

You Do It For Me

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You Do It For Me

by [Zeebee3](#)

Summary

“You need an orgasm.”

That was absolutely the last thing she'd thought Draco Malfoy would ever say to her. Did he even consider her a sexual creature? How interesting. But regardless, his advice was useless because *orgasms* weren't something she had ready access to.

“Excellent advice.” She turned a corner suddenly and quickly trotted up the steps. He barely faltered, keeping up with her seamlessly, uncowed by her unwelcoming tone.

“That sounded sarcastic.”

“Ten points to Slytherin,” she said, even more sarcastically, and then winced when she remembered that, as Head Girl, she actually had the authority to grant them and would probably see an additional ten emeralds in their vessel at dinner.

Bugger.

Or where Hermione has never had an orgasm and Draco cannot abide.

(This has turned into a full-on sexploration with romance as the plot, and is my ode to sex, good communication, and all my favorite tropes)

Chapter 1: It was a decent proposal, all things considered.

Chapter Notes

What's that? I finally updated my WIP and instead of finishing the rest of the next chapter, did this instead? 🙄 no that doesn't sound like me...

ETA: Hi it's me from the future where I'm laughing at all my naive early chapter notes back when I thought this would stay concise 💀 hahaha WELCOME TO THE PARTY 🎉

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

It wasn't working.

She was doing everything right but it *wasn't working*.

She clenched her jaw so tightly it hurt, staring down into the belly of her cauldron where a potion was simmering, a jolly yellow hue when it should have been a cool, iridescent navy. While the need to achieve academic perfection was something she'd grappled with her entire youth, the level of irritation to which this particular failure was bringing her was quite unprecedented.

It was likely being exacerbated by the overwhelming courseload she'd slung on herself, determined to not leave her final year at Hogwarts without obtaining every single ounce of knowledge that she could squeeze from it. Rationally, she knew it was a thinly veiled coping mechanism to keep the anxieties of *what to do next* at bay, not to mention completely overwhelm her mind so that it couldn't dwell on *the things that had come before*.

But damnit it all to hell, if this fucking potion failed again she was going to absolutely *lose it*. She tried to take a calming breath but it came out more like a hiss of frustration through her clenched teeth.

Given the scant number who'd returned to complete their final year, the Eighth Years had been cobbled together with the Seventh Years for their studies. And of those who'd returned, only three others of her year had elected to take potions.

The one who shared the worktop with her now glanced at her askance. She'd done her best to ignore him, primarily because his potion was a gorgeous blue hue, so his attention on her now infuriated her further.

"What?" she snapped, eyes cutting to him.

He raised his brows in surprise, almost disappearing behind the fringe of white-blond hair that had fallen forward in the humidity of the classroom.

Malfoy.

Any other year, it would've been torture to share a desk with him but after all the turmoil of the prior spring, they'd returned to the castle as new people.

She had, at least, and who was she to assume he hadn't?

He certainly didn't act like he had before. He was still slightly pretentious, yes, and that damn smirk of his was unfaltering on occasion, but he wasn't cruel to her anymore. At the start of the term, he'd simply given her a nod of acknowledgement and been a benign presence ever since, sharing as they did the majority of their classes. He'd been the one to first breach their passive silence back in October, and she'd been surprised enough to respond. It was almost March now and though they weren't exactly friends, they weren't enemies either.

They weren't anything, really.

But one thing he *was* was still observing her silently.

When he still didn't say anything, her irritation spiked. She slammed the paring knife she'd been gripping down onto her work surface, inhaled a tremulous breath of pure fury, and then held it while she vanished the contents of her cauldron. The period was almost over so she didn't have time to try it again, and definitely wasn't in the right headspace to hear Slughorn's bumbling assessment of where she'd gone wrong, so she packed her bag with slightly shaky hands, her pent up frustration channeling itself through her nerves and searching for a way out.

She didn't spare anyone a parting glance as she strode out of the classroom and down the corridor, so was shocked when a hand gripped her wrist. Her magic flared instantly, sparks zapping along her fingertips and the perpetrator released her instantly.

It was Malfoy.

Of course it was.

"Salazar," he hissed. "Get a grip, Granger." He shook his hand like he'd touched a live wire. In a sense, he had.

"Sorry." It was automatic but not wholly empty; she did feel a bit badly for hurting him — accidentally, at least.

"You need to vent that energy before you explode with accidental magic like a fucking first year," he advised, adjusting his school bag over his shoulder.

She glared at him. If only it was that easy. "I don't have *time* for additional spellwork! That's the entire problem, Malfoy!" she snapped.

He stared at her, then laughed, derisive but not quite mean. “I didn’t mean *spellwork*, Granger. Merlin, you really are stuck in deep if that’s where your mind went, aren’t you?”

“Then what.” Her tone was as clipped as her steps down the corridor, no longer patient enough to listen to him while standing still. He kept up easily, unbothered by both her tone and cadence.

“I get a sense you might hex me if I even say the word,” he responded dryly.

She drew in an aggravated breath and then said, as calmly as she could, “I won’t. Just say it.”

He hesitated then evidently found the courage. Brave little snake. “You need an orgasm.”

That was absolutely the last thing she’d thought Draco Malfoy would ever say to her. Did he even consider her a sexual creature? How interesting. But regardless, his advice was useless because *orgasms* weren’t something she had ready access to.

“Excellent advice.” She turned a corner suddenly and quickly trotted up the steps. He barely faltered, keeping up with her seamlessly, uncowed by her unwelcoming tone.

“That sounded sarcastic.”

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“It *is* excellent advice though; there’s no need to be sarcastic about it. It always helps clear my mind.”

She resisted a sharp comeback that he probably didn’t have quite as much mind to clear as she, but only held her tongue because she realized it might inadvertently support his point.

“Validity of it aside, it’s not *helpful* advice,” she amended.

“Why not?” he demanded.

Merlin, was she really going to say it? She considered him for a moment. He seemed earnest and really, who would believe him if he told? It was too unlikely a topic for them to discuss.

“Because I don’t orgasm.”

He narrowed his eyes, processing this. “What do you mean, you *don’t*? Have you...*tried*?” he asked at last.

“Yes.” She glared over at him, annoyed anew that he thought she’d just taken the reality of it lying down. Well, in a sense she *had* but that wasn’t the point.

He frowned briefly then the expression cleared into something like understanding. “Oh, I don’t mean with someone else,” he explained, “I know that’s unfortunately not always a given for women, if their partner isn’t attentive. No, I just meant by yourself.”

“So did I,” she deadpanned.

That little frown appeared again, then cleared just as quickly. “Right. Well. But you understand the, er, mechanics of it, don’t you?”

“Of course. Not only is it *my* body but do you really think I’d have gone nineteen years without reading about it?” Her tone had slipped accidentally, less stern and closer to the jocular way she spoke with her friends.

He smiled, bemused, and her heart faltered. He’d never looked at her like *that* before.

“So what’s the problem then? If you understand the theory and evidently have the interest in putting it to use.”

That he was still engaging in the conversation with her — and in such a moderated, inquisitive manner — was causing a slight throb in her temples and at her wrists. Confusion and a foreign sense of anticipation were cascading over the dam wall that her rage had formed, crumbling her irritation and sweeping her fury further downstream. She felt oddly... bereft.

She hesitated and then admitted, much more calmly. “I don’t know.”

“Alright. Well, mindset has a great deal to do with it. Why have you tried?” he asked.

She glanced sideways at him, her pace slowing without conscious thought. “What do you mean?”

“What turned you on to the point that you just *had* to slip your hand into your knickers?”

She flushed slightly at the image but managed to keep her tone dispassionate and face forward. “Oh. Nothing. It was just to satisfy an academic curiosity.”

It was true enough. She’d had exactly zero libido for almost the entire span of seventeen to nineteen — being on the run and literally fighting for her life seemed to have had that effect on her — so had only recently had the urge to explore. She had a private room as Head Girl so for once, had been able to relax without the fear of the hangings around her dormitory bed being yanked open.

But...nada. It had been an interesting exercise in learning more about her anatomy but hadn’t felt like much more than when she ran her tongue along the inside of her mouth: ridges and soft places, wet but inert.

He hadn’t seemed to anticipate this response. She watched him grapple with it momentarily before he gamely adjusted his approach. “Okay. Well, was the result satisfactory enough even if you didn’t come? Or do you still have...academic curiosities?”

She considered denying it but he was being considerate enough in his questioning to warrant her honesty, and the topic was distracting her enough that her magic still simmered patiently just below her skin, a reprieve. “It was unsatisfactory.”

He absorbed this with a nod, like she'd finally given him the answer he was expecting. "I could help you, if you like."

She stopped, turning to face him in the deserted corridor. Now that she seemed unlikely to hex him on sight, his body language had relaxed. He stood easily, eyes interested and intent on her, hands in his pockets. Utterly defenseless.

Warmth prickled.

She smothered it.

"No. Thanks."

His expression flicked momentarily to something akin to disappointment but that didn't make sense so she dismissed it.

He nodded, unaffected again. "Just thought I'd offer."

She watched him carry on down the hallway until he was out of sight.

But not quite out of mind.

She found him again just after dinner in the newly-created General Common Room.

Headmistress McGonagall had had the good sense to provide a unified place for them to gather, irrespective of their sorted House. It was her first step toward breaking down the barriers that four divided Houses had caused for so long. They still slept in their assigned House dormitories but having a central place to relax together had been a missing piece they hadn't been aware they'd needed. Indeed, watching Neville and Luna sit with heads bent together over a small, spiky plant filled Hermione with a warm sense of contentment.

The feeling was fleeting as she found her mark, reading in an armchair by the fireplace. She tried not to let the image *do* anything to her as she strode over to stand in front of him. He noted her presence with an upturn of his eyes, though his face remained tilted down toward his book.

She'd been stewing over his offer since he'd made it and had come to the conclusion that her initial response had been perhaps a tad too hasty and further questioning was required to make an informed decision.

"What makes you think you know anything to help me?" she asked rather abruptly.

He looked up at her properly for a beat before catching up. It wasn't a huge leap as they'd only spoken a few hours earlier but she was impressed nonetheless by his quick

understanding. “My best friend is a lesbian, Granger,” he said with a wry smile. “And one prone to lectures almost as frequently as you.”

She appreciated that he didn’t tease her for still thinking about his offer. Based on his quickly-concealed reaction at her polite refusal, she’d gambled that it hadn’t been empty air.

His best-friendship with a woman did put a rather positive mark in his favor in terms of having the necessary credentials, even if secondhand. Hermione certainly put a bit more stake in Pansy’s knowledge of female anatomy than *Malfoy*.

Hermione could probably use that tidbit to her psychological advantage, too. Despite not personally being sexually attracted to women, knowing that Pansy was a pseudo-buffer between herself and his knowledge was appreciated. She wasn’t looking to start *something* with anyone. So, she wouldn’t exactly think about Pansy while he did...whatever it was he had in mind but, well, she wouldn’t *not*.

“And just how *hands-on* was your tutelage?” She maintained her snippy tone though again, irritatingly, found him unfazed by it. Though if he was close friends with Pansy, she suspected he was quite used to brashness by now.

He closed his book, a forefinger marking his place. “If you’re asking whether I’ve found success applying the education practically, then I can assure you I have. Would you like some references? You could interview them if you like. Make a proper study of it first.”

While she had half a mind to call his bluff and do that very thing, but that would take precious time she did not have, so instead she just rolled her eyes. “You’re insufferable.”

He quirked a brow, smirking. “Maybe. But I think you find me quite a bit more annoying than anyone else does. Almost like you’re *trying* to.”

When she glared at him, not even deigning the accusation a single word of retort, he laughed. “Fine, Granger. It doesn’t matter a whit to me whether you relax or not as long as you don’t explode magic in my vicinity. I just thought to offer a helping hand, so to speak.”

She was, annoyingly, still intrigued. “So to speak?”

He shifted in his chair, crossing an ankle on the opposite knee. “Well I wasn’t planning on touching you, if that’s what you’re concerned with. Just talking you through the finer points.”

“You want to *talk* me to an orgasm?” She admittedly didn’t have a firm grasp on what her body was capable of but that seemed rather an outlandish proposition.

He cleared his throat, suddenly pink-cheeked. *How curious*. “In a manner of speaking. Yes. I was thinking of just, er, telling you how to direct your hands, to give you an idea of what might work for you, and keep you focused. In the right mindset.”

Right. *Mindset*. She couldn’t deny that she already instinctively keyed into whatever he was saying whenever she heard his voice, directed at her or not. He had a lovely voice, now that it wasn’t sneering or spewing slurs in her direction.

It was a decent proposal, all things considered. The only issue was that of timing. Specifically, how much time it would take given how much time *this* was already taking.

“Will that be the most efficient method though?” she asked. “Wouldn’t your knowledge be better suited by direct application?”

She kept her face openly curious, pushing back the notion that she’d just inquired whether *Draco fucking Malfoy* would like to try to get her off. He blinked, presumably realizing the same.

“If that’s what you’d prefer,” he said at last, tone careful.

“I think it is,” she said. “I expect I’ll still be able to apply the techniques I pick up from the experience and I really don’t have the time to learn *then* apply. I’d rather go the most efficient route.”

“Well, the fastest way would be with my mouth on you but since this is intended to be a lesson you can revisit *alone*, it’s probably best to stick to just my hands.” He said it with such a blasé tone, a cool confidence, that she couldn’t help but feel hopeful.

And quite excited at the prospect of learning and *feeling* something new.

She nodded agreeably and did her level best to keep her eyes on his and not drop them to his mouth. *What would his mouth feel like?* she wondered. Wet, certainly. And soft. He had a nice mouth, objectively speaking, and clearly knew how to use that silver tongue of his.

But his motivation was yet to be determined. Surely he wasn’t as altruistic as this.

“Why?” she inquired. “Is this some sort of penance?”

His blush deepened slightly but his expression stayed confident. “Can’t I just want to help?”

“Frankly, I’d be more comfortable with this being your strange way of making it up to me than you purely wanting to help.”

She saw that her words had struck something soft in him and felt a bit badly, but he recovered quickly. “Of course I’m penitent. It can be about that if you prefer.”

She made a noncommittal sound, unsure if she wanted a lie just for her comfort. But then, she didn’t owe him anything and, if she was being litigious, *he* owed her quite a bit. Perhaps an orgasm for each time he’d called her a slur? Surely that was fair recompense.

“If it’s all the same to you, I’d just like a release. So, make it about whatever you wish. I’m rescinding my *no thanks* and am now saying *yes please*.”

His jaw visibly tensed but he relaxed it with a swallow. “Alright. When?”

She glanced down at his book, then back up. “You don’t seem busy now.”

His smirk had a playful edge to it this time. “*Now?*” He laughed, a soft sound. “I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised that you don’t want to delay learning.”

Her magic felt tingly, or maybe just her nerves were picking up the anticipatory excitement that fluttered through her at the prospect.

“I have a private room,” she informed him.

His eyes dropped to the Head Girl badge pinned to her jumper. “How convenient.”

She ran her teeth along the side of her cheek, resisting the urge to snap at him. She was determined now but it still grated to have to ask him *twice*. “Well? Shall we go there? Or do you need time to, er, prepare?”

He slid his finger out of the book, the pages coming together with a satisfying *whump*. “Nope. I’m ready.”

He stood and gestured her onward with it. “After you.”

Chapter End Notes

She’s in trouuuuble

Chapter 2: Pansy, she thought desperately, Pansy Pansy Pansy.

Chapter Notes

Hello! Thank you for your comments and kudos on the last chapter, I appreciate it!

And yes, chapter count went to 3. Are we surprised?

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Her room wasn't far from the General Common Room — or more accurately, the GCR wasn't far from the already-established Heads rooms — so it only took three minutes to traverse the distance between locales. That he was silent and she an ever-growing bundle of nerves made the walk feel twice as long.

She unlocked her door and went in first, holding it open for him to follow her in. He did so, looking around the space. The Heads rooms were identical, each with a private entrance off a shared corridor with an attached loo, though they were also located just down the hall from the Prefect's bathroom. Her room consisted of a little study area with an armchair and separate desk arrangement, with a dresser and double bed beyond.

She led him to latter, coming to a stop at the foot of the bed and then turning to face him. He was lingering by her dresser, still holding his book down by his side, the other hand in his pocket. She shifted her weight from one foot to another but then her patience wore out.

“Well?”

He looked over at her from where he'd been perusing the few photos on the wooden surface. He gently laid his book on her dresser and pocketed his now-empty hand.

“Who has tried?” he asked, apropos of nothing.

“To make me come?” she clarified, intent not to waste time. He nodded. “Oh. No one.”

He blinked. Then frowned. “*No one* has ever tried to make you come?”

She shrugged an indifferent shoulder. “It's not that someone's never *tried*, it's more that no one's ever touched me before. At all. And lest you think I'm some...particularly picky person or something, know the absence of it was not *my* choice.”

It was rather humiliating to admit that she'd gone nineteen years without a boy ever showing sexual interest in her. Viktor was the closest but she'd only been fifteen when they had met, and while she liked to be ahead in every other regard, her sex life fell outside the scope of

premature excellence. And sure, Cormac probably could've easily been influenced toward attempting it, but that was a firm and unchanging *no thank you* from her. Ron had been a non-starter, their mid-battle kiss the full extent of their attempt to be more than just close friends. And well...that was it.

She bolstered herself for a bit of good-natured belittling but Malfoy didn't look primed to tease her about the lack of interest. On the contrary, he looked rather shocked. "*Never?* But... Salazar. That's criminal, Granger."

She quirked a brow at his choice of word. "You'd know."

His mouth tilted into a genuine smile and he barked a surprised laugh. "I suppose I would."

She shifted on her feet again, his reaction only sending her nerves scattering further. He noticed her fidgeting.

"You can take back your yes please, if you like," he offered. "I'm still happy to just talk you through it. Or leave you alone entirely."

She made herself stand still. "I'm not second guessing this. I'm just...impatient. Why are you so far away?"

His expression shifted back to amused. "Oh? How close would you like me?"

She rolled her eyes. "You're the *expert*, supposedly, but I do know enough to know you need to at least be within touching distance to *touch* me."

He pushed off the dresser and walked toward her until only a single step more would have him colliding with her. Her adrenaline instantly spiked, but he still didn't do anything. He didn't even take his hands out of his pockets.

"This better?"

She'd stood or sat close to him countless times by now, so was familiar with his clean, masculine scent. But she'd never been quite this close to him, where it would only take a small movement up on her toes to have her nose right at the source of it. It was an unexpected heady realization.

"Not quite."

He exhaled through his nose, almost a laugh. "I'm not going to just go from zero to fingering you, Granger. Are you even wet yet?"

She liked how bold he was. It was comforting that he was confident enough to not pussyfoot around the details. She was good at being bold, too.

"Should I check?"

He shook his head, bemused at her insouciance. "If you need to check, then you don't want it badly enough yet."

“Malfoy.” She took a calming breath, agitation flaring. “You standing there doing nothing isn’t going to make me want it more.”

He raised an eyebrow and the edge of his mouth tugged up along with it. “Are you sure? I’m betting I could get you plenty riled up from right here.”

She was both wildly curious what he meant and also sure she’d regret asking, so instead huffed another frustrated breath. “Do you mind if we just get on with it? I thought I’d requested the *expedited* method.”

“Fine.” He wet his lower lip as he considered her. “Since this is about you, I’ll speed things up.”

“Thank you.” She instantly regretted thanking him given the way it shifted his expression. “So. What now?”

“I’ll start with some basic foreplay since you insist my mere presence isn’t enough to get you warmed up.” He winked. When her brows furrowed — what did *basic foreplay* entail? — he tilted his head. “If you’re alright with that, of course. I can ask you before I do anything?”

She considered it but ultimately shook her head in the negative; having to continually give her consent would undoubtedly interrupt her focus. “No, that’s fine. Do whatever you want. I’ll tell you if I don’t like something.”

He took a moment to consider her. It was a moment too long for her.

“Should I undress myself or did you want to do that at a glacial pace as well?” She quipped.

He looked a little surprised but covered it quickly. “You don’t need to undress for this. It’s actually one of the best parts about the female school uniform.” His fingers brushed the fabric over her thigh. “Skirts.”

The touch seemed to summon the attention of every nerve ending to the spot, even from areas quite unrelated to her leg. She felt goosebumps prick all along her limbs.

“That certainly *is* efficient,” she replied.

“Mmhmm.”

But rather than immediately take advantage of the easy access, his hand had begun a slow upward journey. He paused for a moment at her hip, thumb stroking lightly where he held the curve of her, and then carried further up, dipping in at her waist, swerving out at her ribs. He didn’t even *graze* her breasts and she instantly felt the loss.

When his hand reached her neck, he stroked the tips of his fingers along the column of her throat like he was taking stock of her, up up up until his palm cradled the hinge of her jaw, his thumb dragging a barely-there line along her cheek. There were still several inches between them but he eliminated over half with a slow dip toward her. When she instinctively tilted her face toward his, he stopped.

“Oh,” she mumbled, realizing her mistake, “Right. Can’t do that when I’m alone.” She quickly turned her head away so he could do whatever it was he’d been about to since it evidently *hadn’t* been kissing her.

“Indeed.” He didn’t move closer but hadn’t gone further, either. “I can kiss you though, if you want?”

His phrasing was quite clear — if *she* wanted, meaning he didn’t — so she shook her head. “No no, you’re right. Sorry. Carry on.”

He hesitated only a second before using his grip on her to tilt her head slightly further, making space for him to run his nose along her neck. The sensation was nice. The warmth of his breath against her skin even nicer.

“You could mimic this with your fingers,” he told her lowly. “There are lots of sensitive spots here. Once you find yours, it’s a good way to get things going.”

He wasn’t wrong. She could feel the way his exploratory touch was making her nipples rather tingly. “Yes, I can see that,” she breathed.

“Good.” She could feel the word against her skin. “Do you want to take over yet?”

“No. Keep going.” He had hardly done anything yet and already she was feeling more than she ever had. And he still had one hand in his pocket.

“Alright. Sit down.” He nudged her back slightly and she sank to the foot of her bed. The position put her face to face with his belt buckle but she only had a moment to consider it before he was kneeling down in front of her. He pulled a foot onto his lap and glanced up at her.

“You don’t need to undress but you might be more comfortable without your shoes.”

She nodded. “Sure. Makes sense.”

He bent to the task, undoing the laces and then pulling them off one at a time to set aside neatly. He ran his hands up her socked shins, coasting to a stop once the knit gave way to the bare skin of her knees. He met her eyes. “How are you feeling?”

“Good. Fine. Keep going.”

He smirked. “I’m going to. But I meant how you’re feeling arousal-wise.”

She felt tingly and warm all over. Her nipples were tight and wanting pressure. And, for the first time she could recall, she could actually *feel* her cunt, her heartbeat rhythmic between her legs. She wanted more.

“I’m the most aroused I’ve ever been,” she told him honestly.

His eyes darkened at her words but then he exhaled and nodded. “That’s not exactly a high bar, I know. But good. That’s good. Scoot back to the pillows then.”

She didn't want to move away from him, not when his hands were finally on her legs.
"Why?" She whined.

"Merlin, Granger. Why do you think?" He snorted, then stood and walked around the side of her bed.

She twisted to follow his trajectory and then rotated fully when he lay down on his side, propped up on his elbow. He patted the coverlet beside him and she crawled up to perch there on her knees.

"Lie down."

She did so, maneuvering herself down as primly as possible, as if he wasn't about to go under her skirt. With her on her back and him up on an elbow, he loomed over her slightly. He brought his top hand to her face, brushing her hair back against the pillow, the act forcing her eyes to his.

"Tell me if you don't like anything," he reminded her. "You won't hurt my feelings."

"Okay." She'd never once been worried about hurting his feelings, or anyone's, when it came to setting boundaries.

His gaze inspected her a final moment and then he dipped his chin. "Okay then."

His hand skimmed back down the path he'd brought it before, gliding down her neck, her ribs, her waist, her hip, and coasting to a halt on her thigh. With a deft movement, he slid his hand under the hem of her skirt. His touch was light but confident, almost ticklish. She squirmed, unsure if she wanted more or less of the sensation.

"You can close your eyes if you like," he murmured. "It might help you stay in the moment more easily."

That made sense. She let her eyes drift shut, shifting her hips slightly as his hand continued up her thigh. At the midway point, it seemed for a moment that he was going to curve around the outside of her leg toward her arse but then caught himself and shifted back towards her inner thigh. Right before he reached her knickers, he jumped his fingers across the slight gap between her legs and ran them down her other leg.

She groaned petulantly. "*Malfoy*."

He chuckled. "You are the most impatient witch I've ever been with. Salazar, Granger."

She opened her eyes, narrowing them at him. "You said I had to want it, right? Well I *do*. I know I'm wet without having to check, alright? Come confirm."

She took the initiative to bend her knees, spreading her legs for him, her outer knee dropping almost flush to the mattress, her skirt slipping up to pool against her pelvis. She could see his hand on her leg now, pale against her olive complexion.

"You sure you don't want to take over?" He teased her, though his voice was a little gravelly.

She considered grabbing his wrist and pulling his hand between her legs but that would show a bit more desperation than she hoped to convey. Instead she just stared at him in a way she hoped would tempt him to touch her, complete with a softly bitten lower lip.

Shockingly, it worked.

He let out a slow exhale through his nose then refocused on her leg. She let her eyes drop closed again, satisfied he'd move things along now.

And move them along he did.

At a pace twice the speed of before, he ran his hand up her inner thigh and then over the gusset of her knickers. She couldn't help her instinctive squirm nor her gasp.

"You're warm," he told her softly. "Let's find out if you're wet."

He hooked a finger around the fabric covering her and Hermione instantly knew she was possibly the wettest she'd ever been in her life. Now exposed to it, the cool air highlighted, rather damningly, the extent to which she'd soaked her knickers.

Holding the gusset aside with his forefinger, he ran his middle two softly down the seam of her. His fingers slipped through her like a hot knife through soft butter, spreading her and smearing her arousal.

"Fuck." The word had escaped him unbidden, as evidenced by his quick apology. "Sorry. But...*fuck*, Granger. You're really wet."

"I told you." She'd tried for superior but it had come out rather breathy.

"Ever been wet like this before?" He managed to make the question seem genuine and not that he was pandering for his own ego, so again she gave him honesty.

"I don't think so."

He dipped down to the source but didn't press inside, instead just circling her entrance and then dragging his fingers up to her clit. She'd tried rubbing herself at the little bundle of nerves before but hadn't had much luck. Admittedly she hadn't been turned on when she'd tried, so maybe that was to be expected and whatever Malfoy was doing now was simply how it would feel were she to reenact it herself.

Because whatever Malfoy was doing to her was drawing all the heat in her body down into an ever-tightening ball of pure warmth somewhere below her navel.

"How does that feel?" He asked.

"Good. *Really* good."

"Ever done this to yourself?"

She was glad her eyes were closed. "Yes."

“Did it feel good?”

She exhaled slowly, trying to calm her racing heart. She focused on the slow, firm circle he was drawing against her body. “Not as good as this.”

She felt the faint brush of air against her, like he was exhaling slowly as well. But what did *he* need to calm down for?

He stroked her clit a few more times, shifting his pattern to give her some ideas to try. When he switched from clockwise circles to counter, she couldn’t hold her moan.

“This might be all you need,” he told her quietly. “Most women can only get off from stimulation on the clit. But some also like a little pressure inside.”

She nodded at his unasked question. “Try.”

“Alright. I’ll start with one.”

In her hazy state she almost asked *one what?* But then she felt his finger glide down to brush against her entrance and the answer was obvious. She couldn’t tell which finger he was using, and maybe it didn’t matter, but if that was truly *one* finger then she was in for it. He’d only pressed it in to the first knuckle and already she felt slightly full.

He stroked the inside of her cunt and she felt something respond. Her inner muscles tightened in an automatic reflex that she’d never experienced before.

“*Oh.*” It was a strange feeling but it had ignited her desire like a spark to kindling. He was making her body do something it had never done before.

“You good?” He checked, keeping still.

“Do that again,” she told him. “Whatever you just did.”

He stroked her again and she let out a shuddery breath. “That feels really good. I’ve never felt that before.”

She heard him swallow rather forcibly but when he spoke, his voice was unaffected. “Want more?”

“*Gods* yes.”

He pushed his finger in further, all the way to his palm, and then drew it out with an intentional press against her front wall.

“Again,” she groaned.

He obeyed, keeping the moderated rhythm. It was good. *So* good. But after a few strokes, the sensation dulled slightly as she got used to it.

“I need more,” she told him, hoping he knew what to do. She certainly didn’t.

“Ready for two?”

Was she? “Sure.”

Anything to regain that heated sensation. He added a second on his next upstroke and the pressure of them, the slight stretch, was exquisite.

“Thank you,” she gasped and then hated herself for thanking him again.

“You’re so polite when you’re turned on,” he chuckled. “I suppose I know what to do now, whenever you’re being rude to me.”

“*Gods.*” The thought of him pulling her aside to get her wet and needy, just so she’d be polite to him, had lit up a part of her brain that was now sending wildly inappropriate thoughts directly to the nerves between her legs. She felt her cunt clench again, unbidden. She absolutely could not let her body betray her in such an inexcusable manner but unfortunately, he caught her reaction.

“You like that thought?” His voice was low, confidential. “That’s very interesting, Granger.”

She sought to deny it but then made the mistake of opening her eyes. She was instantly accosted by his handsome face only inches from hers, eyes downturned to track a path from her throat down to her breasts, and then further still to where his fingers were rhythmically disappearing inside her. His nostrils flared as he watched himself fingering her and she experienced the horrifying event of her body reacting to him, clear as day.

For some reason the thought that *Draco fucking Malfoy* was enjoying touching her sent a hitherto unexperienced white-hot bolt of arousal through her.

But oh no, that wouldn’t do. It was fine to let him turn her on with touches she’d later copy, but another thing altogether to make the experience about *him*.

Pansy, she thought desperately, *Pansy Pansy Pansy*.

She must have said the last out loud because he drew back with a frown, fingers stilling just barely inside her. Despite herself, she twitched, wanting them back deep.

“Did you just moan Pansy’s name?” He sounded incredulous.

“No.” It was a half-truth. She hadn’t *moaned* it. Had she?

He looked unconvinced. “Do you want me to stop?”

“*No*,” she insisted, then tried again more calmly. “No. Please carry on.”

He assessed this request with a penetrating gaze, perhaps checking for the authenticity of it. She did her best to look consenting and eager, which wasn’t exactly tricky since she was enthusiastically both.

He performed an experimental press of his fingers back inside her, eyes still intent on hers, and the regained friction after his moment of pause made her eyelids flutter. He made a low sound of acknowledgement and repeated the motion, his confidence in her enjoyment swiftly returning.

She leaned into it, letting his touch slowly tighten the unexpected knot of pleasure forming in her spine.

He was very handsome, she mused absently, eyes tracing over his features. He had a nice neck, the length of which she had a bizarre desire to lick. Good shoulders. Unobnoxiously defined arms. Really quite enchanting hands. As her perusal focused again on his deft motions with said hands, her arousal spiked again.

But shit. Fuck. Damn it all to hell, she couldn't get even more turned on thinking about him.

Shouldn't.

Wouldn't.

She let out a slow breath, forcing her body to relax. But she should've known he'd notice.

"You're resisting it," he said, eyes flicking up to find hers. "You seem close for a moment and then it's almost like you will it away. What are you thinking about?"

Nope.

Nope nope nope.

She couldn't tell him that she was experiencing her first true sense of sexual desire for another person because of the way he was *looking* at her body. Nor the way she was enjoying his in return.

It felt too pathetic to even *think* let alone *confess*.

"I'm thinking about how good it feels," she attempted, desperate to look away from his intense grey eyes but refusing to show cowardice.

"And?" he prompted.

"And...how much I want to come." *For you*. She managed to leave it unspoken.

He hummed thoughtfully. "Maybe that's the problem," he mused. "You want it too bad, don't you? And then you overthink yourself out of the moment."

He considered her then seemed to come to a decision. He pulled his hand fully away from between her legs and she almost begged him to put it back, but there was a line between letting Malfoy get her off and *getting off for Malfoy*.

"Okay," he said, "we're going to try something different. I'm going to do a few things, just to see what you like, and I want you to try very hard not to come."

She stared at him. “That’s *already* the problem,” she reminded him.

“I didn’t forget, and I know you haven’t. So, I want you to focus on it. How much you shouldn’t come. Don’t think about anything else. Just...not coming.”

“Are you suggesting I use reverse psychology on myself?” She asked, incredulous.

“Sure. Whatever you want to call it. I just know you like breaking the rules so consider this yet another to circumvent.”

She glared at him, unamused by this character assessment. “I’m not that much of a compulsive rule-breaker,” she argued.

“I have about seven years of evidence to the contrary,” he said coolly, brushing off her denial. “Now, I’m going to stretch the bounds of what you could reasonably repeat by yourself but I think it might be helpful for you to actually feel what it’s like to be close. That way you know what to aim for next time you’re alone.”

He said it like he was preparing her for the next step in a partnered potions assignment, casual and almost academic. There were plenty of things he could do to her that would be impossible for her to reenact solo, but she hadn’t quite forgotten his earlier comment. About what would get her off most expeditiously.

Her eyes darted, damningly, to his mouth.

As she watched, his tongue flicked out to draw his lower lip between his teeth, the edges of his mouth pulling up into a smirk. She cut her eyes back to his and found them glinting. He’d caught her.

“Not that, Granger.” He paused, still smirking rather knowingly down at her. “Unless you want it?”

She declined to answer. “What then?” she asked instead.

“You’ll see.”

Chapter End Notes

I think I’m Draco when it comes to dragging things out 😊 Next chapter soon!

Thanks for reading!

Chapter 3: She was wildly curious.

Chapter Notes

Did this chapter double the overall word count? Yes. I considered breaking it into two but didn't want to do that to you all 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

To her immense vexation, he tugged her knickers back properly between her legs. She groaned with excessive drama, now truly frustrated in several ways.

He had the audacity to laugh. “You’ll learn soon enough that you can come even with your knickers on, Granger. Don’t fret.”

His words were hardly soothing but she was at least minorly encouraged that he wasn’t going to leave her high and dry. Or rather...on her back and wet.

“Now, I know I said you didn’t have to undress but...what’s your stance on me opening your shirt?”

She furrowed her brow. “My *stance*?”

“For it or against?”

“I...” *Was he kidding?* “Malfoy. I said you could do whatever you wanted. I meant that. So as long as it means you’re actually *doing* something, don’t waste time asking me.”

He tilted his head, like a dog picking up a faraway sound. “Is that a thing for you? Not being asked? Or are you just frustrated right now?”

She sat up and pulled her jumper over her head, casting curls out in all directions. She threw the garment rather more aggressively than it deserved off to the side then brought her fingers to the buttons of her white school shirt.

“Salazar below, you are—” He cut himself off, snatching her wrists to stop their descent.

“What was my one request?” she snapped, trying to free her hands but giving up rather quickly when she discovered the iron grip he had them in.

“I’m sorry for asking a pretty understandable fucking question.” He squeezed her wrists and used them to push her back flat, keeping them against her chest. “I won’t ask you another. Now...” He pulled her arms straight until her wrists pressed into the pillow above her.

“Lucky for you, this actually works toward my plan. Don’t move your hands. If you can’t keep them there, put them in your hair and hold.”

In the kerfuffle, he’d relocated to his knees between her calves and was now leaned almost fully over her, both hands above her head on her wrists. He didn’t tremble an iota: she was slightly jealous of his core strength.

He let her go and leaned back, watching her hands. She kept them where he’d put them, determined not to give him a single reason to not proceed. After a few moments, his eyes met hers. “Don’t come.”

She inhaled deeply through her nose, held it, then exhaled and nodded. She was feeling quite agreeable given how well his efforts were going so far. There was an alluring tension deep in her core and wanted to keep exploring the feeling.

His hands went to her shirt, finishing the remaining half and then pushing it open. He kept his hands bunched in the fabric at her sides while his eyes tracked up her abdomen to her light blue bra. It was a simple, everyday style but he was looking at her like there was quite a bit more to take in than just the smooth satiny cups. When he brought a forefinger up to stroke the tiny bow right between them, he looked almost reverent. It was a very promising reaction to what she considered quite a boring part of her.

“Pretty.” He said the word so softly, almost to himself, that she almost missed it. She pretended that she had.

He stroked his finger up along the outline of her bra where it cut across her right breast, staying to the material rather than her skin. She wanted to wiggle to get him on her skin so badly that when he slipped his finger under the cup, she wondered if she’d willed it.

“I’m not going to ask,” he told her. “But know that I want to.”

Then without further hesitation, he pulled the cup down to reveal her breast. Already tight, Hermione felt her nipple furl even further in the cooler air.

Her breasts were an average size, just slightly more than a handful for her and, when he brought his other hand across to cup her, a perfect handful for him. He tucked the cup down under and then repeated it on the other side until she was fully exposed to him. She would have felt slightly shy had she not been quite so turned on.

As it was, she arched up slightly into his hands. He cupped her, squeezing gently and brushing his thumbs across her nipples. She couldn’t help the pleased sound from escaping her throat. The light touch had added a new dimension to her lust, thickening it.

Malfoy repeated the brushing motion, then curled his forefingers in with his thumbs to apply fleeting pressure around each bud. She inhaled shakily.

“How do you feel?” His voice was low, measured.

How *did* she feel? Unlike she ever had, certainly. She wasn't sure how to verbalize it, the nebulous feeling of *need* that was building inside. "I feel...I need to...I don't—" She let out a frustrated sound, more moan than anything.

"Here." He shifted so only one of his thighs was between hers then pulled her snugly against it with hands on her hips. The pressure was immediately soothing to the achiness between her legs. He pressed his fingers to tilt her hips slightly, lifting and lowering her an inch or so, showing her what to do. "Grind on me like this if you like. But remember, don't—"

"Don't come. I know." She was definitely breathy now, half her brain focused entirely on the steady tension in her core and the other half on keeping it unfulfilled. The dichotomy of it was making her aware of every faint scrap of pleasure.

She rocked her hips experimentally against his thigh like he'd shown her and could hardly keep her eyes open at the sensation, nor her tongue leashed. "Oh gods."

He hummed a warm sound. "That what you needed?"

She pressed a little harder, shifting until she found that perfect angle again. Her knickers were wet enough that the glide was luxurious as she ground again against his trousers, feeling the firm muscle of this thigh underneath. "Yes," she breathed. "The pressure feels so good."

"I bet it does. You've gotten very worked up." He still held one of her hips, his hand large enough that his thumb pressed into the skin just the other side of her navel. She liked his hand on her. He wasn't trying to control her movements anymore, but the warmth of it, the weight, felt so good in a way she couldn't define. He sent the other back to her breasts, toying with her nipple again. She undulated against him to chase the feeling, pressing her hands into the pillow above her for leverage.

"You're so sexy," he told her, watching her movement. "You look incredible right now."

The praise went right to her head, winding her tighter. She bit her lip — genuinely, this time — to stop herself from whimpering.

"Like hearing how good you look?" His question was probably rhetorical but she found herself nodding. "And you haven't even moved your hands. You don't just *look* good, you *are* good. Aren't you, Granger?"

"Yes." It was a strained whisper. The tension inside her was being fed by every shift of her hips and every word from his mouth.

"And you're *feeling* good now too, hmm?"

"Yes."

He stroked her nipples again. Squeezed them. Heat was flushing her cheeks and chest, her body feeling warmer than it ever had.

"You can do this to yourself too," he murmured. "Maybe with a pillow to replace my leg, if you like feeling something there. Although you'll get better pressure if you're up above it."

She blushed at the thought of doing this alone, at him having given her such an explicit image of how. Was he picturing her doing it, like she was? Or did he just have a Rolodex of female masturbatory positions in his head? She had to focus quite hard on not coming for a beat, the knot threatening to unspool.

Her focused expression must have looked confused to him because he offered, “Want me to show you what I mean?” in a truly unfairly level tone.

Fuck him.

Her insides cinched up and she had to angle her hips away lest she give in and grind herself to completion. He’d told her not to come and her brain was stuck on the mantra of it (*don’t come don’t come don’t come*) rather than remembering the *point* was for her to break the rule and do it.

“I feel close,” she gasped.

“Are you going to come?” His voice was a little rough and she clung to the sound of it.

“No,” she promised. But after she said it, she finally remembered she was secretly allowed to. However her realization came too late — he was already pulling away from her and lying down next to her again. He’d misunderstood.

“That’s okay. We’ll try something else to get you over the edge.”

She almost spoke up to say actually, if he’d just put his hands back on her tits and let her grind against him, she’d be over the edge in a jiffy, but then his hand was dipping back under her skirt and she was glad she’d held her tongue. She wanted to feel his fingers against her again.

Instead of pushing the gusset aside again, he went higher and began to tug her knickers off properly. She lifted her bum to help and winced slightly at the wet feeling when they caught on her knee on the way down. He tossed them in the direction she’d cast her jumper then nudged her outer leg to the side. She eagerly did as he indicated, bringing the knee back down to the mattress and pressing the other against his abdomen. He locked it against his body with his elbow as he brought his hand back between her legs. She canted her hips up to greet it, giving him a pleased little hum when he parted her and stroked her clit.

“I want you to reenact what your body was doing instinctively,” he told her. At her blank look, he clarified, “Squeeze my fingers.”

“What do you mean?”

“Internally.”

She’d gathered as much. She managed an eye roll. “Obviously. But *how*?”

“Oh. Just tense the muscles you would if you were to stop peeing.”

“*Malfoy*.” For some reason this embarrassed her more than anything else he’d said to her.

He laughed at her affronted expression. "I'm literally millimeters away from touching your urethra right now and you're more disturbed by hearing me *say* the word pee?" When her expression didn't smooth he sobered his own. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to embarrass you. That's just the most common, er, use of them so I thought it would help you understand what I meant."

Her affront faded. "Oh. Of course. Okay."

"Okay." He circled her clit once more then repeated the pattern at her entrance. She was even wetter than before so he slid two fingers in without delay. The feel of it made her pelvis rock, pulling him in deeper until his palm collided with her body. He didn't move and she almost begged but she was determined to not show her hand.

So instead she took a calming breath and then tried to do what he'd said, pulling tight the muscles he'd indicated. It didn't feel like much of anything. "Like that?" She asked, unsure.

"Did you do anything?" His question seemed genuine so she resisted her knee-jerk reaction to snap at him.

"Yes."

"Okay. Well, do it again. Harder."

She tried again and then suddenly isolated somewhere inside she'd never paid half a mind to, and managed a tighter squeeze. It felt just like when her body had instinctively clenched in pleasure. She almost moaned at the realization that she could make herself feel that delectable sensation whenever she wanted.

"There you go," he breathed. "I felt that one. Good, Granger. Now do it again."

It was easier the second time, now she knew where to tighten. "Good. Now that you've got it, I want you to do it again but hold it."

She could do that. "Okay. For how long?"

"Until I tell you to stop."

She took a quick breath and then held it as she squeezed her inner walls as tightly as she could around his fingers. It was easy for a few seconds and then she felt her walls start to quiver with exertion.

"Hold it," he reminded her.

She tensed them again but felt that quivery feeling after another few seconds.

"Okay," he told her and she relaxed on an exhale. "Now do it again. And I'm going to rub your clit."

She sipped in a breath, his words sparking against the flint of her, and did it. He kept his fingers buried inside her and brought his thumb up to stroke against her clit. It felt good,

really good, and her cunt suddenly clenched without her conscious effort, deeper inside her than she'd been able to thus far. His eyes flicked up to hers, perhaps feeling the difference, but he didn't comment. He repeated the circuit a second time but when he had her squeeze a third time, he slid his fingers up to rewet her clit before sinking back into her. His awareness that she'd appreciate more lubrication, the counterclockwise pattern on her clit that he'd discovered she liked best, the feel of him inside her while she held tight...all of it was suddenly more than she could withstand.

"Okay," he said and then, when she didn't let up, he clarified. "You can relax now, Granger."

But she *couldn't*. The tension was beyond her now, her cunt contracting so hard she hardly had any breath to voice her rather needy whine.

"I *can't*," she gasped. "Oh...*oh* it's...so..." She couldn't describe it but even so, he understood.

"Fuck," he said, voice low. "You're gonna come, Granger. Ride it out then let go. I've got you."

She didn't know what any of that meant but luckily her body didn't need direction at this point. It took over for her brain, rocking her hips against his hand until the tether snapped and she was free-falling, the first wave of it akin to a sudden drop in turbulent air, and then resonant waves of pulsing, throbbing release. She was only half aware of the staccato sounds she was making, whimpery little gasps that somehow only added to her pleasure. It was perhaps a bit meta, or narcissistic, but hearing herself enjoying it so much was reigniting her arousal in some sort of sexual satisfaction feedback loop.

When she finally settled, she was panting. Malfoy was observing her with a rather rapt expression, his fingers still snug inside her and his thumb petting gentle circles on her clit. It felt good. She felt good. Unbidden, she beamed at him.

His expression looked soft for a moment, and then he smiled smugly. "How do you feel now?"

"I feel...settled. Remade," she told him, stretching her arms further overhead and relishing the pull of her muscles. It was perhaps a strange response but it was the only way she could describe it. Her magic was simmering placidly, her nerves tingly and warm, her muscles worked in a way they never had been before.

She felt put back together but also freshly formed.

He slid his fingers out of her with a parting caress and she straightened her legs, inviting them into the stretch.

She felt *incredible*. From her head to her toes.

"Thank you, Draco," she told him when she relaxed, body pliant. "Merlin, that was so good."

He smirked but couldn't fully hide how pleased he looked. "I'm glad to hear it."

Her movement had brushed her thigh against his groin and she felt an unexpected protuberance. She was confused at first but then all at once, she realized what it was.

He was *hard*.

And why did that surprise her?

“You’re hard,” she blurted.

He huffed a laugh. “I am.”

“Oh. You liked that too, then?”

He looked truly amused now. “Are you asking if I liked making you come? For being the first person to have done it?” He laughed. “Yeah, Granger. I fucking liked it. Fuck, it was so hot. You have no idea.”

She shook her head. “I really don’t.”

When he did nothing beyond look down at her, features still arranged into the pleasantly amused configuration his laugh had rendered, she realized it was on her to make the next move. He’d fulfilled their agreement, after all. Anything else would be on her terms. With the confidence of a made up mind, she turned onto her side to face him and pressed a palm down where he was testing the tensile strength of his zipper.

He froze.

She met his eyes, checking she wasn’t overstepping. He looked somewhat disbelieving but didn’t indicate she should stop, so she ran her palm along the length of him and then curled her hand around him, getting a sense of his shape. When she squeezed, his hips jerked.

“Fuck,” he swore then quickly cleared his throat. “If you’re about to tell me that you know how to make a man come but not yourself, I’m going to burn down Gryffindor tower.”

She smirked. “Calm down. I appreciate the sentiment but I’ve never gotten *anyone* off before, myself or otherwise. Your anatomy is just a bit more...instinctual than mine.”

“You calling me easy, Granger?” He teased.

“Are you?” She retorted, flicking an eyebrow playfully.

“Right now? Probably.” He wet his lower lip with a quick flick of pink tongue and she once again wondered what it would feel like on her. That thought sparked another. Would he like her tongue on him, too?

“I can see what you’re thinking and the answer is absolutely not,” he told her, voice strained.

She cut her eyes back up to his. “You don’t want me to?”

His nostrils flared on a controlled inhale. “Oh, I want you to. But I refuse to let you without having even kissed you.”

“Well that’s rather easy to resolve.” She slid a hand up and around the back of his head, pulling him close.

He stopped her when there was only a few inches between them. His eyes locked onto hers for a split second, a pause so brief she couldn’t fathom his purpose for it, and then he dipped down the rest of the way. His kiss was soft, just gentle pressure against her lips. She returned it and then pressed forward further, breaking off to tuck his lower lip between hers. She flicked her tongue against it on instinct and he opened for her, emitting a low sound from his chest when she slipped into his mouth.

Until that point, she’d thought they were kissing each other, a balanced give-and-take, but when he slanted his mouth over hers with purpose, she realized that he had been letting *her* kiss *him*. And now it was his turn.

He kissed her like he’d been dying to, his tongue a veritable conquer intent on laying claim to the entirety of her mouth. In his fervor, he rolled her onto her back, following her over. She’d never been so thoroughly kissed in her life, to the point that when he broke away to trail kisses along her jaw and to her neck, she simply panted and let him do what he wished, utterly vanquished. He sucked on the sensitive skin of her neck then rocked his jaw side to side to work the flesh between his teeth. She whined and he groaned in response.

“You make the best sounds,” he breathed.

She squirmed under him, getting her arm free and bringing it back to his trousers. “I want to hear yours.”

He let her touch him without moving, supporting himself on his elbows over her. She slotted the bulge of his erection into her palm and squeezed lightly. She felt his exhale against her throat.

“I bet I could come on this,” she mused, half to herself. “So much firmer than your thigh.”

His forehead thunked onto her shoulder. “*Granger*.” It sounded very close to a whimper.

“What?” She wasn’t sure what she’d done to elicit such a delightful response but she absolutely wanted to do it again. She attempted another, firmer grip around him to see if that’s what had done it.

“Fuck. I feel about five seconds away from coming in my fucking trousers.” His voice was taut. “Stop touching me. Please. Just for...just for a second.”

She released him.

He caught his breath and raised up over her, cheek pink and pupils blown wide. “You want to get me off?” He sounded rather disbelieving, which was silly considering her hand was literally on him and her tits were still out. It wasn’t like she was trying to get up and leave.

