his wand. Maybe someone took polyjuice to look like him and carry out this attack." He then added, "it's all being looked into."

He smiled at the three of them. "Now, I have told you much more than I should have and the Aurors will not be pleased."

"We won't say a word, Professor." Ron declared. "Please tell us anything we can do to help."

Professor Dumbledore smiled. "Continue believing in and supporting your friend. He'll need you now more than ever. Also, keep your eyes and ears open." He looked at Hermione. "Miss Granger, if you remember anything else, please come to me. I'm going to look into Mr. Malfoy. What you have shared is worth exploring. I know you and

he have become...close and I know you trust him. But all possibilities need to be explored."

She smiled back at him. "Yes, of course, Professor." Hermione actually felt relieved she had confided in Dumbledore. He would find out if Draco was involved in any of this and she could stop secretly doubting him. Dumbledore would also do everything possible to help Harry. She might not agree with his handling of Snape, but right now she needed to trust him, so trust him she would.

Chapter 27

Wednesday Morning

By the time Hermione, Ron and Ginny left Dumbledore's office, classes were underway and they had missed most of first period. Physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted - and realizing there was no point in going to class so late - they headed back to their common room. The room was blessedly empty and they fell onto the large sofa. No one said anything, each lost in their own thoughts.

She had just closed her eyes when Ron spoke. "Hermione, I know Malfoy is responsible for this. It makes the most sense." His words were spoken in a low and deliberate voice but his tone was pleading.

Hermione didn't become defensive, but spoke simple true words, "Dumbledore is on it now. He'll find out the truth."

No one said anything leaving her to swim in the truth of what she had just said. An uneasiness settled into her gut. She had no doubt the Headmaster would do whatever was needed to protect Harry, but how far would he take that? Would he let someone else take the fall if he found that Harry really was guilty? Was Draco going to be treated fairly by Dumbledore? She didn't like her own answers to those ponderings. The man had obliviated Ginny to keep the truth about Snape from getting out. There was no telling how far he would go to protect Harry.

Suddenly, she was doubting herself for confiding in the old, powerful wizard. She sighed internally realizing there was nothing she could do about it now. She had already told him everything and had to hope Dumbledore would not only find out the truth but see to it that the guilty party was punished, no matter who it was. The problem was, she really didn't believe either Harry or Draco would attack anyone. So, who was it then? Snape? Perhaps someone who had

never entered her mind? Her head was really starting to pound as she thought about it.

Thirty minutes later Ron and Hermione walked into the potions classroom. Draco's eyes were on her the minute they entered. He offered a soft smile and held out her chair for her.

She mouthed "thank you," and gave him a tired smile as she took her seat.

"I was surprised I didn't see you in History of Magic this morning. Everything, okay?" he whispered.

She hated lying to him, or keeping secrets, but she had no choice. "Yeah, just had a headache and didn't feel I could stand listening to Professor Binns droning on and on this morning." She rolled her eyes.

He gave her a surprised look. "Since when do you complain about a teacher?!" His eyes narrowed slightly. "You sure you're okay?"

Hermione was tired and cranky and overwhelmed by everything happening, not the least of which was concern over her boyfriend who might or might not have raped her. Her response was short and had a tone of irritation. "I'm fine, Draco."

Draco's face fell, and he seemed to shrink beside her, making her feel guilty. She turned to him and took his hand. "I'm sorry. I just don't feel very well, that's all." She sighed, "I've got this headache and I'm tired and..." She froze and her eyes grew wide. Panic coursed through her and the room started to spin. Trying to maintain control, she cradled her head in her hands.

Draco wrapped his arm around her, concern etched into the planes of his face. "Hey...seriously. You are not ok! Do you need to see Madam Pomfrey?"

"Yeah, I think I do." She responded with a dazed look.

Draco dashed up to Snape and whispered something before rushing back to her side. He hastily repacked her potion's book and slung her bag over his shoulder before taking her hand and leading her out of the classroom.

Neither noticed the concerned look on Ron's face as he watched Hermione leave with the Slytherin. The simple truth was that Ron Weasley was fed up. His best friend was accused of raping a witch and his other best friend was dating the actual rapist. He knew it was time he did something, and his mind started to reel as he contemplated courses of action.

Draco eyed Hermione warily as they made their way down the corridor. "Are you okay to walk?" She really looked pale and Draco was wondering if he should simply levitate her the rest of the way.

"Yes, I'm okay," she replied with a shaky and distant voice. Draco could tell by looking at her that her response was far from the truth. He felt his own panic rising within himself at the thought that something could really be wrong with her.

He wrapped his arm around her and held her close as he led her to the infirmary. She leaned in to him, relishing the comfort he was offering. She felt safe when he was protective of her like this. She breathed in his scent and told herself it was all going to be alright. She was wrong. She had to be.

Madam Pomfrey rushed up to her as soon as they came through the door. She was surprised to see Draco holding the Gryffindor so close. "Mr. Malfoy, I've got her. You can let go."

Draco hesitantly dropped his arm. Hermione peeked up into his nervous and worried eyes. She smiled reassuringly at him. "I'll be fine now. Thank you. I'll find you later, alright?"

He nodded and watched as Madam Pomfrey led Hermione to a cot and pulled the curtain.

"I was surprised you didn't show up for your concentration exercises this morning," the medi-witch said as she assisted Hermione onto the cot. It was not said in an accusatory way. It was more like she was thinking out loud. "That's it. Lay back and tell me what's wrong. You haven't had another spell of confusion or loss of time, have you?" She added with an edge of concern.

Hermione had completely forgotten to come that morning with everything that had been going on. It was all too much, and she couldn't help the tears that started streaming down her face.

Madam Pomfrey conjured a box of tissues. "Dear child, what's wrong?"

Hermione took one and dabbed her eyes. She looked up into the kind face of the medi-witch. "I think...I think I might be pregnant!"

Draco had not left but had quietly sat in a chair in the corner. He inched the chair closer to the curtain, wanting to hear what was being said. He wasn't leaving until he knew for a fact she was okay. But when he heard what Hermione said, panic bubbled up inside of him like a volcano about to erupt. He stood and quickly dashed out of the infirmary and hurriedly made his way through the castle and down to the dungeons.

He went to his dorm and began to pace. "Calm down", he whispered to himself. His mind spun. She can't be pregnant. You were diligent and used the contraception charm every time. There's no way she's conceived.

He sat on the side of bed as his mind started to explore other possibilities. Had his witch lied to him? Had she been sleeping with someone else? He found that very unlikely. She had only recently found out she wasn't a virgin. However, a small and unwelcome voice pointed out that maybe once she found out she had been attacked, she slept with someone else? Willingly? Maybe it was an act of retaliation against her circumstances. An attempt to regain

some control. He had read that victims sometimes acted out like that.

He absently stood back up and resumed pacing. Visions of her with another man caused his heart to race. A rage, deep in his belly, began to simmer. Who would she have fucked? Harry? Ron? Both of them? He slammed his fist onto his desk. That fucking slut! Another voice echoed in the back of his mind. This one, a voice of reason, told him he was jumping to conclusions. He welcomed the thought. But only seconds later, more visions of a naked Hermione, willingly fucking another wizard, danced across his vision. If she was pregnant, it wasn't from him. It didn't take long for him to be convinced. He was livid.

Madam Pomfrey performed the diagnostic spell and then smiled at Hermione. "My dear. You are not pregnant." She sat down next to Hermione. "Stress. Stress will cause periods to become irregular. And potions can have side effects. If you were given a... Well, nevermind. You understand."

Hermione felt relief flush through her like she had never felt. "I was so sure. It just hit me in class. I've been so tired, and I've had a headache all day. And then...then I remembered that I hadn't had a period in almost six weeks!" She stared up at the ceiling and let out a slow breath of relief. "I was so sure!"

She turned and smiled at the medi-witch. "Thank you! Thank you, Madam Pomfrey. it feels good to finally get a piece of good news from you."

Madam Pomfrey smiled indulgently in return. "Yes, well, it feels good to give good news as well." She opened the curtain and then approached a wall mounted cabinet over the bed. "Now, about your headache. I'm going to give you a potion. It's more than a headache potion, it's also a mild sedative and has a little sleeping elixir mixed in as well. I am sure you were up all night." Madam Pomfrey looked down at Hermione, knowingly.

Hermione swallowed. "You heard about Harry?"

The medi-witch nodded and then sighed heavily. "It's all so terrible. He's such a fine young man. I just find it hard to believe he could do such a thing."

Hermione pulled herself up and sat on the side of the stretcher. "I don't think it was him."

Madam Pomfrey shook her head in disagreement. "The witch was quite sure. I examined her, and she was definitely attacked. She provided memories for the pensieve and the Aurors confirmed it was him"

Hermione just shrugged. "Or a polyjuiced version of him."

The elderly witch shrugged back. "Yes, that's true. But that's quite terrifying as well. It means there is still a rapist in the castle."

Hermione nodded in agreement. "I always thought Hogwarts was the safest place in the world. Now, well...it doesn't quite feel that way anymore."

Madam Pomfrey called Dobby and the house elf appeared instantly. "Dobby, please take Miss Granger back to her dorm and make sure she takes the potion I gave her."

The house elf replied earnestly, "Dobby will do as the good medi-witch says and will help Harry Potter's friend who makes beautiful socks." He beamed at Hermione and Hermione noticed he was wearing a knitted hat she had made as well as two socks.

She smiled back at him. He took her hand and snapped. Suddenly they were in her dorm. Hermione's jaw hit the floor. "Dobby! How did you do that? No one is supposed to be able to Apparate on Hogwarts grounds."

"House elves is not following the same rules as wizards and witches. House elves is able to Apparate where is needed."

He watched her for minute and then said, "Dobby will stay until young miss takes her potion as the good medi-witch instructed."

Hermione pulled the potion out of her pocket, uncorked it and poured the contents of the vial into her mouth. Dobby then bowed and snapped his finger, disappearing with a pop.

Hermione kicked off her shoes and climbed under the covers. A sense of calm came over her and she felt tension leave her body as she drifted off into a deep sleep.

Draco arrived at lunch but didn't eat. There was still no sign of Potter. He scanned the Gryffindor table. Hermione and Ron were missing as well. She was probably off somewhere fucking him right now. Just then Ron walked in holding Lavender's hand and Draco exhaled, feeling a twinge of relief. Still, who was she fucking? Who had gotten her pregnant?

He thought about marching up to the infirmary and demanding answers from her, but he had other ideas. He hadn't seen Princess in quite a while and he was missing her. He decided right then and there he would have her and have her often. He started to imagine Princess pregnant with swollen breasts and found it turned him on. He would dump Hermione's cheating arse and continue fucking Princess. That was just fine with him.

Chapter 28

Only an epilogue to go after this chapter! Thanks so much for reading this disturbing story!

Wednesday Late Afternoon/ Early Evening

Hermione awoke quite hungry that late afternoon. Tossing on her clothes from earlier, she grabbed some clean ones and headed down to the common room where Ginny was sitting with Ron and Lavender.

"Hermione! You're up!" Lavender exclaimed. "You've been sleeping all afternoon!"

"Are you okay?" Ron asked, clearly concerned. He then added, a bit irritated, "I saw Draco wisk you out of class this morning."

"Uh, yeah. I wasn't feeling well and Madam Pomfrey gave me a headache potion that also had some calming draught and sleeping potion mixed in. I feel a lot better. Everything just, well... I'm better now." She looked at Ginny. "Gin, would you mind coming to the prefect's bath with me? I want to get leaned up before dinner."

Forty-five minutes later, the two Gryffindors arrived at dinner. Hermione felt good. Her hair and body were clean, and she felt well rested. She was worrying about Harry, though. She wanted to know what was happening. She wanted to know he was alright.

She looked toward the Slytherin table and saw Draco chatting animatedly with Daphne and Pansy. She felt a twinge of jealousy when Pansy leaned into Draco laughing and he kissed the top of her head. She knew she shouldn't be jealous, she kissed Ron and Harry on the cheek or head all the time. But she had gotten used to finding the blond's eyes on her whenever she looked his way. He was

always watching, and she frequently caught him doing so. But not tonight. Tonight, he hadn't looked her way even once. She was sitting facing the Slytherin table, so she was able to keep an eye on him.

Forcing herself to think about something else, she asked Ron, "Did you talk to your Dad about Harry? Is there any word at the Ministry?"

Ron solemnly shook his head. "I owled him, but he hasn't responded yet."

Hermione peeked up as Professor Dumbledore walked into the Great Hall with a grave face. "Uh, oh. Here we go." Hermione whispered under her breath. As Dumbledore made his way up to the head table, she spotted Draco, who's attention was suddenly on the elderly wizard. He had still not looked her way once, that she was aware of.

Draco had been purposely avoiding looking at Hermione. As the afternoon had progressed, he was more and more convinced she had been sleeping around. How else would she be pregnant? He had used a contraception charm on her every time. She was a whore and therefore he would treat and use her as such. Princess was all he really needed anyway. Her physical person was his, though. He would find a way to keep Hermione from spreading her legs for another wizard. He would own her. But his days of pursuing a romantic relationship with her were over. He could feel her watching him and it gave him tremendous satisfaction. His efforts to ignore her were a struggle, though. He was so used to keeping tabs on her, that his natural inclination was to continue doing so. Showering Pansy with attention was a good distraction. It was always good to keep Pansy's dedication and interest. The girl was in love with him and he liked knowing she was his fallback. He might even marry her. He would keep Princess on the side, of course. He was never letting Princess go.