But even with the unnecessariness of it, the question still made her heart skip a beat. “Yes.”

He exhaled. “Okay. But just use your hand.”

She frowned. *He’d* been allowed to do whatever he wanted to her. “Why?”

Malfoy inhaled raggedly and managed a bemused smirk. “Always with the questions. Because I won’t last a second on your tongue and the last thing you need is a mouthful of cum.”

She disagreed slightly with this statement but shrugged indifferently. It was his body; he could pick. “Fine. We can revisit that later. Now, do you *actually* want to come in your pants or am I allowed to undress you?”

He reached down and popped the button one-handed, then slid down the zip. “Want instructions?”

“Do I need them?” She slipped her fingers under the waistband of his revealed boxer briefs.

“Probably not.” The sentiment was flattering, doubly so because of the almost plaintive tone he’d delivered it with.

She slid her hand in and found his cock. He inhaled sharply but didn’t offer her any guidance. He was warm in her hand, the skin soft but with absolutely no give when she squeezed. She dragged her fingers down to get a sense of him, sinking further into his shorts until she reached the base.

He felt substantial. Much, much larger than his two fingers. It was a marvel, really, that her body was capable of taking him. Not that she was thinking about *that*, exactly...

Curious, and unlikely to have such a willing male specimen literally at her fingertips, she explored lower until she encountered his balls. She grazed her fingers lightly along them, watching his face for his reaction. Boys were awfully precious with them, so she expected they were sensitive in some way. Her exploratory fingertips didn’t elicit much but when she cradled them lightly in her palm and tried a gentle squeeze, he groaned and his eyelids dropped halfway.

“Fucking *hell*, Granger.”

He was panting.

Her heart was thudding, heavy and urgent, as a rush of pure power filled her chest. She was doing that to him.

She gave them another gentle parting caress then withdrew to wrap her fingers around his cock. She stroked her fist up and then flicked her eyes up to him when she felt moisture at the tip. She knew the basic mechanics of ejaculation — her personal studies had included basic sciences when she’d discovered that her Wizarding education would not — and supposed this was the first stage. *Pre-cum*.

She was wildly curious.

“I want to see.”

He met her question with ever-pinking cheeks. “See my cock?”

She nodded.

He swallowed. “Alright. But don’t let this be the measure you compare other men by.”

She snorted. “*Wow*, Draco.”

If possible, he blushed deeper. “I didn’t mean—I just meant that if a bloke comes as fast as I’m about to, you should make sure he gets you off after. Or first.”

“Oh. Well, don’t worry about that. You *did* already make me come. Go on, now. Flip over.” She gestured with her hand that he turn over.

He did, settling onto his back beside her. She rolled over to face him then sat up on her knees. Her bra was still skewy and she automatically went to fix the cups but then considered he may enjoy seeing her breasts while he got off. So instead, she shucked her shirt, unclipped her bra, and tossed them both aside. She knew she’d made the right choice when he made a strangled sort of noise in the back of his throat, eyes hot on her skin.

She was naked except for her skirt and knee socks, a sartorial choice she’d never made before. She decided to even the field a bit and scooted closer to begin unbuttoning his shirt. He didn’t protest and indeed performed a half sit-up to shrug it off once she had it loose. She admired his build, muscled but not ostentatiously, and the way a rosy flush had stained the tops of his pecs, up his throat, and to his cheeks.

He looked good.

Her eyes trailed down until they met the line of his trousers, opened to display the rigid length of him below boxer briefs. She admired the contrast of the sharp black line of the waistband against where it intersected a pale swoop of muscle, then curled her fingers under and tugged them down enough to free his cock.

This was, obviously, the first cock she’d seen in the flesh but she wasn’t wholly unprepared for the sight. She’d read books and had examined the pictures with almost morbid curiosity. But pictures didn’t do justice to the experience of seeing one in person — specifically, one she *wanted* to see. It had *presence*; she was instantly enthralled.

She ran her eyes over the length of him, darker slightly than the skin of his abdomen against which it had bobbed, with a pretty pink head and a thick vein that appeared to almost be throbbing. She tilted her head, curious anew.

“Are you just going to look at it?” Malfoy’s voice cut through her inspection, reminding her of the man attached to the quite intriguing appendage.

She glanced up. “You explicitly said that touching it would make you come, so I’m just getting my fill before that.”

His eyes widened. “Merlin, Granger. Do you know what you’d have done to me if I’d said that to you?”

She tutted. “Maybe before, when I was in the throes of discovery and impatient for more. But if you wanted to look now, I wouldn’t mind.”

“Fucking Christ.” He covered his face with his hands, the heels of his palms pressing into his eyes.

She tilted her head at the Muggle swear, but didn’t ask, turning back to his cock. It seemed even more throbby and pink now. And there was a new addition at the tip: a glistening bead of moisture. She finished her final survey and then looked up at him. He was staring at the ceiling, hands in his hair now with elbows pointed to the sides.

“Well? Do you want to hear my assessment?”

He glanced down at her, looking skeptical. “I don’t know. Do I?”

“It’s positive,” she assured him.

He exhaled gustily. “Fine. Tell me.”

“You have the most gorgeous cock I’ve ever seen. And before you either threaten arson again or dismiss that statement since I’ve never seen anyone else’s in the flesh, know that I’ve seen quite a few pictures of them.”

He absorbed this with slightly furrowed brows but then seemed to parse the important part. He smirked. “Oh yeah?”

“Yes. It’s perfectly proportioned, and even just visually I can tell it’ll be quite effective. There’s something extremely moreish about it. I think once I have it, I’ll want it again.”

His smirk widened, eyes glinting down at her. “Is that so? Well you’re welcome to it, Granger. Any time you want.”

She raised her brows. “Is *that* so? Well. I suppose I’ll let you come now, if I’m allowed to have it again.”

His chest expanded on his inhale and he swore under his breath. She liked how reactive he was to her words, even if she wasn’t quite sure which exactly were doing it. She put it aside for now; she could experiment with words any time during the many classes she shared with him. Right now, she wanted to learn what it took to make him come.

She considered the best way to lubricate her hand, knowing she needed to. If he hadn’t banned her mouth, she’d have gone the most direct route and slicked him with her tongue, but in lieu of that she worked her mouth and then discreetly dripped the saliva into her palm. He watched her, rapt, as she then brought her hand to his shaft. She slicked her palm down

along the side of him, fingers curved around, and then flipped her wrist to wet the other side, then the top.

He was staying very still, perhaps not to spook her, but she could tell he wasn't unaffected, his breath coming quicker and muscles of his thighs flexing where she could feel them against her legs. Once she felt he was sufficiently lubricated, she repositioned her fist around the tip and stroked down. He groaned, hips twitching.

"Like that?" She asked.

"Yeah." His voice was tight. "Fuck. Just like that."

She stroked back up and then repeated it. She tried a few different grips until she found one that made him swear again, then maintained the pressure and upped her pace. "Oh fuck, Granger. Oh *fuck*. Gods of course you're a fucking expert just from reading a...a...*shit*."

She'd dropped down to add an additional tendril of saliva to the head of his cock before working it along his shaft. His reaction intrigued her so she brought her hand back up to the head and slid her slick fist up and down over it. The sound he made was somewhere between a whimper and a gasp.

"Shit. You're gonna make me come."

She hummed a pleased sound, pumping her fist. He felt even harder all of a sudden, swelling further. Perhaps he wouldn't want too much stimulation now? She'd gotten a little sensitive at her orgasm. She pulled her hand away.

His reaction was instant, desperate. "Oh fuck, don't stop. *Please please please*—" he grabbed her wrist and brought it back.

Alarmed, she stroked him again and then he was moaning and coming. She felt his cock pulse and watched him paint his abdomen and then her hand with his cum. He still had his hand on her wrist so tugged her away after a moment. She kept her soiled hand aloft.

"Sorry," she began, not entirely sure what his panic at the end had been about, but he shook his head, chest heaving but looking quite happy.

"Don't apologize. That was exceptional."

Her pride swelled. "Oh. Good. I enjoyed it too."

He smiled. "Thank Merlin. Because I might never recover if that's the only time I got to experience it."

"Definitely not. I have so many questions still to test."

He laughed. "Fuck, that shouldn't be so hot."

She hopped off the bed and retrieved a hand towel from her bathroom, tossing it to him, then went back to wash her hands. He joined her a few moments later, trousers done up but still

shirtless. She watched his reflection come up behind her, his eyes on hers in the mirror. He was still slightly flushed, eyes bright and mouth curved into a little smile. He looked the most relaxed she'd ever seen him. So handsome.

She turned and kissed him.

Chapter End Notes

THE URGE TO MAKE THIS FOUR CHAPTERS



Stop me.

Or encourage me.



Chapter 4: She felt mildly deranged.

Chapter Notes

You guys. I am absolutely *floored* by how many people requested another chapter. You're all so nice!! 😭

So, as requested: more sexy exploration 🤤

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Younger Hermione would have been absolutely enraged by the thought, but it turned out that Draco Malfoy was actually an exceptional teacher. Over the next two days, she got herself off three times.

After he'd left her room that fateful day, she'd breathed a contented little sigh and thought that she'd be set for a while. But the very next morning, as soon as he sidled into the Arithmancy classroom and gave her a private, half smile before he took his seat a few rows over, she realized he'd simply broken the seal on her libido.

She couldn't look away when he twirled his quill absently between his fingers while he watched Professor Vector scratch away at the chalkboard. Nor when he carded a hand through his hair while working through the problem set they'd been assigned. Nor when he'd stretched out a foot and she'd gotten a glimpse of his toned thigh, the memory of that very fabric between her legs giving her a sudden, heady throb.

She felt mildly deranged.

And even more so when she nipped back to her room promptly after class and reenacted what he'd done to her the evening before, right down to pinching her own nipples. The orgasm had been liberating and she felt quite proud of herself for having achieved it.

So proud, in fact, that she tried it again after dinner, this time straddling a pillow like he'd suggested. It had taken a moment longer to get into it but once she'd shut her eyes and pretended it was him, it was almost embarrassing how quickly she'd come.

She'd attempted the third the following morning in the shower, exploring the sensation of sudsing up her breasts and then lower. She couldn't quite get him out of her mind when she touched herself, but this time she fantasized that he was outside the stall, watching her. The thought had made her whine, even while alone under the spray.

That he was still at the nexus of all her orgasms did not go unnoticed by her. She tried to think about someone else, a faceless man or perhaps one with dark hair; had even tried to just focus on herself and what she was doing to her body. But despite it all, her mind always brought her back to him.

She trusted her brain.

It had been well curated over the years by extensive reading, unrelenting academic pursuits, and the unforgiving whetstone of tumultuous, harrowing, real-life experience. It had always been an asset to her, on her side, and had brought its own revelations to her awareness a time or two, making connections without her conscious intention.

So, she followed the instinctive advice of her daydreams and sought him out again the following afternoon.

They'd left things open when he'd departed, not making any promises to one another. He'd simply given her a final kiss, a pleased smirk, and told her goodnight. All their interactions since had been the typical sort she was used to, perhaps a bit friendlier but not exactly chatty or suddenly more intimate. She figured he was playing off her cues so didn't let it affect her decision to hunt him down.

She located him in the library, sitting in the Ancient Runes section and working on his essay. He glanced up when she approached but finished his sentence before he greeted her.

"Granger," he said, offering her the same little smile he always did, one that seemed he'd created especially for her.

"Draco," she returned, sitting across from him. He flicked a brow at her use of his given name but looked pleased nonetheless.

"Have you come to work on the essay?" He inquired, then laid a hand on the open book beside his parchment. "If so, I'm afraid I'm not finished with the reference material yet, so you'll have to wait your turn."

She rolled her eyes. "I finished that yesterday. No, I'm here for something else."

He hummed an interested sound. "Arithmancy?" There was a teasing glint in his eye.

She quelled a smile. "Related to a problem set, yes." She fixed him with a pointed look. "I've been practicing."

His eyebrows went up. "*Have* you. And?"

"I think I've mastered it."

He breathed a laugh. "That doesn't surprise me in the least."

"I'm ready for the next lesson."

That seemed to surprise him. He stared at her for a moment and then his mouth curled into a knowing smile. "I can't wait to hear what you're having problems with next."

She tilted her head and said, in a sweet, teasing voice, "I seem to have an emptiness inside me that only your cock can fill." She'd read the line in a romance novel. It was cheesy

enough to have brought a blush to her cheeks when she'd read it but just irreverent enough to make the ask feel less fraught.

"*Granger.*" His voice had dropped in volume and pitch. "Are you propositioning me for *sex*? In the *library*?"

"Yes." But then she frowned. "Well, no, not *in* the library. I'd like to do it in my room. But yes, I'm asking you for sex."

He worried his lower lip between his teeth, eyes heavy on her. "Just like that?"

"You said I could have you. *Any time.* Well, I want you." And then, to be polite, tacked on, "Please."

"Merlin." He sucked his canine then nodded. "Alright. Let's go."

She laughed at his eagerness, relieved she hadn't just made a fool of herself. It was one thing to have to ask a boy for sex. Another entirely to have to *convince* him to do it.

"You can finish your essay first, if you like. I didn't mean to interrupt you." She gestured to his half-finished page.

He looked down where she'd indicated then back up, a faint crease between his brows.

"What? No...no, I'm not going to *finish my essay first*. Christ. Madam Pince is lucky I'm even packing my things up first. Fuck, she's lucky I'm even *leaving* before taking you up on your offer."

She rolled her eyes at his theatrics, secretly pleased. "Well, I won't let you have sex with me in the library, anyway, so get that last out of your head."

He shook his head. "Can't. I've thought about it too many times. It's practically a part of my psyche."

She snorted. "I only *just* mentioned it."

He glanced up from where he'd been efficiently shoving things in his school bag. "That's cute."

She frowned. "What is?"

"That you seem to think I've only thought about fucking you in the library for the past two minutes."

"I..." She wasn't sure how to respond to *that*. So she stuck to her strengths, rolling her eyes and saying rather bossily, "Well, come on then. You're taking an eon."

He snorted but complied, slinging his bag over his shoulder and tucking the library book under his arm. It felt a little surreal to be walking alongside Malfoy in public, even though no one spared them more than a reflexive glance when they passed by.

He dropped the book off at the return cart by Madam Pince's desk and then guided her toward the doors with a subtle press of his fingertips on her lower back. It was the first time he'd touched her since that night and it was just the proof she needed that she'd made the right choice in seeking him out.

She suddenly wished Apparation was allowed within Hogwarts.

The walk to her room was less awkward than the first time, which was lucky because the distance was about three times greater. She asked him if he'd made further progress on the Advanced Charms homework they'd been given and he thanked her when she offered him some advice after he'd explained where he'd gotten stuck. It felt very natural, and not at all like she was leading him back to her room for him to take her virginity (social construct though it was).

After unlocking her door, she gestured him inside first. As soon as the lock clicked on the other side, he turned to her, expression earnest.

"You can always change your mind if--"

She silenced him with a kiss, her hands sinking into his hair and pulling him down so that she could drop back from her tip-toes. He responded instantly, tugging her to him with eager hands on her hips.

She hadn't realized he'd moved them until her back pressed against the door and she gasped into his mouth, the surprise of it ratcheting up her arousal. It was so gratifying that he seemed to want her as badly as she wanted him. He swept his tongue into her mouth at the same time that he sank a hand into her hair, fingertips massaging lightly. If she hadn't already closed her eyes, the sensation would've had them rolling back. She gripped his hair in return and he groaned.

Now that she was reminded of his taste, his touch, she was absolutely starving for him. She pulled one hand away and scrabbled for the hem of his jumper, seeking skin. He let her touch him until her hand landed on his belt. He pressed his hips against her, pinning her hand between their bodies, and drew back to look at her. With his hand in her hair, her head was tilted back, throat bared. She was already breathless.

"This is your first time, right?"

She snorted. "*Obviously.*" It had only been two days since she'd ever been touched – did he really think she'd gone out and shagged someone else already?

"Don't sass me, Granger. Communication is important." He tightened his fist slightly and the tension had her tilting her head further back.

"Of course. But that was just a rather silly question."

He chewed the inside of his cheek, appraising her. "You're going to make this difficult, aren't you? Do I need to get you off first, so you'll let me do the rest at the proper pace?"

She huffed slightly at the implication that she needed to be *managed*, but wasn't so in denial as to not hear some truth in his accusation. Plus, if he was offering her a quick orgasm, and then would sleep with her? Well, she was but a mere mortal.

"Okay." She nodded, as much as she could within his grip. "Yes please."

He looked bemused at her agreement. "Uh oh, Granger. Have I unleashed a succubus on the world?"

"Prat." But she couldn't quite smother her smile at his teasing.

"Mmhmm. So tell me. How many times have you practiced?" He softened his grip on her hair, fingertips massaging where he'd held tight and began dropping chaste kisses along her jaw and then down her neck.

"Three times." She tilted to give him more skin.

"It's only been two days." He nipped at her pulse point.

"What's your point?" She managed a haughty tone despite the fact that she was practically sagging against him, the hot swipe of his tongue across the bite melting her further.

"No point. Just admiring your dedication." He pulled her away from the door and turned them so he could walk her back to the bed.

"I do like being excellent at everything I do," she quipped.

He made a low sound at the back of his throat. "Lucky me."

Her calves hit the foot of her bed and she let him push her to a sit. He observed her for a moment, head tilting in thought. "Do you want to get naked now or after I make you come?"

No clothes meant more skin for his hands to touch.

"Now. Definitely." She began to pull her jumper up then looked up at him. "Oh. Did you want to do it?"

He tucked his lower lip in, fighting a smile, and shook his head. "No, please go ahead. I'm sure I'll just slow you down."

She narrowed her eyes but didn't care enough to prove him wrong. "Take your shirt off," she told him, then stood.

He took an automatic half step back to give her space and then brought his hands absently his buttons while he watched her pull off her jumper. She doubled his pace, unbuttoned her shirt while simultaneously toeing off her shoes, pulling the tails up out of her skirt around the same time she dropped an inch in height. She unzipped her skirt and then shimmied her hips to pool it around her feet as she unclasped her bra. She considered stripping her knickers off but thought he might like to do that part so left them on, along with her knee socks.

All told, it took her about thirty seconds.

He looked suitably impressed, having watched her efficient multitasking with an increasingly arching brow and unhurried fingers. His shirt was open but that was it.

“That was...quite something, Granger,” he told her, shrugging it off and tossing it aside to land near the pile she’d made. “I’m a little scared to ask how fast you’ve gotten at making yourself come.”

She snorted. “I haven’t timed myself.”

“But you’re going to next time, aren’t you?” When she simply shrugged with an overly innocent smile, he laughed. “Atta girl, Granger. Do report back, won’t you?”

She dragged her eyes over his chest, along the faint remnant of Harry’s recklessness, down to his toned stomach, eyes bumping over each modest ridge of muscle. She thought of her fantasy from the shower.

“Maybe I’ll let you watch. I’m sure that’d only help speed things along.”

He inhaled slowly, nostrils flaring. “Yeah?”

She met his eyes again and aimed for unaffected but her voice betrayed her, a little breathy. “If you wanted to.”

“I would kill to see you touching your pretty little cunt.” He reached out a hand and cupped a breast, stroking his thumb along the swell of it. “These too?”

“Yes. You were right. It feels so good.”

“Like this?” He brought his other hand up to mirror the hold he had on her other breast. When he ended the squeeze with a simultaneous pinch to her nipples, she squirmed on her feet and nodded.

“Will you show me?”

She replaced his hands with hers, copying the squeeze and then swiping over the rosy peaks with her forefingers. His hands tightened where they’d dropped to rest against the curve of her hips.

“So sexy,” he murmured, gaze riveted.

She did it again and felt it pulse between her legs.

“*Draco*.” It came out whiny and she’d have been ashamed of herself but for the way it instantly darkened his gaze. “Make me come, please.”

He was on her instantly.

“So fucking polite,” he growled, pushing her backward until she was tipping, landing on the mattress with a small bounce, the energy of which he absorbed with his own body as he following her down. He slotted himself between her legs, his belt buckle cold against her belly, a contrast to the warmth of his skin. “How would you like me to do it?”

“Fingers.” She’d been unable to properly replicate the feeling of his inside her, her own fingers both too slender and too short, the angle of her wrist not quite right. Just the thought that she’d feel them again soon was making her almost unbearably wet.

He leaned down to kiss her, so fleeting that her head lifted to search for more, but he’d lifted himself off her to resettle at her side. His left hand instantly skimmed a feather-light path down her abdomen to press between her legs. She arched up into the feeling, a pleased sound curling out of her.

“That feel good?” He asked her, rubbing her in a firm, slow circle over her knickers.

She nodded, eyes closing in bliss. He kept it up for another few rotations and then used just the tip of his middle finger to softly circle her clit. She gasped aloud when he mirrored the light touch with his tongue on her nipple. He snorted a soft laugh through his nose at her reaction, the gust cool against her wet skin, tightening the little bud further.

“Shut up,” she gasped. “Do that again.”

He did, flicking his tongue across it and then drawing it into his mouth and sucking.

“*Oh!*” She felt herself flutter in response. “Fuck that’s—“

He did it again and whatever she’d been about to say dissolved from her mind, the words morphing into a moan.

He slid his right forearm under her neck, his hand coming up to card through her hair and cradle the back of her head, then slowly dragged his left from between her legs, up her thigh, and around to her arse. He palmed her, gently at first and then a proper grope. She didn’t have anything to compare it to, of course, but she found his touch to be a delightful mix of youthful eagerness and confident intention. When he showed his hand — literally — by touching something for himself rather than solely her, she felt flush with desire.

“I think you’re going to like all the things my tongue can do,” he told her, laving a wet stripe from the tip to top of her breast.

She arched against him, trying to get closer to each place he was touching her. “I’m sure,” she managed, “but first I need—“

He squeezed her arse and then his hand was back between her legs, instantly massaging her clit. She squeaked.

“I know, you impatient little thing. You need a lesson in delayed gratification.” She chirped a dismayed sound and he nipped at her collarbone. “Don’t fret. I’ll make you come just as quick as you like this time.”

His fingers disappeared under her knickers, instantly slipping down to where she wanted him. He inhaled sharply, eyes flicking up to hers. "Christ, you're wet. When did you last come?"

"Y-yesterday." She rocked her hips against his hand, so close to where she needed it.

"And you're already so needy?"

Her hands, which until then had been above her on her pillow just like last time, were inspired to action. She sent her left hand into his hair, tugging on the soft strands while her right clapped over his, pressing on his fingers. She canted her hips against it and let out an exaggerated whimper when she felt the barest tips of them enter her.

Her show of desperation proved fruitful when, with a low groan, he sank his fingers deep. The fullness was exactly what she'd been craving. She groaned and finally, *finally* he didn't hold back. He steadily increased his pace until she was whimpering in earnest. When he dipped down to pull her nipple into his mouth again, she felt the end approach.

"Oh I'm so close." It came out in a rush, her next breath quick on the tails of her last. She could feel the start of her orgasm, that unmistakable contraction from deep within. She chased it.

"Already? You *have* been practicing, haven't you?"

She nodded reflexively at his interrogative tone, her attention focused much further south.

"Go on then." He pressed the words to the swell of her breast. "Show me what you've mastered."

She squeezed around his fingers, encouraging her body along and then felt it take over. She gasped, breathless, as she came. He sucked a mark against her throat, grinding the meat of his palm against her clit while she pulsed around his fingers.

"So beautiful." She felt his lips move around the words, staring at the ceiling as her body relaxed. She released her grip on his hair, instantly apologetic when she realized how hard she'd been holding. "Sorry." She smoothed the strands she'd mussed but it was no use.

He smirked down at her looking devilishly handsome with his hair rumpled and eyes hot. "I like it. Pull my hair any time you want. Now, did that get you what you needed? Or do you still want sex?"

The question was unassuming. She knew he'd be quite happy to simply tuck her into bed and leave if she asked him to.

The knowledge made her burn for him.

"More than ever," she admitted.

He quirked a brow, smirking. "I must've done a poor job then, hmm?" His tone was teasing; he knew exactly how well he'd done.

She rolled her eyes, smiling. “Do you need praise, Draco?”

“Sure wouldn’t say no to it.”

She wrapped her arms around his neck. “You did very well. In all my attempts, I never quite managed to come as hard as you make me.”

She could see how her words affected him, his eyes darkening and the slight pink tint to his cheeks flaring into the warm rose of arousal. She made a mental note then pulled his mouth to hers. His kiss was a slow, sensual thing. She matched his cadence, letting him lead. After a few soft presses, his tongue swept into her mouth.

When she instinctively shifted her hips at the feeling, she realized his fingers were still inside her. The renewed awareness sent a fresh bolt of arousal through her. He stroked her front wall softly then pressed his two fingers apart, testing.

“I think you’re ready for me,” he murmured. “Do you feel ready?”

“Yes.” She felt *more* than ready, quite categorically desperate for him. She wanted to know what he’d feel like inside her, what sounds she might be able to draw from him.

“It’ll be a little easier since you just came,” he told her. “But even so, I’ll go slow.”

“Okay.”

He raised up and stripped her knickers off, then tilted his head at her knee socks. “On or off?”

She couldn’t care less. “Whatever you want.”

He hummed. “On, then.”

He got to his feet, hands dropping to undo his belt and then his trousers. She watched his hands, absently cupping her breasts as he worked his boxer briefs off. But when he was back, making room for himself between her thighs, she couldn’t stop the flutter of nerves.

“Ever been someone’s first before?” she asked, half to cut the tension and half because she was genuinely curious.

He glanced up at her, bemused. “I’m eighteen,” he reminded her. “They’ve all been virgins before me.”

She exhaled slowly, relaxing that this was yet another thing she could trust him in, when his words registered fully. “When you say *they*, how many are we talking?”

“You really want to discuss this right now?” He looked pointedly down where he was positioning himself between her legs.

He had a point. “Oh. Well—”

But he was pulling back. “Actually, the answer is: enough to know that if you’re thinking about *them*, I have more work to do first.”

He dropped down to his stomach between her legs and shouldered her thighs apart. A jolt of pure nerves shot through her, hyper-aware of how close his face was to her cunt but rather excited by the prospect.

“Let me know when you’re close,” he told her, and dipped down.

He prepared her for his mouth with a slide of his thumbs along either side of her, tongue following in their wake. His mouth was scorching and she felt the distant rumble of a groan against her.

It felt strange, his tongue softer than his fingers and much more dexterous, but she warmed to the sensation quickly. He aided her in the acclimation by circling her clit with the tip of his tongue and then closed his lips around it softly. He had to hold her hips still when she bucked up.

“*Oh gods.*”

His muffled laughter sent her squirming again. She could only withstand it for another few minutes until she was tugging on his hair, hard.

“Fuck. Fuck. I’m close.”

He drew away with a final suck, leaning back to kneel between her legs. “Good girl. Still want more?”

“Yes. *Please.*” She would pin him down and do it herself if he dawdled any longer.

But she didn’t need to worry.

He angled himself over her without further ado, one hand beside her ribs and the other dropping down to give himself two quick strokes before aligning himself. He met her eye, a quick check, and then watched himself push in.

Even with how thoroughly he’d prepared her, it was still a tight fit. He only gave her a few inches before he stilled, his hand moving from his cock to her thigh. He stroked his palm soothingly along it, eyes meeting hers.

“Draco.” She didn’t know why she said it; it escaped her without thought, half breath.

He pulled in a heavy breath through his nose, chest expanding. “You good?”

She nodded, heart thudding. He paused an extra moment, perhaps to make sure she wasn’t rushing herself, and then pressed further. It didn’t hurt, exactly, but it was a little uncomfortable. He withdrew before he’d gone much further, then slid back to where he’d been. The act, the first glimpse at what it felt like for him to fuck her, had her mouth popping open.

He huffed a laugh, sounding strained. “Did that feel good?”

She nodded again, hands coming up to rest on his shoulders. She dug her fingers in slightly when he pressed deeper. On his fourth slow press, he finally bottomed out.

“You feel incredible,” he told her, voice low, just holding himself inside her. “How do you feel?”

“Good.” She breathed the word. It did feel good, if not a little achy. Not at all as bad as she’d feared; not quite pleasurable yet but still rather wonderful.

He stroked her thigh again, unhurried. “Good. Let me know when you’re ready for me to move.”

She shifted her hips and watched his jaw clench, but he didn’t move. The discomfort had faded and now she just felt pressure, hot and potent.

“I’m ready.”

“Sure?”

“Yes. Please move.”

He licked his bottom lip into his mouth and slowly dragged out. She swallowed at the feel and gasped softly when he pushed back in, deep.

“That feels good,” she assured him when his eyes fixed intently on hers.

With each press, she felt herself relax until he was moving inside her without resistance, the glide on its way to exquisite. Once he’d been certain enough that she was alright, his eyes had dropped from hers to skate along her body. He’d looked at her breasts for an inordinate amount of time so when his eyes trailed back to them, she brought her hands down to cup them. When she swept her fingers over her nipples, his hips flexed more earnestly against hers.

“Do you need a break?” She asked, remembering how he’d asked for one last time.

“Don’t worry about me,” he murmured. “There’s no rush. I got off this morning, so I can take it for longer than last time. This is your cock for as long as you want it.”

She pressed the crown of her head back into the pillow, groaning. “That’s so unbearably hot. Gods.”

He laughed, sounding pleased and somewhat disbelieving. “You’ll test me though,” he added on a breath. “But I like a challenge.”

She didn’t have a quippy reply to that, only a rather choked sound as he angled himself a little differently, touching something incendiary inside her.

“That it?” He asked nonsensically but she could only squeeze her hands into the muscle of his shoulders when he rubbed against it again, mind wiped. He made a sound of acknowledgement. “Yeah, that’s it. Feels good, huh? Let me know if I stray.”

He kept his strokes steady and she melted into the bed, her hips rocking to meet his on pure instinct. When he licked his thumb and brought it to her clit, she couldn’t keep her eyes open. The ball of tension he’d been dutifully coiling inside her suddenly more than she could bear.

“Oh...oh...I’m—“ She couldn’t finish articulating it before she was coming, her walls squeezing almost painfully tight around the thick length of him, as if they hadn’t known to leave space for him.

“*Fuck.*” He bit the word out like the pressure was killing him as well, so she let go, seeking relief for them both. Her orgasm swept her away with a broken wail, the sound getting caught in her throat halfway out.

He’d slowed his thrusts when she’d clamped down around him but now as she relaxed again, he pulled his hand off her clit and steadied himself on both arms over her. He was flushed, breathing heavily. He looked tense.

“Can I..?”

“Yes,” she said, not feeling the need to clarify what he was asking permission for. At this point, she was pretty confident she’d let him do whatever he wanted anyway. She’d never felt so satisfied in her life. She let her legs fall open to him from where they’d been tight around his hips.

He picked his pace back up, the friction eased even further by the additional arousal he’d drawn from her. After a few thrusts, he dropped down onto his elbows over her, not drawing out any further than halfway before gliding home.

She wasn’t sure what to do to increase his pleasure but then recalled two things she knew he liked. She wrapped one hand around his bicep and wove the other into his hair.

“You made me come so hard,” she told him, winding her fingers further into the soft locks. “Gods, Draco, you feel so good inside me.” She punctuated it with a breathy whimper right when his cock struck particularly deep and tugged on his hair, hard.

“*Hermione.* Fuck. I—*oh fuck!*” He groaned, something undone and primal, and then pounded into her a handful of times before holding deep, hips flexing against her as he came.

She couldn’t feel it, really, but there was something connecting about knowing he was leaving part of himself in her. She felt, weirdly, sentimental. Out of nowhere, her eyes pricked with unexpected tears.

His arm was shaking slightly under her hand, so she squeezed him, sniffing. He looked down at her.

“Shit. Did I hurt you?” He was panting but she could hear his concern clearly.

“No. No, not at all. I don’t know why I’m crying.” She swiped at her eyes, thankful that the urge was already passing.

“Probably a rush of hormones,” he said, bringing a hand up to push her hair off her forehead, still looking half concerned.

She nodded, sniffing a final time and then exhaling. She tucked her lower lip into her mouth, then grinned up at him.

“That was...I almost don’t have the words.”

His face relaxed into an expression of pure male satisfaction. “Rendered speechless? There’s no higher praise from you.”

She didn’t even bother to retort. “Mmhmm.”

He dropped a soft kiss on her lips then levered off her with a grimace, padding to the loo for a cloth. Without his distracting presence, she was suddenly aware of how exceptionally wet she was between her legs. Unthinkingly, she reached down and ran her fingers through it, rubbing it between a thumb and forefinger. It was a funny thing to consider, but she was sure she could tell the difference between his cum and her arousal.

Before she could get much further in her contemplation, Malfoy’s voice captured her attention.

“Your inquisitiveness might actually kill me.”

He tossed the cloth to her, eyes on her probing hand. She plucked the material off her belly and used it to dab herself dry. “Why’s that?”

He shook his head slowly, then pulled his eyes away. “Just my dumb male brain.”

He located his boxer briefs and pulled them on. She covertly admired his arse as he hoicked them up. When he didn’t supply further explanation, stooping to retrieve his trousers, she rolled onto her belly and sighed happily into the mattress, wiggling slightly.

She heard his belt thud back to the floor.

She smirked.

Chapter End Notes

Okay. Question. I already have half of another chapter written and know it won’t be the last. I might have fallen in love with them and this dynamic 🥰

But I'm not sure what the proper etiquette for this is. Should I switch the chapter count back to ? so people don't accidentally get tricked into a WIP thinking it's complete? Or do I just keep adding chapters whenever my feral little brain creates them since this isn't *exactly* a WIP or more just a slightly plot-less story that won't die?

Thanks for any insight!

Edit: Thanks to everyone for giving their opinions regarding the above question! I have gone ahead and changed it to /? so expect more! 🥰

Chapter 5: She wrote: Hello.

Chapter Notes

Help, I've accidentally stumbled along a tiny plot and now this has taken off 😊

Chapter six (and seven *cough*) are both written so I'm just editing and will post them over the next few days.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione had never felt so alive.

It was a bit like when she'd done her first proper bit of magic and had the satisfaction of that nagging question finally answered.

Or a bit like when she'd danced with Viktor, swirling around like she was made of silken thread and he was a needle, weaving her into perfection.

Or even a bit like when she'd schemed against Umbridge, helping Harry set up the D.A. She'd been practically teeming with righteous energy then, every cell in her body aligned to her purpose.

This felt like another foundational moment. Something formational, a personal awareness of a completely different degree.

She felt a bit badly for all the rather nasty, haughty thoughts she'd had about Lavender when she'd been well entrenched in her *Won-Won* era. If Ron was even half the authority as Draco on the subject of female pleasure, she supposed she rather understood Lavender's devotion. (Privately she rather doubted that he was; Ron had had *her* for a female best friend, after all, and even beyond her absolute hopelessness on the subject, they'd never had that level of intimate discussion).

Although, Hermione wasn't about to go babbling throughout the school about Draco, even if she thought he rather deserved the acknowledgement. She and Draco weren't *together*. He was just teaching her.

And she was the world's most dedicated student.

But Merlin and Morgana...*she had never felt so alive.*

It was an unexpected side-effect, considering a fraction of her brain was now permanently fixated on him, but she felt even more aware of her surroundings. She'd tried to disassociate

her sexual gratification from him but had surrendered when it became apparent it was a losing battle.

Plus, she could give credit where credit was due. He'd done the previously impossible and she was happy to acknowledge expertise.

It was with this new zest for life that she decided to break a personal rule and pass notes in class.

The first class they had together that day was Potions. In the morning, she'd had Herbology while he'd been in Muggle Studies (the extremely lenient terms set by McGonagall for his accepted return to the school). So, while Slughorn explained the potion they'd make that period, Hermione tore off a scrap of parchment and considered how to begin. As with most things, simple was perhaps best.

She wrote: *Hello*, then surreptitiously slid the parchment between them on the desk, nudging the back of his hand with her knuckles, fingers still wrapped around her quill.

He glanced sidelong at her, still writing. She couldn't *stand* when he did that, especially since his handwriting didn't falter. She pressed her finger to the note then moved her right hand back to her schoolwork so he could read and reply. As he was left handed, he only had to shift his hand a few inches to transfer it from his notes to the scrap. He wrote then withdrew his hand. She made sure no one was watching, then leaned slightly to read.

Yes, Granger?

She'd never seen her name in his handwriting before and, stupidly, her stomach fluttered.

She deliberated again for a moment, then wrote:

You look nice today.

She extended her pinky finger to touch his hand again, then went back to her notes. He glanced over at her note then cut his eyes to her. He looked amused, but curious.

And you're as gorgeous as ever.

She chewed her lip, pleased, then decided to up the ante.

I can't stop thinking about you.

His mouth quirked up as he read.

Anything in particular?

How you felt inside me.

She barely heard the quick breath, he stifled it so quickly. He flicked his eyes to her, narrowed in chastisement. His reply was brief.

Granger.

She could practically hear the warning tone of it. She doubled down.

How much I want to feel you in my mouth.

His reply was quick.

Is that so?

Hers was quicker.

Would you let me now?

His eyes hadn't left the parchment while she wrote, but even so he took a moment to reply.

I might beg

She squirmed slightly on her seat and he made a low sound in his throat, half groan and half tut of reproach. The sound inspired her.

For it? Or because of it?

But before he could reply, Professor Slughorn clapped his hands merrily and announced that it was their turn. She'd only half paid attention to his demonstration but for once, found that her distraction had been more important to her than schoolwork.

Malfoy casually slid the parchment under his notes when the professor began to slowly make his way around the classroom. She stood and nudged her stool under the desk then began pulling the necessary implements to her: knife, cutting board, and the correct stirring rod. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw Malfoy was doing the same so when she began walking toward the ingredient storeroom and he trailed behind her like a wraith, she wasn't suspicious.

That quickly changed when he closed the storeroom door behind them, enclosing them in the small space. He was up behind her before she could even turn toward the click of the door.

"Malfoy—"

He wrapped his arms around her waist from behind, dipping his head close to her neck. "You're mean," he accused lowly, nipping at her skin. "You seem all nice and polite — *Head Girl*, even — but you're secretly so *mean*."

She smirked at his plaintive tone. "Liked my note, did you?"

He pulled her back and she felt him against her bum. "You got me hard in class, Granger."

The words thrilled her, a spark shooting down her spine. "Surely that's not the first time," she said airily.

He closed his teeth over another tender patch of skin; goosebumps rose along her entire body, peaking her nipples. “No, it’s not. You have no idea what you do to me.”

She’d meant it in the general sense, him having once been a boy in the uncontrollable throes of puberty and beyond, but he’d made it sound *personal*.

“Or perhaps you do,” he carried on. “You might be new to its expression, but you’re not oblivious to its existence, are you?”

“You’ve lost me.” She feigned indifference and made an exaggerated stretch for an ingredient on the shelf in front of her, lifting onto her toes and rubbing her arse against him in the process. “Not enough blood left in your brain for coherence?”

She thought he’d pull her tighter against him, greedy for friction, but instead he loosened his arms from around her middle. She stumbled forward slightly, off balance on her toes, but he was quick to stabilize her with one hand on her hip and the other along her extended arm, fingers curling fully around her wrist. She’d automatically caught herself on the shelf, fingers bumping into opaque jars, so found herself now immobilized in her lengthened position, his chest against her back, her body precariously close to the glass-jar-laden shelving.

“Malfoy,” she huffed, wiggling in his grip.

“Granger,” he returned, a low sing-song across the syllables.

He pulled her lower body back towards him with the grip on her hip, the eventual contact with his erection so intentionally slow she almost groaned with relief when she felt it. And he thought *she* was mean?

“Someone will come in soon,” she warned him.

She felt his chuckle. “What precisely do you think we’re going to do in here?”

She squirmed. He moved with her.

“You’re not exactly being discrete,” she tried. “Not sure how you could justify practically fucking me against the shelves if that door opened.”

“It’s hardly the most outlandish thing I’ve ever tried to justify,” he murmured. “But I must say, I like where your head’s at.”

He slid the hand on her hip inward to press just above her clit, her skirt practically enveloping his hand with the way her hips were tilted back. But as soon as she’d regained enough of her mental faculties to consider grinding against it, it was gone.

He plucked a jar off the shelf at hip height then leaned in to speak softly. “But you’re right. It’s very suspicious to be in here together. Grab the rest, and enough for me, hmm?”

He’d released her fully and opened the door before she quite realized what had happened. It was only when someone else stepped in to retrieve ingredients that she shook herself out of

her stupor, quickly gathering what they needed and then slipping out, rather flushed. He cast a sly glance in her direction when she rejoined him at the desk.

“You are such a prat,” she hissed.

He laughed quietly, reaching for the ingredients she’d brought. “All's fair,” he quipped.

In love and war. She finished the quote in her head automatically. It was a Muggle saying. She glanced sidelong at him but he’d shifted to his focused expression when brewing, organizing his workspace with practiced hands.

This was the second instance of him using Muggle expressions. She pondered it idly while she chopped and sliced and extracted. Had it just slipped into his awareness over the course of his life? Or was this a new occurrence? She admittedly didn’t know much about him, their prior interactions limited to begrudging proximity in classes or outright aggression.

It wasn’t until she was stirring repetitively that she considered the phrase itself. *All’s fair in love and war.* What had he meant? They weren’t at *war* with one another anymore.

She found she didn’t quite know what to do with what that then implied.

He was a much tidier brewer than she, so it took her a few minutes longer to clean her workstation. He waited for her, something he’d never done before, and they walked together to Charms.

She debated how needy to be. She’d made her desires fairly clear on the scrap of parchment he still had (a rather damning article given the content and her name being writ upon it twice, but she didn’t quite care enough to ask that he destroy it) but was eager to get a meeting time arranged.

He’d joked about having unleashed her but in all honesty, it wasn’t completely far off. She’d probably forever associate him with her true sexual awakening — a legacy she never would have previously believed would be attributed to him. It was quite good luck on his part that the most memorable thing about any interaction between them now didn’t fill her with a simmering rage.

But something else simmered in her as she considered him across the room from her in the Charms classroom. Just as potent as rage but a different kind of heat.

Attraction.

Sexual desire.

Arousal.

That new sense of hyper-awareness of her body was back and she was suddenly able to feel everything from the brush of a stray curl against her cheek to the hard wooden bench below her. She crossed her legs and tried to focus on the lesson. Was this how it had been for her peers the whole time? Well, perhaps not for *everyone*; surely there were quite a few other girls, and even a boy or two, who kept their thoughts on loftier things. But maybe this is how it was for most of her male peers.

Her attention flicked back to Malfoy. He was definitely sexually active. She wondered for how long, though it probably didn't make much of a difference if the predilections of typical male psyche were at all accurate. She wondered if he was thinking about sex right now.

He didn't appear to be, as he was watching Flitwick lecture with a neutrally interested expression, but as she observed him, his eyes flicked to her. He raised an eyebrow and she almost heard the question in his expression. *Yes, Granger?*

Her note had been a smashing success. Perhaps she could play off of it? She uncrossed her legs and recrossed them the other way, and his eyes dropped to the motion as she'd hoped they would.

She returned her attention to Flitwick while she slid a hand down to toy with the top of her knee sock, as if adjusting it. To anyone else it was a casual, absent touch but she recalled that he'd kept her knee socks on when they'd had sex. Whether it was a *thing* for him or not, she'd find out, but either way, it would hopefully remind him of sleeping with her. When she subtly checked a moment later, his eyes were locked on her hand. She pulled it away slowly, letting her fingers catch on the hem of her skirt but not lifting it enough to give anyone else a show. He shifted in his seat and heat flared through her at the prospect that she was turning him on again.

She kept her motions slow and nonchalant, her hand moving ever upward until she used it to tuck a few curls behind her ear. She ended the seduction by bringing her thumb to her mouth, miming an absent nibble on the edge as if worrying a hangnail. She did a quick check to make sure no one else was paying attention to her, and then met his gaze and flicked the tip of her tongue against the pad of her thumb.

He shook his head minutely in warning, eyes dark and cheeks slightly pink. She felt a thrill rush through her at his reaction and raised her brows back at him, expression innocent. He cut his gaze away, shifting again, and scribbled something on his notes.

She marinated in the warmth of her success for the remainder of the lesson, the power of it fueling her magic so that when she demonstrated the rather complex charm for Flitwick, she did it perfectly on her first try.

Merlin but she loved being the best.

He cornered her after class, as she'd hoped he would. "Nice little show in there," he told her as they walked to the Great Hall for lunch.

She grinned, crocodilian. "Did it make it *hard* for you to concentrate? It did take you *two* attempts to cast the charm correctly." She was still riding the high of her two-fold success,

her response quippy.

“That charm was ridiculously complex — the fact that it only took me two attempts is actually quite impressive.” He retorted.

“And yet it only took me one.”

He snorted, amused at her unapologetic bragging. “So modest.”

“Modesty is boring,” she tutted. “I’ve never been one for fake humility.”

“Yes, subtlety was never really your strength,” he agreed.

She would’ve swatted at him had they not been surrounded by peers. She wasn’t sure how familiar she was allowed to be with him in public. As they descended the final staircase before the Great Hall, she let him get a step ahead so her mouth was in line with his ear.

“Come by my room tonight?” She murmured.

He demonstrated his superior grasp of subtlety with a barely-there glance back at her and a quirk of his lip. Then he was veering off toward the Slytherin table while she retreated to the Gryffindor.

Mixed tables was the next step in breaking down the House barriers, she thought. Perhaps she’d put in a word to McGonagall about it.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading! More sexucation coming up.

Chapter 6: “No. Teach me first. Then fuck me.”

Chapter Notes

What will she learn next 🤔

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

She was in the middle of a rather silly Astronomy assignment when there was a knock on her door. She glanced at the clock and saw it was already a quarter to nine. She hadn't specified a time when issuing her invitation to Malfoy, but couldn't think who else would darken her door at this hour. She went over to answer it and, lo and behold, found Malfoy leaning casually against the jamb.

“Hello, Granger.”

“Hi Draco.” She stepped back to let him in and he straightened, entering her room.

“You always use my first name,” he said as she locked her door and turned to face him.

“Would you like me to use yours?”

She hadn't really thought about it, her surname sounding strangely intimate the way he said it. She shrugged. “Your choice. I rather like how you say Granger but Hermione is fine too.”

He smirked then looked around her space, eyes landing on her messy desk. “Did you want to finish that first?” He asked, nodding toward the unstoppered ink pot and swiftly-drying quill atop her roll of parchment.

She stepped into him, slinging her arms around his neck and leaning in close. “No, Draco,” she said, “I don't want to *finish my essay first*.”

He snorted at her parroting his words back to him, then cupped her jaw and kissed her. She melted instantly, pressing closer to him and stroking her fingers along the back of his neck and up into his hair.

“Been thinking about this all day,” she breathed when he gave her a brief respite.

He chuckled. “I know. You've been torturing me.”

“Sorry.” She wasn't.

“No you're not.”

He walked her back to the bed, turning them so he could sit. He pulled her onto his lap and she eagerly straddled him.

“Have you practiced again?” He asked, hands going to her jumper and tugging it off her, slow enough that she could stop him. She didn’t.

She emerged, curls askew. “Not since last time.”

“Would you have, if I wasn’t free tonight?” He had already worked her shirt halfway open, fingers undoing the buttons while his eyes were intent on hers.

Her answer was certain. “Yes.”

“How would you have done it?”

She helped pull her shirt off then returned her hands to his shoulders. “I don’t know. Maybe like this again.” She demonstrated her meaning with a few grinds on his lap.

His nostrils flared, even though she wasn’t directly over his cock. “*Again?*”

“I tried what you suggested. About...with the pillow.”

“Did you? Fuck.” He exhaled. “Was it good?”

She nodded again. “The motion was a little awkward at first but then something about it was really arousing. Like my body knew what it wanted and sought it instinctively.” Despite herself, she blushed. “Is that weird? To get turned on by my own body?”

“It’s not weird. It’s actually incredibly hot, that you know how sexy you are.”

He slid his hands up her naked sides and then around to her bra clasp. When she didn’t stop him, he flicked it open and tugged the garment off, eyes zeroing in on her bared skin. She felt her nipples tighten in the cool air and shifted her hips again reflexively.

“What do you want tonight?” He asked, as he cupped her.

She’d been thinking about it all day and had determined the exact phrasing she’d use during Arithmancy as she’d watched him solve a complex problem at the chalkboard. Professor Vector had only given him a curt nod of acknowledgement but Hermione thought the clever way he’d done it deserved a larger reward.

“I want you to teach me how to suck your cock.”

His eyes flared, obvious excitement brightening them, but his voice still moderated. “There’s not much to teach. It’s pretty hard to do anything wrong.”

“Even so. I want to know what you like. What different things feel like to you. I want to learn everything.”

“Christ.” He sucked in a lungful of air. “I knew I should’ve wanked before I came here.”

She snorted, but the implication of his comment warmed her. “But then what would I play with?” She asked sweetly.

He shook his head, gaze heated. "You're asking for trouble now, Granger. Don't forget that you're due for a lesson in delayed gratification." He punctuated this with a firm squeeze to her nipples and she yelped then groaned when the sharpness gave way to a warm throb.

"Ohh that feels so good." She rocked on his lap. "You're so good at that."

"Flattery won't save you, Granger." But he did it again.

"One lesson at a time," she bartered. "Blowjob today. Delayed gratification tomorrow."

He grinned. "I like the way you negotiate." Then he lay back and pulled her down with him, rolling them over so she was on her back with him between her legs. The position made her suddenly feel desperately empty.

"Can we have sex again, too?" She tried to grind up against him but he was hovering just out of reach.

"Yeah, Granger." He said, tone bemused but not unaffected. "Whatever you want."

"You might regret that offer," she teased, grinning up at him.

He scoffed and dropped to kiss her. "Want me to get you off first?" He asked, pulling back to look at her.

"No. Teach me first. Then fuck me."

"Jesus, the mouth on you." He ground his jaw then nodded, levering himself off her and flipping onto his back beside her.

She shimmied out of her skirt and knickers to save time later, somewhat remorseful that she'd removed her socks earlier that evening with her shoes. So much for performing further experiments on his potential sock kink. Now naked, she rolled over and up onto her knees, shuffling over to straddle his thighs.

"Okay," he began, voice respectably level given the circumstances, namely that she was naked and asking to blow him. "So there's not much to it, as you'll soon find out, but there are a few things to generally avoid unless your partner prefers otherwise. Most importantly: watch your teeth so you don't cause unwanted pain and watch the depth so you don't gag."

She noticed that he'd phrased it broadly, as if she was entertaining the idea of putting anyone else's cock in her mouth. She narrowed the focus back.

"So what about you?"

"What do I prefer?" She nodded. "Don't bite me, but I don't mind the suggestion of teeth. I'll show you what I mean. And although it does feel incredible to be that deep, I don't enjoy gagging generally. I don't like the idea that my partner is struggling."

She knew the general idea of deep throating and assumed that's what he meant. She made a note to read up on techniques to achieve it without gagging. "Alright. What should I do

first?”

“Kiss me.”

She frowned, confused how that would be the first step in a blowjob, but did as he asked. He kept it sweet, but nipped at her bottom lip in parting. He spoke the next words against her mouth. “Now undo my trousers.”

That seemed more relevant. She scooted back to sit on her knees between his spread thighs, working his belt loose then undoing the fastenings of his trousers. He helped her pull them off and then she was back between his legs.

“Can I take your shirt off?” She asked, fingering a button.

“Yeah, of course.” He began unbuttoning from the top and she the bottom. When they met in the middle, he sat up and pulled it off, then curled back down.

“Cock out now?” She asked, fingers already slipping below the waistband.

“Check if I’m hard first.” When she frowned, confused again, he explained. “Sometimes blokes prefer to be hard before they’re naked around a woman. I don’t particularly care either way but it’s just something to be aware of.”

It seemed a silly thing to care about but who was she to judge the rationale of boys?

She could see that he was hard from the way he strained against the thin fabric of his black boxer briefs but she played along and ran a single finger up his length, ending with a little swirl on the head.

“You’re hard,” she informed him dryly.

“If I wasn’t already, that little move would’ve gotten me there quick.” He propped his head up on a bent arm, the pose doing unfair things to his chest and bicep. “Go ahead. You can take it out now.”

She tugged the waistband down and he lifted his bum so she could strip them down to his thighs to where she was sitting between them.

He laughed, nudging her with his free hand. “Move.”

“Oh.” She lifted up onto her knees and shuffled back so she could pull them all the way off then regained her position between his knees. When she was simply looking at it again, admiring and observing, he huffed a breath and she glanced up. He was slightly pink cheeked but looked amused.

“Why don’t you have a go first, and I’ll give you suggestions if you need them. You didn’t need any help getting me off with your hand and frankly this’ll get me there even easier.”

She nodded then chewed her lip in thought, unsure where to begin. Perhaps one didn’t just dive in mouth-first. She touched him lightly with a finger, running it down the underside of

his shaft in an exploratory stroke like she'd done over his underwear. She squeaked in surprise when it jumped under her hand.

He snorted a laugh at her reaction. "It's reflexive," he told her. "A bit like when you feel your insides flutter. But I can control it a bit, too, like you can."

She made a little sound of interest and stroked him again. His cock didn't move; she flicked her eyes up to him.

"I was prepared for it this time," he explained.

She repeated the downward stroke a third time, this time with two fingers, and then curled them around the base to lift and wrap him into her hand. She gave him an exploratory stroke upward, fist close but not too snug. He shifted a little but just gave her an encouraging nod when she looked up to check.

When her next upstroke brought a bead of moisture with it, she paused. Now seemed as good a time as any to introduce her tongue. She'd been curious what he tasted like the last time she'd seen him leaking like this. Decision made, she bent and licked across the head of his cock.

"Fuck."

She met his eyes and then licked him again when she saw the open lust on his face. He brought his free hand to his own hair, raking through and gripping it lightly, like he was trying to avoid doing something else. She almost asked but was already beginning to thrum with the powerful knowledge that she was affecting him like that. And besides, he looked so sexy with both hands above his head, arms bent to great effect, his chest and abs pulled taut in a way that made her squirm.

She drew back to consider the taste of him and decided she didn't mind it, the notes earthy and salty. The taste of creation.

She readjusted her fist to better angle him and then licked him once more before sucking the head into her mouth. He let out a controlled exhale, morphing into a gasped out noise of surprise when she sucked again, a little harder.

She knew from her reading that the head of his cock was similar to her clit in that most of the sensation was focused there, and she'd quite enjoyed when he'd applied a little vacuum pressure around her most sensitive spot. She released him after a few seconds, licking around the head again and then drawing back.

"How am I doing so far?" She asked, wanting his affirmation that she was on the right track.

"So good." He was a little breathless but cleared his throat and sounded fairly composed.

"The suction was really good. Try using your hand at the same time."

She looked down. "You mean like..." She stroked him from the base up to where her lips had sunk back to envelop his head. She drew off. "That?"

“Yeah.” He sounded breathless again. “See if you can find a rhythm to work them in tandem. Make your hand an extension of your mouth, to cover whatever you can’t reach.”

Happy for an assignment, Hermione bent to the task. She slid her lips back around him and then stroked her hand down as she sank him further in, drawing her fist up when she withdrew. She did it a few times but once she’d gotten the rhythm down, wanted to try something else.

She stilled her hand at the base and then slowly descended on him, going slowly enough that when she felt him approaching the back of her throat, she was prepared for it. She instinctively stretched her tongue long like she did when cleaning her teeth in order to reach the back. It always helped eliminate her gag reflex so she could properly clean the back of her tongue; a practice her parents had drilled into her (no pun intended).

She felt his cock nudge the back of her throat and stopped, holding it there for a moment to get used to the feeling, then drew off him with a gasp.

“Jesusfuckingchrist.” Malfoy swore then groaned. “You...fuck, I can’t believe you just did that.”

She swiped at her mouth with the back of her hand, wiping away the little string of saliva. “Was that good?”

He tousled his hair absently, staring down at her. “Uh...yeah.”

She bit back a please smile at his emphasis. “Oh. But I only got to here.” She indicated where she’d kissed her hand, three fingers still curled around his base, spread slightly with her pinky resting against his groin.

“Always the overachiever,” he mumbled. She surmised that she’d managed to place herself on the outer edge of the bell curve, a place she was rather fond of being. Pleased, she stroked him leisurely and then followed with her mouth.

She didn’t try for depth this time, more curious about the feel of it in general. She tried a few different things with her tongue, pressing or swiping or easing it away altogether and tightening her whole mouth. He let her explore, his thighs tensing every so often but otherwise not interfering. That is, until she flicked her tongue side-to-side across the tight line of skin right underneath the ridge of his head and he made a choked sound that sounded rather uncontrolled.

She did it again, for science.

“I read that this was a sensitive spot,” she told him, sitting tall and copying the motion with the pad of her thumb. “Your frenulum, right?”

“Yeah.” His eyes were shut, head pressed back.

She licked her thumb to make sure it was properly wet then rubbed the spot again, vertically this time. She practically felt his groan. The sound sank into her, her cunt fluttering.

“That feels good?” It obviously did but she found she wanted to hear him say it.

“*So fucking good.*”

She slid her thumb higher, over the head of his cock and then around the ridge. He felt harder than before, she thought, encircling his shaft again and appraising the rigidity. She felt quite aroused herself, uncomfortably damp and sensitive, eager for pressure or friction or *anything*.

“Can we have sex now?” She asked.

He opened his eyes, staring at the ceiling for a moment and then exhaled long. “Absolutely. Let me warm you up,” he offered, rising halfway.

She shook her head. “No need.”

He scoffed. “Yes, there’s a need.”

“No, I mean...I already *am* warmed up.” She blushed a little at the admission.

He raised a brow. “*Are* you? May I confirm?”

She shuffled forward on her knees until he could reach, biting her lip as he slid his hand between her legs. He slipped through her easily and they swore in tandem, her hips rocking reflexively for more. She felt quite worked up, his touch only reinforcing how turned on she’d gotten.

“This all from sucking my cock?” He asked her, voice low and disbelieving.

She nodded. “I have a bit of an oral fixation. And you feel really good in my mouth.”

“Goddamnit, Granger.” He pulled her further forward with hands on her hips, one leaving a distinct wet smear, until she was straddling his lap, his cock wedged between them, solid. “You can have whatever you want. Want me to fuck you now? Want my mouth first? I need to make you feel good.”

“Actually...” She brought her hands to his shoulders then stroked them down to his chest. “Could I try being on top? I’ve read this position is actually very conducive to female orgasm.”

“Whatever you want,” he reiterated.

She pushed lightly against his chest; he got the message and lay back. “Any advice?” She asked.

“Go slow. This is only your second time. Otherwise, no. Do whatever feels good. Experiment.”

She could do that. It was her literal specialty.

She reached down to align him, dragging the head through her center and balancing herself with her other hand on his chest. His hands slid to her thighs, thumbs absently stroking the soft inner skin. She was wet enough that only a tiny bit of downward pressure slipped him into her a few inches but she halted on instinct at the sensation. He felt huge in her, so hard she could feel the ridge of him where he was seated. She rose up a bit to feel the sensation of him sliding into her again and his fingers dug into her thighs.

“You feel good,” she told him, a little wondrous.

“You too. So good.” The words were grit out.

He exhaled and his hands relaxed, so she sank down again, lower. It was already easier this time and in short order she’d taken him to the hilt. She paused, savoring the feeling of fullness, and then slowly raised back up. It felt a bit different than the downstroke had, so she performed both again to compare.

And then again when it felt good.

And then she couldn’t stop, the rhythm of it almost hypnotic.

He bore it for a while and then squeezed her thighs again.

“Stop a minute,” he panted. “I need to get you off.”

“You will,” she assured him, not slowing down. She’d begun to feel that hot, clutching hint of her approaching orgasm, especially when she shifted her hips just so on the upstroke.

“*Fuck*. Granger.” His voice was strained, on the way to urgent. “I don’t know how much longer I can last. Let me make you come first.”

“I thought you liked a challenge,” she taunted with a coy smile, dropping down so he was fully sheathed and performing a few slow grinds back and forth like she’d done on the pillow when she’d fantasized about this very thing. She thought the position might give him a reprieve while still working herself up, the friction of his pelvis against her clit toe-curling, but his eyes had rolled closed and he was groaning.

She tilted her head. “Does this feel good, Draco?”

“So deep.” The words sounded pulled straight from his throat. “*Nngh* I can’t—“

He pulled her off him with strong hands on her hips, yanking her forward so she slid to straddle his navel. He shot a hand behind her and she waited for the wet sensation of his cum on her back, but his arm didn’t move. She felt it flex against her so she craned her neck to see what he was doing but she wasn’t quite flexible enough.

“What are you doing?” She asked, facing front.

His jaw was tight, a muscle jumping along his cheek. “Controlling myself,” he said, voice taut. “You were about to make me come. But I’m not done with you yet.”

She squirmed unconsciously at his words, then did it again when it felt good. His eyes dropped to where she was grinding on his abs.

“Jesus fucking Christ, look at you.”

“Why do you swear like that?” She asked, unable to resist asking even as she rocked her hips more fervently.

“Like what?” His hands had migrated back to her hips, assisting her movement, eyes riveted.

“You use Muggle blasphemes. I can’t imagine you learned those in Muggle Studies. Where did you pick them up?”

“You gonna make me talk while you’re rubbing yourself on me like that?”

“Yes.” She brought her hands to her breasts and toyed idly with her nipples. It made the sensation building between her legs even more potent. His eyes had tracked the movement of her hands and now watched under half-lidded eyes.

When he didn’t respond she prompted, “Well?”

“What?” It was rather flattering, and extremely confidence-boosting, that just watching her had evidently wiped his brain.

“Muggle blasphemes.”

When he just nodded absently, a hand dragging up her tummy to thumb the soft underside of a breast, she tutted.

“Merlin, Draco.” She leaned down and tapped a finger on his forehead. “Focus.”

It roused him slightly, though not to answer her question. “I’ve never been more focused in my life. Gods, you’re the sexiest fucking thing I’ve ever seen. Come ride my face like that. Fuck. Please.”

Her eyebrows shot up. That was a thing? “What?”

The idea had sparked him to action. He lifted her off him enough that he could slide down the bed several inches. “Come sit on my chest and then I’ll move you where I want you.”

She did as he bid, intrigued. He helped relocate her so her thighs framed his head then slid his shoulders under her legs, hands coming around to pat her bum.

“I want you on your knees over me. Support yourself on the headboard.”

She raised up slightly and reached for it, wrapping her hands around the top so that she was hovering over him. It was a wildly arousing position, seeing his intense grey eyes from between her legs and feeling his hands on her arse, knowing her entire body was on display but from such a position of power.

“Perfect. Now spread your knees a bit so you can lower down...yeah, there you go. Alright, I’ve got you.” He brought her the rest of the way down, more firmly against his face than she’d expected.

She worried for a moment that she’d smother him but then dismissed it. He’d obviously done this before so she let him handle the details and simply enjoyed it. It was rather wonderful to not have to micromanage or control; to for once be the least knowledgeable in the room. She’d feared that once, the not-knowing, but Draco made it feel like a burden lifted rather than something she ought to search for to pick up lest she be caught without.

As he liked to say: he had her.

His tongue was luxurious against her, long flat sweeps that touched every sensitive part of her, culminating each time in a swirl around her clit. It felt different than the last time he’d done this, the position from above making her a little more open to him than lying supine allowed. It also gave her more freedom of movement, her hips automatically rocking in time with his tongue.

When she felt the first clutches of her impending orgasm, she pulled out of his grip and raised up on her knees, a little shaky.

“You okay?” He panted, hands softening but not letting go.

“Yeah. Just...” She batted his arms away so she could scoot backward. “Just want to come with you inside me.”

He groaned, hands slipping off her. “Go ahead, Granger. Fuck, you’ll probably take me right along with you.”

She doubted it — since as far as she knew, he’d been unstimulated for the past five minutes — but when she repositioned herself over him, she found him stiff and leaking.

“Do you like doing that?” She asked, referring to his mouth on her.

“Yes. And how inhibited you are just makes it hotter. I like watching you enjoy it.”

She hummed a noise of acknowledgement and reached down to grip him, aligning him and sinking back down. Fuck but he felt incredible inside her. She held him deep and ground her clit against him, leaned forward slightly to get the most contact.

It didn’t take long at all — he’d gotten her so close with his mouth.

“Oh. *Oh*. Ohhh fuck. I’m gonna come.”

She squeezed her eyes shut, feeling herself tighten uncontrollably. The crest was incredible, the most drawn-out yet, and the crash of the waves strong. He was quick to follow her, swearing and flexing his hips up into her, holding her firmly against him with strong hands on her arse so that he struck deep.

She draped forward over him, panting against his shoulder, as he rode out his orgasm. She recovered there, tucked away against his skin, his hands running heavy sweeps up and down her back.

When she finally sat up, he smiled and she returned it, feeling almost giddy. He squeezed her once more before patting her flank to indicate she slip off him. She did, collapsing onto her back.

“Do you remember the charm?” He asked.

“Of course.” She rolled to her side then her feet and located her wand to perform the quick contraceptive spell he’d taught her the last time.

She sank back onto her bed and watched as he pulled on his clothes. She almost suggested he sleep over but held her tongue; he was evidently prepared to be on his way and stopping his momentum felt rather clumsy somehow.

Once dressed, he nipped into the bathroom to wash his hands and then returned with a glass of water. He set it on her bedside table then dropped a parting kiss to her mouth.

“Sleep well, Granger,” he murmured then flashed her a smile.

The door shut with a quiet *snick* and she sighed.

Chapter End Notes

This might be the longest I’ve gone in a Dramione work without adding angst. How long will I last!!

(Honestly it probably has to do with the fact that this has been Hermione POV so far and I really thrive for my Draco POV angst. Oh dear...do we need a Draco POV chapter??



Chapter 7: “Mind if I join you? I promise to contain my mess.”

Chapter Notes

Slightly shorter chapter today but the next one is done (and 4k words of pure smut 🙄).

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Since they both had rather rigorous academic workloads, they didn't have much free time to socialize. She worked around this complication by breaking another personal rule and admitting him into her exclusive study group (prior membership including only herself).

Only a few Slytherins from their year had returned and she didn't see him interacting with them much. The only one she even knew by name was Tracey Davis and she seemed to avoid Malfoy like the plague. In fact, whenever Hermione had caught sight of him in the library or the Great Hall, he was usually alone. She wasn't sure if it was an intentional preference of his own or just the way things had worked out, given that none of his friends had returned.

She'd wondered about the dearth of Slytherins but assumed it was either because they didn't need to formally complete their educations (their various levels of inherited wealth meant that working was either not obligatory or they could be self-employed), or feared the well-earned retribution of their peers after their actions under the Slytherin-run school. Hermione had only been at Hogwarts for a few days during those times of tumultuous leadership but it had been enough to show how quickly things had gone a la Lord of the Flies. But whatever the reason, the point remained: previously always-flanked Malfoy had become a social recluse.

So, the next time she'd seen him bent over his homework, sitting alone in an alcove of the library, she'd simply gone over and pulled out the adjacent chair. He looked up, startled, then smiled when he saw it was her.

“Hey, Hermione.”

He said her first name with a different tone, something lighter and more friendly than the teasing, almost sultry way he said her last. It felt like a funny reverse of typical formality: the given name for public, the surname only whispered.

She smiled back. “Mind if I join you? I promise to contain my mess.”

He snorted but shifted a book aside in non-verbal acquiescence. She managed to keep things to her half of the table for almost thirty minutes, but in the end he had to cede a foot and a half.

“How many bloody books do you need?” He asked incredulously when she came back to her seat with another two.

She clucked her tongue. “You have just as many.”

He raised his brows. “I have three. You have *seven*. Plus those two, so *nine*.”

“I have *three* for Transfiguration, *three* for Charms, and now *three* for Defense. It’s not my fault you’re only doing Ancient Runes right now.”

He looked over her mess with new eyes. “You’re doing three classes’ homework at once? What the fuck, Granger?”

She regained her seat and shuffled things to make space for the new additions; he moved her ink pot before she displaced it. Perhaps Seekers were good for something after all.

“They happen to all relate to one another, so it’s more efficient to complete them simultaneously because I can cross-reference things to deepen each of them. I actually once tried to teach myself how to write with my left hand, so that I could be ambidextrous and potentially write two essays at once, but I gave myself a migraine every time I tried.”

“That’s ambitious, even for you,” he said, though his snark had a warm note behind it.

“This isn’t even close to the most ambitious I’ve been. In Third Year, I used a Time Turner so that I could take multiple classes at the same time.” She wasn’t supposed to tell anyone about it but figured if McGonagall tried to reprimand her, she’d just remind the Headmistress that she’d been the one to let a fourteen-year-old *Muggleborn* witch fuck with time just to take *Muggle* Studies.

Malfoy stared at her. “I should challenge that but frankly, at this point that doesn’t surprise me in the least. But where on earth did you get a Time Turner?”

“McGonagall.”

He let that sit for a moment then blew out a hard breath. “I swear to Salazar, sometimes I think the Professors subscribe to a different set of ethics than the rest of us.”

She hummed agreeably. “You’re not wrong.”

They worked in silence but for the soft flick of turning pages and the scratching of quills until Malfoy finished his assignment and began packing up. She had a bit more to complete but didn’t want him to leave and sensed he needed a reason to stay. With an exaggerated sigh, she put down her quill and flexed her fingers.

“Unless you have somewhere else to be, want to keep me company while I take a break?”

He flipped the top of his bag shut. “I didn’t realize you knew that word.”

She looked at him pointedly. “I’ve said it to you before.”

He poked his tongue in his cheek, lifting his brows in amusement at her reference. “Fair enough.”

She sought for a topic of conversation that wouldn't inadvertently become too fraught between them. So...no pleasant asking-afters of his family, nor if he had plans for after Hogwarts, or perhaps even what he'd been up to the previous weekend. She suspected the answers for any of those wouldn't make for uplifting conversation.

"So," she asked at last, "What's your favorite treat?" *Really titillating, Hermione*, she chastised herself.

He smirked. "How salacious of you to ask."

She blushed but held strong. "Don't be a pig. I meant from Honeydukes."

"Mmhmm, sure." He leaned back in his chair. "I don't know. Probably Pepper Imps."

She screwed up her nose at the thought of those (literally) fiery little peppermints. "*Really?* Living up to your name, I suppose."

He snorted. "They're good. Licorice wands are a close second, probably."

She was suddenly a little concerned for him, psychologically. "You are...worrying me," she told him, only half in jest.

His eyes were amused. "What're yours then?"

"Nougat Chunks are lovely—oh stop it," she laughed when he fake gagged at the word *chunks*. "They *are*! And you can't go wrong with a Chocolate Frog."

"You could, actually," he said blandly. "If, say, you'd eaten about forty in less than twelve hours because it was the first time your mother wasn't there to stop you. You probably wouldn't be able to look at a Chocolate Frog again."

She laughed at the image of little eleven-year-old Draco making himself sick on chocolate. He grinned sheepishly at her reaction.

"My parents were always very sensible about sugar," she informed him. "They didn't want me to fixate on it so we had dessert practically every day. But they also made me perform a rigorous teeth-brushing after every meal, so it balanced out in the end."

Mentioning her parents reminded her of the unasked – or rather, *unanswered* – question she'd posed to him.

"Speaking of Muggles," she said, keeping her tone light. "You never did answer me. Why do you swear like one?"

He looked apprehensive for a moment and then firmed his mouth. "It's stupid. And about eighteen years too late. Or actually, probably only eight, since I don't think many of them are appropriate for really young children."

She tried to understand but he hadn't given her anything to work with. He seemed to realize this and continued.

“I watched a lot of Muggle films over the summer. I was on house arrest until my trial, but some mates were allowed round. They brought with them quite a few surprises, first and foremost that they’d been slowly immersing themselves in Muggle culture for the past few years without me having had any clue.”

The corners of his mouth had turned down a little, disappointed in either himself or his friends for having felt the need to conceal it from him.

“Oh. So they brought you films? To...bring you up to speed?” She hedged when he hadn’t carried on.

He nodded. “Yeah. All sorts, but lots with swearing, which I obviously liked.”

It was a little surreal to imagine Draco, sitting in Malfoy Manor under house arrest, watching films to learn about Muggles. Almost as bizarre as the thought that it had been fellow Purebloods who had supplied him with them.

“Who?” She asked, curious beyond belief at the thought of rogue Slytherins.

“Theo. Blaise.” He sighed and looked heavenward. “Pansy.”

“*Pansy?*” This was the most shocking, predominantly because of the way the witch had always treated Hermione but also because she’d tried to hand over Harry while supposedly eschewing her family’s belief system. She opened her mouth to make some exclamation toward this but then halted at his expression.

She saw it then.

His peers — *friends* — had been doubting, questioning, and out there seeking answers all while he was being branded and incited to murder. Ron’s momentary betrayal in the forest had felt poignant at the time, but he’d been influenced by the Horcrux and had regretted abandoning them almost right away. She wasn’t sure how she’d have processed it if she’d discovered that he’d secretly been learning about the pros of the Death Eater agenda while still acting as her friend.

Despite all the rest of it (and there was quite a bit), she found herself actually feeling sorry for sixteen-year-old Draco.

“Not Goyle?” She asked, when she realized the silence had stretched.

He scratched his thumbnail against the grain of the table top. It instantly annoyed her but she withheld her impulse to snap at him to stop like she would’ve to Ron or Harry, who both had a penchant for making repetitive, extremely irksome noises in her presence.

“No. No, he was just as...confused as I was.”

He kept scratching and eventually she couldn’t take it, coping mechanism though it may have been for him, and pressed her hand over his to stop him. He did stop, but then flipped his hand and curled his fingers around hers, squeezing.

Damnit she was so bad at this. She squeezed him back, confirmation that she *did* want to offer him comfort, and then didn't let go. He slid their hands off the table to his lap, the other coming up to play with her captured fingers.

"Didn't think you'd get a whole sob story when asking about swearing, did you?" He'd gone for rueful and landed somewhere nearby, eyes down on their hands.

"Not exactly." She matched his tone but got much closer to the intended mark. "But I don't mind. Life isn't always happy and I don't expect it to be."

His mouth quirked at that and he glanced up at her. "I suppose not."

"If you have questions or...are curious about anything, you can ask me," she offered. Then, to lighten the mood added, "You know nothing would delight me more than lecturing you about Muggles."

"I'm sure." He shot her a quick smile but his eyes were sincere. "Thanks, Granger."

She fluttered her fingers in his hand and he nabbed them, pinning them down, playful again.

"I've just had a brilliant idea," he said, leaning back slightly and looking more like the version of Draco he'd been building all year, confident and clever but without the cruelty.

"Oh?"

"Come have a bath with me."

She blinked, not having expected such an offer. "A *bath*?"

"In the Prefect's Bathroom," he clarified. "Ever used it?"

She frowned. "Of course. Have *you*?"

"Lest you forget, I was a Prefect once."

She tilted her head. "Did that count?" and then broke her charade by laughing when his eyes glittered with delight at her provoking.

"What do you say then?" He pressed. "And it's fine if you say no thanks, of course, only could you still give me the password? The dungeons just have showers and I'm in the mood for a soak."

"Such a little prince," she murmured, conceivably to herself but loud enough for him to catch.

He tugged her closer, her hand still trapped between his, and she slid halfway off her chair, just barely catching herself with her other hand on the table. She laughed again, though this time evidently louder than was Library Approved because he quickly pressed a hand over her mouth, muffling it.

He tutted. “Shh, Granger. Don’t summon Pince.”

She rolled her eyes and tugged his hand down. “It’s fine, she loves me. But you’ve convinced me. Let’s go take a bath.”

He wagged his eyebrows. “Should I ask what swayed you?”

She didn’t deign to reply, turning to begin packing up. He snorted but then stacked the few books he could reach and shouldered his bag.

Chapter End Notes


Just editing the next chapter so I’ll probably post it tomorrow because, as usual, I have no chill.

Thanks for reading! Your comments are so fun — and speaking of, I have begun a Draco POV chapter since there was plenty interest 👍

Chapter 8: “Come have a bath with me.”

Chapter Notes

I'm so glad you all are enjoying the little story-building chapters! I resisted a plot to keep this low-key for myself but a tiny one is forming despite my best efforts, so there'll be more of those coming up.

But today: bath scene 

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Luckily the Prefect's Bathroom was vacant, so Hermione let them in and then sealed the door. She hadn't taken advantage of the facilities more than a handful of times but on occasion had indulged, typically with the soaps scented for relaxation as a last ditch effort to find some calm.

She wondered how many times Malfoy had been here.

She wondered how many times he hadn't been alone.

She pushed aside the ever-nagging question and deposited her bag on the wooden bench that ran along the wall before going over to turn on several taps. “Any preferences?” She asked him, half turning to address him over her shoulder. She was instantly distracted at the sight of him unbuttoning his shirt, jumper already discarded. “Not wasting any time, hmm?” She teased when she found her tongue.

“I told you,” he replied blithely, “I'm in the mood for a soak. And no; I don't have any preferences on bath products.”

She raised her brows in exaggerated surprise. “I doubt *that* very much.”

He snorted, shirt fluttering to the tiles and hands working his belt. “Cheeky.”

She forced herself to turn back to the knobs and finish the task, but chose scents and bubbles at complete random. It ended up being a rather unexpectedly delightful combination of peach with notes of sandalwood and bergamot, which was fortunate. She almost didn't dare turn around, knowing he was likely standing, naked and gorgeous, only a few feet away.

But then the thought registered and her sense of anticipation slid from nerves to excitement. She twisted where she knelt, seeking him out eagerly.

He was indeed standing a few feet away, bare but for his fitted boxer briefs. She stared at his underwear for a moment, wondering if he intended to leave them on even in the bath or if he was just being decorous for her sake. Her face must have fallen when she saw him still partly clothed because he made a soft sound of amusement, drawing her eyes to his. He was smirking.

“Your disappointment is extremely flattering, Granger,” he told her. “I thought you might like a little build up before we got to that but I see your pace is, as always, unmatched.”

She clucked her tongue imperiously, then hauled herself to her feet. “I can go slow,” she insisted but then disproved her own point by stripping her jumper off in one quick motion. His skeptical expression informed her of her mistake. She huffed to herself and sought to do better.

Her fingers were unhurried on her buttons, drifting to a gradual stop when her shirt was only halfway undone, the soft pink of her bra only barely revealed. Instead of continuing, she dropped her hands and slowly tugged the shirttails from her skirt, but then again diverted to the little zipper on her hip, dragging it down and then letting the dark grey material pool around her feet. She undid a few buttons from the bottom of her shirt so he got a hint of her knickers, then stepped out of her skirt and toed off her shoes.

His eyes were burning into her and she could already see the pink splotches of arousal forming on his cheeks and down his throat. She liked how transparent his skin was, showing what he was otherwise so adept at concealing.

“Should I go slower?” she asked with a coy little head tilt.

“By all means, Granger,” he told her, eyes tracking down her body. “I’m rather enjoying the tease.”

She couldn’t decide if he’d spoiled it by enjoying it, or if that made it that much hotter. But either way, she was ready to move things along. She wanted his hands on her.

And hers on him.

She undid the final three buttons holding her shirt together and let the material fall atop her skirt. She was quick with her bra and then toyed with the waistband of her knickers, eyes on him.

“I’d leave the socks on for you, but I think I’d rather be completely naked in the bath.” She watched for his reaction, shifting her weight a little from foot to foot to draw his eye lower.

His eyes darkened slightly, focus dropping to her legs, but she couldn’t tell what part of her statement had done it. Damn her and the inadvertent variables.

But then he was walking toward her and the thrill of excitement drove all analysis from her mind. He stepped up close, grazing the sides of her breasts with light fingertips and then running his hands rather proprietarily down and around to her arse, slipping under her knickers to grope her flesh directly.

“You think you’ve figured something out, don’t you?” he asked her, mouth dipping to her ear. He squeezed her bum, the force bumping her abdomen against where he was straining in his shorts.

“Do I?” She wrapped her arms around him, hands pressing up into the muscles along either side of his spine and then dragged them down to squeeze his arse in retribution. He nipped at her neck and she felt her nipples tighten even further at the sharpness of it.

“You’re a naughty witch,” he told her. “Time to get clean.”

He pulled her along with him to the edge of the tub and then pushed his hands down her arse and to the backs of her thighs, knickers falling the rest of the way to the tiles. “Now mine,” he told her.

She hastily stripped him of his underwear, his cock bobbing between them and leaving a scalding mark against her belly where it had bounced.

“Stay there.” He punctuated the request with a little swat to her bum and then stepped away, dropping down to the edge of the bath and then sinking in. The water hit him just above his waist as he stood and faced her, beckoning her forward with his chin. “Come here.”

She stepped up to the edge of the tub and he wrapped his hands around the backs of her knees, eyes trailing from her tits to her cunt and then down to her socks.

“I *did* discover something, didn’t I,” she mused, intrigued. He didn’t acknowledge her words but the reverence with which he stripped off first one sock and then the other spoke volumes. Her head immediately filled with other sock-like items she could wear for him.

“I blame it on my having come of age surrounded by girls wearing them,” he finally allowed. “Skirts and socks are...” He chewed his lip, appraising her bare legs, then looked up at her. “Nice.”

“Noted,” she told him and flicked an eyebrow. His chest expanded on a breath and she watched his jaw tighten briefly as he perhaps realized what he was getting himself into with someone who always liked to *be the best*.

“May I get in the bath now?” She asked with a touch of insouciance, as if she wasn’t at all affected by the extremely indecent way he was looking at her naked body. He held up a hand and helped her in.

The water was the perfect temperature, an initial shock to the system which then warmed her all the way through. Once her feet were touching the bottom, he let go of her and drifted away, sinking until the water covered his shoulders. With a quick, impish smile, he submerged fully and then resurfaced, flicking his hair back. He looked unfairly good wet, the water sluicing off his chest as he stood up again. She watched a droplet as it sought to rejoin its kin, trailing down his neck and eventually dripping off his pec. She wanted to follow the path with her tongue, so drifted toward him. He met her halfway, hands coming to tug her thighs up and around his waist. Not to be diverted, she immediately bent and licked a firm line from his collarbones to his jaw.

Her back hit the edge of the tub a moment later and his mouth her neck only a moment after that. She sighed happily and tilted her head to give him room.

“It’s time for your next lesson,” he said, flicking his tongue over the mark he’d undoubtedly left on her. “But I have some bad news for you, Granger.”

“What is it?” She almost didn’t care, no news bad enough to drag her away from what he was igniting in her.

“It’s tomorrow.” He nosed up to her jaw, then nipped on her earlobe. Goosebumps erupted instantly where her skin sat above the water and she shuddered.

“What?” She had no idea what he meant for a minute and then it twigged. “Oh. *No*.” It came out whiny.

He laughed, the sound vibrating through her from where his mouth was pressed against the soft skin just below her ear. “Mmhmm. Time to learn how to wait.”

She wanted to protest further but his hands had rounded her breasts, fingers dragging barely-there patterns along the swells without touching her nipples and her brain was unable to process anything else but raw *want*. And then his hands fell away.

“Oh...*please*.” She hadn’t meant to say it.

“Uh oh,” he chided, sounding pleased. “That doesn’t bode well for you, Granger. I’ve barely even touched you yet.”

“That’s making it *worse*,” she complained.

“Good.” He circled a solitary finger around her areola, careful not to touch where she needed. “Just think about how much better it’ll feel when you finally get what you want.”

What do you think I’ve been thinking about since the library, she wanted to whine but forced herself to stay quiet.

He rewarded her held tongue with another teasing circle and she held her breath, silently begging for more, but his hand drifted up to her neck instead. He used both hands to glide up the back of her neck, scooping her hair up as he went and capturing spilled curls until he had it all contained in a fist at her crown. He gave it two deft twists and then held out a hand to her. Wordlessly (in fact, rather speechlessly), she tugged her hair elastic off her wrist and handed it to him, which he used to secure the makeshift bun. He leaned back to observe his work, tucking an errant curl behind her ear when it immediately rebelled.

“There, now it won’t get wet. Not too tight?” He asked, eyes dropping to hers.

“I...” She swallowed thickly. “No, no, it’s...fine.”

He lifted a curious brow at her reaction. She mastered herself. “That shouldn’t have been so hot, considering how well you did it, so have obviously done it to plenty of others, but... Merlin, that was really hot.”

He grinned. "Maybe I'm just exceptionally good with my hands. That could've been my first attempt."

She wasn't so easily fooled. "Was it?"

He flicked a brow. "No. *But*," he carried on when she rolled her eyes, "perhaps it'll comfort you to know most of my practice occurred on either Pansy or my mother. Completely innocent."

It did comfort her (was in fact making her melt a bit, to picture him playing affectionately with his mother's hair), but she simply shrugged. "You've obviously been with other girls before me. I'm happy to be benefiting from your trial and error with them."

"How magnanimous of you." He tilted her chin up and bent to kiss her. "I have another new spell for you to learn," he murmured against her mouth.

She practically moaned at how well he knew her strange, knowledge-hungry brain. "Tell me."

His hands dropped back down her form. "We've never needed it before because you always get *so* fucking wet for me." He palmed her arse and pressed harder against her. "But we'll want a lubrication spell now. The water will wash away your natural source and it'll be uncomfortable without something."

"Okay." She rocked against him on instinct and felt what he meant, her cunt catching on his cock rather than gliding as it would've in bed. She pressed forward instead and wiggled minutely side to side. He pinched her bum and she yelped.

"Stop that." He held out his left hand and his wand zipped to it.

She blinked.

He opened his mouth to presumably explain the spell but she was faster.

"Wait. *Wait*. What was that?!"

He'd frozen at her exclamation but relaxed when he realized what she was halting him for. "Oh. Yeah. I've gotten pretty good." He twirled his wand, looking at it fondly.

"Nonverbal magic is very hard to do," she began, thoroughly distracted by his casual demonstration. "But *wandless*, too?" She didn't even care that she was making him look more smug than she'd ever seen him.

"I've had quite a bit of time on my hands," he said easily. "And I never quite forgave Potter for temporarily taking allegiance of my wand. So I made sure I could always call it back to myself."

She was half tempted to shove him out of the bath and force him to teach her *that* instead of whatever else he'd been planning to. Except that she'd never been more attracted to him.

“We might not need that spell,” she told him, wiggling her hips again.

“That so?” He let her move, eyes amused but heavy on her. “If all it takes is a little nonverbal, wandless magic to get you wet, I’ve been putting energy toward the wrong things.”

“*Everything* you do gets me wet,” she groaned, without thought.

She watched the words curl his mouth into a smirk, almost as smug as before. “You really are wonderfully sweet when you’re trying to get something.” He tilted his head. “Shall we see just how polite I can make you be?”

It wasn’t like he could actually *stop* her from coming, she reasoned. She’d just have to be covert. “Do your worst.”

He laughed. “I never quite appreciated the recklessness of Gryffindors until now.” Then he hoisted her up a little higher, nudging her backward with his body. “Rest your arms on the edge.”

She bent her arms and leaned back, forearms flat on the smooth tile with her elbows pointing straight back, hands draped so that her fingertips almost skimmed the surface of the water. He ran his teeth over his lower lip, eyes tracking over her exposed torso.

“Your tits look insane like this.”

She felt like a goddess under his gaze.

He reached down to wrap her legs more securely around his hips. “I want you to hold yourself up, so keep your legs tight around me. The water will help support you. Now, I need my hands free so I’m going to give you something else to keep track of how close you are.”

She almost asked what but then he was reaching down and pressing the thick, blunt head of his cock against her entrance. Desire for him shot through her, eager for him inside her.

“*Yes*. Please.”

He chuckled. “Charm first. The incantation is fairly obvious: *lubricus*. Wand movement is as such.” He flicked the tip down and then in a small circle, murmuring the incantation on the downstroke. Since she was already wet — in multiple ways — she didn’t feel much except for a flaring warmth in her core. But when she wiggled against him again, the glide was exquisite.

“I’ll have to remember that one,” she gasped.

He tossed his wand toward their clothes and then gripped her hips, tilting them to realign himself and then, without hesitation, pushed inside. He sank halfway in the first press thanks to how ready she was for him and further aided by the lubrication charm. She moaned, long and low, at the stretch.

“That feel good?” He drew back and sank in further.

“Perfect.” She leaned back on her elbows, head hanging heavy on the nape of her neck.

“You’re about to be so mad,” he murmured and then pushed in to the hilt.

She wasn’t sure what he meant, until he didn’t withdraw; didn’t do *anything* other than hold his cock deep inside her. She tried to rock her hips again but he was unrelenting.

“Move,” she begged.

He hummed a faux-sympathetic sound. “Not yet.”

Before she could protest, he’d brushed those maddening fingers around her breasts again and then, without warning, squeezed her nipples. It shot through her, pooling hotly between her legs. She tipped her head back and groaned as he plucked at her nipples again, the sensation this time echoed in her clit.

"Ohh that's so good." She felt hot, amplified by the water and the pure heat of him inside her. She felt perspiration prickle on the back of her neck and knew her skin was likely flushed.

He made a low sound of agreement and then dipped down to swipe his tongue wetly over a rosy peak. "And that?"

"More."

He did it to her other nipple, then sucked it into his mouth. She fluttered around him, uncontrolled, and almost wanted to sob with how much she suddenly needed friction. Maybe if she cried he’d take pity on her?

“I felt that,” he told her, then pressed his teeth gently around the sensitive bud. He sounded so unaffected, she wanted to scream.

Maybe if she hexed him he’d let her come. Damnit, she needed to devote herself to wandless magic.

“You’re going to regret teaching me this lesson,” she said, but it was a bit too breathy to be properly threatening.

He just smirked, rather wickedly. “Oh, I certainly hope so.” They were just about the same height like this so she didn’t have to lift her head at all to see the way his pupils had dilated. The thought of him wanting her to tease him, to make him desperate, was making her head a little fuzzy with arousal.

His words from her note floated back to the front of her mind. *I might beg.*

She wanted so badly to hear him do it.

But right now, he was the one on a mission to draw it from her. He squeezed her breasts, stroked her nipples with his thumbs, drew soft patterns over her collarbones and up her neck, then back down to run along where the waterline lapped at her waist, then did it all again. She

withstood it valiantly, face turned toward the ceiling and eyes shut, letting herself gasp but resisting more explicit pleading.

But when his hand dropped below the water to trace where he was buried inside her, she couldn't hold her whimper.

And then when he drew the magical lubrication up to stroke soft circles around her clit, she couldn't hold her tongue.

"*Please*," she whimpered. "Ohhh pleasepleaseplease."

"What are you asking for, Granger?" His thumb was unrelenting but *just* too light to be truly satisfying.

"Anything. Anything." She tried to press closer to his hand but he was holding her snug between the edge of the tub and his body. She had nowhere to move.

And then she remembered the very first lesson he'd taught her and squeezed her inner walls as tightly as she could. It made her violently, unmistakably aware of him inside her, a fact she'd half managed to keep in the back of her mind.

"*Fuck*." His pace faltered, thumb suddenly pressing hard just off center.

She gasped out a breath and then squeezed again, her body taking control of it after a moment with such force that her eyes half-rolled.

"You're so bad at waiting," he grit out. "But fuck if you aren't such a good little student. Think you can make yourself come just like that?"

"Yes," she panted, forcing herself to stop squeezing so that she didn't come right then and there. "But I'd rather you did it."

"Yeah? Like coming for me?"

Her cunt clenched without her conscious effort and she almost let herself go. But she really, *really* wanted to have it be him who made her come. There was something about the thought of it that made her practically delirious.

"*Yes*."

"This doesn't get you out of the lesson," he told her, thumb drifting back to where she needed it most. "But it might be more fun to edge you in bed anyway. Then I can get my mouth on you. And perhaps teach you another spell or two."

She nodded automatically. "Yes. Yes, whatever you want."

He was playing unaffected well but he couldn't hide the truth from her. She could feel how hard he was inside her, could feel the subtle flexes of his hips, just as eager for friction as she was. And she could practically see the thudding of his heart through his skin. She leaned forward and licked across where it was pulsing at his neck.

She felt the moment he gave in.

His hands were suddenly tight on her, fingers digging into her flesh as he drew back and then thrust back in, hard. She squeaked against his skin, every sensation sparking hot.

“I hope you’re pleased with yourself,” he panted, using his hands to pull her back and forth in time with his hips. The water ate up some of the force but she was sure if they were on a bed, he’d be absolutely pounding into her. She felt him striking deep with each thrust.

She decided to be nice, the pressure building inside her making her unselfconscious. “I’m pleased with *you*,” she told him, leaning back so she could see him again. “You’re making me feel so good.”

She palmed her breasts and then squeezed her nipples, eyes on him. He was breathing hard, gaze locked on hers. She kept playing with herself, eyelids fluttering when it felt particularly sinful, but his eyes never left hers. Something about it, the intensity of it, triggered her orgasm.

“Draco.” She gasped it, a staccato sound. “You’re going to make me come.”

“I know,” he groaned. “I can feel you. *Shit*.”

She let go, eyes sliding shut as her whole body tensed in spine-tingling, brain-wiping bliss. She was only vaguely aware of the words he was saying, his pitch low and tone cajoling, soft. She wound her arms around his neck and dropped her forehead onto his shoulder, catching her breath.

He was still moving inside her and she realized that he hadn’t come yet. She pulled her head back slightly so she could look down between them, watching the way his abs tensed and the water rippled around them each time his body moved inside hers. She looked her fill and then leaned backward, hands linked behind his neck.

“Need me to do anything for you?” She asked, to be considerate.

He huffed a laugh but she could tell he was walking a tight thread. “No.”

“What are you waiting for then?”

“Nothing. I’m just *savoring*.” He cupped a breast and then tweaked her nipple. “You really should try it some time. It feels fucking *great*.”

“So does coming.”

He smirked. “Trust me, I know. I have a lot more experience with it than you. I *love* coming. But I think I love fucking you more.” He thumbed her nipple again and then slid his hand up her throat to cup her jaw. “Think you could come again?”

“*Again*?” She knew women had the ability, of course, but for some reason hadn’t ever considered trying.

“Mmhmm.” He pulled her closer and dipped down to kiss her, just a light press of his lips to hers before he trailed them across her cheek. “Want to try?”

She pulled his mouth back to hers. “Yes. But another time. I want to feel you *savoring* me until you can’t any more.”

She dropped a hand between them and spread her fingers so two bracketed his cock on either side. She could feel how stiff he was on the withdraw so she kept her hand there for a moment, luxuriating in the feeling of him fucking her. It was rather erotic to feel him pushing inside her, his growing urgency evident. He’d said he didn’t need anything additional but she wasn’t about to just let him blow her mind (*again*) and not do her best to reciprocate. He’d reacted rather positively when she’d paid a little attention to his bollocks...

She stretched her arm lower, forcing a little space between them so she could cup his sac. It felt a little different than last time, more snug. “Tight.” She mused aloud, then glanced up. “Ready to come?”

“You...*fuck*. I’m...*goddamn*it, Granger.” He subsided into a groan, drawn out and wrecked.

She hummed a pleased sound while he worked himself through it, hands flexing and gripping her arse as he pulsed inside her. She gave him a final, gentle squeeze and then rested both hands on his shoulders. When he was finished, he raised his head and narrowed his eyes at her in faux-reprimand. She fixed him with her most innocent expression.

His hair had dried pushed back, a little unkempt, but the undone-ness of it only made him more handsome. She brought a hand up to tousle it and then pushed it back again. Satisfied, she reslung her arm around his shoulders and smiled at him.

He returned it and then twisted his mouth to the side like he was about to say something he was hesitant to. “I almost don’t want to tell you this because it’ll only encourage your behavior, but...” He exhaled like he already regretted it. “You’re the best sex I’ve ever had.”

She laughed a short, sharp sound of pure delight. “*Really?*”

And then she kissed him until they were both properly prune.

Chapter End Notes

Did I want to imply that it was Lucius’ luscious locks that Draco practiced his buns on? Yes. Very badly. But it didn’t feel quite right to bring up his father at a time like that 😊

Chapter 9: Draco had been having a really good March.

Chapter Notes

I submit, for your enjoyment:

✨Draco✨

It starts with a little background and devolves into horny male brain 🙄

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Draco had been having a really good March. The bar wasn't exactly tremendously high — at least when one took into account the past few years — but even so, this spring was shaping up to be the best of his life.

Certainly, the regular sex didn't hurt but most of his positive outlook was stemming from the fact that Hermione Granger didn't think he was scum beneath her boot. Anymore, at least.

He hadn't done much to avoid such a review – had in fact encouraged her poor opinion of him back when he hadn't thought very highly of her, either – so it was doubly gratifying that she saw enough change in him to give him a second chance. He'd been doing a lot of changing in the past few years, heralded by his swift descent into hell on Earth at the tender age of sixteen.

The change had been slow going, sure only of what he now knew to be wrong but not exactly sure what then was *right*. Once his father had been sentenced to Azkaban and it was just him and his mother at the Manor, the change had felt a little easier. And then when his friends had been allowed in and finally revealed the little secret they'd all been keeping from him, it had been easier still.

Well, maybe not *easy*.

It had been more like looking in a mirror and finally seeing his actual face in the reflection rather than the mirror-image. He'd been shown, properly, what others saw when they looked at him. And he hadn't liked it.

But he was a Slytherin to his bones — ambitious to a fault, dissatisfied with complacency — so he leaned on those ingrained traits and strove for betterment.

Going back to Hogwarts to complete his education had been just one step in his, as Theo had described it, '*quite neurotic plan for re-branding*'. He'd had to petition Headmistress McGonagall for admittance and had been surprised to find her rather more sympathetic than

he'd expected. Her only stipulation was that he attend Muggle Studies, which of course he agreed to. He would have taken it anyway, as per *neurotic plan*.

But being back in the castle only months after watching it being practically blown to smithereens had been a new sort of reconciliation between the person he was and who he was becoming. He'd been an active – though no longer *willing* – participant in the destruction of his school, something he still rolled around in his head like a cow with its cud. But seeing the castle remade had forced him to finally swallow it and do what he could to move forward instead. The stones, at least, didn't appear to hold a grudge.

He'd been despondent enough during his last two years that the other returning Slytherins (few though there were) automatically kept their distance, and he didn't do much to encourage anything different. He'd kept his inner circle rather close knit (and closer with each passing year), so going about his days alone wasn't the adjustment it would've been when he was younger. Solitude also suited his primary purpose for returning to Hogwarts, that being earning a handful of NEWTs and making a go of his life without having to rely on the Malfoy name or vaults.

But then he'd noticed another solitary person making the endless rounds between class, Great Hall, and library: Granger.