Draco's attention shot to the elderly Headmaster when he made his entrance. His spirits were lifted when he saw the look on

Dumbledore's face. Finally! Maybe now something would be said about Potter.

Dumbledore cleared his throat. "Can I have your attention, please." The chatter slowly died down as the attention of the students and teachers gravitated towards the Headmaster. "I'm afraid I have grave news. Hogwarts will be cancelling classes for the rest of the week and possibly next week as well. Another student has been attacked and another suspect arrested."

Draco worked hard to conceal his glee as he looked around at the shocked faces of the student body. He was still avoiding Hermione, so he hadn't seen her reaction.

Dumbledore continued. "Aurors will be arriving at the school tomorrow morning and will be questioning each and every student individually. Voluntary veritaserum will be offered during questioning. Students who agree to the serum, will be questioned first and allowed free access of the castle once questioning is concluded. Parents must give consent, of course. Students who decline the serum will be put through a more vigorous line of questioning and will be confined to certain areas." He sighed as he looked around. "Aurors will also be searching the castle and they have obtained permission from the Ministry, as well as the Board of Governors, to go through student's trunks and dorm rooms." He pulled off his glasses and rubbed his eyes. "It breaks my heart that it has come to this and it breaks my heart that any wizard at this school, no matter the age, could be capable of such cruelty, maliciousness and violence." He put his glasses back on. "Classes will not resume until the Aurors are convinced there are no more perpetrators of these violent acts in the castle. Owls started being dispatched to parents about an hour ago." With that he stepped off the podium and walked out of the Great Hall.

There was a breath of silence before frantic whispering led to loud conversations portraying disbelief, shock and anger. Draco sat back in his chair contemplating what Dumbledore had said. This was not good. He had not foreseen this. Clearly, he couldn't take the

veritaserum, but that would make him look guilty. Without thinking, he glanced at Hermione. Her eyes were on him and she offered a small, forced smile. He didn't smile back. He didn't acknowledge her in any way. Instead, he put his hand on Pansy's shoulder, causing the witch to turn back towards him and throw her arms around his shoulders as she buried her face into his chest. She was clearly upset by the news. Draco loosely held her but his thoughts were not on the witch he was absently soothing.

Losing his resolve, he quickly looked back to find Hermione had turned away but looked rather upset. Was she upset because he was ignoring her? Was she jealous of Pansy? Was she upset about Harry? Orr, maybe she was upset because whoever she had been *fucking* got her fucking *pregnant!* Regardless, her circumstances weren't nearly as bad as his. His day just went from shitty to shitstorm. His girlfriend had been cheating on him and got herself pregnant and he was about to face Aurors who would probably figure out what he had been doing with the slut. And about his heavy involvement with the potion. And about his framing of Potter. *Fuck!*

He pushed Pansy away and made his way to the back of the Hall, distancing himself from the other students. He needed some space to think and come up with a plan. The plan would probably involve help from his father, which he hated the idea of. Maybe he could go to his Godfather. Severus wouldn't care that he had been using the potion on the Gryffindor slut. He would help him figure out a plan. It's what Severus was good at; deception and espionage. He would go see him as soon as he got out of the Great Hall. Having a course of action, he began to relax, confident he could work his way around this.

He leaned back against the wall and waited for the masses to make their way out of the Great Hall. Then he noticed movement on his right. Hermione was approaching him. "Hi, Draco."

"Oh, hey. You feeling better?" He asked in a bored tone and not looking at her .

She hesitated. "Much. I, uh... had a scare.. but it's all good."

His curiosity was peaked. "A scare?"

She looked around them and said quietly. "Yeah...can we talk privately?"

Draco felt his hackles rise. She was probably getting ready to dump him. She was probably happy to be pregnant with the bastard in her belly. He nodded but acted disinterested as he answered, "it's fairly private right here."

Hermione looked at him confused. "Is something wrong?"

"No. Just have stuff to do." He responded, still not looking at her.

"Oh." She hesitated. "Well, it's not important. I don't want to keep you."

"Just say it, Hermione." He snapped impatiently, finally looking at her.

"What is your problem?" she snapped. When he didn't immediately answer, she lightly shook her head and began to walk away.

He sighed, curiosity getting the better of him. He followed her and gently grabbed her arm. "Tell me, Hermione. What was your scare?" His voice was abrupt and impatient.

She turned back to him, ripping her arm out of his grasp. "I thought I was pregnant." She looked around again to be sure no one was listening. "But I'm not. I thought whoever attacked me had gotten me pregnant." She crossed her arms and wouldn't meet his eyes. She felt like she was going to cry. She just couldn't figure out why he was acting like this, but it was upsetting her, more than she wanted to admit.

He stared at her. Letting the words sink in. NOT pregnant. Oh. She thought her attacker had... well. He closed his eyes and took a

calming breath. Some of the tension in his shoulders gave way to relief. He stepped closer to her and pulled her close, holding her against him. He felt her relax into him and he breathed in her scent. She smelled good...clean...fuckable. "I'm sorry you had that scare, Hermione. That must have been...awful." His voice was soothing and warm.

She sniffled. "It was. I just panicked in class. I realized I was late...you know... and I haven't been feeling well. I've had headaches and been emotional. But Madam Pomfrey explained that stress and the obliations and all the rest of it is what has my cycle messed up."

Draco continued to hold her and sighed. Her body felt so good pressed up against him. So small and warm, She was his. He had been rash. She had not betrayed him. He internally scolded himself for jumping to the wrong conclusion. Hermione was meant for him, he knew it. How could she cheat on the one she was created for? He felt warmth course through him with this epiphany. "I've missed you, Hermione."

She pulled back and stared up at him, her voice conveying the hurt and irritation she felt. "You sure about that? You seemed pretty disinterested in me two minutes ago."

He shook his head contritely and with an apologetic tone replied, "That wasn't about you. I'm behind on schoolwork and this whole thing with another attack. It's just...upsetting. I'm worried about the witches in Slytherin, and I'm worried about you." His face was etched with affection and concern.

He shook his head in dismay as he innocently asked, "I wonder who was attacked this time and I wonder who was arrested." He looked around the room, noticing no one else was left in the Great Hall. They were all alone.

Hermione swallowed. He would find out soon enough, so she may as well tell him. She said quietly, sounding slightly defeated. "It was

Harry. Harry was arrested."

His eye grew wide with fake surprise as his mouth fell open. "So, the witness came forward!" He chewed his lip and continued, a confused look on his face. "Wait, I can't believe she let the witness come forward. She was so worried about losing her marriage prospects."

Hermione was confused by what he was saying and then understood. "No. No, that witness didn't come forward. This was...this was another attack. Last night."

Draco stared at her before asking, "Another attack? Last night?" He paused and then let out a slow breath. "Thank Merlin he's been arrested! Hermione, I've been worried about you being around him. I haven't trusted him but didn't push the issue because I didn't want to tell you what to do." He pulled her back to him and held her close as he affectionately and tenderly whispered, "I would never tell you what to do. But I'm so glad he's been removed from the castle and can't hurt anyone else."

She contemplated what to tell him. She pulled back and looked up at him. "Well, from what I can gather, they aren't convinced of his guilt."

Draco let out a small laugh. "Well, of course they aren't. He's the 'chosen one'." Draco stepped to a nearby bench and pulled her down on his lap. He looked her in the eyes and said, "That's exactly why the witch and witness from Slytherin haven't come forward. No one would believe such a thing about Harry Potter."

She chewed her lip, staring at nothing as if in thought. "Well, the Aurors are going to be questioning everyone now. So, we'll see what they find out."

He brushed her hair aside and kissed her neck. "You smell really good."

She laughed. "Well, I just had a bath before dinner."

He grinned. "You did, did you?" He looked her in the eyes, a twinkle in them now. "Sorry I missed that." His grin morphed into a genuine smile.

She laughed and then smiled back and said, shyly. "I've missed you to, Draco."

He kissed her mouth tenderly.

After a minute she pulled away. "I need to get back to Gryffindor."

Draco looked from her eyes to her mouth and back again. "Why? Who knows when I'll see you again? Sounds like the Aurors will have control of the castle and who knows when we'll be free to move around again."

She hesitated, still looking in his eyes and then smiled. "Okay, maybe we could spend a little time together."

He beamed at her. His mind started to whirl. He really wanted Princess.

His look became shy and he asked, hesitantly. "How about if we go to the Room of Requirement?" He added before she refused, "Just to spend some time together. We don't have to...do anything."

She thought for a minute. She knew she should decline, but as usual, where he was concerned, she had a hard time saying no. "Ok, but I need to grab my transfiguration book. Let's run by Gryffindor first. We can study while we spend time together."

She stood up and reached her hand out to him. He took it and rolled his eyes as she pulled him up. "Do you ever not study?" He asked, his tone teasing.

She started walking and in a haughty tone said, "Only when I want to fail."

They walked up to Gryffindor and Draco waited while Hermione ran inside and grabbed her book, at the same time dropping off the books she didn't need.

Ron and Ginny looked at each other and eyed her as she dashed in and out. Ron had seen her talking to Draco in the Great Hall and he was frustrated in the knowledge she was probably spending time with him now. He jumped off the sofa and ran up to his dorm.

Hermione walked out the portrait and smiled at Draco. Slightly out of breath, she said. "Okay, I'm all set."

Draco couldn't resist. She was so adorable. He bit his lip and gave her a boyish grin as he pulled her closer and kissed her. A group of students came out the portrait, causing them to stop kissing. Hermione blushed at having been caught and Draco laughed as he took her hand and started walking towards the Room of Requirement. His mind was starting to run away with visions of her naked and under him. It had been too long. He was really missing Princess but hoped tonight would be the night Hermione wouldn't stop his advances. No more blow jobs, he wanted in and he wanted in tonight.

When they arrived at their destination, they were relieved to find it unoccupied. Hermione let Draco be the one to request the room and she was pleased when she walked in. The room looked like an intimate common room with a large plush sofa in front of a roaring fire. There was a table in front of the sofa for their books. The lighting was soft, but not so soft she wouldn't be able to read. There were tall bookshelves full of wizarding and muggle novels.

She walked over and picked out a Jane Austin book. "Muggle literature?" She asked him, surprised.

He shrugged. "I asked the room for a space you would like where we could relax, study and read to each other."

She beamed at him, putting the book back. "It's perfect. Thank you, Draco." Draco had been standing in the open door, watching her. He walked in, the door closing behind him.

He sauntered over to her, in a predatory way. "Do you like the room enough to give me a kiss?"

She laughed. "Well, I guess a small one."

He smiled as he pulled her close and dipped his head, kissing her passionately. His tongue forced its way into her mouth as he deepened the buss. His hands began rubbing her sides and she felt her blouse being untucked from her skirt. She pulled back and put her hands over his. "Let's sit on the sofa and get our books out."

Draco nodded and smiled, but he was irritated. He didn't want to study, he wanted to fuck.

He followed her to the sofa and sat next to her. He didn't advance on her. Instead, he gave her a chance to get her books and quills out and organized. When she was finished and opened her first book, he leaned into her and started kissing her neck. His kisses were tender at first and his right arm draped around her waist encouraging her to lean back on the sofa. His kisses became more aggressive and his hands more assertive.

She sighed and closed her eyes, giving in to his affections. He kissed her jaw and then her mouth. She was kissing him back, but tentatively. As he became more impassioned, she pushed his hands away gently.

He could sense her hesitation. Time for plan B. He kissed her cheek and then pulled away and sat up as he said, begrudgingly, "Okay. I know you want to study, so let's study." She smiled at him and kissed his cheek.

He shook his head and sighed in mock disappointment and she laughed. He turned to her. "Okay, I'm studying now." He opened his

bag and pulled out his text book as well as a quill. He opened the book and looked at his watch. Five minutes. He would read for five minutes and then make his move.

Hermione watched him as he settled into reading his text. She turned to her own book and started to read, making notes on her parchment.

At the five minute mark, Draco looked up from his text and glanced around the room. "Oh good." He said, noticing what was behind them against the wall. "I'm so thirsty. That shepherd's pie was good, but it always makes me thirsty."

Hermione wasn't paying much attention to him, her focus on her book instead. Draco stood and walked around the sofa to the pitcher. He poured water into two of the three glasses next to it. He nonchalantly pulled the flask out of his pocket, dropping two drops of the potion into one of the cups. He put the flask back in his pocket and walked around the sofa, sitting next to her. He placed the cups down and took a big swallow out of his own. She didn't pay any attention to the cup he placed next to her. He continued to drink his own as he read more of his text. Finally, several minutes later, she picked up her cup and took a swallow.

Draco rejoiced internally as the potion took hold of her. She was immediately on him, kissing him, pulling at his clothes.

He was desperate for her, accidentally ripping her blouse in his impatience. He quickly unfastened her bra and licked his lips in anticipation as her breasts were now on display. "Princess, it's been so long. Get those knickers off. I want to be inside you." Hermione reached under her skirt, pulling down her panties as he unbuttoned and unzipped his jeans. "Lay back and spread your legs."