She was likewise unflanked this year, a not entirely surprising situation given the lack of academic dedication Potter and Weasley had demonstrated during their matriculation. He thought she was definitely better off without them hanging around her but it did seem a little strange to see her alone, although she did seem friendly enough with Longbottom and Weasley's little sister at mealtimes. He supposed her return to school was for a similar reason to his own, although with perhaps a bit more necessity. He wasn't sure what her financial situation was but he expected it was closer to Weasley's than Potter's, let alone his own.

They shared most of their classes but only sat close enough to speak in Ancient Runes and Potions. When they'd first been assigned as desk mates by Slughorn, his instinctual reaction had been a bolt of fear. He'd covered it instantly and meandered slowly toward the desk to sit beside her. He'd been too yellow-bellied to issue her a proper apology, or even a simple *sorry*, half expecting a well-justified hex as greeting if not simply a cold shoulder. So when she'd done nothing except return his nod of acknowledgement, he hadn't been quite sure what to do.

But when Hallowe'en had loomed, he hadn't wanted to risk any unsettled spirit between them (the school having a rather disastrous history on that particular date) so had done his best to be dauntless and had broken the unspoken (and quite literally speech-less) truce between them.

"Is this Eihwaz or Hagalaz?" He'd asked her softly during Ancient Runes, even though he knew it was Hagalaz. She'd turned surprised eyes on him, dropped them to where his finger was indicating the rune on the page, and then back to his.

"Hagalaz," she'd said, then blinked and turned back to her work.

He'd counted it a success and even more so when she turned to him the following day and asked him to demonstrate how he'd drawn the rather tidy Dagaz, even though he could plainly see her own well-drawn figure on her parchment. He saw it for the olive branch it was, as well as the subtle acknowledgment from her about the nature of his own overture (he hadn't made it to NEWT-level Ancient Runes without knowing the difference between Eihwaz and Hagalaz, subtle though it was).

So he had silently sketched the shape for her and their truce had expanded to polite, academic questioning. And then slowly to polite conversation on topics other than schoolwork.

Until the day they'd smashed the boundary between them to absolute smithereens.

He'd gone after her on instinct, having actually *felt* her magic rising to the surface and, for reasons he hadn't analyzed, wanted to make sure she was alright. He'd accidentally spoken to her like he did Pansy, a little blunt and without much consideration for the ramifications.

But once he'd said it, and had subsequently learned the utterly unbelievable lack of orgasms in her life, it had felt like fate. What better way to repair his image than to align himself with war heroine and icon of both female ability and Muggleborn prowess, Hermione Granger? That it would also mean he could give her something pleasurable in an oblique sort of exchange for the overwhelming pain he'd had a hand in bringing upon her...well, that made the offer even easier to extend.

Though while he *did* take personal responsibility for his schoolyard bullying, he didn't blame himself for what had happened to her at the Manor. It had been quite upsetting, of course, when he'd been called upon to confirm their identities and had seen the raw fear behind the determination. But once it had all devolved and the torture had started, he'd turned away and disassociated until it was over.

He'd seen others being tortured before her, and had seen it plenty of times again after. He had been so worn down with it all, he almost hadn't even seen the *point* in trying to do anything to stop it. And anyway, anything he could've done would've been ineffectual, given what the weight of their circumstances had done to his father, beating him down and turning him into a simulacrum of the haughty, powerful wizard he'd been. So what on earth could Draco, sixteen and skinny and untested, have done? (Time had done away with the first and he'd made sure to rectify the other two. He refused to feel that helpless ever again).

But if he had a chance to help her find a little pleasure after it all...it wasn't a hard choice to make.

He'd made his offer to her and then had managed to temper his disappointment at her polite refusal; it had been rather optimistic of him, anyway. When she'd later accepted, he was fairly certain of the reason why. She'd always been hungry for knowledge, going out of her way to get it. She probably had zero qualms about using him as a means to get it.

He liked that she wasn't scared of him. Wasn't even *wary* of him. And he wasn't sure she ever had been. Even when he'd restrained her in Umbridge's office in Fifth year, flush with granted power, he had a sense she'd instantly dismissed him as a threat. It should have

rankled, especially since he'd been trying to get an edge against her and the others for weeks, but he'd been filled only with an uncomfortable sense of appreciation at her iron spine.

He'd known about her intelligence (no one was spared *that*) and her aggression and loyalty. He'd assumed she was also other things, like friendly or unsure, but hadn't seen it first hand.

Until now, of course.

She was also quite a pretty girl. Really unfairly, now that he'd had a few rather close opportunities to observe her. Everything about her seemed multifaceted in ways he hadn't expected. It was perhaps a cliché, but he was a little taken away by her eyes, the color deep and warm and practically kaleidoscopic when the light hit them. And the way she looked at him, like he was actually worth inspection and the final judgment not all bad...

So when she'd accepted his offer, he had devoted himself to it, determined to be the same level of teacher as she was student.

But *Jesus*. Her *eagerness* for it. He hadn't been prepared.

She was matter-of-fact about so much that he should have anticipated her directness even with this, but he somehow just...hadn't. Afterward, he'd relived every scintillating second of it in his bed, stroking himself as slowly as he could manage just to make as vivid a memory of it as possible, sure it was a one-off.

And then she'd propositioned him, literally *asked him for sex*. She didn't seem to have a very sentimental view of virginity, and nor did he, but even so it was up there as the best offer for sex he'd ever received. It was confirmation that he had succeeded in his tutelage, that she trusted him for more.

As he'd told her, he'd been the first for lots of girls, starting with the deflowering of Daphne at the tender age of fifteen. It'd been a little bizarre to kiss, let alone put himself inside, someone he'd known his whole life but as that would've been true for most of the girls in his social circle at the time, he was happy it had been Daph. However, Daphne was a close enough friend that he hadn't heard the end of it from both her and Pansy after he'd simply collapsed with a gasped *thank you* (his mother hadn't raised a complete boor) and not checked that she'd also come.

In the end, he appreciated their ruthless lecturing and, even more so, Daphne's willingness to give him a chance to practice it. And after he'd been given a gold star, he'd gotten rather addicted to making girls come. Not that he was unique in that regard, of course, but he thought he rather applied a bit more intention to the endeavor than other blokes his age. Based on the number of girls who were willing to give him a go, at least. It helped that he had Pansy, an unapologetic (and staunchly uninterested) best friend with whom to ask questions and receive lengthy and excessively detailed answers. She liked making girls come even more than he did and he suspected she got a bit of a kick knowing she had a role in the overall sexual satisfaction of her female peers.

A true altruist, Pans.

It had been all for fun for almost two years and then it had become an escape. He was ashamed to say he'd actually lost count of how many girls he'd gotten off with during that time, simply desperate to take his mind off his mission and surely imminent death. But after the war, once it appeared he was finally free from being dragged along in his fathers footsteps and wouldn't be imprisoned, he'd gone to Daphne and asked for a little comfort. He wanted someone familiar, after it all. It had been cleansing; almost like a second first time. And when he'd, mortifyingly, cried after, she'd held him and cried too.

After that, sex was fun again. Daphne had politely declined anything long term so he'd broadened his horizons and had a nice time with a girl or two until the start of term. Back at Hogwarts, prospects were more bleak so he'd decided to keep himself chaste and focus on academics, and have *fun* back in Wiltshire on breaks.

But then...enter Granger.

She was going to completely derail his plan to graduate and live a normal life. He could never go back to normal, casual sex after her. She pressed all his buttons, ticked all his boxes...

And, fuck it all to hell, he liked her.

Like liked her.

Was actually pretty godsdamn infatuated.

She was surprisingly funny, cheeky and irreverent and quick as fuck. He'd never had to keep up with a sexual partner before (though had plenty of practice with his godsdamned friends) but as he'd said, he quite liked the challenge. She made him feel alive in a way he hadn't in years. Maybe ever.

He'd definitely never felt the way he was feeling now, as he absently closed her bedroom door behind himself, hardly even caring if he heard it latch. She was sitting at her desk, back to him with her ankles crossed demurely under her chair, in her usual grey school skirt and a pair of black thigh-high socks.

In a skirt and socks *only*.

Fuck. She was...*fuck*.

She looked over her shoulder at the sound of his entry and shot him a quick smile, as if she wasn't half undressed.

"Hi! Come in, I'm almost done." She turned back and kept writing, quickly enough that he could practically visualize the way her rigorous arm movement would be making her naked breasts jostle.

He'd been in her room for about three seconds and he was already hard. She was going to absolutely murder him and he fuck if he wasn't going to thank her for it while she did.

She finished her sentence and then quickly cleaned her quill and capped her ink, twisting fully to stand up. He'd thought she'd play coy with him or perhaps cover herself with her hands until he'd convinced them to lower but she just stood, breasts bouncing and smile blossoming as she faced him. The brazenness of it, her cool confidence, ignited him.

He dragged his eyes down her, licking his lower lip into his mouth and biting down. He shook his head, inhaling slowly.

"You look..." Words, the bastards, failed him.

"*Nice?*" She suggested, cocking her head and quelling a smile with her teeth.

"Yeah. Nice." He repeated and then roused himself with a quick tousle of his hair. "Fuck. You are...the *niciest* fucking girl."

She couldn't tamp down her grin at his babbling. "I must say, you're handling this much worse than I thought you would. I can see how hard you are already. What'll happen if I wear this to class one day? With a shirt, of course, but...perhaps still with nothing underneath?"

She lifted the side of her skirt up over her hip, showing him smooth skin unimpeded by knickers. He hadn't come untouched since he was thirteen but her inquisitive little monologue and casual showing off was making his cock throb. If she wore those fucking thigh-highs to class he would have to scarp and hide in a broom cupboard, loss of points due to truancy be damned.

"Are you really that threatened by my class standing to sabotage my academics like that?" He said at last, dragging his eyes up from her skirt to her teasing expression.

She laughed, looking genuinely pleased with his retort. "Of course not."

She dropped her skirt and toyed with the hem, swishing it lightly between the fingers of both hands over her thighs while she fixed him with a thoughtful expression. He tried to prepare himself, sensing he needed to.

"I was thinking about letting you have me however you liked but I realize you already *do* get that. So instead, you're going to watch me touch myself. And then you'll fuck me in a position of my choosing."

He took a calming breath. "Whatever you want. But fuck...go easy on me."

"I'm not going to be touching you," she reminded him with a pointed look. "Go easy on yourself."

He laughed incredulously. "If you think I'm going to risk touching myself until you're absolutely ready for me, then you haven't seen yourself. I wouldn't last a minute."

She rolled her lips in, pressing them together but not able to fully dampen her smile. "Really?"

“Yes, *really*. Don’t pretend you didn’t know exactly what this would do to me.” He sighed. “You’re so gorgeous.”

She blushed a little at that but her eyes glinted with victory. “Good.” She dragged her fingers up her skirt and to her breasts.

Arousal sank through him, liquid and heavy.

“You’re starting now?” He inhaled gustily through his nose.

“Mmhmm.”

“While I just stand here?”

“As I said, you can do whatever you want. Except touch me.” She cupped her breasts. “At least, not yet.”

When she flicked her fingers across her nipples and he watched her squirm at the sensation, he had to adjust himself over his trousers but then forced his hands into his pockets. He wouldn’t touch her but she had another thing coming if she thought he was just going to stand quietly and let her drive him insane.

“That felt good, hmm?” He pitched his voice low, private.

“Yes,” she breathed, eyes warm on his.

“Do it again?” He managed to make it a question at the last moment, intent to not seize control from her.

She did and his hands curled into fists inside his pockets at the sound she made. She took a few steps back toward her bed, fingers brushing softly across her skin and eyes fixed on his. He followed her, steps slow, keeping the space between them. She sat at the foot of her bed and scooted herself back until she was in the center.

He walked until his shins hit the footboard, glad for a physical barrier between them. She was fulfilling so many of his fantasies, thought up alone in his four-poster or in idle moments in class; featuring faceless girls, usually, but...not always. He was never quite sure if she’d caught him, but it wasn’t like he had never looked at her before (even if it hadn’t always been so favorably) so he didn’t shy away on those times she’d found his eyes on her, lest he draw suspicion. He was covert, if not a bit of a pervert.

But now, as she met his eye while leaning back, he experienced the fulfillment of one: her, looking at him like just the sight of him was turning her on.

Maybe it was.

Maybe fewer clothes would turn that look molten.

He drew his left hand out of his pocket and began working his shirt buttons open. Her hand had drifted to a stop as she watched him and he smirked.

“As you were, Granger,” he told her. “Don’t let me distract you.”

She clucked her tongue dismissively but it was still a beat before her hand took up its meandering pathway again, coasting up to brush along her neck. “Ever since you taught me, this is how I start,” she told him. “And just here...down along there? That’s my favorite spot.”

Her forefinger stroked halfway down her neck, following the line of muscle until she located the spot. He marked it, watching how her body tensed for a moment as she caressed it again.

Her comment had brought him back to that day and the satisfaction he’d felt in having brought her to her first peak; how oddly right it had felt to be able to show her the capability she had for pleasure.

And then she’d touched him and he’d almost lost his godsdamn mind.

He forced himself away from the memories of her inquisitive hand on his cock, trying everything to find what he liked. He undid the last button and finally extricated his other hand from his trouser pocket to pull his shirt off. His belt was next.

He couldn’t stop looking at the strip of bare skin between her socks and skirt. He’d had his hands on it. His mouth. He wet his lower lip automatically

“The first time you got me off, you were just like this. Topless, in only your skirt and socks. I’ve never had a fantasy fulfilled in a way that just made me want it *more*.”

“Don’t tell me I’ve given you a complex,” she teased, fingers trailing into his line of sight as they spanned the strip of skin, expanding it a few inches as she caught her hem on the way back up.

He snorted, shaking his head minutely as he met her eye. “You want me to lie?”

She watched him undo his trousers, hands trailing up her torso to her breasts. Her tongue peeked out for a quick flick to dampen her lip as he undid his zipper.

It was absolutely criminal, the way she was looking at him now.

“I suppose that’s only fair then,” she mused, finally flopping onto her back and palming her tits properly. “Because I’ve yet to make myself come without thinking about you.”

He tried not to let it go to his head. “That so?”

She nodded, rolling her nipples lightly and then not so lightly. He shoved his trousers down and delighted in the little shudder the sound of his belt hitting the floor elicited from her.

“What do you think about?”

She closed her eyes, sighing. “This. You talking to me. Looking at me how you are. Doing the things you do to me.”

He went to palm himself but made himself stop. “What do I do to you, Granger?”

Her hand had finally come to rest between her legs, skirt pushed out of the way just enough to dip under. He watched her hand move.

“This.” She showed him her fingers, wet with her arousal, and his mouth watered. He swallowed. She brought them back to her center and continued her slow circles.

Without pockets to contain his hands, he reached out and leaned one each on her bed posts. She noted it with a rather wicked smile.

“Doing alright?” She inquired coyly.

“I’ve never seen you take your time like this.”

She laughed. “Ah, so you’re *not* doing alright. Poor Draco.” She slid a finger into herself as she said his name and he pulsed with heat.

“So mean,” he breathed, transfixed.

“You like it.”

“Yeah.” He flexed his hands on the bed posts. “I do.”

She fucked herself slowly, pausing only to add a second finger. “Want a closer look?”

Did he? Yes.

Would he survive it? Doubtful.

But even so, it really wasn’t even a question, was it?

“Fuck yes.”

“Come on then.” She rolled onto her tummy and propped herself up on her elbows, looking back at him. “Take your shorts off.”

He was naked in seconds, climbing onto the bed. “Where do you want me, Granger?”

She wiggled her hips. He settled himself over her legs, a knee of either side of her thighs, and ran his hands lightly up the backs of her legs, reveling in the softness of the knit material and the smoothness of her skin. When he reached the hem of her skirt, he toyed with it for a moment but found he hardly had the patience for it. With a deft movement, he flipped it up over her arse.

He barely stifled his groan at the sight. “Fuck. Can I touch you?”

“Not yet.”

He couldn’t stifle it a second time. She’d picked up the lesson in delayed gratification but applied it in an altogether different way than he’d anticipated. He had to give her points for

innovative thinking.

It was then that he noticed her slim fingers peeking out from between her legs, arm tucked under her torso. She rubbed her clit and then pressed them further to rub a few firm circles over the entirety of her center. The motion revealed a glimpse of her flushed pink entrance, so wet she was glistening.

“Jesus.”

He reached forward on instinct, hands groping her arse and spreading her open to his gaze. She didn’t reprimand him — quite the reverse; she moaned and arched into his hands — so he stroked his thumbs lower, barely edging along her cunt.

“Please tell me you’re ready for me,” he groaned. “Fucking Christ, you’re killing me with this view.”

She panted a laugh. “You’re killing yourself.”

“*Granger*,” he whined.

His hips were twitching with the need to slide inside her, his cock leaking generously as if it thought he was denying himself the warm clutch of her body because of concerns regarding adequate lubrication. His cock was the fucking dumbest part of him sometimes, he thought, as he grit his teeth and stared at just how well slicked she’d gotten herself. He’d probably be able to bottom out in a single push. He shivered as sweat beaded at the nape of his neck, his brain on fire with her.

“Okay,” she finally breathed. “Okay. I need you.”

“How.” He barely got it out, but she’d said she’d choose the position and he wasn’t so far gone as to take from her a single scrap of power. He liked her like this. Fuck, he *loved* it.

“Like this.” She shifted her hips and he almost died at the raw sex of it. “Move me however you need but...I want to try it like this.”

“I don’t need to change a thing. You’re perfect just as you are.”

He shuffled forward until his cock was resting heavily between the swells of her arse, keeping her legs together with his on either side. With an angle of his hips and two fingers pressing down on his cock, he notched himself. He could hardly resist the instinctual buck forward when his cock finally felt her heat.

“It’s going to be a tighter fit this way,” he told her. “So tell me if you need me to stop. Or want to change positions.”

“Okay, I will, I will. Please just—“

He didn’t make her ask again, reaching down to lift her just slightly with hands around her hips and then pressing forward in a controlled motion until she had taken him all. She was practically liquid around him but so snug he’d had to lean a bit of his weight into her to get

himself fully inside. He panted, holding still even as she arched her back and moaned. He distracted himself by stroking his thumbs over the crests of her hips.

“How’s that?”

Her forehead was pressed into the mattress, curls in disarray and covering her face. He leaned forward to push her hair aside so he could see her and her breath hitched on a gasp at the motion.

“Please move.” Her voice was strained, almost pleading.

He held her still with his grip on her hips and dragged almost all the way out, rocking back into her in a descent so gradual he couldn’t keep his eyes open. He groaned, chin tilted back and hands flexing on her.

He needed to get a fucking grip on himself.

He didn’t want to come before she did but she had him so worked up, exacerbated further by the way he could feel the soft knit of her high socks against his thighs when he pulled himself slowly out of her again.

She was whimpering under him, an animalistic sound that was crawling up his spine and making him want to fuck into her as hard as he could. But then it would be over and he wasn’t quite ready for that yet.

Draco pulled in a shallow breath and squeezed her arse, letting some of his pent up energy out. The grip spread her and he could see himself disappearing inside her, could see how absolutely soaked his cock was with her.

Shit.

Fuck fuck fuck.

“You’re testing me,” he grit out, hoping she understood the warning.

She let out a guttural groan, muffled into the mattress. “I’m close. I’m so close. Oh god. Oh *god*.”

He felt the brush of her fingers against his balls as she snaked her hand under her belly to rub her clit and almost slipped his tether completely, teeth sinking into his lip so hard that his nipples tingled. He had no time to examine *that* interesting new sensation because suddenly she was clenched tight around him, her orgasm on top of her.

“Fuck, Granger. *Ah—*”

Her hips had lifted, seeking release, and he couldn’t stop himself. He hauled her back against him as his pace became unstoppable, his body giving in to his need to fuck her, properly *fuck* her, until they were both coming.

Hers was almost immediate, the wet clutch around him only driving his dizzying need until he had her flat under him, one hand under her belly in a semblance of support and the other fisted on the mattress beside her ribs.

He wanted to let up, to let her recover, but his body had severed ties with his brain. He lost himself in it, the rhythm pulling him in like an undertow claiming it's next victim. But then she was squealing, almost sobbing under him and the sound of it cut through his haze. He was panting, chest heaving, wavering on the edge of orgasm, but he made himself stop.

"Shit. Are...are you alr—"

She cut him off with a desperate gasp. "Oh, please *don't stop don't stop don't stop!*" She was rocking her hips to try and get him moving again.

Realization snapped through him, hot and heavy.

"Oh fuck Granger. Are you gonna come again?"

"I think so," she whimpered.

He picked his pace back up, snaking his hand further down under her to find her clit. He tried to match the intensity of how he'd been fucking her before without completely losing it.

"Tell me what to do," he panted. "Want a little pressure here?" He angled his wrist so he could press the heel of his hand in just above her cunt, fingers still working her clit.

"Oh *god*." She undulated under him, leaning into his hand.

"Yeah? That gonna do it?" He was properly sweating from his exertions, determined to get her there while so, *so* desperate for his own.

Her muffled exclamation was his only warning before she suddenly clenched around him, squeezing around his cock. His eyes rolled back with the relief of it, groaning as he finally let himself come.

"*Fuuuck*. Oh fuck, *fuck*—" He dropped the top of his head to her shoulder, looking down to where his hips were still rocking against her arse. He'd be set for a life's worth of wanking with that image alone.

"Ohhh that was such a good one," she moaned, catching her breath. "Fuck, it felt... uncontrollable. *God*."

He dropped a kiss to her shoulder blade then levered himself up, slipping out of her and resting back on his haunches. She was an absolute mess and he had to bite his lip to stop himself dropping down and licking through her, knowing he'd taste himself inside her.

She probably wouldn't mind, but...maybe he'd work her up to some of his more sordid fantasies.

Chapter End Notes

Remember when this was only going to be three chapters? 😄

Chapter 10: He had understood her. Hadn't he?

Chapter Notes

Some fluff and cute little mundane moments in this one 🥰

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione had tried to not think about it but she was first and foremost a curious person.

And it felt like something she was finally allowed to ask, given that he'd been shagging her with a thoroughness that hinted he wasn't getting it elsewhere.

She punctuated her paragraph with a decisive dot and then pushed her essay aside to let the ink dry. She pulled her Astronomy assignment forward but rather than start it, decided to satisfy her curiosity and angled herself toward him instead.

She was sitting beside Malfoy in the library, tucked back in the alcove in the Herbology section he seemed to favor. She rather preferred the table closer to the Charms section as it was larger and a bit more central to the stacks, but hadn't thought to suggest relocation. The secluded nature of it actually made her question easier to voice.

"When was the last time you were with someone?" She asked, tone neutrally inquisitive.

He glanced sidelong at her, flicking through the book in front of him to find the section he needed. "What do you mean?"

Admittedly, her question was rather vague. "When did you last have sex?" She clarified.

He looked at her properly, quizzical. "Yesterday. With you."

She couldn't tell if he was acting dense on purpose to avoid the topic but decided to carry on; he could decline to answer if he so chose. "I meant with someone *else*, obviously."

"Oh." He paused. "Uh...I suppose it would've been during the Christmas break."

She nodded. Almost four months. She burned with curiosity at who it was but restrained herself from prying that far.

He turned to face her, resting a forearm across the open book. "Why do you ask?"

She shrugged, feigning nonchalance. "Just wondering what your...habits are."

He observed her quietly for a moment then cleared his throat. "I don't plan to be with anyone else." He idly fanned the corner of the pages, making them flutter softly in a subtle show of nerves. "Of course, I won't stop you if you want to...expand your pool."

She raised an eyebrow at the turn of phrase. "Oh?"

"But if there's anything you're still curious about, you know you can come to me, right? I haven't done *everything* but I can't think of much I wouldn't try with you."

Her second eyebrow joined the first, surprised and amused at the offer. He seemed to interpret this as finally garnering a chip to barter with, so carried on.

"*Is* there something you're curious about? Because I'm sure—"

"Draco," she interrupted, finally taking pity on him. "I don't want to be with anyone else. I just wanted to see if we were on the same page with *not*... expanding our pools."

He exhaled. "Oh. Good. Merlin, you took a rather convoluted route to get there."

She laughed. "Said the Slytherin."

He inclined his head, mouth curling on a smile. "Touché."

She twirled her quill idly, considering her next overture.

"Have you ever been exclusive with someone before?"

He seemed more prepared for the topic now, his expression unsurprised. "If you're asking if I stick to one witch at a time, the answer is yes. But if you're asking if I've ever had a *girlfriend*, then the answer is no."

She was mildly surprised. "Really?"

He shook his head in confirmation. "Really."

"I don't understand how that's possible."

He shot her a quick smirk at the compliment but corralled his expression into something more serious. "Well, for a while, I used physical intimacy as a form of escapism. I'm a little ashamed to admit I didn't particularly care for anyone I was with, and certainly not enough to have wanted a relationship with them."

His gaze had drifted down to his fidgeting fingers. After a moment, he glanced at her and opened his mouth to say something else, but then looked awkward. She knew immediately where his mind had gone and although a wicked part of her wanted to make him say the name, she took pity on him.

"I've never had an exclusive romantic relationship either, even if we did kiss once and hunted for Horcruxes together."

His mouth twisted into a wry smile, perhaps at himself for having been so obvious in his unspoken question or at her reminder of the less-than-pleasant past but, to be fair, he'd started it with his oblique reference to their Sixth year and his coping mechanism.

"I never did see the two of you together," he mused. "He always seemed rather brotherly to you."

She was a bit surprised by this statement, not having thought he'd paid a lick of attention to her friendships. But before she could comment, his expression had sombered further. "He was rather protective of you though. Asking to exchange places with you. It was quite hard to witness that desperation, actually." He cleared his throat.

Oh. They were going to go *there*? She considered allowing it but then decided against it. She'd done quite well *not* thinking about it and didn't want to give it any power over her.

"Yes well, we're protective of each other," she said easily. "We actually first became friends because he and Harry saved me from being attacked by the troll back in First Year."

She omitted the part that she'd only been alone with the troll because of a rather flippant comment from Ron which had sent her crying to the loo. He was a good friend to her but rather bloody obtuse sometimes, particularly with his words.

She brought the topic back around to the fledgling relationship now before her.

"So this would be another first, then," she said, then nudged his knee with her own. "For both of us this time."

He laughed quietly and jostled her back. "I suppose it would be."

She smiled sweetly at him then coiled a curl around her finger idly, considering the star chart in front of her, but it didn't hold her attention. Astronomy really was so dull.

"Will I be your first anything else?" She asked, tracing the feathered tip of her quill along the outline of a constellation. She didn't even care to guess which one.

"You're my first lots of things already," he told her, shifting his chair closer until he was quite thoroughly inside her personal bubble, an arm along the back of her chair and his nose grazing her jaw. She tilted her head to give him more skin.

"I am? Such as?"

"Gryffindor, for one."

"Ah. And Muggleborn, for two," she supplied dryly. She felt the ghosting touch of his soft laugh.

"Yes. But also the first to have propositioned *me*. Several times now, in fact."

She pinched his forearm on the table for his smug tone but he just laughed again, not withdrawing.

“That it?” She asked.

He nuzzled against her neck then exhaled slowly. “No. But that’s enough for now.”

“Oh!”

A surprised voice distracted her from Malfoy’s intriguing admission. She looked past him to see Neville standing at the mouth of the alcove, brows almost touching his hairline. “Sorry! Didn’t mean to...interrupt.”

Malfoy froze for a split second then smoothly slid back a few inches out of her space, turning back to face the table. Neville’s gaze flicked quickly to the side of Malfoy’s face he could now see before cutting back to Hermione’s.

“No problem, Neville,” she said, responding to both his apology and the nonverbal question regarding Malfoy’s proximity to her. “Did you need a book from back here?”

To his credit, Neville recovered quickly. It wasn’t as shocking as it would have been even last year to see Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy sitting so closely in such a secluded little corner, but it certainly wasn’t *expected*.

“Ah, I do, actually.” Neville cast another quick look at Malfoy then skirted around the table to the shelf furthest in. He pulled the book with only a few moments searching, indicating it was a volume he’d referenced before. Which made sense, given their alcove was home to the less commonly used, far more esoteric texts on Herbology. Leave it to Neville to have a favorite.

“Ta.” He slipped back around them, flashed a quick smile at Hermione, and then was gone.

The whole interaction was so quick, she hadn’t been properly able to process it. Indeed, it wasn’t until he relaxed back into his chair that she realized how still Malfoy had held himself. Her first thought was that he was uncomfortable having been caught with her but when he sent a chagrined half-smile her way — no warmth to it, purely apologetic — she realized he feared the same but in the reverse.

But before she could think of what to do or say to smooth that expression over, to make him soften again, he was flipping his book shut and undoing the flap of his bag.

“I think I’ll grab a quick run before sundown,” he said. “See you later, yeah?”

“Oh!” She watched him pack up. “Of course. Have fun.”

He shot her a smirk, looking halfway to how she’d come to know him. “I don’t do it for *fun*, but...thanks.” With a soft laugh, he was gone.

She stared at the space he’d been, puzzling over his sudden departure. Surely he hadn’t been scared away by *Neville*? She thought she’d been quite relaxed, even if a bit stilted, so didn’t think he was playing off her body language at having been caught practically snogging him between the stacks.

And anyway, they were together now, weren't they?

She thought back to their conversation. She'd been fairly clear about how she saw him, she thought. He'd been the one to even say the word *girlfriend*, after all, even if it was only in reference to something he'd never had...

He had understood her.

Hadn't he?

He'd *sounded* agreeable but...had he actually *agreed*? She didn't like the uncertainty.

She pulled her Astronomy assignment back in front of her, readying her quill. She'd get it done and then go find him and make sure he knew *exactly* how she saw him.

The General Common Room was less than half full, most of the couches and tables full of all combinations of Houses entertaining themselves with all manner of activity: studying, playing games, chatting.

"Hermione!" called Ginny from the back tables where she was sitting with Luna and Neville. "We need a fourth for Snap! Come play!"

She waved a dismissive hand. "Not tonight, sorry!"

"You always say that," Ginny shouted but Hermione had already walked past them, looking around.

As she'd hoped, he was sitting in his usual chair by the fire, wearing his typical clothing — dark trousers, white Oxford, dragonhide shoes (the man had never heard the words *tracksuit bottoms*, she thought) — but his hair was damp from his post-run shower and he still had a little color to his cheeks.

She strode over to him until she was standing in front of him, toe to toe. He glanced up and then raised his head fully when he saw it was her.

"Granger," he said in greeting. He sounded curious if not a little restrained.

She bent forward, a hand on either arm of the chair, and smiled at him. "Hi, Draco."

And then she closed the distance between them to press her lips to his. He hesitated for only a second before he kissed her back, pressing forward to deepen it.

She vaguely registered Ginny's squeal as she tilted her head but ignored it.

He broke it a moment later when he smiled against her mouth. “Subtle as ever,” he murmured.

She breathed a laugh and drew back enough to see his face. “Yes well, it seemed like you needed a gesture.”

“That I’m yours to snog whenever you want?” He teased but she could see he was pleased with her public claiming.

“Mmhmm.” She kissed him again to punctuate it and then stood. “How was your run?”

He stretched his legs long on either side of her, staking his own territory. “It was good. Now, are you going to go console your Gryffindors? Because I can practically feel their stares.”

She glanced sideways to where Neville and Ginny were staring at them. Neville immediately looked away but Ginny only raised her brows in an *oh really?* expression. Hermione rolled her eyes and turned back to Draco.

“They can wait. I’m talking to you right now.”

He leaned back in the chair, amused. “So this is what it feels like to have Hermione Granger on your side.”

“You know what it feels like to *have me* more than anyone else,” she reminded him with a pointed lift of her brow.

He tutted but couldn’t hold his grin. “Inappropriate.”

She smirked at him. “Hardly.” Then plopped down on his lap sideways and looped her arms around his neck.

“Such a fucking Gryffindor,” he sighed.

But he looked happy.

Chapter End Notes

The angst fairy bit me but I got ice on the area before it spread 😊

Chapter 11: “Ten minutes,” she warned him.

Chapter Notes

Hi! I want to say a quick THANK YOU!! for all the comments on the last chapter. The Words of Affirmation part of me is dying that I haven't been able to reply to each of them but please know that they mean so much to me and absolutely make my day.

Y'all are the best 🍷

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

After she'd finally sent Draco back to his Slytherin dorm with a lingering goodnight kiss, Hermione meandered over to Ginny and stood patiently for her reaction. Her friend gestured her into the chair across from her and then leaned forward.

“Go on then,” Ginny prompted when Hermione waited for a question. “You know precisely what I'll ask so let's not play coy.”

Hermione wanted to roll her eyes but resisted. “Fine. We got together last week and as of today we're properly together,” she said succinctly. “I like him. A lot.”

Ginny absorbed this with a keen expression. “I see. And who initiated this?”

“Both of us.” Which was true, in a way. He'd been the one to physically reach out that day after potions, grabbing her wrist to halt her, but then she'd gone after him again that evening to accept. She glanced over at Neville, who sat beside Ginny looking a bit like he wished he wasn't, though he did send a warm smile her way.

Ginny pursed her lips then nodded. “Well. I'm a bit surprised by the choice but I expect you've done a thorough assessment of his qualities and overall *sorryness*, so I needn't bother. Is that right? Or do you need me to be mummy?”

Hermione smiled at the protectiveness. “No, he's lovely to me. He's definitely grown up.”

Ginny raised a suggestive eyebrow. “He certainly has.”

Neville made a small sound of anguish but as he was sitting between Ginny and the solid stone wall, he had no way to discreetly escape. The girls ignored him.

“So,” Ginny leaned back in her chair, clasped hands on the table in front of her, truly blocking any chance he'd had at slipping past her. “Care to expound on why you distinguished between ‘*got* together’ and ‘*properly* together’? I know how important precise language is to you.” Judging by her wicked expression, Hermione surmised that Ginny knew *exactly* what she had meant.

She gave in and rolled her eyes. "It means we've shagged almost every day since last Tuesday—"

"*Merlin*," Neville whined, looking for an escape. Ginny closed a hand over his forearm without looking and he slumped back with resignation. Hermione marked the touch with a raised brow but Ginny scoffed and shook her head. She evidently was not holding Neville hostage for romantic reasons. She'd pry into *that* later.

But for now, Hermione continued on. "*But* we only made a verbal agreement of exclusivity today."

"Hmm." Ginny steepled both hands and rested them against her mouth. "So you're dating Malfoy."

"Draco."

Ginny flicked a brow. "I'll call him his name when he calls me mine. He calls you Hermione then, does he?"

Hermione blushed but nodded. "He does."

She hoped Ginny would assume the flush wasn't for any particular reason but her friend was as keen as they came; subtle nuance was never lost on her. "*I see*."

"Not like that." Hermione glanced apologetically at Neville but he was staring at the table. "He calls me Hermione in public."

Ginny barked a laugh. "You *cannot* set me up like that, Hermione. Do you think I'm capable of not asking what I'm about to now?"

"You have excellent self-control," said Hermione, knowing she was only delaying the inevitable.

"That I do." Ginny agreed easily, then gestured that Hermione continue. "Go on. Tell me this one thing and I won't ask you anything else about how Malfoy is in bed."

"Liar."

Ginny grinned.

"It's not very salacious," Hermione relented. "Usually he just calls me Granger."

"Ooh!" Ginny looked delighted. "Does he say it all low and scolding? Like you've been a bad student and he caught you?"

Hermione clucked her tongue. "No."

"*Sure*." Ginny sat back, crossing her arms over her chest and then raising one hand to tap a finger against her lips, elbow resting on the other bent arm. "He always struck me as someone who would use the word *slut* in bed."

“C’mon Ginny,” Neville wheedled, “Let me out.”

“In a minute.” Ginny considered Hermione a moment longer (she stayed resolutely straight-faced even as her mind buzzed with ideas of Draco using other names in bed) and then turned curious eyes on Neville. “You always struck me as someone who uses the word *love* in bed. Am I right?”

He flushed but didn’t deny it.

“Mmmhmm.” Ginny heaved a sigh, then scooted her chair in. “Fine. You’re excused.”

Neville didn’t linger. Hermione watched his hasty retreat with curious eyes which she then fixed on Ginny.

“It was a loss condition from our game of Snap,” the redhead supplied without fanfare. “He had to sit there until I excused him. It was really no punishment at all until you showed up, so thanks for that.”

Hermione snorted. “I’ll apologize to him later.”

“Don’t bother. I’m sure he secretly loved it.” Ginny smirked. “But now that he’s gone, tell me *everything* .”

“You said you wouldn’t ask!” protested Hermione.

“And you rightly called me a liar. Go on now. He good with his hands?”

Hermione twisted her mouth, but the chance to confer with another woman, a *friend* , was actually something she rather needed. Salaciousness of the topic aside, she was sure Ginny would be a good sounding board.

She scooted her chair in.

The first test to their relationship came the next day at lunchtime.

Draco had waited for her by the door as they were excused from Charms so that they could walk down to the Great Hall together. No one had given them more than a passing look, the most scandalized reaction belonging to one Ginevra Weasley and hers had been due to the way Hermione had so brazenly staked her claim rather than the person with whom she’d done it. It was rather a relief to know she wouldn’t be the talk of the school (or at least, not to her face) but she supposed that may still be looming on the horizon. They hadn’t done anything beyond walk down the halls together, after all, even if they were discouraging the thought of ‘they’re probably just friends’ by holding hands.

Just inside the Great Hall, they paused. He was so used to carrying on to the right and she the left, that their joined hands stretched for a moment before they each stopped.

“Ah,” he said, “See you after lunch then?”

She didn’t let go of his hand. “No. I want to eat with you.”

His mouth flicked up. “By all means.” But then he pulled her toward the Slytherin table.

She liked the statement of it, aware of her (unwanted) notoriety and what crossing the Great Hall in such a manner would possibly do to further build a unified school, but she found herself just slightly petty about it. Sure, the schoolmates who had been active bullies toward her hadn’t returned this year (with the exception of the one whose hand she was holding) but she couldn’t deny the flicker of nerves at the thought of all those green-striped ties around her. And she had a nagging sense it wouldn’t be a gesture reciprocated.

“If I sit there now, will you sit at mine for dinner?” She asked before he could tug them more than a few steps.

His gaze flicked to the Gryffindor table and either couldn’t or didn’t try to hold his grimace. Just as she’d suspected.

“That’s how I feel,” she told him with an amused laugh. “Neutral territory instead?” She gestured to the Hufflepuff table in front of them.

He snorted but inclined his head. “Fine. Seems fitting.”

They settled at the very end, side by side, leaving a few empty spaces between themselves and the nearest Hufflepuff students. There was no rule against sitting at another House’s table (Luna did it all the time), but she thought they ought to give the Hufflepuffs the respect of not being brash invaders. They garnered a few glances but as the nearest students appeared to be First or Second years, were quickly ignored.

They had just dished up and begun to dig in when a figure appeared across the table. Hermione looked up to see Neville and his typical kind, half-bemused smile.

“Is this a statement or can I join?” He asked.

“It’s a statement now,” Draco mumbled under his breath but Hermione elbowed him and smiled up at Neville, curious. He was the last person she’d expected to seek them out, given how Ginny had tortured him with the topic the evening before.

“Of course you can join us.”

“Cheers.” Neville sat across from her with a returned smile, then looked at Draco with a rather contrite expression.

“Sorry about the other day,” he offered, “In the library. We’re all a bit protective of each other, but I realize the assumption was unkind.”

Draco blinked, looking taken aback, and Hermione wondered how often he'd been the recipient of an apology. Probably as often as he'd issued one, she thought dryly.

"No problem," Draco finally said. "It's nice to know Hermione has people looking out for her. Besides me, I mean."

Neville's attention had flicked to Hermione at the sound of her name, and then back. "Of course."

She snorted at him, thinking back to Ginny's commentary of how Draco may have used her first name. She felt Draco's glance but decided not to explain it; once in a lifetime was plenty. Instead, she asked Neville about their most recently assigned Herbology work, the resulting discussion taking up almost the entirety of the meal and led predominantly by him.

Which was lucky because she found her attention drifting rather often to the man beside her. Draco ate with a casual elegance that was hard not to admire. As a lefty, he held his knife overhand, the cutlery looking so at home in his hands that he appeared to altogether ignore it, cutting bites without hardly glancing down. But while she appreciated his dining etiquette, she found herself rather wishing he had a free hand to slip under the table and onto her thigh. She'd seen similar covert touches throughout her years at school and found herself finally understanding the pull of such public displays.

But it didn't have to always be the boy initiating it, she supposed. Mind made up, she laid down her cutlery and reached for her goblet of pumpkin juice with one hand as she dropped the other under the table and onto Draco's thigh. His fork paused halfway to his mouth, but only for a second before he carried on the motion and ate the bite, cutting a glance sideways at her. She smiled up at him, sipping her juice and giving his thigh a little squeeze in greeting. He sent her the private half smile she was well acquainted with and then turned back to whatever Neville had been saying.

She sighed happily to herself, replacing her goblet and toying with what was left on her plate. It was nice to touch Draco. He had such nice thighs, leanly muscled and strong. She recalled quite vividly what it had felt like to have one of them between her legs, a position they hadn't recreated since the first time he'd gotten her off. She traced her thumb in a small circle and then stroked her whole hand down to his knee. It had been two days since he'd last shagged her or touched her in any way. Her former self would have laughed rather derisively if she'd seen herself now, running her fingers up her boyfriend's thigh under the lunch table, fantasizing about climbing onto his lap and...

Draco dropped his hand over hers, pinning it.

She glanced over at him and was delighted to find the beginning of a blush on the high points of his cheekbones. He was nodding in agreement to whatever Neville was saying but tightened his hand around hers when he felt her attention on him. She pulled against his hold and watched as he swallowed but relented and let her go. He'd likely thought she was just trying to reclaim her hand back to her own space but he had another thing coming if he thought she'd back down so easily when he hadn't explicitly told her to stop. She squeezed his thigh in a nonverbal acknowledgement and he let her go, picking his knife back up and preparing a bite.

She waited until both hands were occupied before she slid her hand up and inward, fingers practically at his zipper. He dropped his knife in his haste to stop her but almost immediately diverted his hand to snatching up his goblet, perhaps realizing that shooting his hand down to his lap would be a quite damning indication of what she was up to. She bit her lip to hide her grin and pushed her luck with another exploratory advance.

And then there she was, touching Draco Malfoy's cock in the Great Hall, while he had to pretend she wasn't.

Arousal shot through her as she stroked the tips of her fingers down the increasingly hardening length of him. He shifted on the bench, blush darkening but otherwise studiously ignoring her. She found the head of his cock and massaged it gently with her fingers, squirming slightly when she thought about him doing the same to her clit. When had she gotten so turned on? She'd gone her whole life without orgasms and now it seemed she couldn't even go forty-eight hours.

Neville said something about wanting extra time in the Greenhouses before class and she offered him a vague goodbye as he stood. While he collected his bag and set off, Draco slung his arm around her shoulder and tugged her to him, dropping a kiss to her temple.

"Granger," he murmured lowly under the guise of the kiss. "What the fuck are you doing?"

She turned toward him to whisper back. "I want you."

He inhaled slowly. "Yeah, I gathered that much. You couldn't have waited until after we finished eating?"

"I *am* done." She couldn't hold her grin at the petulant noise he made as she pressed her fingers more firmly against the head and stroked her thumb as far as she could reach along his shaft.

"This is quite the public announcement," he whispered back. "I doubt anyone will be unaware of our relationship if you make me fucking come during lunch."

His words, as always, curled a warming surge of lust through her. She liked being known as the best and there was something incredibly delicious about the thought of proving her excellence in yet another field; of Draco, who was always so controlled and proper, losing his composure and coming in his trousers from just the touch of her hand. She wouldn't *actually* do it, of course — there were literal children just a few seats down — but the idea made her molten.

With a little parting squeeze (which he bore with a thick swallow), she pulled her hand back to her own lap. She could feel the heat radiating off him between the few inches that separated them, his arm heavy across her back. She forked a bite and ate it with a playful wink up at him. He pulled his arm off her, hand passing under her hair to give it a sharp tug at the roots.

"Come on. Let's go."

“We have Transfiguration in twenty minutes, “ she reminded him, grabbing her bag nonetheless.

“Plenty of time.” He stood with an extra flourish of his unfastened robes, a move that filled her with a wicked sense of pride.

He tugged her up and in front of him, turned toward the doors and leaned down to murmur his next words right beside her ear.

“And if it’s not, then we’re skipping.”

Hermione had made plenty of changes over the past two weeks but skipping class would not be one of them.

So, she made the most of their limited time and dragged Draco behind the tapestry just two halls down from the Transfiguration classroom. He didn’t comment on how she knew about the hiding place, instead simply casting a quick *muffliato* and then pressing her back against the wall with arms extended on either side of her head.

He smirked down at her. “So, Granger. Now you’ve got me, what’re you going to do?”

She curled her fingers under his belt and yanked him closer, forcing him to drop down to his forearms. She slid the leather from the buckle with deft motions and then worked his trousers open. He licked his lips, huffing a laugh through his nose. “Eager?”

“Efficient,” she corrected, then dropped to her knees.

“Fuck.” He looked down at her, leaning forward on his forearms. “Granger, you don’t have to.”

She scoffed, tugging his trousers down enough that she could free his cock. “As if I’d do anything I didn’t want to.” She stroked him from root to tip, delighting in the instinctive thrust he performed into her fist, and then — for the sake of efficiency — sucked him straight into her mouth.

“Jesus Christ.” He dropped his forehead to his arm, watching her.

The angle was steep enough that she couldn’t meet his eye while keeping his cock in her mouth, so she prioritized pleasure over intimacy and focused her attention on making him come. She made a few quick passes over him and then went in for the kill, hands balancing on his thighs and tongue stretching long. She found it much easier to slip him to the back of her throat in this position, the angle much more open than when she’d tried on the bed. She brought a hand up to curl around his base and was pleased to discover there was only enough space for her thumb and forefinger. She’d gotten two fingers deeper than the last time. Flush with pride, she held him there and then, carefully, swallowed.

“*Fuck*,” he hissed, so she swallowed again. “Fucking *Christ*. Get up here, Granger. I need to make you come too.”

She drew off him slowly, taking her time to suck on the sensitive head while she pulled in a lungful through her nose. She felt dizzy with need for him and went to sink him back deep but his fingers had woven into her hair.

“Goddamnit, witch. Get up here.”

He tugged gently and she popped off his cock with an obscene, wet slurp. He hauled her to her feet, crowding her back against the wall and kissing her instantly. She kissed him back, breathless, whimpering when she felt his hands pushing her skirt up and then sliding down to wrap under her thighs, lifting her up. He held her between the wall and his body and dipped his head to suck her neck exactly where she was extra-sensitive.

“I want to mark you,” he growled against her skin. “So everyone knows how fucking delicious you are.”

“Ten minutes,” she warned him, a complete guess.

“Shit.” He refocused, reaching down to tug her knickers to the side. “Fingers or cock?”

She pulled his mouth back to hers. “Cock.”

“Thank fuck.” He slid his hand between her legs to confirm her readiness (she’d been soaked since she’d touched him in the Great Hall) then aligned himself and *pushed*. He sank deep with hardly any effort and she dropped her head back at the feel of being so suddenly and delightfully filled. Her skull thudded dully on the stone wall and he swore, cupping the back of her head in his palm.

“Thanks,” she gasped. Then, “Don’t stop.”

He drove into her, his other hand tight on her arse, holding her up. She curled one arm around his shoulders, her other hand dipping between her legs. With him pressing her against the wall and her legs tight around him, there wasn’t much space to move. His cock stayed deep, grinding against her with steady pressure.

“How can I make you come?” he panted.

Her fingers were frantic on her clit, her other hand tightening on his shoulder to grip a handful of jumper. “Just don’t stop. You feel so good.”

He ground into her again and again and again, his hand surely scratched to bits where it cradled her head as his motion rocked her up and down the rough wall a few inches.

It felt good — *fantastic* — but she wasn’t sure she’d be able to come in the required time. Though as soon as she thought it, her stubborn need to exceed expectations reared its head. She *would* come. She would *make* herself do it.

Determined, she applied all the techniques she'd learned, tensing her inner muscles in sync with his rhythm, keeping her strokes counterclockwise and firm on her clit. If he wasn't holding her up, she'd have begged for his hands on her, squeezing her and pinching her nipples. She closed her eyes and envisioned how it would feel, the pressure and warmth of his hand or even his mouth...that wet curl of his tongue. She felt her cunt flutter. She needed his tongue.

"Kiss me," she gasped, eyes opening from where she'd had them automatically squeezed shut.

His mouth was on hers instantly, slanting over her with a hungry desperation that made her throb. In the end, it was the touch of his tongue against hers that did it. She moaned into his mouth as everything tightened, her orgasm lifting her hips against his in a final seek for friction.

"Ohh fuck." He pressed deep, grinding his cock inside her so hard he crushed her fingers between their bodies. "You feel so fucking good coming on me. You get so bloody tight. *Christ.*"

She felt when he lost it a second later, his hips snapping inelegantly against hers in several forceful thrusts, his hands flexing where they held her. And then he groaned, long and low, face dropping to her shoulder.

They panted together, the abruptness of the end making her feel zapped, like the time she'd shoved a knife into an electrical outlet because her mother had warned her not to but hadn't explained *why* and she simply had to find out. It didn't make sense, anatomically, but she felt like the knife, electrified by Draco's current.

"You're incredible," he breathed. "Salazar. I might skip Transfiguration anyway, just to recover from that."

She snorted then wiggled slightly to indicate he put her down. With a groan, he slipped out of her and then carefully set her on her feet.