Suddenly, there was a noise as the door from the hallway was flung open. Draco jumped up and was startled as Professor Dumbledore, accompanied by Tonks and Ron, stormed into the room. Ginny suddenly appeared next to Hermione, pulling off the invisibility cloak.

Ginny tossed the cloak over Hermione's naked form, but it slid off her as she crawled towards the blond Slytherin, totally ignoring the new arrivals. "Draco, I want you!" Her plea was desperate. Ginny tossed the cloak back over her.

Draco was stunned to silence. He felt pressure in his chest and felt like he couldn't breathe as the panic from the realization at being caught set in.

"Where's the antidote?" Tonks demanded. Draco didn't speak. He couldn't think, couldn't move. Dumbledore approached Draco and started going through the frozen blond's pockets. Hermione continued to claw at Draco as Ginny was trying to hold her back and keep her covered.

Dumbledore pulled out a black flask. "No," Ginny exclaimed. "That's the one he used in her cup... the lust potion." Dumbledore pulled out another smaller, silver flask and popped the cork, sniffing it.

Dumbledore asked Draco, his voice stern and demanding, "Draco! Is this the antidote?"

Draco slowly turned his head to Dumbledore, his expression changed from panic to one of pure joy. "I love her. I love my princess." Draco looked down at Hermione, who was still fighting Ginny to get to him. "I love you. This changes nothing. We belong together!" He was looking at her with pure adoration, smiling.

Dumbledore shook his head and sighed heavily. Tonks came around the sofa and grabbed the delusional blond, pulling him away from the sofa and away from Hermione. Dumbledore tipped the small flask into Hermione's mouth as Ginny continued to hold the struggling witch.

Hermione slowly stopped struggling and stilled. The glazed look on her face morphed into one of confusion and then fear and then shock.

She looked down, her body now invisible under the cloak and a panicked sob escaped her mouth. She leaned back into the sofa and looked around the room at her friends as tears started to stream down her face. Ginny sat next to her and pulled her close, holding her as Hermione started to shake. Her breathing became rapid as she started to hyperventilate.

"Dobby." Dumbledore called out. The house elf appeared instantly, concern on his face as he saw Hermione in such a state. "Dobby, quickly. Take Miss Granger and Miss Weasley to Madam Pomfrey."

The house elf grabbed hold of each of their hands, and with a pop, the three were gone.

Ron walked over to Draco and punched him, hard, square in the jaw. Draco staggered, and Ron knocked him to the ground with another punch. Ron stood over him, his face beet red with anger.

"Ron," Tonks said sternly. "Stop."

Dumbledore put his hand on Ron's shoulder. "Ron, it's okay. Go to Professor McGonagall. Tell her to floo the Aurors. Draco will be in my office."

Ginny breathed a sigh of relief when Hermione's breathing slowed down. The calming elixir Madam Pomfrey had given her was doing the trick.

Ginny watched her friend closely and saw the despair on her face.

Hermione whispered, more to herself than to Ginny. "I am so stupid. And he is so...so evil". She stared up at the ceiling. "That potion...that potion just...I had no control. I would have done anything!" She turned to Ginny in shock. "Anything he asked. I just wanted to be touching him and pleasing him." She let out a breath and reached her hand out to the redhead and Ginny smiled softly at her, taking it.

Hermione's voice was small and weak. "Oh Ginny. I'm so embarrassed, I'm so ashamed. How could I? How could I be so blind and stupid?" She said the word stupid with emphasis.

Ginny shook her head. "Hermione, he lied to you...so brilliantly. I saw him with you. I saw how he treated you. Not just tonight, but other times - in the library, in the lab, Hogsmeade - .he treated you like he totally adored you. Don't fault yourself for being human. Don't fault yourself for falling for what he presented to you. And most of all, " She leaned closer, "Don't be hurt, Hermione. He doesn't deserve your pain, he deserves your wrath. And my wrath, and Ron's and Harry's."

"Oh, poor Harry." Hermione's eyes watered as the guilt swept over her. "I didn't believe Harry attacked anyone, but I actually believed Harry more likely than Draco! How could I have even thought that!" She rolled on her back and looked up at the ceiling. "Draco must have set Harry up. Draco raped Romilda...and he raped me... oh God...how many times, Ginny? Seriously!"

The two witches just looked at each other for a couple minutes, each replaying the events of the past several weeks. Hermione's expression started to change. Where her eyes had been sad and doe like, they were now intense, her brow wrinkling. Her jaw was clenched, and her lips pursed. "I'm going to kill him!" Her words were spoken slowly, with conviction and intensity. She sat up on the side of the bed. Her face continuing to twist with anger. "I am going to destroy him...and Blaise and fucking Snape as well."

Ginny nodded and, feeding off her friend's fury, replied. "You aren't alone, Hermione. I'm going to help you."

Hermione's expression changed again. This time to a look of curiosity. She tilted her head to the side, studying Ginny. "Ginny, what made you decide to follow me tonight? What brought that on?"

Ginny smirked. "Ron" She shook her head and continued. "Earlier today, while you were sleeping, he was completely convinced it was

Draco who was behind everything. Harry's arrest infuriated him, and it sparked something in him. He knew Draco was manipulating you, as well as who knew how many others. He said he was finished being diplomatic and it was time for action."

She sighed and continued. "I broke down and told him about the Snape recording and he immediately owled Tonks. He ignored my reasons for why you and I hadn't gone to her yet." Ginny shifted in her chair. "Tonks came right away and Ron told her about the recording and he told her that he was sure Draco was manipulating you." She smiled. "I was really impressed by my big brother. He wasn't his normal aloof and goofy self. He was a man with conviction and he had me and Tonks both convinced you were in immediate danger. After he told her about the Snape recording, she was furious and immediately went to Dumbledore." She paused. "About ten minutes later, you woke up and came into the common room."

"Why didn't you tell me that Tonks was in the castle and knew about the recording?" Hermione asked, slightly irritated.

Ginny replied hesitantly, "Ron told me not to. He said he had a plan." She bit her lip and thought. "Then, during dinner, you kept looking at the Slytherin table and Ron was getting more and more irritated. When Dumbledore came in and made the announcement, we knew it was because Tonks was involved. She was forcing Dumbledore to do the right thing." Ginny paused and took a deep breath. "Then after dinner, you immediately walked over to Draco. That's when Ron grabbed me, and we started discussing ways to protect you."

Ginny looked apologetic. "Only it didn't go as planned. When you came back to Gryffindor after dinner, Ron said we should follow you under the cloak and that we should grab the sneak-o-scope. So, he ran to grab Harry's cloak and the map, and I ran to grab the extra sneak-o-scope out of your room. Only, when I grabbed the scope, I must have dropped my wand, because I later discovered I didn't have it. Anyway, under the cloak, we were able to follow you to the Room of Requirement. We fought about who would go into the room

with you. In hindsight, it should have been him because I didn't have my wand. But I didn't know that at the time."

Hermione's head was starting to spin, trying to keep up. "So, you followed us into the room under the cloak. What was Ron doing?"

Ginny shrugged. "Well, I'm not sure. When the door closed, it sealed and probably disappeared, so Ron couldn't slide the sneak-o-scope under it." Ginny thought for a minute, "at least that's what I think happened. I never saw the sneak-o-scope appear under the door."

Hermione was confused. "Well, how did Ron know to get Dumbledore?"

Ginny shrugged. "You'll have to ask him. Once I was in the room with you, I had no more contact with him." Ginny's face twisted with guilt. "Hermione, I'm so sorry. When Draco put the drops into your cup, I decided to wait and see what happened. I wanted to be sure it was the lust potion. I wanted to be 100% sure before I played my hand. When you drank it and I saw the effect it had on you, I reached for my wand, but it was gone. I started moving around the room looking for it. I couldn't find it. I was about to just jump on him and knock him to the ground when they busted through the door."

Hermione and Ginny both looked to the infirmary door as Ron walked in. He dashed to Hermione and sat on the cot next to her, grabbing her and hugging her.

She let out a sob, "Oh Ron, I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry for not listening to you and Harry. I should have followed your advice and stayed away from him. I was so stupid."

He pulled back and looked at her. "Yeah, you were." He admitted, honestly. Then he gave her smile, "but you can't be perfect all the time. And you're my best friend, and I love you. So, I forgive you." He pulled her close again and hugged her tightly as she softly cried. "It's okay, Mione'," he whispered soothingly, "It's all going to be okay now."

Hermione pulled back from him and wiped her eyes. "Where's Draco? What's happening now?"

Ron sighed, "I'm not one hundred percent sure. There's a lot of activity in Dumbledore's office. I saw Lucius Malfoy. Aurors are everywhere."

Hermione watched and listened to Ron with a whole new appreciation. He had protected her and helped her. She thought about the conversation she had just had with Ginny. "Ron, how did you know to get Dumbledore and Tonks? How did you know what was going on in the Room of Requirement?"

Ron's ears turned slightly pink. "Well, truthfully, I didn't. The damn door sealed and I couldn't slip the scope under it. But I just felt like something wasn't right. I knew Ginny was in there and would intervene if necessary, but", he looked at his sister and shrugged, "she's my kid sister. I didn't like not being able to hear what was going on. I was...worried." He sighed and continued. "But as I was heading towards Dumbledore's office, I came upon Tonks and Dumbledore. They were just about to head down the stairs towards the dungeons. They were looking for Draco. I told them I knew where he was, and they came right away."

Ron scratched his head and then continued. "As we were walking, I told them what was going on. When we got to the Room of Requirement, Dumbledore waved his wand and the door appeared. We walked in and.." Ron was now turning red. "Well, it was pretty obvious what was happening."

Hermione collapsed back on the bed and pulled the pillow over her face. Her muffled voice said, "I'm going to die of embarrassment." She pulled the pillow off her face and pulled some strands of hair away from her mouth. "I remember it all. I remember the feeling that came over me when I drank the water." Hermione let out a quick laugh. "All I wanted was to touch him, drink him in. If I could have crawled under his skin, I would have. It was so powerful. I...I..'" she

sniffled as a tear ran down her cheek, "Merlin only knows what I've done while under the influence of that potion."

Ginny looked at her friend and nodded. "Me too, 'Mione. Me too."

Madam Pomfrey walked over to the trio. "It's getting late. Hermione needs her rest."

Hermione looked at Madam Pomfrey. "Would it be okay if I went back to Gryffindor? I feel better and I just want to be with my friends."

The mediwitch smiled. "Go on, then. But make sure you get plenty rest. Come back tomorrow to resume your concentration exercises."

Hermione climbed out of bed. "Yes, Ma'am. I'll see you tomorrow." Ron wrapped an arm around each witch and they headed back to Gryffindor.

Thursday Morning

Hermione did not sleep well. Her night was restless, and she had periods of crying after which she would scold herself for being so weak. How could she have believed him? She was so angry with herself and the more time passed, the angrier she became. She climbed out of bed and quickly dressed. Tonks had come to see her late last evening to check on her and said they would get a statement from her when she was ready. She didn't know if she was ready for that yet. Tonks told Hermione Draco was being arrested and they were currently trying to get more information out of him.

Hermione slipped her shoes on. It was only six fifteen in the morning but she wanted to get moving. She was worried about Harry and wondered what would happen with him now. Tonks hadn't had any answers on that front the night before. Surprise overcame her when she walked into the common room to find Harry sitting on the sofa all alone.

She dashed to the oversized couch and crashed into him, hugging him tightly. "Harry, you're back!"

He hugged her tightly in return. She pulled back, "What happened? When did you get back? Why are you down here all by yourself?"

He laughed, "Umm, a lot...about an hour ago...and because I didn't know if I'd ever see Hogwarts again, much less this room." He looked around and sighed. "This room is home to me."

She flung her arms around him again. "Oh, Harry. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry this happened to you, I'm sorry I didn't listen to you and Ron, and most of all...I'm sorry for ever doubting you. I didn't think you attacked anyone, but I wasn't as convinced as I should have been. I'm so sorry!"

Harry just shrugged, "Hermione, you've always supported me and believed in me. You don't have to apologize."

She wasn't having it. "No, Harry. I do. And, I'm sorry more than words can express. I hope you can trust that I'm your friend and will never doubt you again."

He smiled at her, "Honestly, right now, I'm just glad it's behind me."

Three Months Later

Hermione walked out of the Wizengamot chamber and breathed a sigh of relief. Her testimony was finally behind her. To say it had been dreaded would have been a gross understatement. To say the actual testimony had been every bit as awful as she anticipated, would *not* be an overstatement. She walked over to a bench and sat, feeling like a tremendous weight had been lifted off her shoulders. She rubbed her neck as she thought back over all that had happened since the night Draco had been arrested.

The same night he had been taken into custody, Snape had been taken into custody as well. Dumbledore had no choice but to

produce the Sneak-O-Scope when Tonks confronted him. Once Snape was arrested and the evidence of his threat to Blaise was known to the Aurors, Blaise had been encouraged to tell all. He had been promised a lighter sentence for any evidence he brought forth against Snape, as well as Draco. When they added the guarantee of his Mother's protection, Blaise had sung like a bird. It was amazing what the Aurors were able to piece together once Blaise started talking. They were also able to determine that Draco had been obliviated by Snape because Snape had obliviated memories that Blaise shared as well.

Lucius Malfoy, through his connections and abilities to bribe the right people, had seen to it that Draco had spent his pre-trial captivity in St Mungo's psychiatric ward instead of Azkaban. But in truth, his bribery was probably not needed in the end. Every psychiatric evaluator found Draco to be a clinical sociopath who had no ability to feel remorse. He also was obsessed with Hermione and still claimed himself in love with her. He claimed she was his, created for him by the powers above and that she loved him as well. He insisted that one day she would admit it and they would be together. He was deemed delusional by most who came in contact with him.

Hermione didn't know if Draco's delusions were where she was concerned were real or fabricated to help ensure his insanity plea. It didn't matter. She hated him. For his insanity plea, he was forced to agree to several legilimency sessions with the Aurors and psychiatrists. She had been allowed to view pieces and parts in a pensieve and it had been beyond humiliating. She wanted him in Azkaban. Not in a cushy, private hospital room where he would have planned activities and constant visitors.

She could only hope that the testimony she provided today against him would help guarantee he would be locked up for a very long time. Blaise had ultimately agreed to legilimency interrogations as well. He was already getting a lighter sentence for providing evidence against Snape and Draco, but he was promised further leniency if he came clean about all the attacks. It turned out Blaise

had been very busy and had raped over 15 witches, one of them being Ginny Weasley. While it was terrible, Ginny was relieved she hadn't been whored out and had only been with Blaise. Hermione was also relieved that Draco had been the only wizard she had been with.

Today was the day the victims added their testimony to the mountains of evidence already on display. Hermione contemplated not testifying. There wasn't any real evidence she would be providing that they didn't already know. They had seen all his memories after all. But Hermione wanted the Wizengamot to know how it had impacted her and how her life would never be the same. She also wanted to do her part to make sure Draco ended up in Azkaban and not some psych ward where he would have counseling sessions and art class every day. Draco, Blaise and Snape had all been present. She couldn't tell if there was any actual remorse felt by any of the wizards.

Snape had not attacked anyone that they could tell, but he had been guilty of being aware she and others were being raped and doing nothing about it. He was guilty by association. She had provided her memories of Snape and his manipulation of her as well. She realized his sentence would be lighter, but she found satisfaction knowing that he had not gotten away with it.

Hermione heard the door open and Ginny walked out, letting out a sigh of relief as she walked over to Hermione and sat down next to her.

"You okay?" Hermione asked her red-headed friend.

"Yeah, just glad it's over." She rubbed her eyes. "I hope all three are put away for a very long time."

The witches only had to wait an hour before the Wizengamot had made its decision. They went back into the chamber and sat in the back of the room with Harry, Ron and the rest of the Weasleys.

Hermione was disgusted to see Rita Skeeter sitting in the corner scribbling notes furiously as she watched the proceedings.

It was over rather quickly. As expected, Snape received the lightest sentence. He would spend two and half years in Azkaban for being an accessory. Blaise was sentenced to sixty years, but it was reduced to twenty five for his testimony against the other wizards and for admitting to all the attacks he had been responsible for.

Hermione felt her heart race as she watched Draco stand, waiting to be sentenced. Narcissa Malfoy stood next her son, her expression stony eyed. Lucius stood on Draco's other side, his expression more anxious as he waited to hear if his son would end up in Azkaban or in St Mungo's. Hermione felt vindication and relief course through her as his sentence was read. He would spend thirty five years in Azkaban after which time he would be reevaluated by psychiatrists. If he was still deemed to have sociopathic tendencies, he would not be released, but another panel of judges would determine at that time where he would be detained and for how long.

It was over, and Hermione exhaled and smiled at her friends. As Draco was being escorted out of the chamber, he looked back at Hermione, smiling at her as he mouthed, "I love you."

Two Years Later

"Hermione, it's now or never." Harry's tone was impatient.

"Ok, ok...I just. Well, yes, I want to do this."

Harry had just become an Auror and now had access to prisoners in Azkaban. He wasn't supposed to be in contact with prisoners he personally hadn't investigated, but he had access to them all, just the same.

He tossed his cloak over her and she followed as they entered through the guard entrance during shift change. The guards were used to seeing Harry and greeted him as he walked toward cell block

D. He went down a set of stairs and waved his wand over a magical ID scanner. A door opened, and he quickly dashed in, Hermione hidden behind him.

They walked past several cells where Hermione saw wizards laying in their beds sleeping or reading. The cells were all cinderblock and their beds were concrete slabs with small mattresses. Some of the prisoners had desks and pictures on the walls, while others just had a bed, sink and toilet.

Hermione paused and stared at the wizard in the last cell on the left. The blond had long hair, down to his shoulders. His cell had a desk as well as a table and a chair. Draco was sitting at the table, humming to himself as he picked up different coloring pencils, appearing to be drawing. Hermione could see drawings scattered on the floor and was shocked to see they were of her. One was her profile, as if she were studying and another was her face, laughing. They were quite good. It seemed Draco had discovered a talent he didn't know he had. His face turned toward where she was hidden under the cloak. His eyes were closed. He inhaled deeply.

"Ahh, Princess. You've come." He opened his eyes and stared at the place she was standing. Harry shifted beside her. Despite Harry being in plain view, Draco paid him no mind. Hermione's heart started to race. Draco was smiling. "I'd recognize the smell of your shampoo anywhere, Princess."

He stood and walked to the bars of his cell, now only feet away from her. He spoke calmly, his expression earnest. "I've had a lot of time to think in here, Hermione. I realize now I was wrong to take you against your will. But if I hadn't, Princess...well, I would have never fallen in love with you. If you hadn't stumbled upon me that night when I used the potion the first time, I might never have gotten to know you. Don't you see? It was a means to an end. Fate brought us together that night." He grinned boyishly, an expression that used to make her heart melt but now made her stomach churn. He nodded, knowingly, "Fate will keep you coming back here to visit me. We're meant for each other, Princess. I love you. And whether you want to

admit it or not, you love me. When I get out in thirty three years, we can be together." He was smiling, his look angelic and innocent.

Hermione couldn't help staring at him. She had come here out of curiosity. Six months ago she had still been plotting revenge against Draco as well as the other two wizards. But she had changed her mind over the course of the past few months. If, in thirty three years she still wanted revenge and he was released, she would get it. But right now, that need wasn't in her. She only wanted to move on and forget it had ever happened. But she had wanted to see where he lived. She wanted to know he wasn't in a plush cell with the comforts of home. Looking around his cell, it gave her no relief to see him living in the tiny concrete pace with little comforts to speak of. Yes, he had a table and pencils, but that was it. His desk was bare. His bed was a thin mattress that could not offer much comfort.

"Won't you take that cloak off so I can see your beautiful face?"

Hermione contemplated before removing the cloak. "I'll take the cloak off, Malfoy." As she pulled it off, she noticed him cringe slightly at the use of his surname. Then he smiled affectionately as he looked her up and down. She continued. "I'll take it off because I want you to see what you will never have. You will never see this face again. You will never touch this body. I want you to know, that I have a boyfriend. A boyfriend whom I love and who loves me. When he makes love to me, the world stops. He's all I want in this world."

Draco's face had fallen and slowly a look of anguish began to come over him. "Princess, you don't mean that! You know you don't," he pleaded. Then he shook his head and his anguished look was replaced by a knowing smile. He closed his eyes and reopened them. "Nice try, Princess. You want to hurt me. You're angry, I get it. But you love me all the same, Hermione. You should stop denying it."

Hermione shook her head at him in disbelief over his delusion. So, yeah, he was right. She didn't have a boyfriend and maybe she did dream about him sometimes, but that was only because she couldn't

forget he had raped and manipulated her. She didn't have a boyfriend because she couldn't trust a word that came out of the mouth of any male who showed an interest in her. The only men she trusted were Harry and Ron, who were both married. They would forever be her best friends, as well as Ginny. So yeah, Draco was right that she was lying, but she would never admit that to him. And she certainly didn't love him.

She gave him a dismissive look. "Goodbye, Malfoy. Have fun with your delusions and pencils."

As she turned to walk away, he yelled out to her. "Next time, wear something sexy, Princess. Something that I can dream about." She started to walk faster. "Come back soon, Hermione," she heard faintly as the door to cell block D closed behind her.

AN:

Epilogue to come :) Thanks for reading!

Epilogue

AN: Yeah, I know. This story was finished years ago. Only, it never felt finished to me. I always felt like there was more to be told. Based on reviews and comments, many readers felt that way, too.

Over the past year and a half, I have been slowly editing this story because it had a lot of grammatical errors. Hopefully, I fixed most of them. LissaDream helped edit some of it but then her life got too busy to continue. Anyhoo, as I was editing it and rereading it, a plan for a real epilogue began to form. I approached Lissa (because everything we write is better when we do it as a team) and she happily agreed to help me with this undertaking. This is a very long epilogue. It's over 12,000 words, which is four times the length of the average chapter in the rest of the story. There was just a lot to tell. So, without further ado, I hope you enjoy the revisited ending. And THANK YOU to LissaDream for her contribution to this final installation.

One more thing, some of you are going to like the ending and some are going to hate it. I wish I could make everyone happy. Please review and let me know what you think!

Two Years Later - Four Years After Draco Was Arrested

Hermione sputtered her tea as she read the headline of the morning prophet:

Draco Malfoy Released to Home Confinement

By Rita Skeeter

At the advisement of mind healers, Draco Malfoy, the young heir to the Malfoy fortune, has been released from Azkaban to his

home where he will remain confined and under Ministry watch indefinitely. A relieved Lucius Malfoy issued a public statement within moments of his son's release:

" It is with the utmost respect and appreciation that I thank the mind healers, Azkaban governing board, and our ever-diligent Ministry of Magic for the release of my son, Draco, to the care of his mother and me, who love him very much. My son suffers from a mental disturbance, passed down from the Black ancestral line, which attacks quickly and indiscriminately. My departed sister-in-law, Bellatrix Lestrange, was its most recent victim until the madness set its sights on Draco. We have healers and potioners working diligently to discover a more effective treatment, or better yet, a cure. I miss my son. He is but a shadow of what he once was. However, he does not belong in prison. He is of no danger to anyone within Malfoy Manor and it is Narcissa's and my hope, that in time, with counseling and love, he can refocus the object of his obsession to something useful."

Standing beside the Malfoy patriarch, Senior Mind Healer, Etan Browne, fielded questions about the nature of the illness plaguing the younger Malfoy. He went on to explain that *"Mortem Rationabilem Mentem"* is a very rare disease of the mind which causes the victim to develop an unbreakable and relentless obsession on a single person or idea. The disease had skipped a few generations before claiming the mind of Bellatrix Lestrange, nee Black. Many will remember Bellatrix as a great beauty and brilliant young woman before her mind became diseased with her love and obsession of *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named*.

The healer went on to say that Mr. Malfoy's disease was compounded by the age of its onset. His obsession with not only the witch, but with his desire to bed her, was a direct result of his illness striking as he reached sexual maturity. It was implied that had Draco Malfoy been afflicted at an older age he

might not have acted criminally, however Healer Browne stopped short of saying those words directly.

The Daily Prophet attempted to reach the victim of Mr. Malfoy's obsession, war heroine and best friend of Harry Potter, Miss Hermione Granger, multiple times without success. One has to wonder what her impression is of today's development.

Rest assured readers, Rita Skeeter is on the hunt and will be reporting as more information becomes available.

Hermione stood abruptly, cursing as she stormed back to her bedroom. She halted instantly, swallowing the mumbled rant that had been spewing from her lips when she noticed the sleeping wizard in her bed. She had forgotten Clint was still in her apartment. Or, was it Rick? She rolled her eyes in self-disgust as she quietly padded to her closet where she grabbed another blouse, quickly changing into it and tossing the tea stained one into the laundry bin. She leaned against her dresser, watching the sleeping blond as she buttoned her top.

The familiar lecture played in her brain. *You need to stop this behavior. You're behaving like a slag. No proper wizard will marry you if you've slept with half of the wizards in London.* No longer concerned with being quiet, she hissed "fuck" as she stormed back out of the room, leaving her living vibrator replacement still asleep. *Dammit, Hermione! What is wrong with you?* She snapped at herself before spotting the newspaper article once again and finding herself contemplating a whisky instead of another cup of tea.

Her self-loathing and irritation skyrocketed at the sound of her floo activating, accompanied by her best friends stepping out of the green flames. She would never hear the end of it if Harry and Ron caught site of her visitor.

Knowing full well the purpose of their visit, Hermione was quick with the false reassurances that had been spilling from her lips for the past four years. "Guys, I'm fine! You didn't need to rush over here."

"Like hell we didn't!" exclaimed Ron, his eyes full of the pity she had grown to loathe.

"This isn't going to stick, 'Mione. I've already sent an owl to Shackbolt and Ginny is visiting with Arthur now. He has a great deal of clout in the Ministry these days. There is no way that either of them was aware of Draco's release ahead of time," Harry ranted as he watched her expectantly.