"Oh!" She'd never stood immediately after sex before. She felt the unmistakable glide of his cum down the inside of her thigh, summoned by gravity, and snapped her legs together. She fumbled for her wand to Vanish the mess but he beat her to it, stopping halfway through the act of doing up his trousers when he realized what her soft surprise had been for.

His hand was between her legs before she saw him move, sweeping up until he'd encountered the slick streak of his spend.

Inexplicably, he licked his lips.

Her eyes locked on the motion. He'd been rather interested in the mess he made of her after previous shags, too. She made a note of that and shifted her foot out a few inches to give him space, curious what he'd do.

At her movement, his eyes flicked to hers, expression half guilty like he'd been caught doing something he wasn't supposed to. It made her even more curious so she gave him a little nod of permission. His eyes flared with surprise and sudden heat, and his hand moved with confident purpose now, collecting up what had dripped out of her with two fingers. Her mouth popped open when he slid those two fingers inside her, massaging his cum into her with a few deep presses. He leaned forward and kissed her, sweet but chaste. It was an unexpectedly arousing juxtaposition and she breathed a soft moan against his lips at the feeling.

He pulled back, fingers slipping out of her cunt. He hesitated for only the barest breath before he brought them up and sucked his fingers into his mouth. She stared, watching as his cheeks hollowed and relaxed around his fingers, color darkening them.

She'd ask him about it later, interested in what exactly it was about it that was making him look simultaneously ashamed and aroused. For now she reached up and pulled his hand away, going up on the balls of her feet to replace his fingers with her tongue.

They didn't make it to Transfiguration.

Chapter End Notes

Hermione has so many new questions to explore after this one 🧐😊

Chapter 12: “I’m aware of my timetable. That’s not what I asked.”

Chapter Notes

Hello friends! Today we have another serving of the ensemble cast because it was fun, and then the barest hint of internal-angst before a boat-load of smut and fluff. Cue that Sound of Music song.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

They ate dinner at the Ravenclaw table, summoned over by a waving Neville who was already seated beside Luna. Hermione felt Draco resist for a step but then relented when she tugged him forward; it was a better option than the Gryffindor table, even if it meant he still had to dine with her friends. They slid onto the bench across from Neville and Luna, the latter drifting a dreamy smile over to them.

“Hi Hermione. Hi Draco,” she said. “It’s nice to see you two together finally.”

Hermione’s mouth popped open to say...*what exactly?*...but Draco’s unexpected chuckle snapped it shut in surprise.

“Thanks Luna,” he said, flicking an amused look up to her as he served himself roast potatoes.

Hermione was sure her expression matched the rather baffled one on Neville’s face.

“I didn’t realize you two were friends,” Hermione said at last.

“Yes, well, us blondes have to stick together,” Draco said airily, offering her the serving dish.

Luna hummed, sweeping her own icy blonde hair over her shoulder. “While that’s quite true, it’s really that Draco has a penchant for crying around ethereal, Ravenclaw girls. Though I’m a bit more corporeal than the other.”

“C’mon,” he groused. “That was years ago.”

“Don’t dismiss a foundational movement, Draco,” Luna advised lightly, carefully filling the entirety of her fork tines with peas. “How things begin sets a stage for how they end.”

“Right.” He glanced sidelong at Hermione. “Very encouraging, thanks.”

“You’re welcome.” Luna tilted her head, smiled softly at them, then finally ate her peas.

Hermione left it alone for now, but the unlikely alliance between Luna and Draco had rattled her impression of him. She supposed she shouldn't be entirely surprised that he'd forged a friendship with Luna – looniness aside, she was quite a loyal and trustworthy person – but she couldn't begin to fathom the circumstances of it. Surely it hadn't happened while Luna had been captured and held in the Malfoy Manor dungeons...?

And then, as sudden as a slap, she wondered if Luna was one of the girls Draco had *escaped* reality with.

She felt an unexpected prick of jealousy at the thought, but before it could properly take hold, Ginny came in, looking slightly sweaty and exerted in a way that indicated she'd come straight from the Quidditch pitch. She veered off toward the Gryffindor table until Neville called out to her. She adjusted her trajectory smoothly and settled herself in on the empty bench just the other side of Draco, peering around him to smile at Hermione before fixing her eyes on him.

"Haven't seen you flying this year," she remarked without any prior greeting.

Draco raised his brows. "I didn't realize you were keeping tabs."

Ginny reached for the plate of chicken. "Frankly, I'd be offended by it if I cared a little more. There's still plenty of competition even if Harry's not up in the air against you."

"Ginny," began Hermione but Draco scoffed over her.

"As if *Potter* was the reason I did anything."

Even Neville couldn't hold his short laugh at that. Draco looked around at them, all either chuckling or, in Hermione's case, trying hard not to smile. "What?"

"You tell him, Hermione," said Ginny, spooning sprouts. "That way if he gets cross, you can *make it up to him*."

Hermione clucked her tongue at the suggestive comment, wishing she was close enough to shove or poke or otherwise physically punish her outspoken friend. Ginny knew it, too, shooting her a grin before tucking into her dinner.

"Tell me what?" asked Draco, turning to her. She wanted to kiss the little frown lines between his brows.

"That your vendetta against Harry was rather obvious," she explained. "But if it makes you feel any better, he was equally obsessed with you."

"*Obsessed..!*" Draco protested. "I was not *obsessed* with Potter. Nor was he with me."

"I shared a dorm with him for years," Neville piped up. "Obsessed is accurate."

Draco gaped at that for a moment, then shook his head. "Well, I suppose I can't fault him for that." He smirked at Hermione. "Hard not to be, really, isn't it?"

Ginny made a gagging sound on the other side of him and Hermione rolled her eyes.

“Regardless,” she continued, “You did plenty of things specifically to spite Harry. Joining the Quidditch team as Seeker is only one small example.”

“I didn’t–” Draco huffed out a breath. “It had nothing to do with Potter. I’m a great Seeker.”

“You learned it, sure,” allowed Ginny, “But I’ve watched you play. You’re a natural Chaser.”

Draco scoffed. “You’re just saying that because *you’re* a Chaser.”

Ginny raised her brows, like he’d said the dumbest thing she’d ever heard. “Uh, *yeah*. So I know what it takes. You’re observant, yes, but it’s really your speed and hand-eye coordination that would’ve been much better suited for a more active position.” She pulled out her hair elastic and then reassembled her ponytail. “If you ever want to fly with me, I could show you what I mean.”

Draco was staring at Ginny like she’d started speaking in Mermish halfway through; Hermione, too, was rather surprised by the offer. It was uncommonly generous of Ginny, given both the way the Malfoys and Weasleys had been at each other’s throats for generations, and also because of the very understandable, personal reasons she had for distrusting or disliking Draco. But, Hermione supposed, it had really all been *Lucius*, not Draco, who had committed all those sins against her.

And perhaps, as someone who’d also felt Voldemort under her skin, Ginny was in a unique position to empathize with post-war Draco. They hadn’t discussed his faded Dark Mark – though she’d caught glimpses of it before he’d thoroughly distracted her with other parts of his body – but Hermione was sure its presence was an altogether unwelcome reminder of his past.

Hermione was about to open her mouth to thank her friend for the gesture when Draco cleared his throat.

“Thanks...Ginny,” he said. “I might take you up on that.”

“Anytime, *Draco*.” Again, Ginny leaned forward and shot a quick wink at Hermione, then chugged her water. “Right. I’m dying for a shower. Ta-ta, loves!”

She slung herself back over the bench and was off without a backward glance.

Neville exhaled gustily in her wake. “Merlin, she’s always so hyper after flying.”

“Mm-hmm,” agreed Hermione absently, but her attention was still on Draco. He was blushing slightly, eyes on his plate as he worked his cutlery with pointed care, looking for all the world like he was trying not to either smile or cry. Hermione wasn’t sure what to do, torn between reaching for his hand, or snogging him, or hugging him tight to her chest.

Luna, perhaps sensing that a shift in topic would be welcome, smiled around at them. “It’s so nice to be sitting with friends at my own table finally. I did wonder when you’d all come by.”

It was just innocently guilt-inducing enough – her speciality – to draw all their eyes to her. Neville made a soft sound of dismay. “Oh, *Luna*.”

But whatever else he said was lost to Hermione because under the table, Draco’s hand had found hers.

As was her custom, Hermione holed herself up in the library after dinner. She preferred to complete her assignments there, both because it offered a distraction-free ambiance primed for learning (unlike the common room) with large tables and every book she’d possibly need (well, *that* wasn’t true but it was close enough), and because it felt less lonely than sitting alone in her room, even if she *was* still alone.

It was nearing nine o’clock when Draco arrived. She’d left him just after dinner with a quick kiss in the Entrance Hall, his destination unknown to her though she rather guessed it was the open air, either on foot or broom. He’d had that look about him all through dinner, the one she was used to seeing on her athletics-driven friends.

So while he’d let off some pent up energy, she’d devoted herself to steadily compounding it.

She’d worked herself up into what Ron had coined a *lather*, piles of parchment and several books all begging for her attention while she worked with mounting frustration to finish her Arithmancy assignment. She’d thought maybe the work they’d been doing in Runes had interesting ramifications on the problem set she was working but it had ended up being a dead end that she’d wasted almost three quarters of an hour on. She *hated* wasting time; *hated* being wrong about the usefulness of something.

It was in this frustrated, grumpy state that Draco found her. She hoped he’d simply sit and do his own work, but he didn’t. He observed the mess around her, arms folding across his chest.

“Why are you taking so many classes?”

Ginny had already tried to stage an intervention the day before and she wasn’t in the mood to be patronized again, especially not when the point would be so annoyingly valid.

“You’re taking as many as me,” she reminded him crisply, primed for irritation. She felt his eyes flick to her at her tone but she was too busy to look up.

“I’m aware of my timetable. That’s not what I asked.”

“Then what are you asking?” She huffed when she couldn’t locate the notes she needed. She shuffled through a stack of parchment with quick, frustrated fingers.

“I asked why you are taking so many classes.”

“Because I want to.” She shifted a book, finding only a second one below. She shoved both aside. She’d seen the parchment literally *minutes* ago.

“Why?”

She closed her eyes for a moment, stealing a quick breath. “I’m not in the mood to analyze my academic choices. I have *so* much to finish for next week and it’s already Friday, so if you *don’t* mind, please either sit quietly or go away.”

When he didn’t reply, she felt badly that she’d been too brash. She was used to snapping at Harry and Ron — even Ginny and Neville were practically immune to her occasionally prickly behavior at this point — but when she opened her eyes, Draco looked unfazed.

Oh, she recalled. Right. Pansy.

“Sure. Just tell me, what’re you looking for within this disaster?”

“My notes from Vector’s lecture on the Latibulum Coefficient. I can’t recall how it alters the relationship between the solar and lunar variables and I need it to finish this—oh.”

He’d handed her a piece of parchment, plucked from below a half sheet on the pile in front of him. “It turns the correlation from negative to positive. Still linear.” He told her, without having looked at it.

She twisted her mouth, chagrined by her behavior when he was being helpful. “Thanks. Sorry.”

He waved it off. “Anything else? Otherwise I’ll leave you to it.”

“I didn’t mean to snap at you.” Now that she’d calmed down — and had the answer she needed — she gave herself a minute to be distracted by him. “I’m just overwhelmed. But that’s not your fault. I really am sorry.”

“You didn’t hurt my feelings, Granger.”

“Even so.”

He flashed her a quick smile. “Fine. Apology accepted. Come find me later?”

She sighed. “I’m not sure I’ll be finished for hours.”

“Alright. If you change your mind, I’ll be around.”

He made to leave; on impulse, she blurted, “Draco. Wait.”

He half turned, looking over his shoulder. “Mm?”

She beckoned him over, tilting her face up in invitation. He flicked a brow, smirking as he approached. He dipped down and she reached up, hand curving around the back of his neck to draw him into a kiss.

“I’ll come find you. And if I don’t by, say, eleven, come find me?”

He kissed her again. “Will do.”

She watched him leave, seriously considering just packing in and following him immediately, but another glance down at her schoolwork kept her in her seat. Privately, she was beginning to regret her rather desperate decision to take so many classes. It wasn’t the most she’d ever taken, of course, but as they were all NEWT-level, the workload was quite a bit heavier.

However, now that she had a fresh distraction — and a much more effective, all-consuming one at that — it felt rather ridiculous that she was taking so many classes just to keep herself thoroughly occupied. Were there any she absolutely didn’t *need* to take?

She considered her timetable, giving in and doing a quick analysis of her choices despite her snappish reprimand about not wanting to only minutes earlier.

She couldn’t drop Arithmancy because she *loved* it. And that meant she had to continue with Ancient Runes (which she also loved), and Astronomy (only okay) because they complemented each other so well, making each other richer and more meaningful. The same was true for Potions and Herbology (plus she was enjoying having a class with Neville, and obviously would never drop Potions and miss out on sharing a desk with Draco). History of Magic was just so *interesting*, and rounded out her knowledge of the world she still had so much context to catch up on. Transfiguration, Charms, and Defense Against the Dark Arts were another complimentary trio...but perhaps she could drop Transfiguration? It had quite a bit of overlap with Charms...

Instantly she rejected the idea, a vague panic rising at the thought of what she might miss out on learning. Even skipping it the day before had resulted in several minutes of overthinking, once the heat of her distraction had simmered down and they’d left the seclusion of the alcove.

Damnit. She really was a miserable little swot sometimes.

She chewed her lip, eyeing her mess. With only three months left, it felt like a waste to withdraw from any but was she just spinning her wheels? She was so used to being overwhelmed with things to do — her studies, helping Harry figure it all out, maintaining her other friendships — that the thought of *not* felt a bit overwhelming in itself.

But was burying herself in meaningless work really just burying her chance at finding *actual* meaning? She had no firm plan of what she wanted to do after Hogwarts (for a while, thinking of the future had felt like tempting fate) but she was fairly certain whatever it was wouldn’t require a NEWT in *Astronomy*...

And she’d been neglecting her friendships; she hadn’t spent more than the duration of a meal with Ginny or Neville, hadn’t written a response to Harry’s last letter...and not to mention whatever she’d begun with Draco.

People should take precedent. She knew that.

But she'd fought a damn war to give herself the right to a Magical education and a place in the Wizarding world. It felt inconceivable to take a step back now.

She realized suddenly that her heart was pounding, her breaths coming quick. She'd managed for so long to not consider her future but now that she'd let the thoughts on, her anxiety was spiking. There were too many choices, too many options on what to do and too many paths for the way to get there. She felt vaguely shaky, nerves jangly, and huffed a hard exhale through her nose. She picked up her quill and tried to focus back on her Astronomy assignment but it was *beyond* inane.

She needed a better distraction.

She packed up her things with hurried hands. It was only half past nine so she was moderately confident he'd be in the common room. She tried not to rush but even so, she was slightly breathless when she stepped through the entrance and finally stopped moving.

She caught his eye from across the room and he sent her a half smile which faded slowly as he took her in. He snapped his book shut and stood, weaving around the coffee table and other armchairs without taking his eyes off her.

She reached for him as soon as she could, hand curling around his jumper just above his hip.

"Hi," she said. "Can we..?"

"Sure." He followed her out of the common room without question.

She knew he sensed that something was up with her and was grateful that he simply followed her back to her room without prying right away.

Once her door was shut behind them, he tugged her bag off her shoulder and walked it to her desk, then faced her. She closed the distance instantly, going up on her toes to loop her arms around his neck to bring him down. He went easily, hands encircling her waist with less intensity than hers had. She leaned into his touch, eager to give her thudding heart a physical reason to be beating as wildly as it was. She kissed him as calmly as she could but even so, they were quick, rapid things. He let her, meeting her intensity for a moment but then pulled back to look at her.

"You alright?" he murmured.

Her up-and-down nodding was just frantic enough to indicate the exact opposite.

"Take my mind off it," she whispered, kissing him again a bit desperately.

"Off what?" He nudged the underside of her jaw with his nose and she angled it away, giving him room.

"Everything." She pressed her head back further as his tongue met her skin. "Make me forget everything."

She wasn't sure if he knew exactly what to make of it but she didn't know how else to express it. She couldn't think about the past, didn't want to think about the future. She needed him to ground her.

"Okay, Granger." He dotted chaste kisses down the side of her neck but paused halfway down. All the hairs on her body stood to attention when his breath brushed warmly against the extra-sensitive spot she'd found there. "Just relax. I've got you."

He nipped the spot softly then kissed it, tongue following. She melted into his hold, doing her best to become loose of limb and mind. He walked her backward to the bed, helping her up into the center with strong hands around her waist and then following her down.

He treated her carefully but not gently, touching her with an exactness that had her squirming under him, body heating by the minute. It seemed he'd learned as much as she had in their lessons.

By the time he had relocated between her thighs, shoulders nudging her open for him, her brain felt subdued, her incessant worries and memories tucked away behind the unignorable wall of need he was building. The first touch of his tongue against her cunt had her arching for more but he drew away almost at once. Right before she thought to ask for more, he was back with a firmer touch, lips closing around her clit.

"*Draco*," she whined when he sucked lightly. "Oh *god*."

He hummed a low note of agreement, sucking again and then licking lower. He kept up the rhythmic, pulsing sucks and intermittent soothing swipes of his tongue until she was rocking her hips under him, her orgasm so close she could *feel* it. But then right before the swell of it overtook her, he pulled back.

She gasped a sound of protest, sure he must have known how close she was, but then he was back, pressing soft kisses to her clit, and she thought maybe he hadn't. When he did it the second time, her toes curling with the mounting pleasure, she *knew* he knew.

"Don't stop," she begged when he pulled back again. "Please, I'm so close."

He held her open, eyes between her legs. "I know. I can practically see you trying to come."

Her cunt was throbbing, the edge receding but the pressure not letting up.

"Why are you stopping?" She undulated under him, body fidgety for release.

"I'm just doing what you asked." He kissed around her clit, slow and wet. "I only want you to be able to think about how badly you need to come."

She groaned, shifting her hips against his mouth.

"Tell me next time you get close," he instructed. "Tell me when to stop. I want two more before you can come."

“Okay.” She groaned out the word as he set back to work winding her tighter and tighter. She lingered on the rise for as long as she could manage, but when he slipped a finger inside her she had to work to hold off.

“Stop,” she gasped. “Stop stop stop.”

He pulled his mouth away, panting, but kept up the slow strokes of his finger.

“*Don’t*,” she squirmed, “I’m so close. You shouldn’t...*don’t*...”

His hand stilled, finger buried deep, but she was able to breath around the feeling and keep herself from tipping too far.

“That was *very* close, Granger.” He met her eyes from between her legs. “Careful.”

She had to look away, panting at the ceiling while he kissed along her inner thigh, waiting for her to relax again. Once he deemed her ready, he reversed the path and dropped kisses inward until his lips were back on her clit, resuming his slow strokes inside her.

It was a relief; the only thing for her to focus on was holding off and if she failed? Only pleasure.

She submitted to it, let it pull her in until she was mindless, moaning lowly when it started to approach the point of no return.

“Draco,” she breathed. “Fuck. Please.”

He stopped immediately and she sobbed at the acuteness of her need, her awareness of it doubled now she knew it wasn’t going to be fulfilled.

“Good, Granger.” He stroked firm hands up her thighs, presumably to soothe or distract her, but the sensation only heightened her tension. She arched, panting.

“I’m there. I’m...I... *please, Draco*.”

“I’m not even touching you, Granger.” He pulled his hands off her legs. “You gonna come untouched?”

She honestly felt like she might. She squeezed her eyes shut, feet shifting on the mattress and hips rocking. Without thinking it through, she tensed her inner muscles and nearly went over, a broken whimper escaping.

“*Jesus*.” Draco was back on her in a second, hands warm and demanding, holding her legs open for his tongue, two fingers pressing deep and knocking her straight over the edge.

“*Thank you*.” Her eyes rolled back, lids fluttering shut as the pleasure claimed her. “Ohhh thank you, thank you...”

He worked her through it, pressure steady and gradually easing off. When she relaxed, gasping for breath, he kissed up to her navel and then rested his chin on her pelvis, looking

up at her. His eyes were intent but softened when he saw her smile.

“Better?”

“Come here.” She opened her arms to him and he crawled up her body to hover over her. She looped her arms around his neck and smiled up at him.

“Thank you.”

He quirked a soft smile. “You’re welcome.”

She pulled him down for a kiss but was so spent and breathless, she had to break it. He hummed a warm note against her cheek, kissing her there instead, then pushed up and off her.

She turned her head, following his movement, brain wonderfully sluggish. He was unmistakably hard but didn’t seem to be doing anything about it beyond a quick adjustment over his trousers.

“Stay.” She murmured the word, eyes flicking up to find his.

“Don’t worry about me.” He sent her another smile, this one more wicked than soft. “You’ve given me more than enough to work with.”

“Okay.” She licked her lips. “But stay.”

He dragged in a slow inhale, gaze stroking along the lines of her legs, up up up until his cool eyes touched hers.

“Alright.”

His hands worked his belt open.

Hermione swallowed, determined to hold his stare until he broke it, but when she saw him reach into his briefs and pull out his cock, she had to look. His hand wrapped around himself, stroking slowly. When she looked back up, his eyes were still on hers.

“Come here,” she whispered.

He shook his head. “I want to look at you.”

Obligingly, she undid the buttons of her shirt, slow enough to tease him. He looked at her body like he’d never seen it before, eyes hungry and taking in every piece of her. He dragged his thumb across the head of his cock, jaw clenching.

“God, you are...unbelievable. Fuck.”

“Please come closer.” She wheedled. “I want to touch you.”

He came a step closer but was still out of reach. “You’re so gorgeous. It’s insane that you let me look at you, let alone touch you. *God.*”

He pulled in a heavy inhale through his nose, hand unceasing as his eyes darted over all the skin she’d bared for him. She was still mostly dressed, her shirt open but bra in place, her knickers somewhere on the floor but skirt pushed up out of the way. She felt even more exposed than if she’d been properly naked, the sensation heightened by the fact that he was clothed except for where he’d opened his trousers.

“I feel the same way,” she told him, voice low and confidential, drawing absent patterns along her chest and watching as his eyes followed the motion. “I think about your hands all the time. What it feels like when you touch me here.” She paired this statement with a soft brush over her lace-clad breasts.

He licked his lower lip into his mouth. “Yeah? Where else?”

She brought one hand up to her neck, fingers soft. “Just here is especially good.”

She watched his hand, marking the tension of his wrist and the way the muscles of his forearm rippled with each stroke. His pace was just this side of rapid, his cheeks a very telling rose.

He looked close. He must have gotten himself quite worked up when he’d had his tongue between her legs, to already be so primed.

She reveled in seeing him like this, so undone and uninhibited. It made her feel scalding hot and potent. Powerful.

“Are you gonna come for me, Draco?”

He panted. “*Fuck.*” The flush had spread down his neck, her eyes drawn there by a hard swallow. “Yeah...yeah, I am. Where do you want it?”

She pulled her knees up, feet just below her arse, and dropped her legs to either side as she brought a hand down to spread herself open for him. She’d never thought she would ever do something so brazen, so overtly *dirty*, but she knew instantly she’d done the right thing by the way his expression shifted.

“Christ.” He dropped a knee to the mattress, eyes riveted. “You want me to come on your pretty cunt?”

There was something about the way he said *pretty* that never failed to make her blush. “Yes.”

She squirmed, hips rocking in a simulation of sex, and he hissed in a breath.

“You just...fuck, you just *do* it for me.” He clenched his jaw as his fist pumped rapidly over the tip of his cock, and then he was groaning. “Oh fuck. Oh *fuck*. Gonna come.”

She watched as his face relaxed in pleasure, then his eyebrows drew together and she felt the hot streaks of his cum on her thighs and between her legs. It was shudderingly erotic, and she

couldn't fight the feeling of how right it felt to have it there.

She glided her fingers through the mess he'd made then met his eye as she pushed two of them inside her cunt, like he'd done in the alcove.

He wheezed out a gasp and his cock pulsed a final time, streaking across the back of her hand.

She breathed a soft laugh, delighted by his reaction, and then satisfied her own curiosity by bringing her hand up to her mouth and licking his cum off the back of it with a sweep of her tongue. She'd never tasted it properly, nothing beyond the little offerings of precum before he'd pull her mouth off him, and found she didn't dislike it. It didn't taste *good*, exactly, but it wasn't bad, and the way he was looking at her certainly made up for any negative aspects.

"Unbelievable," he muttered under his breath, tucking himself away.

She smiled and tilted her chin up to accept the kiss he pressed to her mouth. She pulled him back down onto her, using his off-kilter stance to her advantage. He went with it, settling over her and then rolling to the side, pulling her with him so they ended up facing one another.

She sighed happily, combing her fingers through his hair and playing with the soft strands. When she glanced back to meet his eyes, he was already looking at her.

He gave her a sated smile then inhaled mightily, like he was gearing up for motion. "Right. I should go before I pass out."

"You could stay," she offered, not releasing him. "Tomorrow's Saturday so you needn't rush back to your dorm for fresh clothes, and it's well past curfew now anyway."

He considered her. "You sure?"

"Of course."

She felt as much as she saw him relax onto the bed. "Alright then. I'll stay."

She carried on her gentle strokes through his hair, body relaxed even if still half clothed and damp between her thighs. She'd take care of it in a minute, she thought. For now she was content. Settled. The rush of anxiety altogether dissipated.

But remembering why she'd so desperately gone to him gave her a nagging sense that she needed to say something. She hated admitting to weakness (and hated even more that she even considered it as such) but also knew he deserved some sort of explanation for her neediness.

And beyond that, she was genuinely grateful for the way he'd so expertly handled her and wanted him to know.

"Thank you," she murmured, looking at his jaw when she felt unable to meet his eye. "For... everything. You were perfect."

He hummed a low sound, running a hand down her side and settling in the dip of her waist. "I'm glad."

She was relieved he hadn't simply returned the sentiment, evidentially picking up that she wasn't simply offering him praise for the orgasm. This was confirmed when he stroked his thumb in a slow, soothing glide and asked, "Do you want to talk about it?"

She shook her head automatically. "No. It was silly. I just got overwhelmed I suppose."

He kept up his gentle touch. "Overwhelmed with what?"

"Just...choices. Options." She paused, but then carried on when she realized he might mistakenly include himself in those. "With school specifically. And the future, after school. I didn't let myself think about it much before, not when it wasn't a...a sure thing, so now I'm just...overwhelmed."

He was quiet. Then: "You don't need to explain it to me. I know exactly what living without the promise of a future feels like." His voice was low, soft in the quiet room.

She exhaled a short puff, heart suddenly tight. "I suppose you do." She sighed. "I don't know what came over me exactly but all of a sudden I just...needed to not think."

"You don't need to explain that to me, either." He tucked her against his chest and she nuzzled in, happy to feel hidden and protected just for a moment.

The impulse to still explain rose up, driven by habit more than anything, but she bit her tongue. It was nice to actually believe that she didn't have to, and yet still be understood.

His next words were hushed but lighter; an offer to move past the heavier topic.

"I've never shared a bed with someone before."

She frowned, though he couldn't see. "*Never?*"

"No. Have you?"

"Yes. Ginny mostly." She drew back enough to tilt her face up to see his. She grinned, despite it all. "Aw. So this'll be another first for you?"

"*Mostly?*" he said, brows raised. "Who else then?"

Leave it to him to focus on that.

"A Muggle friend a few times when we were kids. And *once* Harry. But purely as a friend, as you well know."

"Hm." She felt the vibration through his sternum when she laid her cheek back against it. "So what're the rules?"

"Rules?"

“For sharing a bed.”

“There aren’t any *rules*.” She smiled. “Although perhaps there *are* some best practices.”

He made an encouraging sound.

“It’s just some basic courtesy, really: don’t steal all the covers, watch your elbows, that sort of thing. But most importantly—” She trailed her fingers softly down his abdomen, “If you wake up hard, don’t press it against me unless you want to *share*.”

He snorted a laugh. “Seems reasonable enough. You pick that last one up sharing with Ginny?”

It was surreal hearing him say Ginny’s name so casually, as if he had always called her that.

“Yes.” She pinched his hip when he chuckled and then rolled onto her back with a sigh. “I’m too comfortable to get up but I can’t sleep like this.”

“Like what?”

“Half dressed and covered in your cum?” she answered lightly, tilting her head to look at him.

He smirked. “Asking for help getting naked?”

She rolled her eyes, smiling. “No. I’ll get up. Just...in a minute.”

“Don’t bother. This is precisely the sort of scenario I’ve practiced for.” He propped himself up on an elbow and held out his left hand, summoning his wand as he had in the Prefect’s bath.

“You need to teach me that next,” she informed him.

“Happily. Now, what do you want to sleep in?” He’d already summoned a flannel for her from the en suite, then followed it with her pajamas when she directed him.

In short order, she was tidy and snuggled under the covers in her pajamas and he beside her, stripped down to his boxer briefs. She’d offered him one of her oversized tee-shirts but he’d declined with a shake of his head and a prideful smirk at her ogling of his bare torso.

They lay side by side, as if they were on a blanket under the stars, fingers loosely intertwined beneath the covers in the space between them. Hermione wanted to keep talking to him, to cherish the gentle intimacy that sharing a bed lent itself to, but she couldn’t think of a single thing to say.

Her mind was blissfully, luxuriously blank.

So instead she just absently rubbed her fingers between his until she drifted off to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

Writing this story is seriously *so relaxing*. There's something so freeing about everyone getting along and having no structured plot I'm trying to follow...so, this lazy-river work is gonna just keep on floating ☺

Oh, and did anyone catch the title reference? Felt like the right time to introduce the second way it could be taken (the first being alluded to when Hermione asked him to get her off himself, that very first time).

Thanks, as always, for reading 💕💕

Chapter 13: “Ever been the little spoon before?”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Hermione was not normally one to linger in bed upon waking. She always woke up fully alert — this trait honed further by the anxieties of the past two years especially — and lying in bed for too long always left her feeling fidgety and on-edge.

But now she could amend that from *always* to *mostly*, because when she awoke and saw Draco sleeping beside her, the thought of leaving the bed was, for once, utterly unthinkable.

There was a bit of space between them still but he’d turned onto his side to face her, shoulders curled in and face half concealed by the pillow, the covers pulled all the way up to his chin. It was an adorable, almost boyish way to sleep but she recognized it as also a protective, anxious one. She too usually slept curled up tightly – another habit she’d picked up while on the run – seeking even in her unconsciousness to keep herself compact and safe.

But again, this morning had broken *that* habit too. She’d woken stretched long, her outside knee bent ballerina style and the opposite arm slung up over her head on the pillow. It was how she’d slept *before* it all.

How interesting that her psyche had identified sharing a bed with Draco as being safer than sleeping alone.

She turned her face into her elbow, resting her cheek on her bicep to look at him.

So handsome, she sighed to herself.

Almost pretty.

Lovelier still in his currently imperfect state: hair mussed (as much as hair so fine and soft ever could be; her fingers drifted to her curls ruefully) and the faintest shimmer of golden stubble along his jaw and cheeks, visible only when she tilted her head and it caught the light.

She’d rather hoped to have woken up cuddling, as was always the case in every fictive work she’d read, but supposed reality was just as nice.

It felt like a tiny gift, to be able to wake up looking at him.

Her shifting around had roused him and his eye cracked open, looking almost crocodilian with half of his face concealed by the pillowcase. He saw her already looking at him and smirked.

“Morning,” she whispered, not ashamed at having been caught admiring him.

He hummed a low sound and shut his eye again, then inhaled heavily and adjusted his head so both eyes were visible when he next opened them.

Now that he was awake, she decided to enact her fantasy of waking up in his arms and rolled over, scooting back until she felt the warmth of his body behind her. He curled around her instinctively, nestling his knees behind hers and tugging her back with an arm snug between her breasts over her pajama top. He danced his fingers in a little one-two in the dip between her collarbones and she wiggled at the ticklishness of it. He chuckled and smoothed over the spot instead, settling her back against his chest.

She sighed happily, letting her eyes drift shut and savored the feeling of being surrounded by him. It felt so good, she decided to offer him a little of the same.

She turned in his arms, and then nudged his shoulder to indicate he roll over too. He raised his brows but obeyed, shifting to his back and then facing away from her when she nudged his shoulder again. She was momentarily distracted by his naked back and the shifting of his muscles under the skin, lean but defined. She stroked a hand down his spine and he shivered, curling in slightly at the sensation. She ran her fingers back up the cobbles of his spine and then scooted closer to wind her arm around his middle, palm flat against his sternum. He was taller than her by several inches but even so, she thought she fit rather well against him.

“Ever been the little spoon before?” she asked, using the tip of her nose to circle the jut of his vertebrae at the base of his neck.

“No.” His voice caught, unused and gravelly. He cleared his throat as she pressed her lips to his skin with a hum and then snuggled up against him again, cheek half on her pillow and half against the warm skin of his back.

“How do you like it?”

“It’s rather nice.” She could hear his smile.

“I like it too.” She held him quietly for a moment but then couldn’t stop her wandering hands from dragging back and forth across his pecs and then down the little concave pathway between his abdominals, dipping into his navel.

“Gonna press your erection against me, Granger?” he joked.

“You wish.” She diverted her hand to press flat against his stomach and pantomimed a grind against his arse.

Which sparked a thought.

“Incidentally...have you ever...?”

When she didn’t continue, he snorted. “I can think of at least three ways you might finish that question, you know. I’m rather curious which one you meant.”

Three? She’d only meant to ask if he ever *had* had an erection pressed against him (and then done something about it). What on Earth were the other two?

He didn’t enlighten her, offering only: “The answer to all of them is no, by the way. Never have.”

She almost asked, but he turned in her arms to face her. “My turn. Ever thought about being with a girl?”

“Oh.” She pulled her mouth to the side, thinking. “No, not really.”

She worked her arm free from under him — he lifted slightly to accommodate her — and used it to push her hair back off her face. He settled onto his back, bending his furthest arm to prop his head up. She liked the game they’d started, and figured it was her turn to ask something.

“Have you ever been with two people at once?”

He looked askance at her. “Since we’ve already established I’ve always adhered to exclusivity, I’m going to assume you mean a threesome?”

“Yes, prat.”

He smirked at her tone then shifted slightly. “Yeah, I have.”

“Oh?” She propped up on an elbow. “Two boys or two girls?”

“Two girls.”

She made sure her expression was faux-scandalized and not at all jealous. “My, my. How lucky for you,”

But his expression was bemused, not proud. “Not exactly. It didn’t really focus on *me*, you see.”

She frowned, thinking. Then, “No, I don’t. What do you mean?”

His eyes narrowed at the ceiling as he evidently considered how to phrase it. “Pansy let me sit in on one of her, er, *encounters*. Her partner at the time was bisexual so didn’t mind me, well, being understudy.”

“You needn’t be so coy, Draco,” she teased, relaxed now that she knew Pansy had been involved (a sentiment she’d never had in her entire life).

He snorted. “Fine. Pansy gave me a hands on lesson with her partner as the recipient. She demonstrated first and then I had a go. Fingers, then mouths. I was sixteen and fantasized about it for months afterward even though they didn’t let me come until after I left the room. That enough detail for you?”

“Very vivid.” She settled back down beside him. “That makes sense though. I did wonder how you’d gotten quite so good at it all from just lectures from Pansy. I expect you had quite a bit of practice after that, too, hmm?”

He looked dubious. “You really want to talk about how I learned it all?”

The implication — hearing about the other girls he'd touched — dissuaded her slightly but didn't deter her.

"It's something I'll learn eventually, isn't it?"

"Is it?"

"Your complete life story from birth to now? Yes. In case you've forgotten, I'm quite a curious person. Nosy, really."

His smile made her heart skip a beat. "Ah, how could I forget."

He looked at her for a moment and her heart was suspended in its irregular cadence until his expression, though still fond, adopted an edge of wariness. He looked away, inhaling softly, and she felt her chest throb with her own exhalation.

He shifted his position, arm flexing as he adjusted it, then offered, "Go on then. Ask away."

She decided to go easy on him. "Well, who was your first? You know who mine is so it only seems fair I do too."

He answered easily. "Daphne."

Hermione pictured the slim, brown-haired girl, one she'd seen usually hanging around Pansy but who'd never said a single word to Hermione, mean nor kind.

She couldn't think of anything to say beyond, "Oh. Pretty."

He didn't try to deny it — it would have been a falsehood if he had, anyway — but instead was quick to ask her his next question. "What about you?"

She looked at him flatly; did he want to hear her say it had been him? He interpreted her expression correctly, but clarified his question.

"You've been kissed before me, haven't you?" He prompted. "You said you and Weasley had..?"

Oh.

"Oh. Yes. But Viktor was my first. Fourth year."

He made an affirmative sound. "I thought so. I bet I can guess the exact day then, too."

"You could but I'd be shocked if you got it right." She knew he expected it to have been at the Yule Ball but that was wrong — she actually hadn't kissed him at all that evening. Not after Ron had put his foot in his mouth, as he was wont to do.

"Hmm." Draco eyed her speculatively. "Was it the week prior? In the library?"

She smiled smugly. "I have never been kissed in the library. On the lips, at least," she added, remembering his mouth on her neck; if Neville hadn't interrupted them, she'd certainly have been kissed then.

He confirmed her suspicion when his eyes glittered and he asserted, "*Yet.*"

She flicked her brows at him and then settled back. "Give up?"

"*Was* it the week prior?" He asked, returning to the guessing game.

She nodded. "It was."

"It wasn't on his ship, was it?"

She snorted. "No. You have one last guess."

He rolled his lips in, pressing them side to side while he thought. "The grounds?"

"That's rather vague."

"Ah, but technically correct, isn't it? Otherwise you'd have just shot it down. Was it by the forest?"

"In a manner of speaking." He narrowed his eyes at her evasion and she finally relented with an amused smile. "It was closer to the lake than the forest."

"Hmm." He looked back to the ceiling. "Kissed at the shore of a lake in one of the most picturesque areas of Scotland, and by an international Quidditch star. You don't go for half measures, do you?"

"Yours wasn't as romantic then?" she teased.

He laughed. "Not at all."

When he didn't go on, she turned on her side to face him. "Do I have to guess?"

Unexpectedly, he grinned and then turned his face toward her, looking quite amused. "Please do. If you can even get close, I'll be impressed."

Well then. If he was going to make it a *challenge*.

"What will I get if I guess it correctly?" she asked.

"I didn't get anything for my guesses," he protested.

"It's *my* fault you didn't barter?" she returned, raising her brows in mock-surprise.

He snorted. "Fine. What do you want?"

She could have anything, she knew. Anything he could give her, he would. She handled that knowledge with care.

“Tell me something you’ve never done, but that you want to,” she decided.

He sucked his canine, considering that. “Anything?”

“Sure. But extra points if it’s something I can *fulfill* for you.” She waggled her brows suggestively.

“Ah.” He rolled to his side to face her. “You want a sexual fantasy, hmm?”

“Yes please.”

“Well, I almost hope you guess correctly then.”

She grinned and then said confidently, “I will. Now let’s see…”

She considered his reaction, the inside-joke-ness of his instant humor. It reminded her of whenever Seamus geared up for one of his tales of misadventure, often the result of whatever dubious games the boys played in their dormitory after hours.

“Was it a dare?” she asked finally.

His brows raised in mild surprise. “It was.”

“Hmm.” She appraised him anew.

He’d been amused by it, meaning it was something of a joke among his friends. That he was still laughing about it meant it wasn’t cruel towards a girl, which it might have been when it had occurred but which she suspected would’ve lost the humor for him in his newly mature state. He’d alluded to never having done anything sexual with a boy — which she expected he would’ve by now if he had the inclination — meaning he was almost certainly heterosexual. That narrowed it down significantly, if the typical behaviors of her straight male friends were anything to go by.

“Did it happen in your dormitory?” When he went to answer she clarified, “The *boys* dormitory, I mean.”

He nodded, eyes narrowing suspiciously. “...yes.”

That cinched it for her. He’d definitely been kissed for the first time by a boy, given that it was an event which inspired fond amusement even now. It was likely one of his friends. But who?

She thought through the other Slytherin boys of their year, dismissing them one by one. He wouldn’t have still found it amusing if it had been Crabbe. Likewise probably for Goyle, and Fawley (a rather sickly looking boy who’d kept to himself), and Shafiq (quite handsome but brash enough she suspected Draco’d kept his distance).

Which left Zabini and Nott.

She surmised, based purely on observation, that Draco and Theodore hadn't gotten close until well into Fifth year, which left...

"Was your first kiss from Blaise Zabini? In the Slytherin dormitory, because of a dare? In, I'm guessing... Third year?" The last was purely speculation.

The expression on his face was a delight to behold. "*What?* How in Salazar's name...?"

She restrained her instinctive squeal of victory and instead tapped her temple imperiously as answer. "Just tell me I'm right. And then tell me a secret fantasy."

He rolled on top of her, caging her in. "You're right. Merlin, I can't believe you."

She grinned up at him. "Thank you. Now, secret, please."

"Where to start..." His eyes scanned from hers to her mouth. "You already know I want to fuck you in the library..."

She felt herself warm at the thought, though she was unsure if she'd ever risk fulfilling it for him. It could get her banned if Pince caught them but... surely she had at least one 'get away with anything' card...

"Ah, okay. Here's one you might actually be willing to fulfill. I've always wanted you in my bed."

It was much more tame than she'd expected.

"That's it? Just, have me in your bed?"

He dipped down to flick the tip of his tongue against her neck. "*Fuck you* in my bed," he clarified.

"Your dormitory bed?" She suddenly felt her stomach flush with quick nerves. "Or... at home?" She wasn't sure she'd willingly go back to Malfoy Manor, even for the promise of excellent sex with the heir of the estate.

"Dorm," he said easily, erasing her anxieties.

She looped her arms over his shoulders, holding him close and wiggling her legs out from where he was lying half across them to instead cradle his hips between her thighs.

"Mmm then absolutely. You can fuck me in your bed any time you like."

As she'd hoped, her words elicited a nip of his teeth which sent a cascade of goosebumps across her. She shivered under him and he soothed the bite with a soft kiss.

She closed her eyes but then his phrasing clicked and she opened them again. "When you say '*always*'...?"

He hummed against her skin. "Mm-mm, Granger. My turn to ask a question."

He rolled them to their sides, reaching under the covers to keep her leg over his hip. He stroked his hand along her thigh, the touch both soothing and arousing. She sighed petulantly at the evasion then grinned when he pinched her.

“Go ahead,” she allowed.

He leaned forward and kissed her, a soft touch that was gone before she’d properly pressed back into it.

“What would your friends think?”

She waited for more but then understood the unsaid implication. “About us, you mean?”

He nodded.

“Well obviously Ginny and Neville are happy for me. I think Harry and Ron would be, too... at least eventually.”

“Do you still talk to them often?”

She shrugged her shoulder. “Harry writes to me now and then, although I’ve been dreadful at responding. Ron sometimes includes a note but really I don’t see them except during breaks. I haven’t heard either of their voices since Christmas.” She laughed, surprised and a little sad at that. “It’s rather strange being without them.”

His hand was soothing on her thigh, sweeping slow strokes up and down. She ran her own hands lightly across his chest, idly exploratory.

“What about your friends?” She asked. “What would they think about you being with a Muggleborn?”

He made a dismissive sound. “They wouldn’t think anything of it. They’re the ones who saw the light sooner than me, don’t forget.”

“What about being with *me*, specifically, then? I’ve never really interacted with Zabini or Nott but you know as well as I do that Pansy hates me.”

He clucked his tongue. “She never *hated* you.”

Hermione raised her eyebrows with extreme incredulity, lifting her eyes to his.

He glanced upward then back to her, not quite an eye roll but just as expressive. “She didn’t. *Doesn’t*. She didn’t *like* you, sure, but she had no reason beyond foolish blood supremacy ideals — which she’s since renounced — and plain pettiness. She’s well over it now.”

Hermione frowned. “You know for a *fact* she doesn’t dislike me? *How?*”

Draco sighed. “As for most of our peers, you were a bit of a wake up call. It’s hard to stand by antiquated, bigoted beliefs when they’re being disproved literally in front of your eyes.”

She already knew this had been the case for some but it was quite something to know she'd affected even people she hadn't spoken to with a word of kindness. She felt her cheeks warm as she considered how many more people had taken notice of her than she'd — probably naïvely — originally thought.

“Oh.” She didn't know what else to say. She traced her forefinger along the line of his collarbone.

“Your turn,” he said after a minute. She considered asking him about that ‘*always*’ but instead pursued another curiosity.

“Speaking of your reformed Slytherins, which film was your favorite?”

He considered the question. “I think...*A Room with a View*,” he said at last.

It was the last thing she'd expected him to say. For one, there was no swearing in it. She reared back a bit so she could see his face.

“That's an excellent film,” she agreed. “What did you like about it?”

He stroked his hand up her thigh and to the dip on her waist, slipping under her pajama top. His palm was warm on her skin, fingers skimming in small circles not unlike the way she fussed Crookshank's tummy. In a strange, indescribable way, that fond touch felt more intimate than when those same fingers were inside her.

When he finally answered, his voice was low, contemplative. “It felt familiar. The setting, I mean, and the mannerisms. More than some of the American films Blaise brought. And the plot is geared around assessing societal expectations, specifically where they intersect with love, and how much an individual will force themselves to conform to them. I liked that in the end, she was able to choose.” He shrugged. “It showed me myself, in someone else — in a Muggle, even. That stuck with me.”

She swallowed, throat feeling tight at his unexpectedly heartfelt response. “I like that she ended up choosing, too,” she agreed.

He swept his hand back over her hip. “Mmhmm. All's well that ends well.”

Her mouth curled with amusement and she reached down to trap his wrist when he began to pull it away. “That's the second Muggle phrase you've quoted. What other proverbs have you memorized?”

He allowed the extra question, a slow smile overtaking his mouth. “Ah, this one was a favorite. ‘If you give a witch an orgasm, she comes once. But if you *teach* a witch to orgasm —“

She pinned him, using her leverage to roll him onto his back and yanking his hands up. He laughed, letting her hold his wrists against the mattress by his head while she straddled his waist. She muffled his laugh with her mouth, kissing him until his humor shifted fluidly into passion. She pressed her hips back and made a pleased sound when she felt him getting hard.

“How about ‘it takes two to tango’?” she suggested, grinding up and down along his thickening length. “‘Fortune favors the brave’?”

“That one sounds like Gryffindor propaganda.” He lifted his hips up against hers, increasing the friction. Her pajama bottoms were quickly becoming destined for the wash pile.

“‘Well begun is half done’?” She flicked her eyebrow and switched to slow rotations over him.

“Minx.” He yanked his hands free and gripped her hips, holding her still and picking up the slow grind from below.

Hermione felt overheated, her body warming rapidly as he worked her over himself. It felt good even through her pajamas and his boxer briefs, but she knew it could feel better. She pushed her bottoms down over her hips and then lifted her bum, straightening her legs until she was over him in an inverted pike; he got the hint immediately, stripping the cotton bottoms down her legs and then off. She settled herself back down on his lap, raising her arms when he lifted her pajama top up and over her head without delay, leaving her naked on top of him.

“God, you’re gorgeous,” he breathed. “Such a pretty girl.”

She blushed, the warmth of it spreading from her cheeks down to her breasts.

“Take these off,” she told him, snapping the elastic waistband of his briefs.

He did, jostling her slightly in the process so she fell forward on her hands, one on either side of his head. The position put her breasts right above his face and he didn’t miss the opportunity to raise his head and suck a nipple into his mouth. She moaned when he paired the sensation with a teasing swipe of his cock against her clit.

“Tell me a sexual fantasy of yours.” It was less a question and more a demand, though as he’d said it on a groan, it really felt closer to a beg.

“How do you know I have any?” She pressed back against the swell of his cockhead, aligning him exactly where he needed to be.

“I’m sure you have...an...annotated list.” He said as he pushed up, sinking the tip of his cock inside her with a low groan.

“Not written down,” she said with a grin, rising up so he couldn’t enter her any further. “But yes, I have begun to compile some lingering curiosities.”

He huffed a laugh at her phrasing, letting her lead. “Tell me one.”

She pressed down until her body was flush with his. His cheeks were tinged pink, his hair still a mess from sleeping, eyes half lidded as he watched himself disappear inside her. She watched him watch, keeping her movements glacial so that he didn’t miss a moment of it. She liked it, the observation of it. She wondered what he was thinking as she rose up and then fucked herself down on his cock again.

“I’m curious what it would be like to be seen,” she told him.

His eyes cut to hers instantly. “Oh? Do you mean—“ He cut himself off with a swear when she held him deep and started grinding her clit against him, hips undulating with a smoothness she was quite proud of. “Oh fuck, look at you.”

She balanced a hand on his chest and used the leverage to increase her pace over him. Her reading had been right: this position oriented her very well for reaching orgasm. He felt perfect inside her, his cock stroking against her front wall on each withdraw and bumping somewhere deep inside her on the upstroke. It also meant she could work her hips over him, the blatant sexuality of the motion turning her on even further.

His reaction to it all was quite nice too.

“I mean I like when you watch us,” she explained. “And I think I might like it if you weren’t the only one.”

He inhaled through his nose. “That why you asked me about threesomes, Granger?”

She’d thought about it, obviously, but had decided she didn’t want to share him. “No. I don’t want anyone else touching you.” She leaned forward over him, kissing him deeply. His tongue was inside her mouth almost at once, his groan low against her.

“I don’t want anyone else touching you either.” His voice was low and intense. “Even if you want them to, I’m not sure I could...allow it. Fuck. I’m sorry if that’s too controlling, I just —“

She kissed him again, whimpering brokenly. “No. Only you,” she agreed. “I didn’t mean...”