Hermione knew he was just waiting for her to rage or cry. She couldn't blame him. For despite all her assurances to the contrary, Hermione was always on the verge of losing it. And Harry was the one she unloaded on most of the time, although occasionally it was Ron whose shoulder her tears coated.

However, right now she needed them to leave before her bedroom visitor made an awkward appearance.

"I'm fine...really. I am." She hugged Ron and then Harry. "Honestly, I've been waiting for something like this. There was no way Lucius Malfoy was going to let his son remain in Azkaban. It was only a matter of time before he bought Draco's way out." When their eyes remained disbelieving, she became impatient. "Stop it! Both of you. I know you mean well, but this doesn't help. I just want..." She stopped herself and took a calming breath. Her voice quieted and softened. "It's not that I don't appreciate you. You know you two are my rock...my family. I just don't need you rushing to my side like I'm so fragile I'm going to..."

"Whoa! I thought you were simply name dropping when you said you were still friends with Harry Potter!"

Hermione felt her body sag with defeat at the sound of her latest conquest's voice. Her shoulders slumped, and her forehead fell into her right hand. She could literally feel Harry and Ron tense up before her.

"Who's your friend, Hermione?" Harry asked in a crisp and impatient voice.

Fuck! "Umm, this is...Clint..."

The shirtless blond stepped forward and thrust his hand out as he interrupted her. "It's Blake, actually. Blake Bothswell."

Hermione could feel intense heat creep up her face, knowing full well she was the color of a tomato as first Harry and then Ron shook the man's hand introducing themselves properly.

There was an awkward pause and after a minute Blake excused himself to get dressed.

"Hermione! What the hell?" Ron whispered, angrily.

"You promised us. No more one offs," Harry added as he collapsed exhaustedly onto the sofa.

"It was just...it's not like I... I mean I just ran out to grab dinner...I wasn't planning on..."

"Just stop, Hermione. That's it. You're seeing a mind healer...or a psychiatrist if you prefer a Muggle doctor, but you need help. And we aren't taking no for an answer any longer." Hermione stared at Harry who was looking at Ron for confirmation of his words.

"That's right, 'Mione. Enough is enough. Even if you can't see it, Harry and I can. You are on a fast path to self-destruction."

"How much did you drink last night?" Harry asked, a sad resignation in his voice.

Hermione didn't answer. She simply stared at her friends, her gaze shifting from Ron's blue eyes to Harry's green. Their expressions were hard and determined, and Hermione knew she couldn't talk her way out of it this time. They were right. As much as she hated to admit it, she knew they were.

"Maybe...maybe you're right. Maybe I could talk to someone...or join a group or something."

Harry closed his eyes and let out a breath. The tension escaping him was as plain as the glasses resting on the bridge of his nose.

"You mean it?" Ron asked.

Hermione fell onto the sofa next to Harry. "Yeah, I mean it. I just...I can't explain it. I get anxious at night sometimes and I just...I feel a loss of control of my life. When I bring a guy home, I get some of that control back. I'm calling the shots. I'm with him because I *want* to be with him." She swallowed. "But when I wake up, I feel dirty and used and...unworthy."

Hermione's eyes were welling but it wasn't until she looked up and saw the moisture in Ron's eyes, that her tears spilled over.

Harry grabbed her and pulled her to him, hugging her tightly. "You are none of those things, Hermione. You are brilliant and beautiful and the most decent, kindhearted woman I know."

Hermione hugged Harry in return and let the tears flow. After a minute she heard the click of the front door and looked up to see Ron walking back towards her. She realized he must have seen Blake out. He sat down on the other side of her, took her hand and gave her an earnest look. "You can't back out, Hermione. We need you to keep your word."

Hermione squeezed his hand. "I promise, Ron."

Two Years Later

Hermione stood at the front door of the mansion. She swallowed heavily and steeled her nerves and resolve before purposefully reaching up and pulling back on the massive door knocker. Instantly a house elf opened the door.

"I'm Hermione Granger. Mr. Malfoy is expecting me."

"Missus is expected. Please follow me." Hermione followed the house elf, who was clad in a Malfoy crested pillowcase, down the hall and through a large stained-glass door. Lucius Malfoy stood promptly, stepping around his desk.

"Miss Granger, thank you for coming. I can't tell you what it means to me...what it means to..."

Hermione held her hand up, interrupting him with a firm tone. "I'm not doing this for you or for your son. I'm doing it for myself. I'm doing it because my psychiatrist wants me to."

Lucius swallowed; his look uncomfortable. "I understand, but I thank you just the same." He gestured for her to sit on the leather chesterfield sofa and, after she was situated, sat in the matching wingback chair across from her. He opened his mouth to speak but was interrupted by the house elf popping back in with a tea tray. After the elf served them and left, Lucius asked with an appearance of sincerity, "How is that going? Your...therapy?"

Hermione swallowed the hot tea, finding it strengthened her resolve to be as forthright and honest as she had promised her doctor she would be. "It's going...well. I've come a long way in the past couple years."

Lucius set his saucer and cup on the table between them. "I can only imagine, Miss Granger...what this has been like for you." She didn't respond, not finding his statement worthy of one. After a minute he continued. "Do you like your healer? Pardon me, your psychiatrist? I don't mean to ask too personal a question, Miss Granger. It's only that, until we found a healer Draco connected with, one he trusted, until then we didn't see much improvement."

"Mr. Malfoy, I know why I chose to come today, but why did you ask me here? Certainly, it wasn't to discuss mind healers and doctors."

Lucius tilted his head in concession. "Straight to the point. I appreciate that." He stood and walked around his desk. "Not only do I wish to allow Draco to speak with you, but I wanted to show you something." He opened a drawer in his desk and pulled out a check. Seeing her expression and the rebuke forming on her lips, he quickly explained himself. "It's a donation, Miss Granger. A donation in your name and honor to the newly formed clinic for victims of rape and sexual abuse at St. Mungo's. The clinic is being publicly introduced to the community in two weeks. I would like your permission to name the clinic after you. Your strength and good name and..."

"No."

Lucius froze.

"No, to all of it, Mr. Malfoy. Make your donation. Call it what you will but leave me out of it. I'm not *happy* that I was a victim and I'm not *proud* that I'm better. I'm fucking *relieved* ! Besides, surviving your son's abuse is not what I want to be remembered for. I have much better reasons, and frankly far more important ones, to be known for. Getting over your son's criminality is not one of them, I assure you. So, no. I don't want my name in any way associated with your clinic."

Lucius was stunned. "Miss Granger, you do realize that you are looked up to by witches all over the UK. You are a war hero. You are a beacon of light to many. Imagine a young girl or woman has been attacked. Imagine the faith they would have in trusting a clinic named after you. Imagine the positive influence you would have."

"Pretty words, Mr. Malfoy."

"Call me Lucius, please."

"Pretty words, Lucius. But you aren't using my name to give your pet project credibility and merit. Frankly, I would much rather an entirely different clinic be developed. One where individuals are screened for mental illnesses and tendencies towards violence. I would prefer that rather than another clinic to help victims, we have a clinic to *prevent*

them. Perhaps if Draco had been screened and watched more closely given his family history, perhaps then I would never have been attacked."

Lucius' look was unwavering and stern. "Blaise Zabini was mentally sound and raped a multitude of girls."

Hermione snapped in response, "If you are going to tell me that a boy who *brutally sodomizes and rapes* multiple women is mentally sound, then I fear we need a dictionary, Lucius. For your definition and my own are very different. And I think *there* lies the problem with society." After a moment she added, "A famous muggle once said, 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.' That's what we need. Prevention and education. Education that *mentally sound* individuals are not violent. They do not rape."

After a moment, Lucius simply nodded. "You are, of course, correct, Miss Granger. I have been properly chastised."

Hermione felt herself calm and after recognizing that he appeared to be sincere, responded, "call me Hermione, please."

Lucius smiled. "Well then, Hermione. Perhaps we can do both. A clinic for treatment and a program for prevention and screening."

Hermione smirked. "Perhaps that's a start, Lucius."

Twenty minutes later Hermione felt, rather than saw, Draco's entrance. She knew he was coming, as her host had sent the house elf to retrieve him after Lucius had promised he wouldn't leave her alone with him. Not wanting to appear weak, she sat up straight and looked at the younger Malfoy. She couldn't help the racing of her heart. Despite not seeing him in four years, he looked very much the same as he had at Hogwarts. The long hair from when she had visited him was now cut short again and he still had his boyish good looks. It was hard to believe it had been six years since it had all happened. Sometimes it felt like yesterday and other times it felt like a lifetime ago.

His demeanor was completely different, however. He was nervous and shifted from foot to foot. He seemed at a loss for words, something his younger self never struggled with. "Hermione..." He coughed and looked at his father who was now sitting behind his desk, a good twenty feet away from them.

"Why don't you sit, Draco," Lucius softly suggested.

Draco lightly rolled his eyes as he sat in the same wingback chair his father had occupied moments before. "Sorry," he mumbled, glancing up at Hermione. "This is harder than I thought it would be."

Hermione didn't say anything.

"Look, I...I don't even know where to begin. No words can undo what I did. I don't deserve, and I'm not bothering to even ask for, forgiveness. But I regret what I did every day. I'm ashamed that I hurt you and lied to you and... I'm heartbroken and mortified that I physically touched you."

Hermione swallowed the lump in her throat. This was difficult. Hearing his voice and sitting across from him was much harder than she thought it would be. She had to fight her impulse to simply stand and leave. She had no way of knowing his sincerity. Truthfully, it didn't matter if he was sincere. She didn't care if he was sorry. It was neither here nor there.

Before she could say anything, he continued. "My mind healer tells me I need to be honest and forthcoming." He swallowed and looked up at her. "I have an illness. An illness that causes me to be obsessed with and...in love with the object of that obsession." He swallowed. "Which is, of course...you."

Hermione asked, "So you still? After all this time?"

Draco looked up at her, the warmth and adoration in his eyes all too familiar. It left her very uneasy. "I'll always feel this way about you, Hermione. There's no cure and it's unlikely my obsession will shift to

another. It's...not easy. My healer has helped me so much. I now understand that my belief and faith that you loved me was wrong. You don't love me, and you never will. It took me a very long time to accept that."

Hermione's heart clenched. "I don't know what to say about that, Draco."

He shrugged. "Nothing for you to say, really. It's unlikely you can even believe any words that come out of my mouth anyway. But I have to tell you, I'm sorry. I have so many regrets, but what I regret the most is that I hurt you. Physically and emotionally. I wish we could be together... I probably shouldn't say that, but it's the truth. The difference is that now the thought of forcing you or manipulating you in any way is abhorrent to me. I love you too much for that." He held his hand up when she was about to speak. "Please, let me get this off my chest and then you can speak your mind and leave here...never to see me again."

She clamped her mouth shut, a myriad of emotions bubbling within her. Emotions she had thought long gone.

"I know you think my love isn't real because it's obsessive and stems from an illness. But my healer says it's as real as any love that any person has for another. At least, to me it is." After a pause he said. "What I did was...criminal and unforgivable. I wish I could take it all back. I wish I had a time turner and could go back and shoot a stunner at myself before I... but I can't. I can't change what I did. But I'm not the same person I was. I have the same illness and I still love you, but I'm able to rationalize right from wrong and I'm able to accept that you will never want anything to do with me." He let out a breath and ran his hands along his trousers as he leaned back in his chair. "Okay, your turn." He seemed to brace himself as if he expected her to verbally and physically assault him.

Suddenly, the words she had intended to unleash on him felt like ash in her mouth. So, she toned them back a bit, but spoke deliberately and calmly. "Draco, while I believe you have a mental illness, I also

believe you have a cruelty in your nature. You would have never raped me, humiliated me in front of Blaise, or lied to me if you didn't. Let's not forget you attacked me before you were obsessed with me. It's not that your...love or obsession for me has a root in mental illness. I could accept that. And had you been a decent person, if you had actually been the person you *pretended* to be, I may have been able to...be your friend." She looked away and her voice dropped to a whisper. "Maybe even more." She shifted in her chair; her voice more forceful again. "The problem is that you are capable of such nastiness, brutality, and manipulation. I could forgive your illness, but not your nature. What you did to Harry was..." She paused and took a deep breath. "So, I don't forgive you, Draco. But...I no longer hate you. And I no longer wish you ill will."

Draco stared at her, hanging on every word and every expression on her face. "I understand, and I appreciate you coming today. You didn't have to do that."

"I didn't do it for you."

He shrugged. "Okay, fair enough." He smiled lightly. "Do you mind if I ask how you are? I was told you are in therapy. I hope...I really hope you are better. I really want you to be happy... more than anything."

Her tone was short and factual. "I have trust issues and a need to be in control of everything in my life. But...I'm better. Harry and Ron have been...amazing."

"Well, I'm glad you have them."

She let out a humorless laugh. "I don't believe you, Draco. You hate Harry and Ron and I'm sure you hate that they are in my life."

Draco smiled sadly. "I used to hate them, but not anymore. I've grown up, Hermione. I've outgrown that rivalry, but I'll admit to being jealous. They get to be in your life. I only know what I read and what others tell me about you." Sensing her uneasiness, he changed the subject. "What did you and my father talk about? He had you to

himself for quite a while." He looked back over his shoulder towards Lucius who was busy working on something at his desk.