He sat up, pushing her back as he went and then shoving her to the side, following her down without separating them. He hovered over her on his elbows, pace picking right back up.

“After,” he ground out. “Tell me after. I can’t fucking think right now.” His strokes were deep, his body tight against hers.

“Okay,” she gasped, already feeling her orgasm reaching for her. His intensity had spiked her arousal and the way he was groaning and swearing under his breath was pulling her right to the edge. “*Oh!*”

“You gonna come for me?” He slid a hand between them, pressing his thumb against her clit and letting the motions of their bodies stimulate her. “I know you like to, don’t you? You always come for me, even when I’m not there. Isn’t that what you said? That still true, Granger? Only me?”

Her orgasm seized her with a sudden intensity that left her gasping. “Oh *god, ohgodohgod.*”

“Ah, fuck.” His pace faltered as she gripped him tightly enough to impede his steady motion. “*Fuck*, there you go. Goddamnit you feel so good. Gonna make me come.”

He hissed an inhale through his teeth, throat long and chin lifting. His tension was breathtaking; or maybe it was just a head rush from her climax. Either way, his orgasm left her panting almost as much as her own had. He dropped heavily over her but slid to the side so as not to crush her, rolling to his back.

“Jesus. I thought morning sex was supposed to be sleepy and relaxing,” he panted.

She laughed. “I feel pretty relaxed. But we can try sleepy sex next time.” She tilted her head to look at him. “If you can contain yourself, that is.”

He grinned, and didn’t deny it.

Chapter End Notes

Ok gang, the sexploration (she’s advanced from mere sexucation) is back on the menu. I have curated a list of *lingering curiosities* they’re going to try and I might be creeping back toward unhinged with the number of items 😏 it’s fine. We all knew this was never going to wrap up succinctly.

A Room with a View is such a perfect film for this, I just had to include it in (and it was released in the late 80s so would have been around, woop woop). That it stars Helena and Maggie is simply the cherry on top.

Also I know fanon has decided Daphne is a blonde but for some reason she’s always been a brunette to me and Astoria is the blonde 🧑♀️

As always, thank you so much for reading! 😊

Chapter 14: He was wearing joggers.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

As it was Saturday and they had no classes to attend, Hermione allowed herself a relaxing morning even after they finally got out of bed. Draco left her with a lingering kiss and a promise to meet up with her for lunch before departing back to his dormitory for a shower and a change of clothes.

In his absence, Hermione took stock. As always, her mind went straight to her to-do list. She had quite a few assignments that could do with her attention...

No.

She forced herself to resist. Most weren't due for at least another week, if not more, and she'd spent long nights in the library several times that week already.

So what would she do for the next two hours?

It was a bright morning, the clouds dispelled by a soft springtime breeze. The sun played an endless game of hide-and-seek with Scotland, especially this time of year, so she decided to take advantage of its brief showing. Gathering books and a blanket, she made her way through the castle and out by the courtyard, heading down the stone steps inlaid in the hillside and toward the flat expanse of grass adjacent to the lake. She spread out her blanket in a sunny patch and settled in for a spot of pleasure reading.

She lost track of time, wholly immersed in a written world, until she heard the rapid approach of running feet. Hermione looked up from her book, instantly alert. But it was only Draco, slowing to a jog in the middle distance and then walking the rest of the way toward her. He was shirtless, chest heaving and sweaty. As she watched, he lifted his hands to rest them on his head, ostensibly to help his lungs expand but Hermione knew it was truly just to torment her.

He looked...there simply weren't words.

She tossed her book aside with a carelessness that would've sent former versions of herself into a veritable tizzy and got to her feet, walking several steps to intercept him. Over his shoulder, she saw Ginny was pulling up short just behind him, also out of breath and flushed with exertion. She puzzled over it for a scant second before her attention was back riveted on Draco.

He was wearing joggers, slung low enough that she caught just a peek of the waistband of his briefs, and was holding what she assumed was his t-shirt in a hand.

"Hel-lo," she said, stretching each syllable as she smoothed her hands up his sweaty chest. "Aren't you a lovely sight."

Ginny walked up behind him, tugging her oversized shirt up and over her head and then using it to wipe her sweaty brow and chest, leaving her clad in tracksuit bottoms and a longline sports bra. Ginny's presence helped to temper Hermione's libido, just barely.

"Hi Hermione. Hit Draco."

Hermione quirked a brow and thwacked him lightly on the chest as requested.

He snorted. "C'mon, I *know* you can hit harder than that."

"Don't be gross," Ginny slung her shirt around her neck, grinning wickedly.

"He didn't mean it like *that*," Hermione began but Ginny shook her head.

"Nope. Literally do *not* want to know."

"Fine. So, why am I hitting him exactly?"

"He told me he was taking me on, and I quote, 'a short run by the lake'. *An hour ago*. And no, he didn't let me stop for a single break." Ginny propped her wrists on the top of her head as well, stretching back delicately. "You're dating a sadist," she told the sky.

Draco rolled his eyes but he looked smug. "Seeing as that *was* a short run for me, it's probably more accurate to call me a masochist."

Ginny snorted and straightened, dropping her hands. "At least you're finally self-aware. Well, I'll get you next time. Seeker practice has nothing on Chaser drills so get ready to actually have to work your broom for once."

"Can't wait," Draco called after her as she strode around them and up the wide stone steps of the pathway, laughing when Ginny offered him two fingers without turning.

Hermione tugged his face down and kissed him, unable to wait a single second longer. He smiled against her mouth but was still catching his breath enough that he pulled back before she could properly introduce her tongue to his. She sighed but let him go.

"It's nice to see you getting along with Ginny," she said.

He pulled on his shirt, much to her disappointment. "It's rather easy, truth be told. She's quite similar to Pansy, but with the added bonus of liking Quidditch. And also can take a joke a bit better. I suppose having so many brothers gave her tough skin."

Hermione grinned. "I'm sure it helped but Ginny's always been a firecracker."

"Yeah." He pushed his hair back, the damp strands staying put. "That's certainly true."

"So how'd this come about?" She gestured to his general person. "Why were you two running together?"

“Oh, we crossed paths on my way down to my dorm. She pestered me about flying again and so I offered to show her a proper warm up.” He grinned. “You Gryffindors are so easy to manipulate, it’s almost not even fun anymore.”

She raised an eyebrow but couldn’t fight the instinctual smile. “She’ll get you back,” she warned. “I’ve seen her fly at the Burrow. Let’s just say that even *I* can tell that she restrains herself at school.”

Draco raised his brows, looking impressed. “Yeah? Well then I *actually* can’t wait.”

She laughed and went to retrieve her wand, using it to summon her belongings back to herself. “You really are a bit of a masochist, aren’t you?”

“Nah.” He looped his arm around her shoulders, walking them back toward the castle. “I just like to be *challenged*.”

“Here. I made you something.”

Hermione looked up. She’d gone to the library while Draco showered after his run, unable to resist its hushed calling any longer. Now, he was standing by her table, holding out a small parcel about the size of a deck of playing cards, wrapped in smooth brown paper.

When she didn’t move to take it, he wagged it. “Go on.”

She took the package, squishing it to get a sense for what might be within. The paper crinkled as it compressed; whatever was inside was pliant. She tore open the wrapping and looked inside. It was a small piece of fabric, folded into a neat square. She picked it up and let the wrapping fall. The material was soft, a high quality cotton that felt almost cool to the touch, and colored a gorgeous cornflower blue, one of Hermione’s favorite colors. She held it up for her inspection and her brows shot up.

It was a pair of knickers.

A pair of *her* knickers.

She cut her eyes up to his. He looked expectant but not at all guilty.

“*Draco*,” she hissed. “We’re in the *library*!”

He shrugged. “So what? There’s no one around.”

It was true. She’d automatically headed back to their now-typical Herbology alcove and even if she hadn’t, it was Saturday. The library was deserted beyond herself, Madam Pince, and a studious gaggle of Ravenclaw girls far enough away that Hermione couldn’t even hear their quills.

She refocused on the important matter at hand. Namely, that he had just handed her a pair of her own knickers – a pair she knew for *certain* he'd never removed from her body personally.

“When did you take these?” She demanded.

“The other day,” he said, waving a dismissive hand. “Now, don't you want to hear why they're special?”

“They're special because they're one of my favorite pairs,” she deadpanned. “I can't believe you rooted around in my knickers drawer *and* stole some!”

He pressed his lips together, squashing a smile. “Granger. Focus. I promise you'll appreciate the reasoning behind it. And anyway, where else would I have gotten a pair of knickers for you while at school?”

It was suspicious that he needed a pair of her knickers to begin with, but her curiosity won out.

“Fine. Why did you steal a pair of my knickers only to return them like a gift, *Malfoy*?”

His eyes glittered with delight at her use of his last name, spoken like a chastisement.

“I've been thinking about what you said. About your fantasy of being seen.” He flicked his brows meaningfully.

They'd taken a moment to recover after she'd made an attempt at revealing one of her fantasies the morning before, but once he'd had his composure back, he'd turned to her and asked for more details. She'd finally been able to properly articulate what she wanted with a few probing questions from him: to be touched in public by him, knowing someone else might see them.

“That explains why you keep groping me in public,” he'd said wryly. “I never would have guessed you'd be an exhibitionist.”

She'd tutted. “It's not *exhibitionism*.”

“It is,” he insisted. “Exhibitionism is much more multifaceted than you think. You want the risk of being caught, not necessarily to be watched. Always *such* a Gryffindor, aren't you?”

“Are you suggesting that, as a Slytherin, you refuse to participate? And anyway, I never said I didn't want to be watched. I just don't want anyone else...*actively* involved.”

“Oh, I'll participate.” He'd crowded her then. “And we'll discuss the second half of *that* later.”

Now she looked up at him, knickers still held aloft. “Oh?”

“Mhmm. I *borrowed* your knickers to enhance them with a few charms. Want to see?”

“Obviously.”

He drew his wand and moved it in a small, tight motion, murmuring an incantation under his breath. The fabric in her fingers started vibrating, though completely silently.

“Oh!” She tilted her head, considering this new addition and exploring the material with her fingers. The vibrations were getting stronger the nearer she got to the middle. When she reached the center strip of fabric, the pattern changed to intermittent pulses. She imagined what that would feel like between her legs and swallowed.

“I adapted a resonance charm, the one Sprout taught us for stimulating the *Bulbophyllum* to blossom, which felt relevant-” He smirked at her and she blushed, “—and then layered in a silencing charm to muffle the sound of the vibrations. I want the reason someone catches you to be *you*, and not the reason *why* you’re making those little noises I love.”

“*Draco*.” Her chastisement was weak, her throat tight. The charmwork was inventive and delicate, practically woven into the fabric. She hated how much it turned her on.

“Wear them tomorrow when we go to Hogsmeade,” he told her. “And we’ll play.”

“How is it controlled?” she asked. Her fingertips were tingling the longer she held the fabric and she almost dropped the knickers when the pattern changed again, this time longer stretches of intense vibration that gave way to a barely-there tickle. Oh *Merlin*.

“I do.” He twirled his wand. “If you like it, I’ll practice doing it wandlessly.”

“*If I like it*,” she repeated incredulously. “I’m practically salivating just holding them.”

“Oh yeah?” He canceled the spell and plucked the knickers from her hands. “Then I’d better hold onto these for you until tomorrow. I don’t want you *practicing* tonight without me there to see.”

She considered swiping them back but as he hadn’t taught her the spell, realized it would be useless.

“I suppose I’ll just practice another way then,” she quipped, feigning indifference and returning to her schoolwork. She could feel his eyes on her but he surprised her by simply sniffing casually and leaning against the table.

“Have you finished the Transfiguration essay yet?” he inquired.

She nodded. “Of course. It’s due next week.”

“Right.” He cleared his throat and she glanced over in time to see him corralling a smile. “I still need to finish it but haven’t been able to find a book that references the Iskah Theorem. What did you use?”

“Oh. There’s a subsection in *Transformative Magicks* by Marjorie Martin that goes into it quite nicely.”

“Hmm. Thanks.” He looked in the direction of the Transfiguration section. “Do you remember where it’s shelved?”

“Of course.” When she kept writing, he chuckled and she looked up again. “Oh! Right.”

She stood to go help him locate it. He trailed a few steps behind her and then got distracted by a book in the Charms section so she left him to it and went to find the book herself. She’d just spotted it on the third shelf and was going up on her toes when she felt his presence behind her.

“Need help?” His voice was low, right beside her ear.

She felt the hairs on her arms and back of her neck stand to attention, even more so when he pressed forward until she could feel the warmth of his body.

“I can reach it just fine, thank you.” It felt natural to give him a little pushback, and then did so literally by pressing her arse back against him.

He hummed. “This is just how I always imagined it. You, searching for something just out of reach. Me, coming to help you and getting my head practically torn off for it.”

“You like when I yell at you?” She scoffed. “Well that’s shedding light on quite a bit of your behavior then.”

“Shush.” He slid a hand around to press his palm low on her abdomen, holding her against him. “You’re supposed to be begrudgingly seduced right now.”

She laughed. “Oh, my mistake. What happens next in your fantasy, then?”

“You realize how much you want me and beg me to distract you from your schoolwork.” He leaned closer until his nose brushed along her cheek. “Oh wait. You’ve already done that.”

She thrust back against him roughly to dislodge him and he laughed but let her free. She turned and pushed him back against the opposite shelf.

“I think you just want me to yell at you,” she told him with a put-upon scolding expression. “Have I been too nice to you, Malfoy?”

He licked his lips, leaning back and wrapping his hands around her wrists, holding her hands where she’d pressed them against his chest. “Maybe.”

She scoffed again but noted his reaction, watching how his eyes tracked from her lips to her breasts. She was wearing casual clothes today, a long sleeved shirt and corduroy trousers. The top was a bit more form-fitting than her school blouse but cords were a poor choice, she thought idly: no easy access.

As soon as she thought it, she mentally shook herself. What kind of wanton creature had he turned her into, that she was genuinely disappointed that she wouldn’t be feeling his hand slip under her skirt in the library? Yes, she could admit she wanted to explore a little *light* exhibitionism but not where the consequences could result in having her — she could hardly even think the words — *banned from the library*.

She pushed him back once more, a shove if he hadn't already been in full contact with the bookshelf behind him.

"Scoundrel," she accused and he grinned.

She pulled her hands off his chest and he followed her to the center of the aisle, hands still wrapped around her wrists. He stepped close and dropped his mouth to hers, kissing her with a sweetness she hadn't expected.

She was still standing there, hand to her lips like a goddamn fool, when she realized he was halfway down the aisle.

"Wait," she called in a library-whisper, "Don't you need the book?"

He glanced back, confused for a moment and then laughed. "Ah. No. I finished that essay yesterday."

With a smirk, he rounded the end cap and disappeared.

Oh, he was in *so* much trouble.

Draco had slept in his own bed so Hermione didn't see him until breakfast the next morning, which she arrived at later than usual having spent the morning properly conditioning her hair, something she liked to do on alternate Sundays. She was surprised to find Draco still sitting at the breakfast table, a half drunk cup of tea in front of him, temple propped on a fist while he read a book. Even more surprising was that Neville was sitting across from him.

Hermione slid onto the bench beside Draco, giving him a quick peck on the cheek before smiling across at Neville.

"Good morning," she greeted them, reaching for the cafetière.

Neville scooted it closer for her. "Morning. Stay up late studying?"

"Ah, no. Just had a lazy morning." She added a splash of milk and took a sip.

Neville glanced at Draco as if to say '*doing what?* He's *here*' but didn't voice the comment.

She helped herself to eggs and toast. "What're you up to today?"

"Oh, just pottering about," Neville replied, resting his chin in his palm and watching her spread jam.

Draco snorted. "By that I hope you don't mean following me aimlessly throughout the school."

Hermione tutted. "Harry only stalked you a few times."

Draco glanced up at her sidelong, mouth twitching into a smile, and then went back to his book. Neville chortled. "So what's your plan for the day? Library until dinner?"

"No," Hermione retorted, and then backtracked, "Well, maybe for a few hours. I *do* have some reading to catch up on...but we're going to Hogsmeade for a late lunch."

"Oh, nice. If you go to Honeydukes, will you get me some Nougat Chunks?"

"Ha!" Hermione jostled Draco, who tutted and marked his place with a forefinger. "I told you it was good!"

"I'm not sure Longbottom also enjoying that horrendous choice is enough proof," he retorted, and then looked over. "No offense."

"None taken, sure." Neville rooted around in his pocket and then counted out a few coins. "Here. If you don't stop by, no worries."

"Oh, we'll be stopping by. Someone's going to eat their words." Hermione slapped her hand over the coins, pulling them to herself as she tried to fix Draco with a challenging expression. He just shook his head at her with fond bemusement.

Neville slung his leg over the bench and stood. "See you later then. Have fun."

"Bye, Neville." She watched him depart and then turned back to Draco. "What are you reading?"

"A book," he said dismissively, angling himself toward her. "So what *did* you get up to this morning?" His tone suggested the answer was *no good*.

"Nothing exciting. Had a shower, put in a hair mask, read for a bit, washed it out...very boring stuff."

"I don't know about that," he slid his arm around her shoulders and tugged her close, burying his nose in her hair. "Sounds like you spent the morning in various stages of being wet and naked. I'm envious."

"Such a boy," she teased him, but her heart rate had picked up at his proximity.

"Mmmhmm." He kissed her temple. "I'm off to fly for a bit but I'll meet you in the courtyard at 3 o'clock, yeah?"

"Yes." They'd agreed upon the timing the day before.

"Can't wait." He pulled his arm off her, reached into his pocket, and then placed something on her lap. "You'll need these."

The charmed blue knickers. She closed her fist around them, cheeks warming despite the fact that no one could see. He smirked then snapped his book shut and swung his legs over the

bench, preparing to stand. But just before he did, he turned to her.

“And Granger?” She looked up. “Wear a skirt.”

Chapter End Notes

Hogsmeade chapter will be up in the next day or so 🙄

Chapter 15: Her knickers buzzed to life.

Chapter Notes

The number of ideas y'all inspired by the comments on the last chapter... 🤔😊

Enjoy their Hogsmeade trip! And rest assured that this is not the last time The Knickers™ will come out to play 😊

It was a temperate enough day that wearing a skirt to Hogsmeade wasn't an altogether irresponsible sartorial choice, but Hermione still paired it with high socks, boots, and a cozy cornflower blue jumper (the color an intentional nod to what she wore under it all). It was the end of March in Scotland, after all, even if it was unseasonably mild.

She felt inexplicably naughty as she pulled on the charmed knickers, enough though they felt as ordinary as ever in their inert state. She wasn't sure what the range of his magic was but it excited her to not know exactly when he might activate the charm.

She'd spent a few hours in the library as she'd indicated at breakfast but had since returned to her room to change. It was ten to three when she locked her door behind herself and made her way down to the courtyard.

As she was several minutes early, she'd expected to wait for him so was pleasantly surprised to find him already there, waiting for her with his back against a pillar, face turned toward the expansive view.

He heard her steps when she was only a few meters away, glancing over his shoulder and then turning to her with a smile.

This was, she realized, about to be the closest thing to a first date she'd had. That it was occurring after she'd already shagged the daylights out of her companion — and while wearing knickers she hoped would be giving her a semi-public orgasm — made her chest swell with humor.

She returned his smile with a little laugh, mostly at herself, as she walked over to him.

“What's funny?” He asked as she stepped into his space.

“Nothing.” She raised up to peck a little greeting to the corner of his mouth. “Just happy. Ready to go?”

He nodded, looking pleased at her comment, and held out his hand. She intertwined her fingers with his.

The trek to Hogsmeade went by quickly, their conversation light but unending. She felt so incredibly at ease with him, she almost forgot that this would also be their first truly public appearance as something other than begrudging classmates. She tried not to think about it, even as strangers looked them over with interest as they passed by.

It all felt easy until her feet automatically brought them to the Three Broomsticks. Draco's suddenly leaden form pulled her to a stop when he noticed their trajectory.

"Ah. I'm not sure I'm welcome there," he said, chagrined. "Not after..."

Holding Rosmerta under an Imperious Curse for months, she finished in her head. Right.

He cleared his throat. "Hog's Head?"

Her mouth twisted. "I don't have the fondest memories of that pub either. Let's go somewhere new."

"New." He nodded. "Smart. Let's see...there's the Sickle and Knut or Madam Puddifoot's?"

"Sickle and Knut. Definitely."

He snorted at her quick response. "Not keen for a romantic tea?" He teased her.

She raised a brow. "Have you forgotten what I'm wearing? That's not exactly a discrete cafe."

He smirked. "I certainly have *not* forgotten. Fine, the pub it is. I'll make sure and get us a booth, shall I?"

"Prat." But she looped her arm through his all the same.

The pub was just the other side of Zonko's and at less than half capacity. They were shown to a booth without fanfare and Hermione experienced the thrilling thought that perhaps they really could exist in the Wizarding world as a couple without massive publicity or backlash.

She quickly tempered the thought. This was *Hogsmeade*, a tiny Wizarding village in the Scottish Highlands, for Merlin's sake. Wandering around Diagon Alley on the arm of a Malfoy would certainly elicit quite a different reaction. But that was a concern for another day.

She put it aside with firm intention and refocused instead on the handsome blonde seated across from her, his eyes downcast on the menu they'd each been handed.

He still hadn't activated the charm and she was growing antsy with anticipation. He noticed her squirming and laughed under his breath, eyes flicking up from the menu.

"Impatient?"

She saw no reason to deny it. "Yes."

He grinned, almost lupine. “Naughty little Granger,” he taunted and she hated how warm it made her. “Let’s eat first. You can wait a bit longer, can’t you?”

She was going to force him to teach her the charm or would figure it out herself, she decided. The little taste he’d given her of it yesterday had been enough to spark a myriad of increasingly depraved thoughts, the pinnacle of which being: what *else* could she charm to vibrate?

But she wouldn’t get her way unless she played the game.

“Yes, Draco,” she said sweetly, to mess with him. He sucked in a breath through his nose and she reveled in her tiny victory behind her menu.

When the waitress came to clear their lunch plates sometime later, Hermione practically buzzed with anticipatory nerves, but Draco shot her a knowing smirk and inquired after the puddings list.

“What do you think, Granger?” He mused once the waitress had returned with it. “Sticky toffee pudding or cake with raspberry compote? They have a chocolate mousse, too, if you prefer, though I won’t have any.”

She sighed gustily and he curled his lips in to hide his smile. “Cake, I think. And coffee?”

“You are the world's biggest tease,” she hissed and he laughed.

“Delayed gratification, Hermione. You know how good it makes things.” He signaled to the waitress and placed their order.

She huffed but knew he was right.

When the cake arrived, she helped herself to an excessively large forkful to deplete it faster. But when she tasted how genuinely good it was, she slowed down and enjoyed it. So much so, in fact, that when she felt Draco’s foot nudge hers under the table, she simply nudged him back, happily forking another bite. His second nudge was more pointed and with a rush of excited nerves, she realized what he was requesting.

She met his eye, pulling the fork slowly out of her mouth and moved her foot to the side, spreading her legs several inches.

“Keep them apart. No pressing. No crossing,” he told her, as casual as you like.

She set her fork down across the plate and licked the last taste of cake from her lips. She was suddenly very aware that she was seated on the half of the booth that faced the main body of the pub, including the bar and the door. They were tucked away towards the back, yes, and it *was* lit for a moody, cozy aesthetic but she still felt wildly exposed.

But rather than cull her arousal, it unspooled it.

“You’re already squirming and I haven’t even started,” Draco murmured, drawing her attention back to him. “Is this exciting you?”

She knew she was blushing, her cheeks burning hot. “Yes.”

He leaned back, resting his head against the high wooden back of the booth. He observed her silently for a moment, wetting his lower lip with a flash of his tongue.

“I’ll stop whenever you want,” he promised, then made a movement under the table.

Her knickers buzzed to life, a low frequency that raised every hair on her body. She’d never felt anything like it between her legs before and shifted around to get a sense of it. It felt nice on the outside of her cunt, warming her entire body and making her hips instinctively want to shift. When she followed the urge and leaned forward slightly, it lit her up in an altogether different way. Her eyes flared slightly at the sensation of it, almost breaking their eye contact.

“How’s that?” He asked, watching her explore.

“It feels good. But it’s sort of...teasing. It’s making me very aware of how many nerve endings I have but it’s not enough to...make anything happen.”

He made a low sound of understanding and the frequency doubled. Her mouth popped open at the sudden pleasure of it. The vibrations felt more pervasive than before; she could *almost* feel them against her clit. If she closed her legs or, even better, crossed them at the knee, she was certain she could get that ghosting touch pressed right where she wanted it.

But of course he’d thought of that already, hence his rules.

She tried angling her hips forward but couldn’t get far enough to put pressure where she wanted. He watched her with interest, his eyes tracking each micro-movement while his foot remained a persistent boundary against the inside of her shoe, a firm reminder not to move her feet.

“More,” she whispered.

He flicked a brow. “Faster? Or stronger?”

She bit her lip, ridiculously turned on by the words alone. “Stronger.”

His eyelids dropped halfway, head tilting back. “Say when.”

He steadily increased the intensity until she gasped out, “*There*. That. *Fuck* that’s so...” Her legs instinctively tried to close but he shoved his other foot between hers, pressing her feet apart with a quiet *tsk*.

“Please,” she gasped. “Please, I just need to—“ She moved her hands to her lap to press the gusset more firmly against herself.

“Ah-ah,” he chided. “Hands on the table, Granger.”

“*Damnit*.” The curse felt inadequate to express her frustration. “This is—“

The vibrations changed again and she bit her lip, hard, to hold her keen. *Bliss. Torture.* She couldn't decide.

"Need something?" He inquired casually, but his expression gave him away, the tension in his jaw and the heat in his gaze. He was anything but unaffected.

Good.

"Come here," she wheedled.

He debated this request for a moment but then gave in.

"Don't move," he warned and then left his side of the booth to slide in beside her, blocking her in and curling his body toward her with an arm along the table like they were in an intimate conversation. In a way, they were.

"Need something inside you, Granger?" He murmured.

She wanted to drop her head back against his shoulder, wanted to lean forward and properly grind against something. Knowing she couldn't — *shouldn't* — was driving her insane.

"Yes please," she whispered,

He dragged his forefinger casually through the compote on the cake plate then held it up to her mouth. To anyone else, he was simply a besotted boyfriend offering his girlfriend a taste.

But to her, he whispered, "Suck."

It wasn't the *inside* she'd meant but nevertheless, she opened her mouth and he pressed the pad of his finger to her tongue. She sucked his finger into her mouth and the feel of it made her cunt flutter, her damned oral fixation rearing its depraved head. It felt both extremely satisfying and unfairly arousing.

She needed pressure between her legs so badly, the vibrations tantalizingly close to perfect. They were steadily winding the tension inside her tighter and tighter but with no clear relief in sight. She shifted on the bench to try and find a position that would pull her knickers taut enough to feel the vibration directly on her clit.

"Look at you," he murmured in her ear. "Grinding the bench, trying so badly to come. You need to, don't you?"

She sucked on his finger, hard, to both answer in the affirmative and quell her moan. He held her jaw with his thumb and ring finger, then stroked his little finger softly down the side of her throat. She shuddered.

"It's too bad I can't give you my cock right now," he hummed lowly in her ear. "You wouldn't *believe* how fucking hard I am. I bet it'd feel so good inside you. It's just what you need."

It felt entirely likely that Hermione was about to burst into frustrated tears. Her hands curled into fists on the tabletop, desperate to press both between her legs so she could just... fucking... *come*.

She could feel sweat beading between her breasts — yet another place he was making her uncontrollably wet — the tickle of it making her desperately aware of how tingly her nipples were.

She pressed her tongue against his finger, gliding it up and down and then resumed her pulsing sucks.

Gods, she wanted to suck his cock.

She wanted to push his hand down and fuck his fingers.

She wanted to suck his fingers and fuck his cock.

She wanted—

He slid his free hand across her lap and down between her legs, pressing his fingers firmly against the gusset of her knickers overtop of her skirt. Her hips rocked against it without conscious thought, her eyes rolling back as his hand held the buzzing fabric right over her clit.

And then...fuck. *Fuck*, she was coming.

Right there, in the pub.

The initial crest was almost painfully strong, her nerves frazzled after having been stimulated for so long. But once she let go, the pulsing waves of release were bliss. She did her best to contain her whimpers of pleasure but she'd evidently been less adept than she'd thought when he slid his finger from her mouth and instead covered it with his palm. It was about as subtle as her sucking on his finger had been but she couldn't bring herself to care.

"Shh," he tutted, sounding amused. "Unless you actually *do* want everyone to know you're coming right now."

She squeezed her eyes shut as her hips instinctively pressed forward against his hand and her still-vibrating knickers. Her cunt fluttered on the aftershocks the feeling sent through her.

"Done?" He murmured when she'd finally stilled.

She nodded and he dropped his hand back to the table. She could see where his palm was slightly damp from the condensation of her breath. It was a strange thing to focus on but she couldn't look away, her heart throbbing with endorphins. Her knickers were still vibrating against her cunt, the frequency low and steady, but she didn't ask him to end the charm. She wasn't sure she was done yet.

"You almost made a scene," he told her. "Coming so desperately like that."

He was altogether too collected for how absolutely unhinged she felt, his words only making her pulse all over again. She dropped her hand to his lap and squeezed his cock. She'd intended it as punishment but as soon as she felt him – so hard it almost felt fake – she whimpered despite herself.

“*Granger*,” he hissed. “Jesus.”

“I need to fuck you,” she whined, squeezing him again. “Please, Draco. Please.”

“*Christ*.” He canceled the charms and in the absence of the vibrations, she felt how absolutely soaked her knickers had gotten. It made her blood pulse thick with desire for him.

“Not here.” He gripped her wrist but didn’t tug her hand away, looking around and then back to her. “What’s your stance on shagging in the loo?”

“Positive.” She nudged him sideways toward the opening of the booth. “Extremely positive.”

“Excellent.” He slid out but then blocked the exit. “Count to thirty. Don’t be obvious.”

He waited for her nod and then ducked through the opening that led to the loos. Hermione did her best to count at a moderated pace even as every cell urged her after him. She surveyed the pub and its limited patrons, none of whom were paying her a speck of attention despite the so-called scene she’d made. He was being overly cautious, she decided.

She slid out of the booth and strode quickly down the back corridor and to the doors that led to the two single-room loos. One was ajar, the other not. She knocked on the second and waited on impatient feet for him to let her in. He cracked the door and peeked out.

She snorted. “It’s obviously me. Merlin, who knew you’d be so risk-averse.”

He grabbed her upper arm and tugged her inside, locking the door and then pressing her up against it.

“That doesn’t sound like the manners of someone who wants something,” he said, holding her there. “Want to try again?”

He seemed to have a thing for pressing her against things, she thought idly. She opened her mouth to retort but gasped out a breath instead when her knickers buzzed back to life. Her head thunked back against the door, her body already responding.

“Fuck, Draco,” she gasped, eyelids fluttering.

“That feel good?” He’d shoved his wand up his sleeve, the hilt peeking out along the inside of his wrist. Easy access. She groaned.

“It’s not enough.” She tried to rock her hips against him but he kept his far enough away that it was ineffectual. “Please, I need more.”

He leaned his chest against hers then raised her arms until he could hold them in a single hand, the other dropping to lift the hem of her skirt so he could slot his thigh between her

legs. The contact made her squirm, her cunt clenching around nothing and making her violently aware of how empty she was. But as soon as she'd begun to rock her hips to grind on his thigh, he pulled it back. Not gone but *just* not close enough. She whined.

"You're torturing yourself too," she tried. "I felt how hard you are. You need this as badly as I do."

"I do," he agreed. "But you know how much I love waiting."

She groaned again, and then sucked in a breath when he changed the pattern to short, pulsing touches. Her toes curled in her shoes and he smirked down at her.

"Ready to ask nicely?"

"*Yes.*"

When she didn't right away, distracted by trying to make contact with his thigh again, he breathed a tight laugh. "Go ahead then."

"Draco." She opened her eyes – when had she closed them? – and met his heated stare. "Put your cock inside me and fuck me until we both come. *Please.*"

He groaned, the sound low and tortured, then licked his bottom lip into his mouth, eyes hot on hers. "Yeah, that'll do."

He squeezed her wrists once in a warning to keep them above her head and then set to work opening his belt and trousers. She squirmed on her feet, finding it supremely arousing to be holding herself in such a needy position for him.

Now that he was letting himself have her, he didn't waste time. In mere seconds, he had his cock free and his hand was diving under her skirt.

"Oh *fuck*," he bit out. "Granger, you're dripping. Literally *dripping*." His fingers swept along her inner thighs and he groaned again.

Did he think she was unaware?

She made an impatient sound and rocked her hips against his hand. He refocused, continuing his upward exploration. She expected him to strip her knickers off so was momentarily confused when he simply pulled them a little higher, tucking his fingers around the front where the fabric covered her mound and tugging it to the side.

"Hold on to me," he instructed her and then bent slightly to grip her thighs with both hands and hoist her up.

She wrapped her legs around his hips and her arms around his shoulders, shifting until she felt his cock slip through her arousal. He reached a hand down to align himself and then wrapped his fingers back around her knickers. As he pushed inside of her, his fist tightened slightly to pull the material taut right over her clit. She squeaked.

A fresh rush of arousal melted through her. He'd positioned the very nexus of the vibrations against her and the intensity of it was quickly turning her liquid.

"How's that?" he asked, voice strained as he held himself deep inside her then slowly drew back.

Her knickers were pulsing against her, asynchronous to his thrusts in a way that was keeping her constantly stimulated. She felt the tension all the way to the back of her throat.

"It feels like you're licking me and fucking me at the same time," she panted. "Oh *god*, I'm going to come so quick."

"Come as soon as you want." His next thrust was hard enough to jostle her against the door. "You've earned it."

"I don't think I could hold it anyway." She squeezed her eyes shut. "Fuck, this is..."

He dropped his face to her neck. "You feel incredible. Every...time. So...*good*."

She whimpered, trying to keep quiet on the off chance someone walked down the hallway and heard them just on the other side of the door. Her efforts were meaningless though, given the sounds he was drawing out of her with each eager thrust, obscene and unmistakable.

"Damn, Granger." He fucked into her again, quick and firm. "Can you hear that? Fuck, my cock is *soaked*. You love this, huh?"

Even if she'd wanted to, she couldn't stop her orgasm from slamming into her, choking her in its intensity.

"*Draco*," she squeaked. "Oh...my god. Oh...*oh*, I'm gonna come."

He laughed a desperate, strained sound and tightened his grip on her knickers. "Yeah, you are. Christ, I can feel you getting *so* tight. S'gonna be a good one, isn't it? Let go, baby, let go. Let me feel you come on me."

Hermione had read erotic novels where the protagonist 'saw stars' at the moment of orgasm and had always scoffed at the theatrical embellishment. But now, held against the door by Draco's body, his stupidly gorgeous voice murmuring in her ear, his frustratingly perfect cock moving inside her, and the absolutely spine-melting vibrations tight against her clit had Hermione's vision literally spotting with pinprick stars.

She sobbed out a gasp and then frantically pushed on his arm as she edged rapidly toward overstimulation. "Oh god, stop, *stop*."

"Fuck. Hang on," he rasped.

He yanked the buzzing fabric away from her body, hips pressing flush against hers to support her while he used his other hand to flick his wand out enough to touch the hilt, canceling the charm. "There. You okay?"

“I might actually pass out.” She laughed a soft sound of disbelief, vision still whitening out but slowly bleeding back to full saturation. “That was so intense. Oh my *god*.”

He made a soft sound and stroked her thigh soothingly, regaining his hold on her then angling his hips back to slide out of her. It wasn’t until he pulled out that she realized he hadn’t come yet.

“Wait,” she began, catching her breath. “I didn’t mean *stop* stop, just stop the vibrations. You can still—“

He shook his head, panting. “Take a second. I’m fine.”

But she could feel him, a solid weight against the crease of her thigh, and when she shifted slightly in his hold, she could actually *feel* him throb. It sizzled her nerves back to absolute clarity.

“Really?” She asked, shifting again on purpose this time. “Because you feel like you’re a second away from ruining my skirt.”

His throat bobbed. “You can’t say shit like that when I’m like this.”

Her smile felt wicked, even to herself. “Like what, Draco?”

His nostrils flared on his exhale but he didn’t answer. She considered rocking against him until he really did ruin her skirt, but then had a better idea.

She pushed against him. “Put me down.”

He hesitated for a moment, appraising her, but gave in when she raised a challenging eyebrow. As soon as her feet touched the floor, she dropped to her knees.

He reached for her instantly, evidently worried she’d collapsed. “Shit, Hermione, are you—“

“Hands on the door,” she told him and wrapped her fist around his cock. She gave him a scant second to obey and then sucked his cock into her mouth.

“Oh *fuck*.” His hands landed against the wood of the door with a muffled smack.

She hummed an encouraging sound around him and just barely caught his responding whimper, muffled as he leaned forward to press his mouth against his fist.

She took him as deeply as she could, her hand sliding down his length easily thanks to the way she’d absolutely soaked him. He was as hard as he got right before he came, to the point that she couldn’t quite fit all of him in her mouth. So she focused her attention on his cockhead, tonguing his frenulum rapidly and stroking her fist from his base to mid shaft.

“Jesus *fucking* Christ,” he grit out. “That’s...you’re... *oh my fucking god*—“

She suckled on the head of his cock and then drew back enough to speak, close enough that her lips brushed him as they formed the words. “Go ahead, Draco. Give me your cum.”

He dropped his other hand to her hair, fist tightening in her curls so hard her eyes watered. He held her still and worked himself in and out of her mouth. “You have such a dirty... fucking...mouth...*Christ*.”

He only gave her a few inches, staying well away from her throat, but the act made her wild for him. She kept her suction tight around him, lifting her tongue so it stroked along the underside on each pass.

She felt the moment right before he lost it, his cock pulsing where she held him at the base. She tilted her face up as much as his grip allowed and opened her mouth so he could watch himself come on her tongue.

He did, groaning with each pulse. She stroked her fist, working him through it and doing her best to keep him on target. All things considered, they did a fairly good job though she flinched reflexively when an especially strong pulse sent a stripe across her cheek.

When she was sure he was finished, she gave him a final squeeze and dropped her hand, sitting back on her heels and inadvertently pulling his loose-limbed self with her until he relaxed his hand in her curls.

Now that she could, she tilted her face up to him properly. His eyes were heated, meeting hers first with a flash of a smile and then dropping to her tongue, still proudly displaying his cum.

He rubbed his fingertips gently on her scalp where he’d pulled at her hair then lowered his hand to drag his thumb along the streak of his cum on her cheek. He brought the digit to her mouth, gliding it softly against the edge of her tongue, then met her eyes.

“Swallow?” He’d perhaps meant it as a final directive but it came out hushed, an almost hopeful question.

She hadn’t expected to do anything else (spit it on the floor at his feet? How insulting to him. Walk to the sink and rinse? Not very efficient) but liked that he’d asked all the same. She maintained eye contact as she swallowed, working her tongue around the inside of her mouth to get it all.

He watched with flared nostrils, cheeks pink and breath heavy, then held out his hand, palm up, to help her to her feet. As soon as he could reach her mouth, he kissed her, arms shifting to hold her close.

“You’re unbelievable.” He kissed her again. “Fuck, I’ll do anything for you.”

“Good.” She smiled against his mouth. “Because we’re going to Honeydukes next.”

Chapter 16: “Aw. You want me to call you baby?”

Chapter Notes

What’s that? Another Draco POV? 😬 I love writing from his perspective so much so it had to happen again.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Draco thought they did an admirable job returning to the table without looking like they’d just shagged like mad in the loo. Magic was a thing of beauty; he’d never fully appreciated the usefulness of cleaning and ironing and smoothing charms quite so much as he did when Hermione used them to set them both to rights. He’d simply leaned back against the wall and let her sort him out physically while he sorted himself out mentally.

He felt a bit unmoored after the confession he’d unthinkingly blurted in his afterglow – that he’d do anything for her – and the degree to which he’d meant it. They’d only been dating for a fortnight and he worried that he needed to get a grip or else was liable to scare her away. By the time her fingers were combing his hair back, the tingle of her magic fizzling faintly along the strands, he had regrouped.

They perhaps weren’t as subtle as they could have been by reappearing together, but it hadn’t even occurred to Draco to separate from her again. Their table hadn’t been turned over yet, the cake plate and two cups still exactly where they’d left them. Either they hadn’t been gone for very long (unlikely) or the waitress was simply canny to the nature of their interlude (a bit embarrassing but too late to fret over) and had supposed they might wish to finish their coffees after. He glanced over at Hermione to see what she made of it and found her rummaging in her pocket.

“Absolutely not,” he told her, pulling his leather coin purse and unzipping it against her protests.

He left a generous tip and then guided her out of the pub with a hand low on her back, mercifully without having made any awkward eye contact with their waitress nor any particularly astute patrons.

The sun had made a bit of an effort while they’d been indoors, seemingly determined to make a statement, that of spring being nigh. Hermione lifted her face to it in a perfect mimicry of a sunflower, sighing happily.

“I like grey skies and rain as much as anyone, but there’s something about sunshine that just instantly recharges me.”

“You have the complexion for it,” he told her, tapping his finger lightly on a few of the freckles that adorned her cheek. “Meanwhile I’m already risking a sunburn.”

She laughed. “Poor Draco. Let’s get you to the sweet shop then, hmm?”

Given its proximity to a school and that it was a temperate weekend, Honeydukes was packed. Hermione wove expertly through the clusters of their peers with a clear destination in mind; one didn’t need to be a Ravenclaw to deduce what it might be. He followed her to the Nougat Chunks display where she promptly plucked up four boxes and presented them to him.

“You want *four* boxes of this stuff?” he said, aghast.

“Two are for Neville.” She forced them into his hands. “And one is for you.”

“Not likely.” His lip curled in disgust as he scrutinized the label. “I can’t decide if I’m relieved or even more disturbed to learn that the titular *chunks* are almonds.”

“What happened to you claiming you’d do anything for me?” She grinned impishly over her shoulder as she led them to the next display.

He had to pause for a moment to let two Second years dart in front of him, but then quickly caught up. He kept his response as light as her question had been. “I thought you’d use that chit for something more grandiose than force-feeding me questionably named forms of sugar.”

She snorted at his melodrama, passing him a packet of coconut ice. He took it with much less reticence than the nougat.

“Want a Liquorice Wand?” she offered.

“Go on then. And some Jelly Slugs.”

She added his selections to his arms without comment though he saw her physically restraining herself from making one. He smothered a grin. He’d grown fond of Jelly Slugs sometime around Second year when he and his mates had reenacted the hilarity of Weasley hexing himself to puke them up. It was absolutely in poor taste to still find it amusing — especially, he thought with a pang of regret, since Weasley had hexed himself while defending Hermione after Draco himself had first called her a slur.

He paused, watching her browse, as something occurred to him: she’d already known what the term meant. Had even recited the definition to Potter. He couldn’t imagine she’d come across it by chance in a book, so...had someone else called her it before him? *Who?*

It was an exceedingly hypocritical thing to feel anger over but the thought of someone calling her a *mudblood* sent his blood pressure skyrocketing. When she made a final scan of the shelves and then turned to seek him out, he was freshly awed by his circumstances. He was a lucky, lucky man.

He let her pay for the sweets – with her, it seemed the gentlemanly thing to do – but regained control of the bag as soon as it was handed over by the clerk, partly to be helpful and partly because he felt the need to assuage the lingering guilt he'd brought upon himself.

Once they were back in the relative quiet of the street, she turned to him. “Anywhere else you wanted to go?”

“No, but let's not go back to the castle quite yet. Fancy a mosey around the lake?”

“At what pace?” she inquired, raising an eyebrow. “Because you'll find I'm much less easy to manipulate than Ginny when it comes to physical exertion.”

He wagged his brows. “We both know *that's* a blatant lie. But I did mean a proper mosey, nothing above a stroll.”

She smiled up at him and offered her hand. “Sounds lovely.”

They walked for the better part of an hour, digging into their purchases. He bartered a single bite of nougat with her eating an entire Jelly Slug and watched with unrestrained humor as she screwed up her nose at the banana flavor he'd selected for her. He hammed up his distaste over the nougat but really, one couldn't go too far wrong with whipped honey and almonds (not that he'd ever let her see him enjoy it).

They ended up on one of the main grassy areas of the grounds. There was something about the first real bit of sun that made it feel like the middle of July, luring scads of students outdoors. Most were lounging on the grass but one pack of boys were tossing a Quaffle around in a bizarre version of on-the-ground Quidditch. Draco watched them with interest, not having forgotten Ginny's threatened (promised) Chaser drills, but it seemed the group wasn't aiming for rigor or any particular finesse at the moment.

He conjured a blanket and went to spread it out under the shade of a tree until Hermione insisted on a sunnier spot but then fussed about all the tiny meadow flowers he was crushing when he moved the blanket into the full sun. (*“They're so pretty, Draco,” she'd whinged when he'd waved off her concern. “I don't want to damage them.”*)

In the end, they compromised on the location of their blanket: half under the shade for him and half in the sun for her, but at the edge of a patch of flowers. They settled down on it facing one another, head to toe. Draco leaned back on his arms, stretching his legs long while Hermione lay down fully, eyes closed and face turned into the rays, ankles crossed demurely and hands resting over her stomach.

He observed the way the sunlight brought out different colors in her hair, revealing hints of reddish copper and warm gold. A Gryffindor to her roots.

It was the last week of term before the Easter break and she'd been working herself to the bone with long nights in the library. He'd sensed something in her this year beyond her usual manic need to be a swot of legend. Even though she seemed less prone to bouts of accidental magic now that he'd shown her how to let off a little steam, she didn't ever just *stop*.

He wondered if there was something intentional about her busy-ness. She'd confided in him that part of her stress was due to the uncertainty of her future but he had to believe it wasn't only anxieties over her career. Surely she'd have her pick of the litter when it came to a Ministry job, particularly with Shacklebolt at the helm. And if she wanted to take a year, hell even two, before committing herself to determining what she wanted to do with the life she hadn't counted on having, he was more than happy to support her. In whatever way she'd allow. He had no intentions of moving back into the Manor; maybe she would consider splitting a flat...

He was getting ahead of himself – *jumping the gun*, as he'd learned in from a film. But then again, it wasn't like he had eons of time left. They'd be graduating in just shy of three months and he didn't want it to be the end of them, too. If he had any hope of her keeping him around after the summer, he needed to start showing her how easy it would be to integrate their lives.

He risked the sun to stroke an affectionate hand down her shin to her ankle, happy to see her finally relaxing purely for the sake of it. She cracked an eye to see what he was up to.

"Any plans for the Easter break?" He asked, hopeful her currently indulgent mood would make her more amenable to his forthcoming invitation.

She closed her eyes again, wiggling a little until his thumb picked up a stroking pattern along her ankle. "Mm, yes! Ursula Euledge has a new book out on her experience living amongst Centaurs which looks *fascinating*, and I was thinking about getting a head start of the reading for Charms. We're set to begin advanced protection charms when the next terms starts and even though I've–"

"Granger," he interrupted her, chuckling. "Those aren't *plans*. You aren't going anywhere? Meeting up with anyone?"

She shrugged noncommittally. "Normally, I have gone to the Burrow or..." She trailed off then cleared her throat. "I haven't written to anyone to see what they're up to. I expect they're all still working next week. Not everyone gets a full week for Easter like us school children do."

He snorted at the diminutive term. "Well then, since you don't have plans – which you *don't*, stop making that face, reading doesn't count – what do you think about coming with me to Blaise's?"

She propped herself up on her elbows, her expression shifting from affronted to quizzical. "Why are you going to Blaise's?"

"He invited me."

She fixed him with a flat look. "Cute."

He laughed. "Theo'll be there, too, and Pansy on the weekend. Blaise is planning a bit of a do; you could invite whoever you want."

Her expression was that of supreme incredulity. "Even Ron?"

“Even bloody Saint Potter,” he said agreeably. “Whatever makes you say yes.”

She was quiet for a moment, likely weighing a week of solitary reading against a week with him. He honestly wasn’t sure which was coming out on top until she said, “Alright.”

He’d begun to resign himself to eight days without her so confirmed, “Wait, really? You’ll come?”

“If it’s not terribly uncouth to arrive midweek, I’ll come on Wednesday. That will give me a few days to read and then a few days with you.”

He nodded with faux-seriousness. “An equitable compromise.”

She sat up and pulled his hand from her ankle to her lap, nestling it in her own like she was about to do a palmistry reading. “Excellent. Where does Blaise live?”

“Dibden. Just the other side of the river from Southampton. I’ll write down the Apparation coordinates for you.”

“Southampton,” she repeated, eyes dropping to where she was tracing his life line. “That’s not far from Wiltshire.”

“About 50 miles,” he estimated, “Though everywhere is equally close with Apparation.”

She was quiet, though he had a keen sense she wasn’t as calm as she seemed.

“Why’d you mention that?” He asked.

She didn’t answer right away, running her fingertips along the head line next, light enough to make him want to reflexively close his hand. “Well...will we stop by to see your mother?”

“Thinking about meeting my mother, Granger?” He wagged his brows.

“I *have* met her,” she said flatly, looking up. “Several times. Hence the question.”

His mouth twisted to the side. He felt a bit bad at having been playful about it. “Ah. I wouldn’t exactly count those times as being...properly introduced.”

Her mouth slanted in a grim smile, looking back down. “Well, no. Nor do I. But answer me: would we go to your house, too?”

“Are you asking to or asking *not* to?” He closed his fingers down over hers. “Because we can do whichever you want.”

“I don’t want to keep you from your mum,” she hedged, not quite an answer but very telling in and of itself.

“I don’t exactly have a burning desire to go home. If Mother insists, I can go alone before we head back to school. No big deal.”

She nodded, easing his fingers open so she could resume her leisurely tracing. He sensed her head was miles away but let her wander. At length, she sighed. "I'll have to meet her *properly* at some point, won't I?"

He raised surprised brows. "Will you?"

She glanced up, mouth rueful. "Unless you'd planned to keep me a secret from her?"

Ah.

"Definitely not," he said firmly. "I'd bring you home tomorrow, if you wanted."

She laughed, a little disbelieving. "You're ridiculous."

"Committed," he corrected, feeling rather brave.

It was stupid to feel nervous about it, given everything they'd already done and said, but there was still a wide chasm between them teeming with things *unsaid* and events unpacked. Innumerable things unapologized for. He wasn't quite sure how to tackle it all but he knew he at least wanted to try.

She stroked his heart line, lips pressed together in a pleased smile. "Me too."

They let that sit between them, a content little understanding. If she felt his pulse racing under her fingertips, so be it.

After a few moments, she cleared her throat. "So. I've been thinking about other spells that could have intriguing recreational uses."

He warmed to the new topic instantly. It felt safer, somehow.

He raised a brow. "Oh? And what depravity has occurred to you?"

She flicked her eyes up to his. "*Incarcerous* has some interesting possibilities."

What a naughty witch. He grinned wolfishly. "It certainly does."

"So you'd be open to it?"

Tying her to his bed? "Absolutely."

She looked a little surprised at his easy answer. "Really? You'd let me?"

Confusion flickered. "It's not a big sacrifice," he replied, hesitantly. "Unless I'm missing a nuance?"

Her expression cleared. "Ah. I wasn't clear. While of course I'd let *you* do it to *me* that wasn't what I was asking."

Oh.

“You want to tie *me* up?”

She looked a little hungry just hearing the words. He watched her gaze flick along his body and then back to his eyes. “Yes.”

Fucking hell. He tried not to get hard immediately.

“Yeah.” He cleared his suddenly tight throat. “Yeah, I’d let you.”

She observed his reaction with a keen eye. “Wrists?”

He nodded.

“Ankles?”

He groaned. “*Christ*, Granger.”

For some reason the thought of being completely beholden to her will was so arousing he lost his fight against his cock, his trousers tightening so abruptly he felt momentarily lightheaded.

She waited.

He exhaled hard, mastering himself. “Yes.”

“Are you sure? You hesitated.”

He took a moderated breath but nodded. “It’ll be a first for me.”

She nodded seriously. “Don’t feel pressured. I’m just trying to find your limits, so please—“

He tugged her hand over and pressed her palm to his erection. Her mouth popped open, eyes dropping to his lap.

She stroked along his length inquisitively and he almost regretted making her touch him, semi-public as they were, except that it felt fucking *great*. He was shielded by the tree on one side and her body on the other, but that didn’t negate the fact that he could literally see people over her shoulder, even if they were a hundred feet away. She either had completely forgotten where they were or had a stronger exhibitionist streak than he’d thought. He preened for a moment as a third reason occurred to him, that of her being so cock-hungry for him that she simply couldn’t help herself.

“You’re this hard just thinking about it?” She asked, mapping him with a thumb and forefinger on either side. As she had already well acquainted herself with the answer to that, he let the question be rhetorical.

She stroked him once more and then seemed to recall their surroundings and let her hand continue down his thigh to more appropriate territory. She ran her thumb along his knee instead and he was surprised to find the sensation almost as nice.

“You'd really trust me?” She checked again, eyes intent. It was strange maybe, given their history of antagonism, but he found he did without reservation.

“To let you have your way with me?” He teased, wanting to keep the conversation light. “Yeah, Granger. Of course I would.”

She gave him a bemused smile but then chewed the corner of her lip. “Ever been restrained before?”

He jostled her. “Weren't you paying attention? I already said it'd be a first for me.”

But she was looking rather serious and it clicked: there were plenty of unsexy ways to have been restrained. “Ah. No, I've never been held against my will.” He hesitated, but found he had to ask. “Is that what this is about?”

It was her turn to look confused. “What?”

He plucked a few blades of grass to give his hands something to do. It went against his self-preservation instincts to remind her of a specific example of him being a brainwashed twit but he had to know. “When I restrained you in Umbridge's office.”

“Oh.” She glanced at him and then down to his hands, watching him weave the grass. “No. It's not about that.”

“Because I wasn't lying before.” He dropped his voice a little, the words heavy. “I am penitent. For all of it.”

She cupped a hand around his, stilling him. “I know. I promise it isn't about some form of payback to you specifically.”

She always phrased things so carefully.

“To who then? If not me.”

She exhaled a short puff. “I'm just curious what it feels like to be in control. Properly.” She licked her lower lip then met his eye, expression forthright if not a little sly. “And I still haven't heard you beg me yet.”

His erection, which had flagged slightly at the dour topic, now restored itself to full mast. He'd never been made to beg for it before, although a few times he'd done so anyway just to see how it felt. He'd liked it, which had been somewhat frustrating as his partners had never been much in the way of denying him anything. He'd always gotten what he wanted, practically his entire life. The thought of not, of being denied until he was straining for it, made him a little delirious with lust.

“Just tell me when. And I'll be there.”

Her face was still downturned toward his hands but he caught the pleased smirk which danced quickly across her mouth. “That sounds rather eager.”

“You’ll find I *am* rather eager.” He reached forward and tugged on a curl. “Have a day in mind?”

She looked up, raising a brow. “You don’t want to be surprised?”

“With *bondage*?” He snorted, then tilted his head to the side as he considered it. “Eh, actually...”

“How about this,” she interrupted his musing. “I’ll tie you up on Friday after exams, and then you can scurry off to Blaise’s with the memory of it to keep you company until Wednesday.”

“*Scurry off*,” he repeated under his breath. “Too bad I’m not into degradation; I have a feeling you’d be a fucking master at it.”

“Are you sure you’re not?” she joked. “I could call you a foul, loathsome, evil little cockroach again and see what it does for you. I promise not to hit you this time. Unless...?”

“Minx.” He tugged her to him and nipped at her lip. “When I suggested you were being too nice to me, I didn’t mean *that*.”

“Didn’t you?” Her eyes lit up, close to his even as he moved a few inches away. “What *did* you mean?”

But he wouldn’t give her any help in that department. “Nope. You’re plenty mean enough to me as it is. Forget I even said anything.”

“Uh huh.” She looked disbelieving but nodded along agreeably. “Well, rest assured that if there *is* something for me to figure out, I will.”

He wanted to crush her against the blanket, roll her through the meadow and trample all the sodding little flowers. They were ugly compared to her; frail and short-lived and truly, wholly incomparable.

“Speaking of figuring things out,” she began and he put away his impulse in favor of hearing what fresh delight she had in store for him. “I was wondering if you’d be open to calling me names?”

That wasn’t what he’d expected. He frowned. “What, like *swot*?”

She rolled her eyes. “You don’t need any encouragement with that one. No, I meant pet names. Like baby or honey, or whatever.”

“Oh.” His expression cleared, then softened. “*Aw*. You want me to call you *baby*?”

She swatted him. He rubbed his arm dramatically even though she’d hardly put any power behind the whack. “Ow. I was serious! You didn’t like it?”

“I’m not sure. Try some others.”

He leaned forward and kissed her. “Ok, honey. I will.” He drew back and tilted his head expectantly. “Eh?”

“It’s nice...” She sounded unconvinced. “But not my favorite either.”

“Alright. I’ll work a few in and you let me know which one strikes your fancy.”

“While you’re doing that, could you also try some...meaner ones? In bed, specifically?”

He wasn’t immediately sure what she wanted. “Meaner? Can you give me a little more to work with?”

“I don’t know. Something a little...demeaning?” His brows shot up and she quickly added, “No, no, not *that*. I was thinking more like—” She bit her lip, looking suddenly embarrassed.

“If you can’t say it, why do you think I’ll be able to?” He nudged her. “Go on. I’ll say anything you do.”

She hesitated, then shifted her shoulders in a subtle gesture of physically girding herself. It was adorable, if not a little worrisome that she felt she needed to.

“I want to hear you call me a slut. And...and any variation thereof. You’re welcome to use that as a jumping off point.” Her cheeks were flushed pink but she looked confident in her decision.

He was surprised by the request but concealed it as well as he could so as not to make her self-conscious. He’d only ever used the word to rib Theo good-naturedly, and certainly not while in *bed* with the man. He was a little intrigued about how it would feel to use it, specifically in relation to a way she was behaving. For *him*.

He cleared his throat. “Okay Granger. If you’re sure.”

“I won’t know what I like until I try,” she said, raising her chin. “There would be no knowledge without discovery, after all.”

He appraised her for a moment then nodded, leaning forward to kiss her again. “Then I’ll work a few in. Now, do I get it to put in a request for reciprocation?”

She pulled back enough to see him, expression bemused. “You want *me* to call you a slut?”

“You don’t need any encouragement with that,” he parroted and she grinned. “No, I also meant a pet name.”

She looped her arms around his neck. “Oh, of course. Any specific requests?”

He could see when she instantly regretted the opening she’d given him. He happily rose to the occasion. “Handsome Sex God?”

“That’s quite a mouthful,” she demurred, eyes glittering.

“Mmm that’s a good one too. I knew you’d pick it up quickly.”

“Idiot.”

He pouted dramatically. “Wrong direction, sweetie.”

“Blech. Not sweetie. And fine, I’ll come up with something *besides* idiot.”

“You spoil me.”

She kissed him, flicking her tongue out against his lower lip. He hummed against her mouth, not giving her entry. “You’d better not be trying to start something, Puffskein. Not in front of all these First years.”

She pushed back from him, hands on his chest in her affront. “*Puffskein?!?*”

“What? They’re cute.” He stood by it.

“But the name isn’t. And it doesn’t even make sense to call me that.”

“Doesn’t it? Small little thing whose hair has magical properties? *Makes a low humming sound when it’s happy?*” His voice lowered suggestively at the last. He predicted and therefore expertly dodged her whack, snickering.

“Shall I call you Hinkypunk then?” She offered sweetly, eyes anything but. “Looks like wispy white smoke, impish little trickster, *turns solid when illuminated?*”

But before he could rebut, she suddenly cackled with fresh glee. “No wait! You could be my little Lobalug!”

He ran through the classification in his head to guess her reasoning: it was a rubbery, spout-shaped creature known for its venomous sac.

“*Granger*,” he began, tone scolding, then paused as another key descriptor of the creature popped into his head. He smirked. “*Ah*, I see. Is it because it’s ten inches long? That’s a bit excessive but I’m flattered nonetheless.”

She clucked her tongue disparagingly. “I did say my *little* Lobalug.”

He gasped with faux-affront. “Those are fighting words, Granger.”

“Fine, fine. No creature-based pet names. Shall we call it a truce, darling?”

He quirked a brow. “Indeed, *darling*.”

They screwed their noses up in unison.

(Apologies in advance if they slander a favored pet name of yours. They've already thrashed two of my personal favorites so know that I'll sympathize.)

Setting the stage for some fun stuff with this one 😊 Draco POV continues in the next chapter as the sexploration continues (and frankly, it's only getting more explorative from here 🙄).

Since this has become my fic to get all my favorite tropes / Eighth Year classics out to play with, we OBVIOUSLY have to have a Blaise's House Visit / Snakes party (thank you for sparking the idea in the comments! 🙏)

Also you can find me on [Twitter](#)! I only have 10% of an idea of what I'm doing so it's not terribly exciting yet but it's been fun to interact with the community a bit more ☺

I'm also on [Tumblr](#) if that's more your thing but I'm afraid I'm even more boring there 😊

Lastly, a quick note for anyone waiting on my other WIP Balance & Oppose. First, thank you 😭 Second, I'm sorryyyyyy. My brain needed a light fluffy break and I want to do that story justice by not writing just for the sake of posting something. It's my first ever fic and my precious baby (which I'm neglecting 🙄) so I'm giving myself a minute to reset before diving back in to the more complex/heavy writing. But the ending is written! Now it's just...writing all the in-between that gets to it 😊

Anyway, ramble complete. Thanks as always for putting up with me 💕💕

Chapter 17: She flicked her wand, murmuring, “Incarcerous.”

Chapter Notes

Happy Monday! Kicking the week off the right way with some light bondage 🧡

This chapter is pure smut but in a fluffy way sometimes? Rest assured there's no plot to be found, so we're safe on that count at least 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The week flew by in a blur of classes and end of term exams and Draco doing his level best to keep Hermione at *her* level best. If it meant he often ended his days with his tongue between her legs, working her down from the edge of a panic attack and up another of pleasure, well, he was happy to serve.

It was with multifaceted relief that saw him laying down his quill as the time was called on their final exam of the term. Compared to the end of year exams, these were more like graded checkpoints that the knowledge was sticking, but he knew Hermione didn't really see the distinction.

They'd agreed to meet back at her room after their final exam to decompress before dinner. He was leaning against the wall beside her door, one foot propped up behind him against the stones, when she arrived. She didn't stop her forward trajectory until her arms were curling around his middle, face smashed into the front of his jumper. He wrapped his arms around her, both feet now braced on the floor but back still against the wall, and held her tightly.

She exhaled expansively then turned her face so her cheek was against his heart. “Just what I needed.”

She squeezed again then released him. Begrudgingly, he let her go. She unlocked her door and ushered him in, following on his heels.

“You’ve been so thoughtful all week,” she said, leaning her back against the door until the latch clicked. “Incredibly so. I’ve been dreadful and you’ve been so sweet.”

He scoffed, turning to face her from where he'd drifted to the center of her room. “You haven't been *dreadful*.”

She raised her brows. “I’ve been impatient and distracted, and completely in my own head. I didn't even notice you hadn't come when I passed out last night. I just let you go down on me — *again*, mind you — and then *fell asleep*. It was only when I woke up in the morning that it occurred to me. *That's* dreadful.”

“You needed the sleep,” he said easily. Then he smirked. “And I had things well in hand afterward.”

She huffed a breath at his innuendo, but her eyes glittered with humor. “The point stands: you’ve been very attentive.”

“Fine, I can agree to that. So what, you’re going to *attend* to me now?” He poked his tongue in his cheek playfully.

But she didn’t match his playfulness, eyes fixing on his with building heat while she slowly dragged her bottom lip between her teeth, giving it a little side-to-side tug. She worked open the clasp of her robes. “Yep.”

His brows shot up. “Wait, really? We’re doing this now? I thought it’d be after dinner.”

“Well you looked like you were *half* interested in being surprised so I thought I’d *half* surprise you. That alright?”

“Yeah. Yeah, of course. I was just...” He cleared his throat rather than say the word *surprised* a third time in as many seconds.

Her lips curled into a satisfied smile, fingers continuing with a renewed purpose that had him swallowing with eager anticipation. But when she got her robes open and shrugged them off to toss over her chair, it only revealed a standard issue uniform, complete with a regulation-length skirt. Even her top button was done up.

He’d be lying if he said the look did *nothing* for him but he had a sense that she was up to something. He tracked his eyes over her clothes then back to hers, raising an expectant eyebrow.

“Clever boy,” she whispered, giving him an appreciative quirk of her mouth as she drew her wand. “*Finite*.”

Her entire outfit had been a ruse.

The magic dispelled her charmwork like a warm breath melting frost on a window, revealing lace and silk and all manner of visual delights. He didn’t know where to look first; wanted to look at everything all at once. His brain had only parsed concepts — dark green silk, black lacy edges, oh god fucking *thigh high black nylons* — before another thought struck him. He’d had her in his sights all day, ever since she’d joined him at breakfast. Their exams had all been for classes they both took. There was no way she’d slipped away to change.

“You’ve been wearing this all day? While we ate lunch? While you sat the Arithmancy exam?”

She tilted her head in the affirmative. For some reason, the thought of her working advanced Arithmancy problems while wearing silk nearly did him in.

“Shit.” He carded a hand through his hair as he blew out a breath. “Anyone could have cast a *finite* in your proximity. And then what would have happened?”

She toyed with the lace where it framed the swells of her breasts. “Then I suppose they would have seen.”

The top of his neck felt hot, deep in his spine. Like the root of his brain was inflamed at the idea, though he couldn’t decide if it was in a good way or not. “You want everyone to see you like this?”

“No...” she said liltingly as she ran a slender forefinger across the distinctly-emerald green satin. “But I think it’s pretty obvious who this is for. And I wouldn’t mind people seeing *that*.”

She hadn’t *actually* claimed him so publicly but the notion that she’d risked it so boldly made his chest constrict, pulse pounding on his next breath.

“So the library is off limits but classrooms are fair game? Good to know, Granger.”

She flushed prettily but narrowed her eyes at him. “You’re doing quite a bit of talking right now.”

He noticed that she hadn’t outright denied his leading question. He tucked that information away for later and presented her with his trademark expression of a half smirk and matching lifted brow. “Is that right? And what would you prefer I be doing?”

“Stripping would be convenient.”

He pouted. “I’d have thought ‘attending to my needs’ would be a bit more full-service.”

“Be grateful that you’ll be naked. That’s more than I got this week.” She gave him a pointed look.

He smirked fully. “I suppose that’s fair. I didn’t exactly get you all the way unbuttoned each time, did I?” Sometimes he hadn’t even taken her knickers properly off. Merlin and Morgana, he fucking loved skirts.

“You certainly didn’t.” She eyed the knot of his tie meaningfully. He obediently began to work it loose.

“I’m going to bind you.” She said it like he’d somehow forgotten. “Are you still okay with that?”

“Extremely okay with it.” He divested himself of his jumper with Granger-like efficiency.

“Good. Pick a word to use if you want me to let you free.”

He looked up from undoing his shirt buttons. “Do you intend to ignore me if I say *untie me, Granger*?” He’d meant it in jest but there was honest contemplation in her shrug.

“You might *want* me to ignore that. It’s better to have a dedicated word. All the books say—“

He held up a hand. "I understand the concept of a safeword." Of course she'd be doing things (literally) by the book. "Right. Mine will be *Nougat Chunks*."

She laughed, bright and delighted. "You are a fool and a half."

He grinned, kicking his shoes to the side and working his belt open. "Will yours be Jelly Slugs then?"

She rolled her eyes, still chuckling. "I was going to choose *aristocrat* but Jelly Slugs is fine."

He raised a brow as he undid his zip. "Am I to understand that you think you're not half a shag away from moaning *aristocrat* in bed? Probably in some derogatory manner toward me but still, it wouldn't be a stretch."

She full-on blushed — he tracked the spread of it with delighted eyes — but deflected it with a sharp snap of her fingers. "Get on the bed."

He hooked his thumbs under the elastic waistband of his boxer briefs but she shook her head. "Leave those on."

He let the elastic snap back insolently. "Yes, Granger," he purred.

He left his puddle of clothes, cast aside in a devil-may-care manner which alone gave him a thrill, and retreated to her bed. Excitement and anticipation were melding with the rush of adrenaline, making his pulse race as he settled himself on the edge of her mattress and waited to see what she'd do next. Her intentionally slow approach didn't help his pulse but it did give him a chance to finally appreciate her lingerie.

She wore at least three pieces: a bra, knickers, and a tantalizing belt of lace-trimmed silk around the smallest part of her waist. The final piece had little black ribbons connecting down to the tops of the sheer black material of which covered her legs all the way up until just a hands-breadth of thigh was bared. Somehow it was all connected together by clever snaps and bows and clasps.

His fingers itched to figure it all out.

She stopped her advance just out of his reach.

"You're going to come twice," she informed him. "At a minimum. And I don't want you concerning yourself with my pleasure this time."

He was torn between fervent approval of multiple orgasms and a knee-jerk reaction to negotiate on the second half. Her pleasure was a chief concern of his pretty much always.

"I mean it," she said firmly when she saw the argument in his expression.

Fuck it. He could still make sure she enjoyed herself, even if he had to be covert. He nodded.

"Good." She stepped up between his spread thighs.

He immediately raised his hands to her body but then paused, looking up at her for approval. He didn't want to misstep so soon.

"You can touch me," she said with a nod. "For a minute."

His hands went immediately to her breasts, thumbs gliding along the revealed swells while his palms got their fill of silky satin. He almost couldn't tell which was softer. He got a little lost in it, hands squeezing and savoring, and was about to move down to that arousing little belt around her middle when she breathed out a hushed, "That's enough."

Merlin, had she meant a *literal* minute?

He almost regretted spending so much time on her tits except that he absolutely didn't. He slowly lowered his hands to his lap, pushing his luck by taking the scenic route down her torso and over her hips.

"You're stunning," he murmured as he went. "Where on Earth did you get all this?"

She looked down at herself. "I made it — well, Transfigured it. I quite like it though, so I think I'll have to buy some proper pieces next time I'm in London."

Draco didn't know of any shops in Diagon that provided such garments and then realized she hadn't meant *Wizarding* London. He had yet another fresh appreciation for Muggles.

"You won't hear me complaining," he murmured, eyes still riveted. But then a thought struck. "Wait, if you Transfigured this, why didn't your *finite* undo it all?"

She beamed. "Want to guess?"

"Fuck no. I'm done sitting exams for the day. In fact, I rescind the question."

"Spoilsport." She ran her fingers through his hair, tugging gently. The touch lit him up. "I think I ought to require that you guess. And not take any of it off until you figure it out."

"That's not the threat you think it is." His eyes roamed her body, thoroughly enjoying every inch of her, covered or not. There was something undeniably erotic about a partially clothed woman, he thought.

"Hmm." She stroked her fingers through his hair again, raking both hands along the top and down the back of his neck. He shivered.

"Scoot back." She gestured to the head of the bed.

He leaned back, using his arms to hoist himself up and back until he could flop down in the middle of the bed. Hermione drew her wand and used it to levitate the pillows neatly to the floor, then climbed up onto the mattress to settle herself over his thighs.

"There are a few ways I could tie you," she began, head tilting as she observed him under her. "Arms spread, arms above your head, hands apart or wrists together..." She listed them like she was pondering the best way to prepare Valerian root. Her casual knowledge of it was

deeply arousing. “If you ever tie me up, we’ll definitely want wrists together above my head. That way you can flip me over without having to untie me. But since I don’t intend for you to move...spread your arms for me, Draco.”

He did, trying not to fixate on the fact that she’d already assessed how best to be restrained for him. Restrained but still able to be fucked from behind. *Merlin*.

She flicked her wand, murmuring, “*Incarcerous*.”

Thin cords wound themselves around Draco’s left wrist, the ends meeting around the bedpost. She’d managed to control the veracity of their binding so that, while he certainly couldn’t move his arm more than a few inches, he was still able to flex his hand to make a fist. She watched him explore the feeling of it, then repeated it on the other side. She licked her bottom lip into her mouth, the flash of pink tongue making his blood heat.

“*Gods*,” she murmured. “You look so good like that.”

He breathed a laugh, her flattery sinking in and warming him head to toe. She was looking down at him like he was edible and wasn’t sure where to taste first, and it was making him tent his shorts.

She inhaled deeply then lifted up, shifting around to sit on his torso facing his feet. He hadn’t seen the back of her ensemble yet and sucked in a breath at the way the cut of her knickers sloped high along the curve of her arse. She was breathtaking – literally. His eyes ate up the revealed skin of her back, the slope of her spine and the way the delicate muscles of her back shifted as she leaned forward to knock her knuckles against the inside of his knee.

“Shift your feet apart a bit.”

He did so, eyes fluttering shut at the bizarrely erotic sensation of cords wrapping around his ankles. She stroked approving hands down his thighs to his knees, and then lifted up to turn back around, settling herself on the mattress between his legs.

“Perfect,” she told him. “That feel okay? Are you comfortable?”

He was distinctly *uncomfortable* but knew she wasn’t asking about the state of his briefs. “Yeah. Yeah, I’m good.”

She smirked. “Yes, you are.”

He scoffed but blushed despite himself. “You’re having too much fun with this.”

“*Au contraire*,” she replied, leaning to wedge the tip of her wand between the mattress and the bed frame, stowing it for the time being. “The fun is just beginning.”

She crawled up his body until she was hovering over him, her expression pleased and excited, and he couldn’t help but return it. She leaned down and pressed a sweet kiss to his lips, then deepened it. He groaned into her mouth, hands instinctively lifting to try and hold her. She felt his movement and laughed against his mouth, teeth nipping at his lower lip before sucking it lightly between her own.

Gods, she was going to annihilate him.

She worked her kisses along his jaw and then down the side of his neck, pausing every so often to scrape her teeth or suck a mark. By the time she got to his chest, he was panting. Not being able to move was making every touch twice as heady, so when she flicked her little pink tongue teasingly across his nipple, his resounding groan was unrestrained.

“Does that feel good?” she asked curiously, doing it again a little slower.

It felt good in the same way that scratching an itch on the arch of his foot did: a squirmy, nerve-tingling sense of relief. “It’s weird. I...I like it.”

She softened her tongue and gave him a slow, wet lick right across the whole of it and he swallowed thickly.

“Fuck, that’s...”

Her teeth closed down ever so gently and when she laved her tongue around it in a small circle, he felt his cock flex involuntarily.

“*Fuck.*”

“You’re getting all pink,” she observed, her eyes skimming across his neck and chest while she circled a finger where her mouth had wet his skin. “Your skin is so revealing.”

“You’re so sexy,” he groaned, unable to think of anything but the bare truth. “Fuck, I’m so turned on already.”

“I can see that.” Self-satisfaction curled her mouth into a smug smile and heated her eyes as she took him in. She repositioned herself on her knees between his thighs and stroked a hand from his nipple down to his navel. His abs clenched reflexively at the grazing touch and then again when she dipped down to swipe her tongue across his navel.

“Granger.” It came out on a breath, almost a chastisement.

“Yes, Draco?” She dotted kisses across to his hip, her chin brushing against the waistband of his briefs.

He just groaned again and shifted his hips, his cock absolutely aching for her touch. If he was free, he’d have her on her back in a second, cock pressed firmly against the warmth between her legs. Or maybe he’d just pull her forward until she was sitting over him, maybe use his hands to grind her along him like she so enjoyed; anything, anything to feel her on him.

“Getting impatient?” He could hear her grin, feel it against his skin.

“I’m so hard,” he whined, hoping to entice her.

She sucked a mark on his hip in response but then took the bait, shifting lower until she was mouthing hotly over the thick ridge of him through his briefs. He half regretted luring her to him, realizing abruptly that it might only mean a more acute form of torment, but she quickly

dispelled his fears by pulling down the fabric enough to free his cock. It sprung up and then bobbed heavily against his abdomen and he let out a low breath of relief.

His relief was short-lived.

She stroked a finger along the underside of his cock, swiping it softly back and forth along his frenulum and then lifted it off before she properly touched the sensitive head. He shifted his hips but she didn't touch him again.

"My needs feel unattended to," he tried.

She snorted delicately. "Oh please. How many times have you told me how much you like the build up? How *good* it feels? How much I should make it last? Well, consider this me finally learning how to take my time."

"Fucking Christ." He hated how smart she was. "God damnit, Granger."

"Uh huh." She sent her finger up that tortuous journey a second time and made a little sound of delight when his cock demonstrated just how much he liked it, precum dripping onto his pelvis.

"I'm going to play with you for a bit," she told him, sitting up and leaning over to retrieve her wand. "Feel free to come whenever you want."

If he had ownership of his hands, they would've been scrubbing down his face. As it was, he couldn't hide his rising blush from her nor the way his eyes couldn't stay open when she murmured "*Lubricus*," and dripped it, silky and warm, down his shaft.

A second murmured charm divested him of his briefs and then her wand was restowed, hands back on his thighs. The first pump of her fist around him was bliss. He savored it with eyes closed, body finally relaxed against the bed. She worked him over with slow strokes, her pressure light but satisfying. It took the edge off his need just slightly, in a way that let him take in a full, deep breath.

But he should have known she had something else up her sleeve.

He felt the mattress shift as she maneuvered herself from her knees to her bum and he lifted his head to see her arranging both legs up and over his left hip so that her stocking feet were planted on the bed beside his waist. He couldn't figure out what she was up to until she tugged his cock snugly between her thighs and then leaned back on her hands and lifted her hips.

His eyes widened at the feel of it, her silky skin and the just-barely rough texture of her stocking tops, the snug warmth of her thighs, the absolutely sinful way she was moving her hips over him. His cock slipped easily between her thighs, the magical lubrication easing the way.

"Jesus." His neck was starting to hurt from lifting his head but there was no way he was looking away. "That's...fuck. That's so... *god, Granger.*"

She'd dropped a hand to press his cock down until it coasted along the satin of her knickers, obliterating brain cells with every graze. He could do nothing but take it, any attempt at thrusting immediately stymied by her legs over his lap.

It happened quicker than it should have but suddenly he was in serious danger of getting his cum all over her pretty, lacy things. The image sent him hurtling even closer to the point of no return but just when he'd all but given in and let go, she opened her legs. The instant loss of pressure around his cock hauled him back from the edge he'd been dipping his toes over.

"*Shit*," he swore, hips jerking instinctively but serving only to bob his cock over his pelvis. "Oh fuck, I was so close."

"Oh!" She pulled her legs off him, getting back to her knees with startling athleticism. "Sorry. Here." She closed her fist around him.

But the repositioning had shown him a glimpse of the green satin of her knickers, the material dark and damp between her legs where it practically molded itself to the shape of her. It was probably from the lubricant she'd coating him with but the important part remained the same: one way or another, his cock rubbing against her had done it.

"God, please fuck me." He hadn't meant to say it, and certainly not so petulantly, but his mouth had gone rogue at the sight. "Please. Need to come inside you."

It seemed she liked this idea because she was quick to climb astride him, driving him absolutely mad when she simply pulled her knickers to the side and sank down on him. The damp patch hadn't just been from rubbing the lubricant on his cock on the outside of her knickers, he discovered.

"You're so wet," he groaned as she took him inside herself again. "Fuck, baby. You feel so good."

He felt her cunt squeeze around him as she panted a breathless little sound, her pace faltering momentarily before she picked it back up, moving even more quickly over him. It was going to finish him off in short order, but feeling her clench around him had reminded him urgently of his covert plan to make sure she enjoyed herself too. He strained against the bindings, brain once again forgetting he couldn't just hold her hips still until he caught his breath.

"I...wait, wait...that's gonna make me come," he panted, cheeks pink and chest heaving with the effort of holding off. "Just...give me a minute."

"No." She picked up her pace, adding a little rock of her hips on the downstroke. "I want you to come."

"Granger," he whined, "Please, I can wait so you can—"

"Draco," she interrupted, voice low with a slight edge. "I told you to *come*."

He tried not to for a few panting breaths but then squeezed his eyes shut tight when he couldn't hold off, the glide and squeeze of her around him utterly irresistible.

“Fuck. Oh fuck.” He subsided into a moan as he started to come, powerless against the rocking of her on top of him. She was whispering soft little words to him, telling him how good he felt, how much she liked feeling him come inside her and it was *destroying* him.

She gradually slowed as he finished, settling herself flush on his lap and stroking her hands softly down his chest and abdomen. When she reached where they were still joined, she slowly rose up to slip off him and then dipped her hand down between her legs.

He panted at the ceiling, listening to the soft sound of her fingers and wishing they were his own. He’d thought that she was finishing herself off so was surprised when she drew her hand away after only a few passes and then leaned forward over him. She held her fingers up to his mouth and he opened for her immediately, the needy place in his chest constricting as he sucked them into his mouth.

She observed his reaction with a calculating expression and then seemed to come to a decision. She pulled her fingers from his mouth and then planted a hand on his chest to balance herself while she scooted up his body on her knees. When she could reach it, she relocated both hands to the headboard.

“You can make me come now,” she told him, up on her knees over him. “Unless you want me to untie you first?”

He wanted his hands on her, absolutely, but not more than he wanted to see what else she’d do while she had him bound to her whims. He shook his head.

“I’m fine. C’mere. Let me taste you, baby.”

Even in the clutch of his orgasm, he’d noticed her reaction when he’d used that pet name. She gave him a similar reaction now, that little inhale which hinted he’d done something she liked. Maybe it was the word, or maybe it was just that he was calling her something sweet. He’d try another and see.

She obliged him, working her legs carefully over his shoulders and tucking her calves under his extended arms until she was hovering over his mouth. He groaned at the sight of her, pink and swollen and wet. He wondered how close she was. His eyes wandered further to take in the green satin still tucked to the side of her cunt, then to the black ribbons running parallel down her thighs to those damned stockings. His hands flexed with the need to run them all over her.

She redirected his attention by lowering herself down over him, a little hesitantly. He’d been the one to control her movement the first time she’d done this, so he made a low sound of encouragement and raised his head as much as he could to place a soft kiss on her clit. She figured out her alignment rather quickly after that.

He focused on her clit to start, wanting to work her up as fast as she’d done him, but when his tongue slipped through her and he was met by the same potent combination he’d sucked from her fingers, it unlocked a new desperation in him. He groaned from deep in his chest, hands flexing again with the impulse to hold her down against his mouth until his tongue was buried. She sensed his shift in demeanor, peering down at him with fresh curiosity.

“Can you taste yourself?” She asked. “Is that what you like about it?”

His responding groan indicated how close she’d gotten, but he was unwilling break away from her for even a moment to answer properly. She rocked her hips slowly over his tongue, her motions distracted enough by her musing that she bumped against his nose. He wondered how it felt, catching on her clit like it was. And he wondered how the barely-there growth of stubble on his jaw felt against the sensitive inner skin of her thighs. He visualized it, red and abraded from him, and felt a complicated mix of lust and concern. He didn’t want to hurt her but he liked the idea of leaving little marks where it was obvious what she’d let him do to her.

She hummed a soft, inquisitive sound, drawing his attention up to her gaze.

“Or is it a possessive thing?” She cocked her head. “Do you like knowing I’m still full of you, even when we’re apart?”

Hearing her say it almost did him in. He pulled against the restraints, desperate to get his hands on her, forgetting that he was still bound. He sucked her clit, hard, to share some of his tension and then turned his face to the side, panting. “Fuck, Granger. Untie me. Let me touch you.”

She reached down and realigned his mouth with the gentle prod of three fingers against his cheek. “You are touching me. Don’t be greedy.”

He exhaled a cut-off sound, a frustrated whimper, but then licked through her again and got back to work. He’d make her come and then, when he had his hands free...

He grunted when she carded a rough hand through his hair, the sudden pain of her fist flaring through him and making his cock throb. His refractory period was already fairly brief but the way she was treating him had reduced it to scant minutes. He felt himself hardening, his hips already beginning to twitch with the need to fuck something. When she tightened her hand in his hair again, his hips responded in earnest. His jostling drew her attention behind herself to his lap.

She tutted and then twisted her shoulders to reach back and wrap her hand around his cock. “Hard again? Already?”

His moan was muffled by her cunt but he knew she felt it by the way she twitched. “How about this,” she bartered, “Since you’re doing such a good job cleaning me up, I’ll let you make a mess of me up all over again. And then we can go down to dinner while I’m still full of you. Hmm?”

“Christ.” He bucked into her fist. “You’re so dirty.”

“Says you.” She released him to lean forward again, carding her fingers back through his hair and grinding herself slowly down against his mouth. “Make me come now, sweetheart.”

He devoted himself to her.

Even with his hands pinned, it didn't take him long at all to have her squirming and moaning over him. He worked her over the edge with strong, pulsing sucks on the entirety of her clit, slowly gentling the pressure as she relaxed over him.

"You're so good at that," she panted. "God, I love your mouth."

He flicked a brow at her, his smile hidden between her legs. She recovered for another moment then inhaled deeply and worked her legs free from his shoulders, sliding her body down his until she was perched on her knees between his legs. His cock was resting heavily against his pelvis, extremely interested by her proximity. She wrapped her fist around it and gave him a few lazy strokes.

"We're definitely doing this again," she told him, eyes raking across his chest and arms. "But I'm going to untie you now. I think I need you on top of me."

He flexed his hands. "Yeah. Fuck yeah. Let me up, babe."

She pursed her lips. "Not babe."

"No?" He licked his lips, savoring her taste. "You liked baby though."

She tightened her fist on the next downstroke and he hissed as the pleasure shot through him.

"What about you?" she said, "Did you like me calling you sweetheart?"

"I didn't hate it." He tried to thrust up into her fist and she held him down with her free hand. With his ankles still restrained, he had no leverage. She'd said she would untie him but she hadn't reached for her wand yet – wasn't doing anything but working him closer and closer to the edge.

"That's not a resounding yes," she mused.

"Hard to make an assessment after only hearing it once," he grunted, trying again to rock his hips up.

"Ah, I see." She gripped his base to hold him steady and dragged her tongue around the circumference of his head. He groaned and tried to buck up into her mouth but again, couldn't. His eyes slipped shut when she finally gave in and sucked his cock into her mouth. She drew back with a swipe of her tongue, then mouthed along his shaft.

"In that case," she purred, "Fuck me, please, *sweetheart*." And untied him.

He hadn't noticed her reach for her wand so it took him a second to realize he was free but as soon as he did, he was on her. He flipped her onto her back, his palm flat against the top of her sternum as he knocked her legs open with an impatient hand so he could grind himself against the tantalizing combination of warm, wet cunt and soft, damp silk. He was panting, barely restraining himself from sinking straight into her.

"I think you're conditioning me to love that word," he grit out. "It's definitely doing it for me right now."

She grinned impishly and his hand slid from her chest to her throat on instinct, his blood thrumming at her teasing little expression. He squeezed her once, carefully, and took immense delight in the look of pure, unadulterated lust that flickered over her expression, her mouth popped open in a moan.

Naughty, naughty Granger.

He tutted at her reaction, stroking the length of her throat with his thumb before pushing his hand up into her hair, cradling her head. He used his free hand to align his cock and then fed it into her, thumb relocating to her clit as he sank in. Her hips lifted to take him deep, encouraging him to insistent, rapid thrusts almost at once. She keened and wrapped her legs around him, the soft texture of her stockings an additional piece of stimulation to his already highly stimulated system.

It was lucky that she also seemed in need of a quick, hard fucking because he wasn't sure he could do it any differently at present. After being held back for so long, the need to drive into her was almost uncontrollable. He kept a steady pace on her clit, circling it counterclockwise like she preferred, and dipped down to bite at her nipple through her bra, wanting to touch her everywhere and hardly knowing how to decide where to focus his attention first.

"Draco." She arched under him, pressing closer.

He nipped along the material until it gave way to soft skin and sucked a mark against the supple flesh of her breast, the swell bouncing under his mouth as he pounded into her. He licked over the mark then continued up, sucking a matching oblong, rosy mark on her neck. Her mouth was hungry for his when he finally kissed her, her tongue playing with his while her hands held him close around his head and shoulders. She moaned into his mouth and he felt her orgasm claim her, the initial clench arresting his motion until it gave way to spine-tingling, suckling pulses around his cock. He kept rocking into her slowly, thumb petting her clit until she relaxed under him enough to start kissing him back again.

He got a little lost in the kiss and in feeling her still squeezing intermittently around him, so didn't notice her hand moving until he felt it wrap snugly around the base of his cock on his next withdraw.

"Shit," he blurted, startled by the touch and how good the additional pressure felt. He looked down between them to watch her stroking his cock, the top several inches still buried inside her. "Fuck, that's so hot."

"Let me feel you come," she panted. "Fill me up."

"God." He couldn't have held off if he tried, not while she was literally working to pump his cum into her cunt and begging him to let go. "Fuck, love, gonna come. Gonna come inside you. Oh *fuck*."

It felt like she'd dragged it out of him, her hand and snug inner walls working in tandem to milk him for everything he had.

He dropped onto his back beside her, chest heaving and feeling deliciously, wholly spent. She rolled onto her side and tucked herself in against him, kissing him sweetly on his pec. He tilted his face down toward her as he exhaled long, emptying everything out of his lungs so that he could fill them to their entirety with the scent of her hair.

“Let’s not go to dinner,” he murmured. “Let’s just stay here.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! I'm very excited about the upcoming Blaise's-house-trip-slash-snakes-party. It's already been way too fun writing it so hopefully it's as fun to read! 😊

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 18: “I’ll miss you too.”

Chapter Notes

Today we have a little fluff before we get to Blaise’s. I just had to set up a few things first because *gasp* a micro-plot is emerging.

This picks up right where we left them in the last chapter.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione was perfectly content to curl up against Draco’s side and calm the racing of her heart. But once the sweat cooled and her breathing regulated, she found herself absolutely ravenous. She tried to extricate herself from his hold but he only tightened his arm around her waist with a little hum of disagreement.

“Draco,” she complained. “I’m starving. Let me nip down to the Great Hall, I’ll bring provisions back.”

“Just summon an Elf,” he suggested sleepily, face pressed down against the top of her head.

She scoffed. “I’ll do no such thing. I’m perfectly able to fetch my own dinner, which they’ve already slaved away over – *literally* – to prepare for me.”

“And you call *me* dramatic.”

She pinched his nipple and he yelped, head knocking down onto hers as he tried to shimmy away. She ducked out from under his arm and rolled to the floor rather less gracefully than she’d intended, laughing at his scandalized expression.

“I’ll come right back,” she promised, standing and heading to her bureau. “And I know you’re hungry too, so don’t act so put out.”

“Hm.” He shifted back against the pillows they’d returned to their proper place, tugging the sheets up until they were draped over his waist and rubbing a hand over his abused nipple.

Hermione had located a pair of jeans and was about to pull them on when she realized she was still wearing her Transfigured lingerie.

“Pass me my wand?” She asked, gesturing with her hand to where it was lying on the bed.

He nudged it with his foot, the sheets making a little slope down from his toes. Her wand rolled a few inches closer.

“Oh my god.” She marched over and snatched it up. “You are such a little prince.”

He chuckled, looking pleased that he’d goaded her so easily. “Does that make you my princess, then?”

She ignored him, unwilling to let him rile her up further. “Tell me why my *finite* didn’t de-spell my lingerie and I’ll get you pudding.”

His eyes raked over her, both hands tucked behind his head in a position of supreme repose. After a moment he ventured a guess. “Heimler’s Completeum Constant?”

Delight sparked in her chest, filling her stomach with a sudden kaleidoscope of butterflies. She loved an intelligent man.

“Got it in one.”

He flicked an eyebrow, pleased with himself. “You should submit it for extra credit.”

She scoffed, raising her wand to finally drop the Transfiguration with a murmured, “*Finite completeum*,” revealing a simple pair of blue knickers and dusky-rose bra. Draco made a little sound behind her, shifting on the bed, and she glanced over as she hoicked up her jeans.

“Alright back there?” She teased.

“I honestly can’t decide which set I like you in more,” he said contemplatively. “The fancy stuff was nice – *gorgeous* – but there’s something so sexy about you in your everyday knickers. It feels so...” He shivered theatrically. “*Naughty* to see you in them.”

She clicked her tongue at his performance. “Such a boy.”

"Well spotted." He made a shooping gesture. "Go on then. Bring me something with fruit and cream, hmm?"

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It felt funny to be walking to dinner alone after having had her blonde shadow stalking the halls with her all week, but Hermione couldn’t deny that having a moment alone sans the stress of exams was a tiny treat. She loved being around Draco — he was one of the only people she could properly study around, knowing he was just as engrossed in his work as she hers — but sometimes a girl just need a moment alone.

She had also realized an important question that his offhand suggestion had raised for her. She was of course aware that his family owned House-Elves but she hadn’t considered that going to Blaise’s might mean that she’d be in the home of another Wizarding family who did.

After her S.P.E.W. debacle with the Hogwarts Elves, she was aware that well-treated Elves enjoyed their posts, but after seeing how few regulations there were about the standard of living in private homes, and the utter lack of oversight by any sort of reputable organization, she was wary to believe that *every* Elf was just as content.

She wanted to be a respectful guest to the Zabini's, but she had her principles and would not condone poor treatment of any creature. She stewed over it as she made her way to the Gryffindor table on auto-pilot, slinging a leg over without paying much mind to her surroundings.

"Uh, hi Hermione."

She startled and looked up. Seamus was looking across the table at her with a bemused expression. She glanced to her left and saw Dean also smiling down at her like she'd finally lost the plot.

"Oh. Hi." She mentally shook herself.

Between the intense week of studying, even more intense session with Draco, and her fervent ruminations on her walk, she'd absently settled herself onto the bench in the middle of their conversation.

"Sorry. Just grabbing a plate to bring back to my room." She pulled a serving dish toward herself and heaped a few spoonfuls of mashed potatoes onto her plate. When she served herself three large pieces of chicken, Seamus laughed.

"Blimey, Hermione. Did you not eat lunch?"

"What?" She glanced up at him, reaching for a second plate and piling it with carrots.

"Ah." Dean made a noise of understanding. "So the rumors are true? We've seen you two together but there wasn't any...explicit confirmation."

She must have looked momentarily guilty because Seamus whistled.

"Oh shite, Hermione! Are you eating in your room because you have *company* there?" He was gleeful. "Merlin, I never thought I'd see the day!"

"For your information—" She clicked her fingers in the direction of the trifle and Dean obediently passed it over with a grin. She considered lecturing them about her private life and how much it wasn't their business, but it felt more effortsome than it was worth. So instead she just said: "Yes."

"Merlin's beard. And it's *Malfoy*?" hissed Seamus, sounding both scandalized and impressed.

She smirked as she collected up two sets of cutlery. "Mmhmm. *Malfoy* indeed."

"Ginny knows?" Dean confirmed. At Hermione's nod, he shrugged. "Well, then I won't bother with any protective stunts as I assume she has that well in hand. And obviously you're

a force to be reckoned with in your own right, so I'll just say I'm happy for you, Hermione."

She blinked, looking between the smiling Dean and dubiously-impressed Seamus. "Thanks, Dean. Seamus. I'm happy, too."

She considered not poking the bear but had never had success in curtailing her curiosity. "You really don't have any...thoughts or feelings about me being with Draco?"

The boys exchanged a glance. After a brief non-verbal exchange, Dean spoke for them. "It's a little bizarre, yeah, but anyone who's been around him can see he's changed. You weren't at the castle last year so you wouldn't know but he wasn't exactly... *compliant* with the regime."

Hermione's brows shot up in surprise. "Not compliant? What do you mean?"

Dean shrugged a shoulder. "Don't get me wrong, he didn't actively stop anything or stand up against Snape or even really *help* — nothing so rebellious as that — but he didn't participate either. After all his years of grandstanding about being, like, the sodding pinnacle of Purebloodedness and the heir to two ancient families, he should've been in his heyday. But he just..." Dean drifted off, looking to Seamus for the word.

"Existed," supplied the Irishman ruefully. "*Barely*. It was pretty gratifying, if I'm being honest. Good to see him reaping what he'd sowed."

Seamus immediately looked apologetic that he'd slandered Hermione's boyfriend right in front of her, but her mind was already on the implications of this revelation. Draco had been Marked by then, she thought. He'd been shown the reality of his choices in sharp relief and now it wasn't fun anymore.

It was real life.

Scary, terrible, wand-raising, kill-or-be-killed real life.

Hermione nodded slowly, mind picking up speed. There were so many things they hadn't discussed yet. She still wasn't sure she even *wanted* to rehash it all with him. She'd never been one for avoiding hard truths but there was something enticing about simply ignoring their past in favor of avoiding a fraught conversation.

Or twenty.

But she knew avoiding the hard topics forever wouldn't be sustainable. And she rather wanted things between them to sustain.

She levitated the plates and then reached for a goblet of pumpkin juice, standing to depart.

"Well." It was a little weird that her two friends knew she was going back to eat her meal in bed with Draco but there was nothing to do about it now. "I'll be off then. Thanks for the chat though. That was very illuminating."

“Tell him he’s a right lucky git for you to even look at him after all his arseholery!” Seamus called after her, eloquent as ever. “Bloody lucky!”

She rolled her eyes even though they couldn’t see but couldn’t hold off the smile. It was nice to be reminded that she still had platonic male friends at Hogwarts, even if Ron and Harry hadn’t returned with her.

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Draco was almost exactly as she’d left him, except that he’d gotten a book from somewhere. He looked up as she closed the door behind herself. She directed the plates over to the bed, half distracted by the unfair sight of him naked from the waist up and reading in her bed. Had he no *shame*?

He raised an eyebrow as she undid her jeans, closing the book and setting it on the side table without looking.

“I’m not going to sleep in jeans,” she told him wryly in response to his unasked question. “And I’m not getting back out of bed tonight.”

He grinned. “Excellent.” Then took inventory of the food she’d brought back. “Good showing here, Granger. Strawberry trifle even!”

He tugged the dish of layered pudding toward himself, fishing around in the sheets for a spoon amongst the handful of cutlery she’d tossed down. She crawled up onto the mattress beside him in her knickers and t-shirt; he lifted the sheet for her with his free hand and then tucked it up around her waist.

She had so many things on her mind to ask him about but forced herself to eat some dinner first, both to discourage an interrogation on her part and because she really did need the sustenance. By the time she’d put away a good portion, she’d isolated the most pertinent topic to broach.

He’d eaten alongside her in companionable silence, polishing off half of the strawberry trifle before putting it aside and switching to savory. He’d just pulled the trifle dish back towards himself when she cleared her throat, catching his eye.

“I have a question.” She paused for a quick inhale to steel herself. “House-Elves.”

Draco's brows dipped, nonplussed. “What about them?”