Hermione shook her head. "He had a ridiculous proposal for me."

Draco smiled widely. "Don't tell me he pitched the abused victim clinic to you?" He laughed. "I can tell by your face he did! Ha! I told him you would want no part of it."

Hermione was surprised. "You did?"

Draco smirked. "Please. That's not you, I told him you wouldn't want your name attached to it in any way, even if it was a worthy cause."

"It's not that it's not a good project and it's not that there aren't many women and girls out there who could benefit from such an offering, it's just that..."

"You would rather not be remembered as a victim. I told him as much."

Hermione stared at the blond before responding. "Yes, exactly." She shook her head lightly. "I need to go."

Draco's eyes shot up to hers, a hint of desperation in them. Then he closed them and reopened them again, this time they were soft and calm. "Of course." He stood and offered his hand to help her stand. She didn't take it.

Lucius stood from the other side of the room and approached them. "Hermione, thank you for coming."

Hermione nodded in response.

"I'll see you out," Lucius said as he gestured towards the door.

"Goodbye, Hermione." Draco said simply but with a trace of undeniable sadness in his voice.

"Goodbye." She said in simple response before leaving the room.

The minute she Apparated into her apartment, Harry and Ron were on her, asking what happened, what was said and was she okay.

After filling them in on the main points, she headed to the kitchen to make tea, the men hot on her heels. "Well, how do you feel? Are you upset? Are you glad you went?"

"Honestly, I'm just glad the visit is over. I said what I needed to say and so did he. Although every word out of his mouth could have just been more lies and attempts at manipulation. There is no way of knowing with him." She pulled cups out of the cabinet and after setting them on the counter, paused. "He always knew the right things to say. He knew how to play me. I have to believe it's no different now."

She turned back towards them. "Enough about Draco Malfoy. He's a closed chapter in my life and it's time to move on."

Two Years Later

"Checkmate," Draco gloated as her queen fell to the board, impaling herself on her sword. Her king had nowhere to go.

"That's it. I'm never playing with you again."

Draco chuckled. "You said that last time."

Hermione shrugged. "Well, this time I mean it."

"Yeah, until you don't. You can't stand not being exceptional at whatever you put your mind to. This is no different."

Hermione ignored him and stood, walking towards the windows overlooking the grounds. "If only it wasn't raining. I really enjoy your gardens."

"The rain is sure to stop. We can go out next time you visit," he said simply.

Hermione looked back over her shoulder at him. "I shouldn't be visiting you at all, Draco." She didn't miss the pain on his face at her words.

"It would be understandable for you to walk away from me for good. I don't deserve your friendship, even if I am grateful for it."

"I think your father had his sight on this very thing. Constantly inviting me over to work on the new mental health screening program, all the while knowing it would afford you more opportunities to spend time with me."

"You could have said no. You didn't have to come. You didn't have to agree to see me."

Hermione shrugged. "I know."

"So, why did you?" he asked boldly.

"I didn't see the harm in seeing you as long as Lucius was around."

Draco looked around the room. "He's not here now."

"Yes, thank you for pointing that out, Draco."

"Why can't you just admit you like me... as a friend."

"My psychiatrist doesn't like me spending time with you. He says it's fine for me to forgive you, but that I shouldn't..."

"That's only his opinion." He stepped towards her. "We aren't doing anything wrong. You see me once every couple of weeks, for an hour or two. You've become...a friend. I feel so incredibly lucky that you even speak to me, much less spend any time with me."

"I should go."

"Please don't. Can't you stay a little longer?"

"I have a date. I need to go and get ready."

"You have a...?"

"Yes, Draco. A date." She replied a little more harshly than she intended and then instantly felt guilty when she saw the hurt on his face.

After a second, he composed himself. "That's good. I'm glad you are going on dates. You deserve to be happy."

She knew he was saying what was right instead of what was true. "I'm sorry, Draco. I shouldn't be visiting you. This isn't fair to you..."

"Hermione, it's fine...really. Your visits mean so much to me. We have fun, don't we? I'll understand if you never step foot in the manor again, but I hope you'll be back."

Two Years Later

"Again?" Harry's voice was mixed with disbelief and anger. "You're going there again? You were just there this weekend."

Hermione cringed internally. She hadn't meant to tell them she was going back to the Manor tonight. "I didn't realize you were keeping tabs on my extracurricular activities." She slowly set down her fork and raised her eyes to her two best friends with whom she was sharing a lunch date.

Ron's mouth was hanging open unbecomingly, partially masticated food visible. She swallowed a gag and shifted her gaze to Harry, his face said it all, but his next words made her flinch. "What's wrong with you?"

She sniffed primly before calmly stating, "There's nothing wrong with me. It's been over four years since I first visited with him. I've seen

him almost weekly. If something sinister was going to happen, it would have by now."

"You're being foolish. You're setting yourself up to get hurt again!" Harry whispered heatedly, not wanting to draw attention to their table.

"Don't..." Ron trailed off before taking a steadying breath. "Maybe you should go back to your psychiatrist, Hermione. What you're doing is just...you're friends with the man who raped and humiliated you...that's...it's just not right."

"I agree with Ron." Harry's voice had softened, now it was laced with the concern and pity she so hated to hear.

Hermione felt her nose start tingling with the threat of tears. She understood what they were saying, she really did. She didn't know how to explain to them the way Draco made her feel. It was hard to ignore that type of dedication. It was hard to walk away from his looks filled with adoration and longing and love and devotion.

She knew it was so, so wrong of her...but she didn't know how to walk away and stay away. She found herself missing him if it was too long between visits.

To placate them, she whispered, "I'll think on it."

"Harry and Ron want me to start seeing my psychiatrist again. They don't like me spending so much time with you."

"Did you explain we are simply very good friends? It's not like there is anything more than friendship between us."

"They think I should be dating more. I'm twenty-seven years old years old. Ron and Harry have wives and children."

"Yes, and at twenty-seven you are the youngest department head in Ministry history. To be the Head of the Department of International Magic Cooperation is quite an accomplishment. Shacklebolt told Father you would be the next Minister of Magic. You've always been more career focused than your friends."

She shrugged.

He stopped beside her as she bent to pick up a fallen rose petal off the path they were walking on. "What's wrong, Hermione. Tell me. You've been acting strangely all day."

She started walking again, not saying anything.

He pressed, "You know, you are constantly insisting I be forthcoming about my feelings. I hide nothing from you when you ask of it of me. I have absolutely no secrets from you. Yet you clam up and hide your own feelings and thoughts from me on a regular basis. I realize it's a leap of faith on your part to trust me...given our history. But we've been friends for four years now, good friends for two. What are you afraid I'm going to do? Why do you hide your thoughts from me sometimes? You know I love you more than the air I breathe and only want your happiness."

"I've decided I need to stop coming to see you, Draco. The past two years I've spent less and less time with my other friends because I'm always over here. I've only been on four dates in two years. I need to be more available to my other friends. I need to meet new people. Find a man I can build a life with."

"And you can't do those things and still be my friend?"

She swallowed as she turned away from him, sitting on the bench overlooking the lake. "Draco, it's complicated. I... the more time I spend with you, the less I want to spend with others."

Draco crouched in front of her, his heart was pounding in his chest. "And you need to move on with your life. Which you can't do with me

in it?"

Hermione's eyes darted up to his. "You've become my best friend, Draco. But you are also the man who potioned me numerous times and raped me. How can I be your friend? How did I let it come to this? How did I let myself...care for you again? You aren't good for me!"

Draco scoffed. "We've been friends for four years and I haven't more than touched your hand. I care about you more than probably anyone else in your life. I breathe and live consumed with thoughts of you and your happiness. I would die for you. How is that not good for you?"

Hermione swallowed. "There is a part of me that wonders...it wonders if you still had a wand, would you imperious me again? Would you try to potion me again? If you had it at your disposal? Do you really care about me? Or are you still trying to manipulate me into a relationship with you?"

He flinched at her words, a scowl creeping over his face. "What the *fuck* have you been doing visiting me for the past four years if you truly think I could still be capable of that, Hermione?" He stood and turned his back to her.

"I don't have an answer that makes any sense," she responded simply.

"Try," he snapped. "And dig deep for a bit of that truthfulness and forthcoming that you demand from me on a regular basis."

"You're easy to be with, Draco. We enjoy the same books and share the same interests. You are funny and warm and kind and treat me like a prin..." She blanched.

Fucking hell, he thought as he closed his eyes and that all too familiar guilt washed over him again.

After a minute, she continued. "I just... couldn't stop myself from visiting you. I needed to forgive you so that I could move on with my life. But somehow, I lost my way and..."

"If I had never attacked you, could you love me, Hermione? Despite my illness? If I hadn't been such a monster, could you have grown to love this man standing before you who loves you more than anything?"

She laughed without humor. "So easily, Draco. But you *did* attack me. And I don't know that the part of you that was okay with doing something so terrible and heinous isn't just hiding. When the day comes that you get your wand back, what will you do? What if we have a fight and I am no longer your friend? What would you do then? What evils could you be capable of? Everything is easy right now because your options are so limited. You have no choice but to accept what I offer you. But if or when you have the ability to take what I don't freely give, what then? What will you be capable of?"

"You seem to be under the false impression that I don't have access to my magic, Hermione."

"What do you mean? You don't have a wand. When you were released you were told you couldn't have it back."

Hermione's jaw fell when Draco held his hand out to his side and several of Hermione's favorite yellow roses flew through to the air and into his hand.

"Non-verbal and wandless? How did you..."

"You won't like it, Hermione," he responded simply as he held the flowers out to her.

She took them absently, still stunned by what he had just demonstrated. "Tell me," she demanded.

Draco let out a breath and answered hesitantly. "Severus taught me. After his release. He visits frequently from Paris."

Hermione felt bile rise into her throat. "Snape." She threw the flowers to the ground. "Of course. The co-creator of your potion and the enabler of your attacks on me. The other master manipulator." She stood and walked away, her back to him as she looked towards the stables.

"He's my Godfather, Hermione. He cares about me almost as much as my parents. I have very few people who care about me. I wasn't about to turn him away. He has been invaluable to me these past few years."

"How often does he come?"

"For a while it was weekly, but now that he is married, so it's not as often."

"How did I never see him here?"

"He didn't want to see you, Hermione. He kept to parts of the manor that you and I don't visit. He spent a lot of time with father."

"Why didn't you tell me he was visiting?"

"I was afraid you wouldn't come if you knew he was around."

"You're damn right, I wouldn't."

"So, you can forgive me for attacking you, but you can't forgive him for knowing about it?"

"Draco, Snape was a grown man and a teacher! It was his job to protect me, not to help you secure time with me and to cover for you. He helped you create that god-awful potion. Not only that, he knew about the familial mental illness. He should have told your parents what was going on."

"I hope that one day you'll let him apologize and explain. He regrets everything and feels guilty for his part in it all. He has yet to forgive himself for not intervening and not stopping me."

"I don't believe that." She ran her hands through her hair. "This is so fucked up." Peeking back over her shoulder, she ranted, "All this time I've let myself be alone with you, assuming you to be without the ability to harm me in any way and here you've been capable of wandless and non-verbal magic. To top it off, a Master Potioneer who helped you develop the lust potion and assisted you in covering your tracks, so you could use it on *me*, has been visiting you while I was here." She shook her head and began to walk briskly towards the manor. "I'm such a fool. I've learned nothing."

Draco rushed to keep up with her. "Yes, I've been capable of magic and yet I've done nothing to you. Go to St. Mungo's and get yourself checked if you don't believe me."

"Good idea, I think I will!" She suddenly stopped and turned back towards him. "This is over, Draco. I won't be visiting you anymore. I've been reckless and foolish."

Draco's own emotions were battling for supremacy. Anger, disappointment, resentment, jealousy... but it was heartbreak that won. His voice cracked with emotion. "I thought we had become friends and, somehow, I had believed you trusted me. I was the one who was a fool. I don't think my heart can take any more disappointment. This is unbearable. Please don't come back." He turned and walked away from her. Heading towards the stables.

Hermione watched him walk away, her own heartbreak threatening to consume her.

Two Weeks Later

"What are you doing here?" Draco's look was weary. Hermione couldn't help but notice dark circles under his eyes. It didn't appear he was sleeping any better than she was.

"I don't really know," she offered, disgusted with how lame she sounded.

Not saying anything, he gestured to the chair she usually sat in when she visited. When she cautiously accepted, he sat opposite her, his hands in his lap, trembling with anticipation. He hadn't thought he would ever see her again.

"I've missed you so much," he said so quietly she almost didn't hear him.

Hating herself for admitting it, she responded, "I've missed you as well." She looked around the room. "Is Snape here?"

Draco shook his head as he sighed. "No. He doesn't come around much anymore. He has a son now."

Hermione had nothing kind to say about that, so she said nothing.

"I'm sorry for..."

"I went to St. Mungo's."

They both paused and looked at each other awkwardly.

"You go first," Draco suggested.

Hermione sighed and then nodded. "I went to St. Mungo's. I decided that if they couldn't find evidence of anything, that I would consider resuming our friendship."

"I told you I hadn't done anything to you." He looked down. "But I don't blame you for not trusting me."

"Here's the thing, Draco. I want to believe you. I want to trust you. I like coming here. I love spending..." She shook her head. "Yet, despite all that. I just can't. I can't believe you. I can't trust you."

Draco closed his eyes. "Why are you here, Hermione?"

"To say I'm sorry. To say goodbye. I should have stayed away all these years. It can't have helped you get well and work through your obsession if I was always here. I've held myself back as well. I haven't moved on with my life."

He didn't say anything, but Hermione's heart nearly broke in two when she noticed a tear roll down Draco's cheek. He wouldn't look up, his eyes staring into his lap.

"I'm taking an extended vacation. I have over two months accumulated."

Draco's voice was shaky. "Where will you go?"

"I want to travel Europe and some of Asia. I think going away will help me stop thinking about you. And staying away will hopefully help you stop thinking about me."

Draco shook his head. "It won't make a difference, for me, anyway. My disease won't let me stop thinking about you. The less I see you, the worse it gets. When you are here, and I can trust that you are coming to visit me, I can focus on other things. I can read and I can study. I can write and I can focus on my art."

"I'm sorry about that, Draco. Truly. I don't want you to suffer. Or hurt. But I want a family. I want a husband and children. I want a life."

Unable to hear anymore, Draco stood as he snapped. "This is rubbish! Can you even hear yourself?"

Hermione's eyes grew wide as he began to pace.

"Two weeks ago, you admitted that I was your best friend. You know how I feel about you. You know that I would move heaven and earth for you if I could. You also know that I haven't done anything to you with my wandless magic, thanks to your visit to St. Mungo's to confirm. I'm not that confused seventeen-year-old, sex crazed, hormonal kid who didn't understand what was happening to him!"

He crouched in front of her and took her hands. "Look at me!" He demanded.

Hermione's heart clenched and it started to thrum as fast as butterfly wings when she met his eyes. Eyes that were fierce with determination. "I. Love. You." His words were punctuated. "Has it occurred to you that even if I didn't have this diagnosis, that I would still love you? Can I tell you why that might be?"

Hermione sat stunned. He hadn't been this impassioned about anything in a long time. She nodded.

"You are brilliant. I love discussing theories of time travel and Arithmancy. I love it when we debate the translations of Ancient Runes. I love it that we enjoy the same fiction. I love it when we spend hours doing nothing but going through magical theory books in my library. I love the way your forehead crinkles and you suck in your bottom lip when you find something that excites you. I love the way you cross your legs and wiggle your foot when you are engrossed in a book."

Hermione closed her eyes. "Draco, I..."

"Let me finish!" When her eyes shot back to his and she didn't say anything, he continued. "I love the way you don't take crap from anyone, including my Father. I love your work ethic and all that you have accomplished at the Ministry. I love that you helped Harry Potter defeat that maniacal monster! I love that because you and Potter spoke on my parent's behalf, they didn't end up in Azkaban. I love your heart and its infinite ability to love every creature who has been unfairly used or taken for granted. I love your passion for werewolf rights. I love that you don't bore me intellectually."

He paused. "Yes, I have this diagnosis. And yes, you are the object of my obsession. But our compatibility has nothing to do with it. What I feel for you now...it's real, Hermione. It's *real*! You are... beautiful. Everything about you. From the freckles on your nose to the way your eyes reflect shades of honey in the sun. From your crooked

middle finger with its permanent ink stain, to your ridiculous yet magnificent hair. The way you never wear heels or dresses that reveal your curves because you insist on being appreciated for your mind instead of your feminine beauty."

Her took her hand and placed it over his heart. "This belongs to you, Hermione. As well as the flesh that it feeds. I am yours. Forever. I love you. I was wrong all those years ago. You weren't made for me. I was made for you! Don't you understand?"

Hermione started to cry.

"Marry me, Hermione. Let me love you. Have a family with me. Do you even know how much I would love to have children with you? How much I would love them? Children born from your womb and my seed? Please don't walk away from me. Please don't. Let me spend the rest of my life making you happy."

When Draco became quiet, Hermione stared at him. Her breathing was quick as she absorbed his words. Every single one of them.

His words were hesitant, as though he was afraid of their consequences. "Do you...do you love me? Even a little bit?"

Suddenly Hermione's arms were wrapped around him and she was sobbing onto his shoulder. She fell forward and he pulled her into his lap as he closed his eyes and rocked her. Afraid he would wake up any minute to find it was all a dream.

"Shh, don't cry, kitten. Please don't cry."

Hermione pulled back just enough to take his face in her hands. "I do love you, Draco. I don't know how it happened. But I do. You are not bad for me. Not anymore."

Two Days Later – Malfoy Manor

What surprised Hermione the most was that she wasn't nervous. She imagined this day ever since she was a little girl, and in it she always thought that she'd have butterflies in her belly and be trembling. However, she was perfectly calm.

It had been a whirlwind two days. She had told Draco yes. Yes, she would marry him. When they approached his parents, it was obvious that Narcissa was overjoyed. Lucius, while seemingly pleased, was more reserved. After a stiff nod of acceptance to their announcement, he asked what she needed from them to be sure.

He had been correct; she did have questions as well as a stipulation. First, she expected that Snape would never be allowed in the manor when she or any future children were present. That demand was met with a quick and understanding affirmative. Narcissa stating that they could visit the Snapes in France any time they wanted and there was no burning need for him to visit them at their home. If he were coming to England, they could set them up at their townhouse in London, versus him staying at the Manor.

Her most burning question had brought Draco up short; it was obvious that he had never considered it before – What was the risk of their children having the same mental disease Draco was cursed with?

Hermione had been surprised when Narcissa had beamed brilliantly at her and Lucius had uncharacteristically jumped up from his seat on the davenport to retrieve a sheaf of parchment. She had been informed that, due to Draco's young onset of the disease, they had been funding much research at St. Mungo's. There had been a breakthrough with the curse in the form of a potion that a child could take when they turned eleven-years-old.

" Even though Draco cannot benefit from it, it is still a huge development," Lucius exclaimed in what Hermione would have called excitement. "Any children you and Draco would have would be able to take the preventative potion which, in layman's terms, would make the child immune to the curse developing."

"Like Muggle immunizations?" Hermione found herself fascinated. A potion that worked as an immunization? How...forward!

She had taken the paperwork and research home with her that night and penned the head of the medical research staff before going to bed. When she heard back the following afternoon that they were still researching a cure but were confident in the potion's ability to prevent the curse from taking root, she knew that she wouldn't hold herself back. She wanted to be with Draco – she loved him as well as he loved her.

Which is why, a little over 48 hours since his spontaneous proposal, Hermione was standing in front of a full-length mirror in a dressing suite in the West Wing of Malfoy Manor. It was to be her personal dressing suite from here on out.

There was a light knock at the door and Hermione turned to find a beautifully made up Narcissa Malfoy smiling serenely at her. "Are you ready, my dear?"

Hermione nodded and returned the soft smile, "I am."

Two Days Later – The Burrow

Hermione fidgeted with the diamond on her left finger. It was slightly bigger than maybe she would have picked for herself, but the intricate and old-fashioned design couldn't have been more perfect. The beautiful matching wedding band molded directly against the engagement ring and looked to be a part of it flawlessly. Taking a deep breath, she plastered a smile on her face and swung open the gate on the far end of the property.

The creak of the weather worn and aged hinges alerted her surrogate family to her arrival. Shouts of, "Hey Hermione!" and "'Mione!" greeted her ears and her tummy tightened uncomfortably as she kept her smile firmly in place and raised her hand in a show of hello. She knew that this unassuming Sunday luncheon was going

to turn ugly. No one was ever going to fully understand the decision she had made.

If she was honest with herself, she didn't blame them. Deep in the recesses of her logical and sane mind, she knew that what she was doing was insane. Draco Malfoy had assaulted her, raped her over and over again, and quite literally fucked up her life to the nth degree.

When it came down to it, however, what he had shown her over the last handful of years was that she was it for him. He worshipped her, he loved her, he was...he was *obsessed* with her. Somehow, his devotion to her made her feel powerful. His belief in her gave her strength. Despite everything, he made her a better person. He loved her, but he was brutally honest with her when she was wrong. She could bounce work ideas off him and his analysis and input was always intelligent and well thought out. His debates with her only made her arguments stronger and she was excelling at work even more than before because of it. She was sleeping better and focusing better. She laughed more. She smiled more. She lived more.

Maybe she was insane. But her life was richer and more fulfilling because of Draco Malfoy. And how could she turn away from someone who loved her so unconditionally?! He would never stray. He would never leave her. He would forever be devoted to her. He was smart and witty, and he challenged her intellectually in a way that fed her soul. He was hers. She just couldn't walk away from that.

"You look very pensive today, Hermione." Molly startled her out of her reverie as she reached the ramshackle tables laden with food. Everyone had obviously just sat down to eat and there was a stasis charm over the food. They had been waiting for her to arrive. "Knut for your thoughts?"

"Oh," Hermione tilted her head, conscious to keep her voice light as she waved her hand in a noncommittal gesture. "The food looks

great!" The change of subject was a bit forced and she nervously reached for the back of her chair when a low whistle came from across the table. Charlie was home for the weekend and Hermione swallowed hard when she realized his gaze was homed in on the diamond adorning her left hand.

"I didn't know you were seeing anyone, Granger!" Charlie gave her a wolfish grin and pointed at the ring. "Who's the lucky guy?"

The silence at the table was deafening for a split second as Hermione, who hadn't even sat down yet, clasped her hands together in a poor attempt to hide it. She had been hoping it would take a little longer for people to notice.

She glanced around the table, noticing Ginny's face drain of color just before Harry and Ron exchanged furious glances. Molly's lower lip was trembling, and Arthur had removed his glasses and was wiping them with his shirt, obviously preparing for the explosion he suspected was about to take place.

"Hermione," it was Ginny who broke the silence, "tell me you didn't."

"She obviously did," Ron said furiously.

"Hermione, you *can't* ," Harry's voice was hoarse. "I just...why would you even want to?"

Hermione felt her cheeks grow hot. She had known that this would be their reaction, but it still made her feel a mix of humiliation and anger. "Because he loves me," she whispered it, but her voice was firm.

"He doesn't! He wants to control you, he *hurt* you!" Harry roared, jumping to his feet. Ginny was silently crying, and Ron's mouth was opening and closing like a fish out of water.

Tears splashed down Hermione's face even as her ire grew. "He did...years ago. And... and he paid for it. But you don't know him like

I do – you don't understand what he's been through –"

"Would you listen to yourself? You are insane, Hermione!"

She could no longer keep ahold of her fury. Her whole body was shaking as she forcefully told her friend, "No, Harry. I am not. You tell me to listen to myself, but you never take the time to listen to me! I went through something awful and traumatic and I survived it. I dealt with it poorly, but I got the help that I needed and was able to do something amazing – I was able to forgive him. I *forgive him* ! He has had every chance over the last six years to hurt me again and he hasn't taken it. I am the object of his obsession, yes, but it is no longer a hurtful obsession to me! To me it's just utter devotion and adoration. He is the only one that hurts! He loves me! So much that he has taken the scraps I've been willing to give him over the years. Now, though...now I realize that I love him, too. And I want to move on with my life – fully. And I want it to be with him."

The silence that fell over the table when she informed them she loved Draco Malfoy was absolute. Harry all but fell back into his seat as Ron buried his face in his hands, rubbing his fingers over his forehead in what appeared to be disbelief.

"I won't let you marry him, Hermione," Harry whispered after the longest minute of her life.

Tears pricked her nose as she gripped the back on the chair so tightly her knuckles were white. Draco had been right, and she was glad she had agreed to marry in the Malfoy Gardens a mere two days after he proposed. She had filed the paperwork with the ministry the very next afternoon and had requested his house arrest be lifted as the only reason he was really on it was because he was a potential danger to her. The paperwork had been approved ten days later – Draco Malfoy was free, and they were leaving in the morning for their honeymoon to Taha'a in French Polynesia – a wedding gift from her cautiously happy in laws.

"Even if it was your choice, Harry Potter, you're too late."

There was a collective intake of breath at the table and most mouths dropped open. Hermione pushed herself away from the table.

"What do you mean, 'too late'?" Ron rasped.

"Exactly what it sounds like," Hermione choked. "I'm already married. Congratulations, right?" She couldn't help the hurt and sarcasm that flooded her voice. "I can't do this – I...I have to go. It was a mistake to come."

Draco was holding her in his arms and stroking her hair lovingly when Tinny popped into their suite a few hours later. "Yous has guests, Mistress," the little elf informed them.

Surprised, both Hermione and Draco sat up in their bed. "Who?" Hermione asked in a tear-roughened voice.

"Misters Potter and Weasley, Mistress."

She looked to Draco, their eyes locking. He had been so wonderful with her when she had come back almost hysterical in her grief. Gentle and understanding and encouraging, he had told her that her friends loved her, and they would come around. And, while it would likely never be perfect, they would see over time that he just wanted her happiness and would do everything to make sure she had it. It would win them over in the end.

Hermione leaned into his touch when Draco smoothed an unruly lock of hair out of her face and behind her ear. "Show them to my wife's parlor, Tinny."

The elf winked out of existence after giving a low bow, and after a few words of encouragement from Draco, Hermione found herself cleaned up and sitting across from her two oldest friends.

"We went to your apartment, but your landlord said you moved out," Harry said quietly.

"Well, it made sense to actually move in with my husband," Hermione said a bit waspishly.

Ron flinched at her tone of voice. They were sitting in small parlor at Malfoy Manor - technically it was Hermione's parlor – in her and Draco's wing. When had her life become so surreal?

"Yeah...yeah, I guess," Harry answered uncomfortably.

"Look, 'Mione," Ron pressed after a moment of silence. "We're sorry."

She raised a lone eyebrow, surprised. "Are you?"

"Yeah," Ron cleared his throat. "We obviously...we obviously are never going to understand fully...but you...you're our Hermione."

Tears again. Merlin, she was sick of crying.

"What Ron means is that...we love you, Hermione," Harry said softly. "And we don't want to lose you. So, if that means supporting you in this...this marriage..." He trailed off. "Look, I can't say we agree or that we like it or that we even understand it. But we love you...you know?"

She nodded as tears splashed down her cheeks. It was good enough for now, they could work on more later...but it was good enough for now.

The champagne caused a tingle on his tongue and he felt like laughing. Never in his life had he been this happy. Taha'a was truly the most beautiful place he had ever been, and it didn't even phase him. The view of the crystal teal water was magnificent, the five-star wizarding hotel sublime. But none of that mattered. None of that meant anything.

Finally. He had her.

10 years. 4 weeks. 2 days. He glanced at his watch, and 11 hours.

That was how long it had been. How long it had been since that fateful moment in the Room of Requirement. How long it had been since his life's trajectory took a huge detour.

It was hard to believe. Draco smiled to himself as he took another glorious sip.

No, it wasn't that hard to believe, he teased himself. He had known. All those years ago and all the years since then, he knew. Like he was seer or something, he just knew she would be his.

He meant what he told her. She wasn't made for him. It was always he who had been made for her. But it came down to the same thing. They were simply meant to be together and now they would be. Forever. No more waiting for the wards to alert him of her arrival. No more moments of doubt that he would ever see her again. And no more polyjuice'd whores.

He still had mixed feelings about the other women. He did harbor a little guilt. But it had been so easy! The bushy haired seductress shed hairs all over the Manor every time she visited! It was nothing to collect them. To use them. To send them to his Godfather who brewed the potion. Draco didn't use it right away. He had resisted. He respected the woman he loved. But over time, it was just too much temptation. And while the whores were fine and scratched the itch, they never acted right. He was never satisfied. They weren't ... her.

His father had been understanding about Draco's physical need but had been less than pleased about the potion. Ultimately, he had supported Draco, but Lucius felt sleeping with Hermione's mirror image wasn't healthy and wasn't conducive to his heir's mental progress. Of course, Narcissa never knew any of it. Lucius wouldn't allow it and Draco couldn't have borne her disappointment.

Draco closed his eyes and drew in a big deep breath of freedom and complacency through his nose. He blew out any flickering of guilt about how he got here. How could he regret anything that led to this moment? His ultimate happiness. His Utopia. Hermione was finally his.

"Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?" she asked as she sidled up beside him and took in the sun setting over the water.

He only had eyes on her when he said without a glimmer of falsity, "Never." His gaze danced down to find she was wearing a forest green silk gown. She had never looked lovelier.

He turned to face her, cradling her cheeks in his long fingers. Their eyes met softly before he leaned down and placed a delicate kiss on her supple lips. He wondered if it would finally happen. Would she have sex with him? She hadn't yet. Despite that they had been married for almost a week. He hadn't pressured her in any way.

"Draco...I,"

"It's okay, Hermione, I can only imagine what you are going through right now. If it's still too soon, I can wait. We aren't in any hurry. Sex isn't important to me. Hasn't been for a long time."

Hermione could see in his eyes that he spoke the truth and she would be lying if she said his words didn't relax her.

He faintly smiled as his thumb stroked her bottom lip. "For you, when we make love, it will be our first time."

When his eyes began to well, Hermione pulled his forehead down to hers. "Shh, it's okay, Draco. I love you. It will be fine."

His steel blue irises met her honeyed ones as he whispered, "but it's my first time with you as well, love. My first time when you are...you. For the first time it will be real, Hermione."

Hermione smiled as she wrapped her arms around him and held him close. He felt like home. She closed her eyes in bliss when his arms enveloped her in return. This was right. And yes, her husband had hurt her many years ago. Yes, he had an illness. But he loved her more than any other man ever had or ever would. Whatever the catalyst for that love, she had it. It was a gift. And in this moment, she was the luckiest witch in the world.

His hands felt strong and warm as they rubbed her back through the silky fabric. His lips languorously trailed kisses along her jaw and down her neck. Her eyes fluttered closed as her head fell back and she felt her strength and any doubt leave her.

Sensing her acquiescence, Draco scooped her up bridal style and carried her into the suite and to the king sized, canopied bed. Laying her down gently, he stepped back and watched her as he began to unbutton his shirt. Her gaze never left his as he undressed. Down to nothing but his boxers, he sat on the edge of the bed as he pulled her hand into his. When she squeezed it in reassurance, he lay down facing her.

She shimmied closer and kissed him deeply. After a minute, he rolled her onto her back as his mouth continued to devour hers while he maintained most of his weight on his forearms. Her fingers were delicate as they skimmed up and down his back and her lips were gentle. A sense of disquiet settled over him as he became a bit more assertive. Pressing up onto his knees so that he was straddling her thighs, he kept his eyes locked with hers as his fingers skimmed down her sides and began to bunch her nightgown slowly up her body. She lifted her hips and then arched her back making it easy for him to slip it over her head and onto the floor beside them. Unable to resist anymore, his focus moved to her glorious breasts. They were his favorite physical feature of her body. They had become larger over the years and he frequently engaged in breast play when he was with her. Well, with the whores, that is.

Dipping down, he sucked her right peak into his warm mouth causing a delicious moan to escape her lips. Ahh, he thought to himself,

there it is. Polyjuice did change the voice – the whores never could get it right. He liked *her* noises. He wanted her to squirm with need.

His right hand fondled her left nipple as his left hand made its way down between her legs where he rubbed the damp crotch of her knickers. Another little gasp from her lips was all he needed to tuck his fingers under the fabric and massage her dewy folds. His mouth and fingers became more aggressive as her hips began to gyrate. Sliding the skimpy fabric down her thighs, Draco kissed his way down her belly as he cradled his shoulders between her knees. Drawing them up and apart, he opened his eyes to her wet and spread open cunt. Taking a whiff of the familiar sent, he latched his mouth onto her clit causing another moan to meet his ears. Her hands gently threaded through his hair and once again Draco felt an edge of concern. Something wasn't right. She wasn't... he didn't really know. When his fingers slid into her core, she let out a little mewl. When he nibbled on her clit once again, her body began to tremble as she climaxed.

Sliding up her body, he kept her legs spread as he pressed his desperate cock into her. Still coming down from her orgasm, her eyes were slightly glazed as he began to move desperately in and out of her. Her fingers gently stroked his shoulders before threading down his chest. But this wasn't right, and Draco began to panic. Why wasn't this the bliss of his youth? Why didn't he feel the way he did before when he was inside of her? Thrusting wildly, he realized the problem. *Fuck!* Just wanting to be finished, he closed his eyes and pumped three more times before exploding inside her.

Neither said anything as he fell into the mattress next to her, his eyes closed and his breathing heavy. When he finally opened them, it was to find hers watching him. Forcing himself to say what he knew she needed to hear, he whispered, "That was amazing, kitten. I love you soo much!" It wasn't a lie. He did love her. More than words could say. It just wasn't the whole truth.

"I love you, too," she whispered as he pulled her to him and kissed the top of her head.

He held her until he could hear the soft snores of a deep slumber escaping her mouth. Gently pulling away, he slid out of bed and padded to the en-suite where he found his robe and pulled it on. Walking to the sink he splashed cold water on his face before standing upright and staring at his reflection.

"So close, Draco. So close," he whispered to himself. Despite the rapid thrumming of his heart, he told himself not to panic. But how could he not? The sex he had just experienced was no better than the sex with the whores. Worse in some ways. And he knew why. He let out a frustrated growl as he tossed the face towel on the counter. Why hadn't he figured this out before? How could he have missed something that was now so obvious!

Peeking back into the bedroom, he scribbled a note and tiptoed to the balcony. Ringing the small bell, a flurry of wings flew promptly toward him. He quickly fastened the note to the owl's leg. "That's for Severus Snape, and for his eyes only. Don't leave until he reads it and responds." The bird was gone in a flash.

Telling himself it would be okay and that his Godfather would help him, Draco mourned what he wanted and couldn't have. He loved his wife. He loved her mind. He loved her beauty and her wit. He adored her stubbornness and her fight for all that was right in the world. But he loved the part of her that she wasn't consciously aware of just as much. That part of her that was desperate for him. That couldn't bare not touching him. That aggressive and needy witch that was buried deep in her psyche. *Princess!* He needed Princess every bit as much as he needed Hermione.

It was two days later when the owl returned with a package. A package that contained a box of chocolate truffles and a small bottle of Elven Wine. There was a note:

Best wishes to the Bride and Groom. Thank you for traveling with Felicia's Exotic Portkey travel. We wish you a lifetime of happiness and many wonderful travels ahead. PS- Try the

chocolates first. The wine compliments the aftertaste, deliciously!

Hermione stepped out onto the balcony and looked in Draco's hands. "We got a package?"

Draco shrugged. "Yeah, some chocolates and wine. A little kissing up from the portkey company. Clearly they want our future business."

Hermione gave him a curious look as she stepped closer. Her eyes lit up when she saw the chocolates. "I love truffles!"

He handed her the box. "All yours then, kitten."

He watched her cautiously as she plucked a round dome of sweetness out of the box and popped it into her mouth. Her chewing slowed as her eyes grew wide and she tossed the box aside.

"Draco," she moaned as she threw herself at him.

His lip curled into a smirk as he gave her a crooked smile. "Hello, Princess. It's been a while."

Draco sighed as the scene progressed in his mind with him forcing her to her knees, her mouth eager for his cock. It's what would happen, after all, if she ate the chocolate. He could see it in his mind perfectly.

Looking down at the two items in his hands, a sense of trepidation overcame him. He could do it. He could potion her. But then what? Did he want to be the kind of man who drugged his wife? And what if she found out? He would lose her. For real this time. There would be no coming back from it. Was getting Princess back occasionally worth the risk of losing his wife? His freedom? Because he would definitely end up in Azkaban, and she would be devastated. And Potter and Weasley would be right about him. And he would hurt her all over again.

Draco swallowed heavily as his hands began to tremble. He wasn't that boy anymore. He wasn't a rapist!

He was startled from his thoughts when she walked up beside him. "Oh, did we get a package?"

"Just some shitty chocolate that expired months ago and some cheap wine from the travel company."

Hermione looked at the truffle box with longing. "I love truffles," she pouted, playfully.

Draco pulled out his wand and cast an *Evanesco* , causing the entire package and its contents to disappear.

"Then I'll buy you all the truffles you want, my love. Only the best for you." He stepped towards her, wrapping his arms around her shoulders as she nestled into his chest.

"Draco, I want you."

He froze. "What?"

"I've been hesitant and shy when we've made love and I know it hasn't been quite...right. I just..."

"Shh, stop that. Why would you say that?"

"I just sense...I don't know, disappointment from you?"

Draco stared into her trusting hazelnut irises and almost broke down in tears. What had he almost done? How could he ever think she wasn't enough? He did not need Princess! "No, Hermione. I think we are both ...adjusting. I'm sorry if I've made you feel insecure."

"No!" she interrupted. "You've been wonderful and patient and gentle and kind! It's just, well, I want passion, Draco. I'm a passionate person and I haven't shared that with you. I want to ravish you and show you how much I desire you! Making love to you the past two

days has been nice, but I haven't really let myself go. I was... worried. I didn't even realize it until we were in the act. But you have been with a version of me that I don't know. I have no memory of it and only saw glimpses in the pensieve. And I panicked that the real me wouldn't measure up and that maybe you would be let down." The words had come out in a rush. She took a breath. "But I've worked through my insecurity and now I want to show you the real me. I just needed some time to wrap my head around what I was feeling so that I could logically work my way through it. And I'm ready. I'm ready to open myself up to you and unleash the desire I have for you. Can we do that? Can we...make love?"

Draco was stunned. This witch was brilliant and amazing and... damn, he was so lucky. "You are ridiculous, you know that, right? As if you need to ask!"

Just then another owl flew to the balcony. Draco untied the note from its leg and unrolled it. "No!" was all it said. *Hmm, I guess those were really chocolates and wine from the portkey company after all* . This was definitely a note from his Godfather. He internally smiled. If he was ever weak again, he now knew he could count on the man to keep him from making a monumental mistake.

"What's that?" Hermione asked as she eyed the small parchment in his hand.

He tucked it in his pocket. "Just a confirmation for our dinner reservation in an hour." He cocked a brow. "So, you, my little kitten, need to get into that bed so you can ravish me!"

Hermione fell to her knees and had his trousers and boxers around his ankles in a flash. "Silly Slytherin," she smirked. "Who needs a bed?!"