“You have them. Does Blaise?”

“My *parents* have them,” he corrected with emphasis. “But no, Blaise does not.”

That was not the response she’d been expecting. “He doesn’t? Why not?”

He ate a bite of the pudding slowly, expression thoughtful even as his tongue flicked out to capture a stray bit of cream from his lip. Finally he asked, “How many Pureblood homes have you been in?”

“Erm, the Weasleys, Grimmauld Place, Aberforth Dumbledore’s, the Lovegoods, Bathilda Bagshot’s...” It was almost the end of the list, but then she added. “And yours.”

He made a slight face at the last, though quickly corralled it. “That’s quite an eclectic mix, Granger. But it helps my point. How many had House-Elves?”

She considered this with a hum. “Just the Black family home, and yours.”

“Call it the Malfoy home, not *mine*.”

“Semantics.”

“Humor me.” He sent her a look and she capitulated with a nod. Fair enough if he didn’t want to claim the burden of that estate, though it was still his to bear.

“So what’s the dividing line? It can’t be just Slytherin families versus everyone else, surely.”

“No,” he agreed. “For example, the Longbottom’s have a long history of Elf ownership as well, which I see you’re surprised to learn. It usually takes someone willing to break the status quo to change the inheritance magic which binds Elves to the families. I’m sure Longbottom will be the last of his name to own them, assuming he hasn’t taken up the mantle from his grandmother already.”

“Why do you know so much about Neville?” She asked, completely distracted from the original topic.

“I don’t know anything about *Neville*. I know about the Longbottom family.” He scraped off the top layer of cream and ate it, then worked to carefully dislodge the next layer of strawberry-studded jelly.

“There’s a difference?” She nicked the trifle from him before he destroyed it completely. He sighed and folded his arms across his chest, watching as she spooned a bite.

“I know the family history — for most Pureblood lines, mind, not just his — but I don’t know the people themselves.”

“How interesting...” She could infer why this knowledge would be useful, particularly for the heir to a longstanding Slytherin family. It showed a level of both cunning and ambition to gather and hoard the knowledge of their peers.

“That’s one word for it.” He adjusted his legs under the sheets, pulling his further knee up and resting his wrist on it. “The Malfoy line gained our riches through exerting subtle — or not so subtle — influence via aggressive connection-making and the careful application of secrets, or simply the threat of revealing them.”

“So, networking and blackmail,” she interpreted dryly.

He smirked, looking at her askance. “Don’t sound surprised. You’ve met Lucius.”

She snorted. “Again, *met* is probably the wrong word.”

He sighed, leaning the crown of his head against the headboard. “Yeah.”

It wouldn’t do to innumerate all the times she’d interacted with his father, particularly those that had devolved into casting spells back and forth, so instead circled back to the original topic.

“So was that your convoluted way of saying that Blaise’s family *did* have House-Elves but he’s taken ownership and freed them?”

He smiled at the ceiling. “In a way. It was his mother, actually, who did away with the binding magic but as Blaise came into his inheritance at fifteen, it was technically under his reign. I’m sure he’d be happy to take credit for it.”

“So what then?”

He glanced down at her. “What’s my point, you mean?”

She nodded. He looked back at the ceiling.

“Just that you know a bit about Pureblood culture but perhaps only the extremes: Weasleys versus Malfoys.”

“And there’s a wealth of difference in between,” she inferred.

“Interesting choice of phrase.” He smirked, visibly preparing himself for her smack. She refused to be predictable and so withheld her instinctual swat. She’d get him later.

“So the Zabinis are somewhere in the middle?”

“Technically, there’s only one Zabini since Blaise’s mother remarried after his father died and he was already the last of his name. And *middle* isn’t exactly right — perhaps extremely upper middle. Blaise is slightly below the Notts and Parkinsons but above the Longbottoms and Greengrasses.”

Her mind boggled at how much unknown knowledge had been lying around, evading her attention. She didn’t care about the finances of other people’s families but the dynamics it wrought were certainly something of interest.

“And you’re top dog, are you?”

He compressed an amused smile at the phrasing. “Again, my *parents* are.”

His uncharacteristic insistence to separate from his family piqued her curiosity. She debated not prying but as it was the second time he’d emphasized it, she decided to outright ask.

“Have they disowned you?”

He looked at her, surprised. “What? No.”

“Are you planning to disown them?”

He looked away again but she saw his quiet acceptance of her questioning. “No. I love my parents.”

She sensed there was more. “But...?”

He sighed, frowning at his raised knee. “But the last few years have taken the shine off being a Malfoy. It’s trite but...I want to make something more of myself.”

Her chest tightened. “I don’t think that’s trite.”

His half smile showed some of his self-consciousness, but he braved eye contact when he flicked his gaze sideways to hers. “You might think so because you’ve always had that option. But I don’t think my parents would see it as a good thing.”

“Everyone has their own baggage that weighs them down,” she disagreed. “You have your last name and everything that comes with it. I have mine and everything it doesn’t.” She shrugged expansively. “Making a name for myself is a freedom, yes, but it also means I’ve had to fight for everything I’ve earned. Why do you think I’ve always worked so hard in school?”

“Nice try, but anyone with half an awareness of you knows it’s because you love it.”

She snorted. “Yes, that’s true as well. But I had to prove myself, especially after I inadvertently linked myself with ‘The Chosen One’. Being Harry’s Muggleborn sidekick had its own set of pressures.”

He made a low sound of interest. “I suppose you did bother Father more than, say, Justin Finch-Fletchly.”

“*Bother*,” she scoffed. “That’s a nice way of saying *inspired murder in*.”

She honestly hadn’t meant to bring it up but it had perhaps been a foolish hope. To his credit, Draco just sighed again and reached out for her hand. She squeezed his back and let the topic settle in the silence before deciding to lighten the mood.

“Shall we debrief?”

He tilted his head to look at her. “Debrief?”

“Everything we just did. It seemed like you liked it but...?”

He made an expression like he was trying not to grin, mouth twitching and eyes glittering, and said in an overly stoic tone, “Yeah, it was alright.”

“Prat.” She used their joined hands to bump his thigh. “You’re the one who started this all off by saying communication was important.”

“You’re so fun to tease though.” He let out a short laugh at her unimpressed expression and then sobered. “Yeah, okay. You’re right.” He cleared his throat. “You did a really good job. The position was comfortable, but I appreciated having options. You were thoughtful and careful and *so fucking sexy* I almost died. I want to do it again tomorrow.”

She flushed a little at his feedback, pride flaring hotly in her chest. She liked doing well.

“You’ll be at Blaise’s tomorrow,” she said with put-upon regret. “Though maybe he’ll be just as good?”

“Cheeky.” He squeezed her fingers.

She squeezed back. “Really though, I’m glad. Thank you. And then any final thoughts on anything I called you?”

“I liked sweetheart,” he said hesitantly. His cheeks pinked a little and she had to bite her lip to stop the fond smile, in case it embarrassed him. “But probably only in bed.”

“I feel the same about baby. I liked it quite a bit in context but maybe not in general settings?”

“Sure.” He adjusted his hand to intertwine their fingers. “Whatever you want, baby.”

She melted, just a tiny bit.

“So sweetheart receives a thumbs up from you,” she summarized, “But only in bed. And ditto for me with baby. You also called me love, which I think I feel neutrally about at present. Maybe try it again later? When it’s closer to true and not just a common British term of endearment.”

She suddenly realized what she’d implied — that one day he might *love* her — and felt her entire body burn with embarrassment at her presumption.

Mercifully, he just nodded agreeably, entirely unfazed. “Will do.”

She went on hurriedly. “So, any other names you’ve thought of? For me to call you, I mean?”

“I still haven’t heard *handsome sex god*,” he suggested, waggling his brows.

She tutted and slid over to straddle him, hands on his shoulders. “Oh, how neglectful of me.” Her voice dipped down a register, going sultry. “How ever shall I make it up to you, oh handsome sex god?”

“Mmm now we’re talkin’,” he drawled, hands squeezing her hips. “Feel free to use that one in public.”

She kissed his smirk off. When his lips diverted to her neck, she considered other endearments she’d read about in various romance novels. It was rather hard to think of things to call him, unless...

“If you call me baby, maybe I could call you...daddy?”

His reaction was immediate.

His mouth twisted as he pulled back from her neck, head shaking. “Ick. Absolutely *not*.”

“Why not?” She didn’t want to admit what saying it to him had done to her (it hadn’t turned her *off*, that was for certain) but she could acknowledge he probably had a fraught relationship with Lucius and perhaps—

“Because it reminds me of Blaise.”

She blinked. “Why does the word *daddy* remind you of *Blaise*?”

Oh fuck, there she went again. This was not good for her poor knickers. What was *wrong* with her?

“Theo called him Daddy as a joke once and it, unfortunately, stuck. It’s the worst when he uses it to refer to himself; truly, I die a little bit each time.”

“Alright, fine,” she relented, letting a little of her disappointment show. “I won’t call you daddy.”

Out loud, she added to herself. It was hardly a demeaning name so she didn’t feel *too* guilty about her plans to moan it (experimentally, of course) in her head.

He kissed her. “Thank you. The last thing I need is Blaise and Theo in my head at an inopportune moment.”

“Understandable.” If she was ever made to think about Harry or Ron during sex, she’d probably lose her libido entirely, too.

“But if you wanted to try calling *me* baby sometime, that might be nice,” he suggested, a little shyly.

She cupped his jaw and stroked his fine cheekbones. “Yeah? Okay. I can do that.”

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Hermione awoke curled around Draco. He’d stayed over both because it had gotten late when they’d finally stopped talking and because he planned to head to Blaise’s after breakfast so they’d wanted to extend their time together. She stood by her decision to spend the next four days reading and enjoying some alone time, but wasn’t looking forward to seeing him off.

She slid her arm further up his torso, snuggling even closer against his back. His skin was bed-warm and soft under her lips where she pressed them to his shoulder.

“Good morning,” she whispered, eyes still shut.

“Mmph.” She felt the low sound he made through her palm on his chest.

She smiled at his sleepy response and stroked her hand lazily across his chest while he slowly woke up. After a few minutes he rolled over, tucking his chin on top of her head and hugging his arms around her. He inhaled deeply and then pulled her close.

“Read fast,” he murmured. “Come to Blaise’s any time.”

She smiled against his chest, then raised her face to press her lips to his.

“I’ll miss you too.”

## Chapter End Notes

Blaise’s house next!

(Also was I eating my mum’s strawberry trifle while I wrote this? Nah definitely not 😊)

Thank you for reading 💕💕

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# Chapter 19: “Hermione Granger. So he wasn’t lying.”

## Chapter Notes

Time to enter 🐍 The Snakes Lair 🐍

And just to mentally prepare you all, I have approximately four chapters written or partially written in this setting so...we'll be here for awhile 😂😎

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione made it until Tuesday morning before she seriously considered altering her plans and heading to Blaise’s early.

She’d devoured a book and a half by Sunday afternoon and had even been directed to a second on centaur-human cohabitation when gushing to Madam Pince about the new Ursula release.

Ginny had finally found her on Sunday evening to say goodbye before she left for The Burrow, reiterating the open invitation for Hermione to join her. Hermione had declined, citing her own plans.

“*Blaise Zabini’s?*” Ginny had repeated, eyes wide. “That’s unexpected.”

“I’m not exactly sure what I’ve gotten myself into,” Hermione had admitted. “But it can’t be worse than what we’ve already braved, can it?”

Ginny tilted her head contemplatively. “Probably not. If nothing else, at least you’ll have some handsome eye-candy to subside on during your torment.”

Hermione had sighed longingly. “I know. I miss him. Ugh, is that pathetic? It’s only been a day and a half.”

“I wasn’t talking about *Malfoy*,” was Ginny’s mischievous response.

After Ginny left, Hermione spent the evening with Neville and Luna for company, chatting idly in the common room while each attended to their own interests. Hermione sat on the sofa with a book on her lap with Neville at a nearby table pruning what appeared to be a completely non-magical bonsai, while Luna sat cross-legged on the floor, stringing pretty sparkly beads into a necklace.

“Where’s Malfoy this week?” Neville asked, breaking a lull in the conversation.

Hermione looked up from her book. “Oh. He went to Blaise Zabini’s. I’m actually heading there myself in a few days.”

Neville looked surprised for a moment but then nodded to himself. “I suppose once we’ve graduated, things like our Hogwarts House won’t mean much. Not that it really means much this year, anyway.”

He glanced over at Luna with a smile. She was humming to herself, sorting beads and ignoring them. He looked back to Hermione.

“So things are getting serious with him?”

She nodded, fingering the corner of the pages. “I think so. They are for me, anyway.” She laughed self-consciously. “I know it’s only been a few weeks but I really like him.”

“That’s really nice, Hermione.” Neville smiled warmly at her. “I’m glad you’ve found someone. I’ll admit I thought it was a strange choice at first but you two really do work well together.”

She was touched. “Thanks, Nev.”

He went back to clipping at his bonsai, the tiny scissors looking even smaller in his large hands. She considered Draco’s offer for her to invite friends to Blaise’s for the Friday evening party.

“Nev,” she said, recapturing his attention. “Would you want to come to Blaise’s on Friday night? He’s having a party and Draco said I could bring friends.” She quickly glanced over at Luna, not wanting to be rude. “You too, Luna.”

“A snakes party?” Neville said dubiously.

“A *party* party,” Hermione insisted. “I’ll be there, obviously. And I was thinking of asking Harry, Ron, and Ginny too. We’d outnumber the ‘snakes’.”

He chuckled. “Yeah, alright. Sounds fun.”

“Thanks, Hermione,” said Luna, tying off her necklace. “I’d love to come to a party.”

“Great!” Hermione already felt more excited by the prospect. “I’ll get you his Apparation address. And I suppose I should write to the Weasleys and Harry.”

She hadn’t yet told Ron and Harry that she was dating Draco and though she would have preferred not to do it in a letter, found the distance actually to her benefit. The last thing she wanted was a lecture or, Merlin forbid, an inflammatory response. Perhaps reading it in a carefully drafted letter would make the news more palatable for them.

At the very least, it would at least give them a cooling off period before she had to hear what they thought about it. She resolved to write to them in the morning. Ginny’s presence at The Burrow was a godsend; if anyone could make those boys see reason, it was her.

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Hermione maintained her plans to wait until Wednesday, mostly because she didn't want to interrupt any boys time that Draco may be enjoying and because she was still awaiting a response from Harry and didn't want to send his owl all the way down to England searching for her if she left Scotland early.

Luckily, his owl found her at breakfast on Wednesday morning, bringing with it his agreement to attend the party and a rather moderated reaction to her chosen beau. Apparently Ginny had had the influence Hermione'd hoped for. Indeed, the redhead's own reply to Hermione's invitation had been unreserved excitement alongside a rather inappropriate comment about their host.

The most surprising response of all had been Ron's, delivered alongside Ginny's. Rather than the Howler she'd half expected from him, his response had been succinct and oddly positive. He wasn't exactly *enthused* about her relationship with 'Malfoy' but he maintained that '*the war changed a lot of perspectives*' and '*without knowing someone was a Slytherin, it's harder to see the difference outside of school*'. It was a bizarrely insightful response and she half wondered if he'd been tipsy when he'd written it. Ron was prone to melancholic, romantic musings when down a pint or two.

No matter what, she made plans for a proper thank you for Ginny.

After a late breakfast, Hermione grabbed her weekender bag and said goodbye to Neville and Luna before walking down the grounds to the gate. She'd decided to stop by London on her way south so as soon as she was free of the anti-Apparition spells, she pictured her destination and Disapparated with a crack.

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It was just after four o' clock when she materialized at the address Draco had written down for her. It was sunnier down south but being so close to the mouth of the sea added a breeze that tempered the warmth.

She took in her surroundings. She was standing on a narrow road about halfway up a modest hill, houses lining just the river-side edge. Beyond them, she could see the docks and businesses of Southampton across the water. Right in front of her was what she assumed to be Blaise's house, though it was much less ostentatious than she'd anticipated: a single level, nicely architected and painted a clean white with a well-kept front garden. It gave the subtle impression of wealth in a way that she found rather in good taste.

As she opened the low front gate and made her way up the path to the front door, nerves gathered with each step. Perhaps the friendly, cottage-like facade was merely a trick to lull her into a false sense of calm and she was in for several days of being sneered at by his friends? Surely he'd have sent word if he'd gotten a sense that she wouldn't be welcome...

But there was no time for feebleness now. She inhaled a quick breath, shook out her hands, and took up the fox-head knocker to rap smartly on the door.

She hoped that Draco would be the one to greet her, assuming he hadn't forgotten that he'd invited her, so was doubly surprised when the door wasn't opened by him nor Blaise, but by a blue-eyed, dark haired man. She blinked, suddenly fearing she'd gotten the wrong house, but then it clicked.

Theodore Nott.

Son of yet another Death Eater who had tried to eviscerate her in the Department of Mysteries. She'd actually hurt Nott Sr. rather badly that day, if she recalled correctly.

Shit.

"Erm, hello," she ventured.

He tilted his head. "Hermione Granger. So he wasn't lying."

"If you mean Draco, then no, he wasn't. Well, maybe he was. I suppose it depends on what he's said." She shook herself internally at the vapid response but Theo only grinned.

He opened the door fully, stepping back and sweeping his arm inward. "Come in, come in. The boys are out back."

She stepped over the threshold and her jaw dropped. As she'd suspected, the front aspect of the house had been a cobra in the leaves — or, more accurately, a plain white skirt over a sexy pair of knickers; the interior wasn't a trap laying in wait to bite as much as it was an unexpectedly brilliant surprise.

As she stepped in, she was accosted immediately by the view. The foyer gave way to an expansive, sunken lounge with floor to ceiling windows that showcased the river and sweeping hills both this side and beyond in a way which made her feel as if she were standing right in front of them. It was expertly framed as to mostly block the commercial bustle of Southampton where it lay upstream to the left.

She hadn't intended to walk to the windows but found herself practically nose-to-glass when she peered down to see what lay beyond. Below was a lower deck which housed a pool and covered outdoor gathering space. She realized that the front of the home was merely the street-level portion and the body of the house evidently disappeared covertly down the hillside.

As she watched, a hand extended just past the concealment of the cream-colored canopy to set a glass on a nearby side table, the ice inside catching the sunlight and sparkling invitingly

up at her.

She knew that hand.

She turned back to Theo, who was waiting for her with hands in his trouser pockets, expression politely amused. She blushed a little at her awestruck reaction to what was probably a normal experience to him and cleared her throat, making her way back over to him. He cocked his head toward a set of stairs to his left.

“Shall we?”

The wood of the stairs was a rich, deep tone, smooth even through the soles of her shoes. Theo led her down and around, through an even larger second lounge area with hallways branching both directions and to the back of the house where glass-paned louver doors made up the majority of the wall. She spotted the kitchen through a large opening to the left but Theo had already opened the single door portion of the retractable wall, so she didn’t dawdle.

“Salazar, you took your time.” Blaise’s distinct baritone welcomed Theo’s arrival. “Wait, you didn’t even bring the book? What were you doing up there?”

“Collecting something much more interesting,” Theo replied as Hermione joined him outside on the deck.

Blaise ran his eyes over her in a calculating, curious look that had her feeling like he was an art dealer and she a piece of art he was considering the merit of. She couldn’t immediately tell if his appraisal was negative or positive. Blaise kept himself close, she thought; a foil to the open delight now gracing Theo’s face as Draco turned in the cushioned chair to see what his friend was on about. Her attention snapped to him instantly, watching as the side of his mouth rose into a pleased smile when he saw her, brow lifting along with it.

“Hello there, Granger.” His voice curled through her. Fuck, she’d missed his voice.

“Hi Draco,” she returned. Then, not to be rude, forced her eyes across the space to Blaise. “Hello Blaise. Thank you for having me. You have a beautiful home.”

Blaise’s mouth twitched like he was fighting a bigger reaction but he simply inclined his head. Draco stood and rounded the chair. He was the most casually dressed she’d ever seen him in a public setting: his shirt a plain black long sleeve t-shirt pushed to his elbows, his trousers well tailored as always but sans belt. And Merlin, was he *barefoot*?

His focus was intent on her in a way that had anticipation surging through her, but when he reached her he simply reached to take her bag from her.

She looked down. “Oh! It’s not heavy.”

“Featherlight charm?” He asked once he’d felt the almost weightlessness of the weekend.

“Of course.”

He smirked at her tone, one she usually paired with an eye roll though she'd restrained herself from it this time. His expression hinted that he'd visualized her doing it anyway.

"I'll show you to your room," offered Theo from just behind her. She glanced back automatically but then turned back to Draco.

"Oh, aren't I sharing with you?" She asked him.

"Ha!" He said, and she startled until she realized his exclamation had been directed toward his friends. "I *told* you."

He faced her again. "They didn't believe me. They said you'd be coming here either against your will — which is *so* fucking rude to suggest, by the way. Does my trauma mean *nothing* to you, you cad?"

"Or...?" She prompted.

He refocused from where he'd begun to berate the now-smirking Blaise.

"Or as a misguided *friend*." He now shot a look over her shoulder to Theo.

To be fair, even a month ago she would have been surprised to find herself meeting up with Draco Malfoy at Blaise Zabini's house, willingly or not.

But it wasn't a month ago.

She hummed. "I see. Well, hopefully this clears it up for them."

She stepped into Draco's space and went up on the balls of her feet to rake her hand through his hair, pulling him down and kissing him firmly. He grunted against her mouth in surprise but was quick to wrap his free arm around her middle. She heard the muffled thud of her bag hitting the wooden decking and then his other arm was gliding up her back into her hair to cradle her head. She curled her other hand over his shoulder, deepening the kiss with a quickly-welcomed sweep of her tongue. He tasted like quinine and lime and *Draco*.

She wanted to drag him to the nearest surface and utterly defile it, but intended to make a slightly more decorous first (proper) impression with his friends, so instead she closed her teeth gently over his lower lip, tugging slightly as she drew back, then smiled up at him with naked affection.

"Hi Draco," she told him sweetly. "I missed you."

Draco appeared to have misplaced his wits and sought for them with greedy eyes along her mouth and cheeks and throat. She let him look and turned a pointed gaze to the onlookers. Blaise raised a solitary brow in acknowledgement of a point well made but Theo looked incandescent.

"Oh, I *like* you. He needs someone to be brave for him. And now that I've seen it — excellent demonstration, by the way — I can tell that you two together just..." He interlocked



his hands together, held aloft like the resulting fist was a meaningful symbol. *Fit*, was perhaps his implication.

“We do,” she agreed firmly.

“So how’d you break the news to your Gryffindor posse?” Theo looked eager for the drama of it, eyes sparkling as he looked between them.

“Er...” She glanced back at Draco, who’d regained enough of himself to offer her a smug smirk. “The same way, actually. Snogged him in the Common Room.”

Blaise snorted and Theo whooped.

“Hoo! I wish I’d been there to see the looks on Potter and Weasley’s faces.” He maneuvered behind Draco to sink onto the outdoor sofa beside Blaise.

“They weren’t there, so actually, you’ll be able to,” she said, eyes flicking back to Draco’s. “I invited them to come here on Friday. I hope that’s alright.”

“Of course,” he assured her. “I meant it when I said you could invite anyone.”

She bit her lip, an action he tracked rather hungrily, then admitted, “Good. Because I went a bit rogue and also asked Ginny, Luna, and Neville.”

“The more the merrier,” trilled Theo. “We need some fresh faces around this place. It gets rather dull seeing the same four day in and day out.”

Hermione surmised that these belonged to Blaise, Draco, and Pansy, but wasn’t quite sure who the fourth was. Goyle, perhaps? How strange would that be, to share a drink with Draco and Goyle alongside Ron and Harry. Utterly, utterly bizarre.

“Come on, I’ll show you where our room is.” Draco bent to retrieve her bag and then gestured her toward the house.

“See you in ten minutes!” Theo jeered after them. “Fifteen tops!”

She flushed a little at the implication but beyond a quick rude gesture over his shoulder, Draco ignored him, guiding her through the door and then to the hallway that branched off to the right of the stairs. He stopped halfway along, reaching around to twist the doorknob and then push open the door for her.

The room was probably nice but at the present moment, she couldn’t have been less interested in the interior design. She turned and wrapped her arms around his neck instantly, kissing him again.

“I missed you,” she confessed against his mouth. “I didn’t think I’d miss you as much as I did but...I really, *really* missed you.”

He tugged her with him until his back was against the wall beside the door. “I missed you too,” he told her, hands coming up to cradle her jaw. He inhaled slowly as he took her in.

“Is it bad form to have sex in your friend’s house?” She asked, eyes on his mouth.

Draco snorted. “It’s a bit late if it is.”

*What the fuck?* Her brows furrowed, eyes darting up to his. “What is *that* supposed to mean?”

He observed her muted outrage with a grin, perhaps enjoying the little spark of possessiveness her reaction had indicated.

Sod it — she *did* feel possessive of him. Having been without him for four days had hammered home, rather uncomfortably, just how much she liked him.

“It means,” he drawled. “That even if it’s the worst social faux-pas known to man, there’s no way you’re leaving this room unfucked.”

“*Draco*,” she scolded, but had to press her lips together lest she reveal her grin.

“Mm, that’s a good start.” He coasted his hands down to her arse and groaned as he squeezed. “I’ll have you moaning it soon.”

She scoffed but leaned in. “I’m not sure if you’ve noticed, but you’re the one who’s pressed against the wall,” she told him primly.

“So do something about it.” He dipped down to nose at her jaw.

She stopped him with a hand in his hair and he chuckled, breath warm against her skin. She took advantage of his proximity to flick her own tongue against his neck and then nipped and mouthed at his skin. She could smell the mix of his cologne and shampoo, could feel the warmth of his skin, his temperature already rising. He always got so hot in bed, his blood surging close to the surface like every part of him wanted to be nearer to her.

She felt a similar urge now.

Her fingers dipped under the hem of his shirt, pulling it up until he got the hint and tugged it off from behind his head. She didn’t waste a moment, hands immediately gliding along his chest and down his stomach to his trousers. He went to help her but she batted his hands away, undoing the button and dragging down the zip herself. She could feel how hard he was already, his cock pressing back against her knuckles as she tugged his trousers open.

“Are we going to do this against the wall?” he asked. “Or can I take you to bed?”

She slid her hand into his briefs and squeezed his erection, feeling herself absolutely liquify at the feeling of him. He groaned, head dropping to her shoulder. She could tell he was watching her hand so gave him a slow, twisting stroke. She felt his slow exhale against her collarbones.

“Bed,” she agreed.

He lifted his head and kissed her, slanting his mouth over hers and sliding his tongue hotly into her mouth. She whimpered around the invasion, pulling her hand off his cock so she

could wrap both around his neck as he walked them backward.

He crushed her under him, the duvet so fluffy it encased her so all she could see was him and the ceiling beyond. She closed her eyes and let him consume her, wiggling until her thighs were open to him, regretting fervently that she'd worn jeans. He saw to it quickly, rearing back on his knees to quickly strip her of her trousers and knickers in one, tossing them to the floor and immediately pushing her shirt up and off her. He tugged her bra down and licked her nipple into his mouth, tongue toying with the sensitive bud while his teeth scraped around her areola.

For a moment, her mind just...stopped, reduced to a low hum.

"Jesus, I've missed the sounds you make," he murmured, moving to her other breast, and she realized the noise had been her.

He reached behind and flicked her bra open, tugging it down enough so that she was fully exposed to his mouth. She arched under him, pressing as close as she could. He was still in his trousers but when she pushed her fingers urgently against the waistband, he worked them down and kicked them off.

His cock was heavy in her hand, solid and hot and already leaking at the tip. It made her mouth water, and that physical reaction alone made her desperate for him.

"Fuck me," she pleaded. "Please fuck me."

"Yeah? You need me?" He kissed down her throat, sucked hard on the spot he knew drove her wild.

She squeezed his cock in an instinctive mirroring of her cunt and felt the vibrations of his resounding groan against her skin, goosebumps skittering along her and tightening her nipples to the point of aching. He let her align him with her entrance but then collected her hands up in his, intertwining their fingers on either side of her head.

"I'm gonna fuck you now, princess," he told her. "You ready?"

It occurred to her then that neither of them had actually touched between her legs yet but she knew, without having to check, that she was absolutely dripping for him.

"Yes," she promised, canting her hips up so that he just barely slipped inside. Even that was enough to make her flutter. "Oh fuck."

He squeezed her hands and thrust forward, pushing into her in a single, steady motion. She hadn't come since he'd left her and certainly hadn't had anything inside her. The stretch made her eyes flutter and when he dragged out to slide home again, she whimpered.

"Feel fucking incredible," he muttered against her shoulder, where he'd dropped his head. "Jesus *Christ*. So good."

"Faster." She tried to work her hips against his but he was heavy on her, stronger by double.

He huffed a laugh, sounding half wrecked already. “So demanding. You *have* missed me, hmm?”

She squeezed his hands and tried to squirm under him, but he didn’t let her move, trapping her under him while he gradually drew his hips back and then sank into her again, slow and so deep.

“Oh my *god*.” She couldn’t decide if she was about to come or if his teasing was going to drive her crazy by *not* getting her there. “Roll us over.”

He made a low sound of disagreement but she’d made her mind up and would not be denied.

“C’mon baby,” she purred, letting a little of her petulant whine seep into it. “Let me ride you. I want your hands on me while I take your cock.”

“*Christ*.” He thrust into her hard, *finally*, but only once. She almost complained again but then he was adjusting them to flip over, rolling under her and pulling her up onto his lap. She reoriented herself and then picked up the pace instantly.

“Oh fuck.” He tried to slow her down but she caught his hands and pulled them to her breasts instead. “Shit. I’m already too close.”

Pride zinged through her.

“We’ve only just started, Draco,” she teased him, dropping a hand to her clit and working herself in cadence with her rhythm on him. She couldn’t deny she was already close herself but would never miss an opportunity to torment him.

“Normally I can go months in between and still...*nnggh*...perform adequately,” he panted, palming her. “But fuck...four days without you and I feel like I’m fifteen again. Fuck. You’ve...*oh fuck*...you’ve broken me.”

“I like you like this,” she decided. “I would never have guessed babbling incoherence to be a turn on, but yet again you’ve proven me wrong.”

He groaned through a laugh, hands tightening around her breasts again.

“Gods, please come,” he begged. “Please come so I can.”

“Play with my nipples,” she told him, one hand braced on his chest and the other making tight circles over her clit as she started to bounce lightly on him. “And you’ll make me come.”

She could tell how close he was by the utter absence of movement below her. He was holding himself back while she fucked herself on him, likely sure that any overly active participation on his end would devolve into fervent thrusting and the point of no return.

The thought of him being so close to losing it after only having been inside her for a handful of minutes drove her mindless with lust. His hands on her breasts, fingers sweeping across her nipples, pinching and tugging at them, helped her right along.

“Oh god,” she whined, feeling the first uncontrollable clutches of her orgasm. “I’m right there, baby. You’re gonna make me come.”

“Shit.” His hips bucked up under her on reflex and the added force hurtled her closer.

“Again,” she begged, snatching his hands off her breasts and matching his earlier position by holding them down by his head, fingers half-woven in her haste. “Come on, baby. Fuck me ‘til I come on you.”

“*Jesus fucking Christ*, woman.” He bent his knees for leverage and let go, pounding up into her.

She’d gotten herself close enough that she knew she’d come in seconds, even without her clit directly stimulated. Her cunt was squeezing around him and she leaned into it, letting it overtake her. At the last second, she remembered she was in someone else’s house with regular wooden walls, not stone, and they hadn’t done anything about noise control, so muffled her moans as best she could, pressing her lips together as she came hard.

“That feel good, princess?” He panted, not letting up. “That what you needed?” And then he hissed in a sharp breath. “Oh fuck. Gonna come.”

She kissed him, gliding her tongue along his in an open-mouthed, breathless kiss. He moaned into her mouth, hands squeezing hers as he pulsed deep inside her. She kissed him through it until they were just panting against each other’s mouths. He tugged his hands free and then wrapped his arms around her, hugging her close.

“Damn, Granger,” he breathed.

“Princess,” she corrected, smiling against his cheek. “I liked princess.”

“Yeah? Good. That’s what you are.” He exhaled and smoothed his hands down her spine. “I liked baby.”

“I could tell.” She pressed a kiss to his cheek and then slid off to the side. “Merlin. This is the softest bed I’ve ever been on. This house is *fancy*.”

He ran his hands down his face and then up into his hair. “Wait until you see the bathroom.”

She nuzzled down, savoring the few minutes of sedate sleepiness that sex brought her before her brain kicked back into high gear. The pillow smelled like him, mixed with something unfamiliar. A different laundry detergent maybe. She wondered absently who did Blaise’s washing for him, if not an Elf.

“Does Blaise live here alone?” she asked.

“Mhmm, although Theo is here most of the time. Blaise bought this place last year after his mother met her current husband and moved up to Leeds.”

“Quite the bachelor pad.”

He snorted. "He certainly thinks so."

They lay quietly for a moment and Hermione slowly took in the rest of the room: light blue walls, cream-colored drapes, two doors on the left wall and a bureau on the opposite side, a few of Draco's belongings resting on top.

"Which one is the bathroom?" She asked at last.

"On the right."

She heaved a sigh and rolled to her feet, trotting to the right-hand door and slipping inside. The bathroom was gorgeous, a perfect compliment to the bedroom. White quartz, gold hardware and taps, dark slate floors that felt warm beneath her feet, plush towels the surprising color of bougainvilleas. A *massive* tub.

She let herself into the private toilet room then washed her hands and wet a flannel to dab between her legs. When she returned to the bedroom, Draco was dressed and unpacking her bag into the bureau.

"Oh! You didn't have to do that." She found her knickers and pulled them on, her bra following.

"Only took a minute," he said, then held up his hand, a pair of notorious blue knickers dangling from his forefinger. "Plus now I know these are in play."

She tugged on her jeans. "You must know I never go *anywhere* without those," she joked.

"You don't know the spell," he said, sounding only half sure.

"I don't," she agreed. "Lucky you're here, isn't it?"

He flicked a brow but put the knickers away without comment, sliding the drawer shut and setting her empty bag beside the furniture. He tossed her toiletries pouch onto the mattress for her to reach.

She smiled up at him, heart clenching at just how much she liked him. "Thank you."

He returned the smile, sliding his hands into his pockets. "It's good to have you here."

## Chapter End Notes

I'll probably be posting updates every 3-4 days since I have a lot pre-written and you guys know how I get when that's the case 🙄

Also for anyone hoping for Malfoy-related anger/ drama by Ron, sowwy. I lean the direction of Book Ron (not Movie Ron) and he always seemed more insightful,

strategic, and overall a better friend than he was portrayed in the movies.  
But that's not to say Ron doesn't have something up his sleeve! 🧐

As always, thank you so much for reading and commenting 🥰

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🖐️

## Chapter 20: She admired the dedication to aesthetics.

### Chapter Notes

Today we have a little bonding and rapport to get Hermione further integrated.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

They righted themselves fully and then ventured back into the hallway.

“They’re either outdoors or in the kitchen,” Draco said, leading the way. “I don’t hear them playing billiards and that’s really the only three things we do here.”

As they entered the lounge, she heard Blaise and Theo’s voices but as the billiards table further off to the right was indeed unoccupied, they carried on through to the kitchen.

Theo was perched on a stool at the kitchen island, twirling the stem of a wine glass in his fingers while Blaise stood the other side, working amidst a collection of bowls and culinary detritus. It smelled phenomenal in the kitchen, garlicky and lemony.

“They live!” Theo cheered, raising his glass. “Did Draco show you all the amenities, Hermione?” His blue eyes sparkled with mischief.

“Manners, Theodore,” cooed Blaise, smirking over at them. “At least get the lady a drink before you pry.”

“Ah, of course.” Theo turned his stool, propping a long leg against the floor while the other rested on the footrest. He appraised her with pursed lips and narrowed eyes. “You seem like you prefer something crisp. Sharp on the tongue but lingering on the palate. Floral nose, fruity finish.”

“Such a fucking show off,” muttered Draco while Blaise chortled. “He takes *one* class and spouts off like a Master sommelier.”

Hermione tilted her head at Theo. He’d been quite accurate, when it came down to it. “I didn’t realize you’d formed opinions about my drinking preferences,” she said with a lift of her brow.

“Was I off the mark?” he inquired, raising a brow in return.

She smiled. “No. That sounds lovely, thank you.”



He hummed and stood, walking to an adjacent butler's pantry and stooping to retrieve a bottle from the wine fridge therein. Draco pressed her forward with light fingertips so she walked up until she could slide onto a stool, watching Blaise use kitchen tongs to toss spaghetti in a bowl until it was well coated with indeterminate flecks of green and yellow.

"That smells wonderful," she said, breathing deeply. "What is it?"

"Grated courgette, onion, a little lemon juice and zest." Blaise said, putting down the tongs and unwrapping a wedge of hard cheese. "A pinch of porcini salt, a few cracks of black pepper, and now some Parmigiano-Reggiano to finish."

For some reason, she hadn't quite cottoned on that *Blaise* had been the one preparing the meal in its entirety. She knew he didn't have House-Elves but even Molly cooked mostly by magic. She watched with fresh eyes as Blaise retrieved a microplane from a drawer, nudging it shut with a practiced bump of his hip.

"Wait, you *made* this?" She hadn't meant to blurt it out so incredulously but the sight of Blaise Zabini surrounded by the tools of domesticity was breaking her brain. "I didn't know you could cook."

Blaise palmed the wedge of cheese in preparation for grating it. "Respectfully, Granger, but you don't know shit about me."

"Oi," warned Draco but the look Blaise shot her over the microplane was almost cheeky so she didn't take offense. She watched the wispy curls of cheese fall into the steaming bowl, melting practically on contact.

"Fair enough," she said agreeably. "And ditto, by the way. So let's get to know one another."

"Brilliant idea!" Theo passed her a glass of wine, so pale it was almost clear. She took it happily, offering him a smile of thanks for both the drink and his enthusiasm for her suggestion. "I know *I'm* bursting with questions for you."

Hermione raised curious brows at him as she sipped the wine. It was delicious, so she took a bigger sip.

"Yum," she said first, raising her glass to him, and then crossed her legs at the knee to sit up tall. "Go ahead. I *love* questions. I almost always have the answer."

Draco snorted, palm skating down from her shoulder to her waist as he pulled her back to lean against his chest. She held up her wine glass, offering him a taste. He took it.

"Fuck, you two are adorable." Theo leaned against the counter watching them. "Is Draco a good boyfriend?"

She laughed. "You're wasting a question on that?"

He cocked his head. "Do I have a limit?"

She regained her glass and had another sip. She always got exceptionally playful when drinking wine. Her memories of imbibing were all fond: Christmas dinner with her parents, the ratio of water to wine slowly decreasing as she grew up; a glass of something much too sweet on New Years at The Burrow; the glass of deep red – the fanciest she'd ever had – at Bill and Fleur's wedding. *Before*.

She was looking forward to making fresh memories now. *After*.

"You can ask me five questions and then it's my turn," she decided.

"Ooh, alright." Theo took up his stool, leaving an empty one between them, and turned on it to face her. "Is Draco a good boyfriend?"

She laughed at his impish grin.

"The best," she said firmly. "The absolute *best*."

"He's blushing," Theo stage-whispered, leaning in. "He's so difficult to embarrass normally. I think I love you."

She felt Draco's long-suffering sigh but he'd squeezed her hip affectionately at her answer so she couldn't help but tease him a little.

"I do find it quite easy to get a reaction out of him," she mused coyly and smirked at Theo's delighted laugh, wiggling as Draco prodded her in the ribs in a facsimile of a reprimand.

"Oh, you are *fun*. I've forgotten how bold Gryffindors can be. No subterfuge or half-revealed truths with you lot."

"Known many Gryffindors?" she asked, surprised.

He cocked his head. "That an official question?" He held up his hand, trilling his five fingers meaningfully.

"Ah. No, I suppose not." She sipped her wine again, indicating he go on with his turn.

"Alright kids. Dinner's ready," Blaise said, taking down four bowls from the open shelving behind him. He began dishing up, swirling the pasta into neat little piles. She admired the dedication to aesthetics.

"*Kids*," repeated Theo. "As if I'm not two and a half months older than you."

"And Granger's older than *both* of you," put in Draco as they made their way over to the table.

"It's a state of mind," Blaise retorted, drawing his wand and sending the bowls and a loaf of oven-warmed bread to the nearby kitchen table. He flicked his wand over the cooking implements, sending them to the sink to wash themselves and acknowledged Hermione's interested attention with a chuckle. "I don't do *everything* by hand."

“Well no matter what, we all know that Draco is the *baby*.” Theo’s emphasis made Hermione instantly self-conscious. She hasn’t been *that* loud, had she?

Draco, astute as ever, pulled her chair out and leaned down to murmur, “It’s a long-standing joke, don’t worry.”

She shot him a grateful look and did her best to believe him.

The kitchen table was located by the back windows overlooking the view. By the table, the wall that divided the kitchen from the lounge was made of red brick, a rather homey contrast to the white walls and onyx black floor tiles of the kitchen proper. Along with the soft rug under her bare toes, it gave the space a sense of enclosure and intimacy.

Hermione sat beside Draco with the other boys across from them, marveling privately at how low-key the ambiance felt. She’d feared endless place settings and grandiose rooms intended to both impress and intimidate dinner guests. Instead, she was treated with the sight of Blaise leaning an elbow on the table and Theo using his own knife to spread butter on a slice of bread. She was beginning to realize that Draco had been right. She’d been bracing herself for what the interior of Malfoy Manor had implied about the upper echelon of Wizarding society but was already seeing that it was much more nuanced than that.

“I’ve thought of my next question,” Theo announced after a few minutes. “If you’re amenable to supertime interrogation.”

She nodded, swallowing her bite of pasta. “By all means.”

“What was the first magic you ever did?” He immediately held up a forefinger to delay her answer, adding. “I mean, pre-Hogwarts.”

“Are you asking how I knew I was a witch?” She eyed him over her glass as she raised it to take a sip. He inclined his head, mouth now full of bread.

No one had ever asked her that before. McGonagall had known by some method other than a conversation with her and for whatever reason, none of her friends had inquired. She’d have thought perhaps Harry would have been interested since his own abilities had come as a surprise given his own Muggle upbringing, but the topic had never come up between them. Though to be fair, she’d never asked him either...she put aside her fresh curiosity for now and collected her thoughts, toying with her wine glass stem.

“I was eight,” she began, “And alone, thankfully. My parents had gone next door to the neighbors for a chat. I could hear their voices in the back garden and we had a conjoining gate so I could easily have gone over if I needed them.” She cleared her throat, suddenly conscious of how unnecessary those details had been but their attention hadn’t wavered so she carried on.

“*Anyway*, the important bit is that I was alone. I had decided I wanted to bake some fairy cakes but mum kept the baking tins on an upper shelf and even with the kitchen step, my hand was still almost a foot away. But I was determined and didn’t want to bother them, so I

went up on my toes, stretching as hard as I could and then...suddenly, the tin was in my hand. I had summoned it.”

She sipped her wine to indicate she'd finished, glancing around at them awaiting their reactions. It was a rather silly thing to have performed magic for, but it was the truth.

“Controlled *and* useful,” commented Draco after a moment. “I’m not surprised in the least. Meanwhile, I almost destroyed a shelf of Mother’s crystal stemware when I was six, having a strop over Salazar knows what.”

Blaise chuckled and Theo nodded. “And *that* doesn’t surprise in the least, either.”

Draco smirked.

“But back to Hermione,” Theo laid down his fork and planted both elbows on the table, resting his chin on his overlapping hands. “What happened after that? Surely you didn’t make the connection right away.”

“That it had been magic? *Real* magic? No, I didn’t know for certain until McGonagall showed up at my door the day after my eleventh birthday.”

Theo hummed. “Merlin. Not knowing for three years. I can’t imagine it.”

“Finally knowing did help somewhat,” she agreed, “but my birthday is in September, nineteen days *after* the start of term. So rather than let me start Hogwarts that year, McGonagall told me that I was a bloody *witch*, left me some books, and said she’d be back *next July* to help get me into Diagon Alley – you need a wand to get through, you know, or at least be with someone who has one. Which meant that I had to go back to my Muggle school knowing that I was magical but not able to do anything about it. *And* since McGonagall informing me of my status now meant I was under the Statute of Secrecy and had the Trace, it *also* meant I had to be careful not to do any accidental magic at home because I was constantly in the presence of Muggles, even though mum and dad had obviously also been informed about what I was. It was a lot to have out of my control so I did what I could and read and *reread* the books she’d left me: *Hogwarts: A History*, *A Muggleborn's Guide to Magical Matters*, and *Basic Charms*. The latter was torture, by the way. Literally, my fingers buzzed with the need to try the spells.”

She realized again that she’d been rambling and blushed. “Gods, sorry. I didn’t mean to monologue.”

Draco squeezed her leg under the table. “Don’t apologize. I’ve never thought what it must have been like for you. For Muggleborns in general.”

Her mouth twisted into a wry smile. “You don’t need to tell *me* that.” But she dropped her hand to his to show she didn’t hold it against him anymore. His mouth turned down in apology and she squeezed his fingers, giving him a little smile.

Theo’s mouth was twisted to the side in thought but Blaise was nodding.

“A former stepdad of mine is a Half-blood,” he offered, surprising her. “He said the Statute made it so he had to choose which half of himself to be, or else he said it felt like he was living a life of half-truths. So, I never met any of his family.”

It was a sentiment Hermione was intimately familiar with. She hummed sympathetically, twirling her fork through the pasta. It really was quite delicious.

“I was close to my parents, of course, but after I left my Muggle school, I didn’t put effort in to retain any friendships. It was easier to just...go headfirst into the Wizarding community. I actually spent most of my summer breaks at the Weasley’s or else on holiday out of the country, rather than risk running into former classmates or neighbors around town. There’s only so many times you can say ‘boarding school in Scotland’ before they start asking for specifics.”

“Was it hard? Leaving your world like that?” Draco had taken up a slow glide with his thumb along her leg. She wasn’t sure if he was aiming to soothe her or himself with the physical caress as his expression, when she turned to look at him, was troubled.

“Not really,” she admitted, but then hurriedly added, “Now, that’s not to say that I think there’s anything lesser about being a Muggle. There are many, *many* things that Muggles excel at over Wizards and I did actually supplement our education with plenty of Muggle branches of study. But...it never really felt like a *choice*. Magic is a part of me. Living without being able to use it would’ve been like choosing to never use my hands again.”

She hadn’t meant to guilt them, exactly, but there was something rather gratifying about the reactions this comment elicited from the Slytherins: the further downturn of Draco’s mouth, a final breaking of eye contact from Blaise, and a little sigh from Theo.

While she’d long suspected that Draco’s adamant adherence to Pureblood superiority had been a direct result of his parent’s overbearing influence rather than something he’d landed on after purposeful, personal consideration, Hermione wasn’t sure where Blaise and Theo lay on the spectrum. She’d never felt any animosity from them at school but then again, neither of them had ever really even looked at her let alone spoken to her, and that was its own sort of dismissal.

Now though, they both seemed perfectly happy to interact with her. They were friendly and jocular and inclusive. She decided not to force the matter; if they’d once considered her less than, she didn’t particularly care to know.

There was a beat of silence and then Theo asked, “So is it weird being around your parents?”

The question earned him a tut from Blaise and a noise of caution from Draco.

“What?” He defended, “She knows how I meant it.”

“It is weird,” Hermione agreed. She chose not to expound on that; that it was weird being around two people who no longer identified themselves as *being* her parents. She shifted the focus. “If I’ve been keeping count, then you only have one question left. What’ll it be?”

Theo considered her for a moment, jaw working side to side over his fist. “I think I’ll save it. Your turn.”

“Alright.” She straightened in her seat. “How do you occupy yourself?”

She felt it was a very tactful way to ask if he worked or not. Theo’s smile indicated he’d heard the implication.

He waved a hand and said airily, “Oh you know, this and that. Lazing the days away with Zabs here. Reading. Tinkering.”

“He’s being glib,” Blaise said, forking another bite. “He’s elbow deep in Time currently.”

“Capital-T Time,” Draco explained as she frowned at that nonsensical statement. “He’s been researching the properties and qualities of Time.”

“Oh!” Hermione brightened. “How interesting! Are you working on it officially? As an Unspeakable, I mean?”

Theo shook his head and held up his hand meaningfully before lowering a second finger. “That counts as another question, by the way. But no, I’m not affiliated with the Ministry. My interest is purely academic.”

“Well, if you’d like a first-person account of time travel, let me know,” she offered. “I have about nine months experience using a Time-Turner.”

His brows went up at that. “Oh? When did you...wait. No. Shit. I’m not going to waste my question on that right now because I know one will only lead to *fifty*, but know that I am extremely intrigued and will be circling back to that. Did you know about this?” He directed the last at Draco, then looked quickly at Hermione. “That one doesn’t count.”

She allowed it with a wave. Theo looked at Draco expectantly.

“Yes.”

The single word answer earned Draco a groan from Theo. “You’re always so bloody stingy with information. It’s such an annoying quality.”

“Don’t ask a yes or no question and you won’t get a yes or no response,” Draco replied blithely, resting his arm along the back of Hermione’s chair and crossing an ankle over his knee.

“Fine, you pedant. *When* did you learn of this and *why* wasn’t I informed? You know I’ve been gagging for a case study!”

“She told me a few weeks ago. I didn’t inform you because I was under the impression that Hermione was keeping the information close to chest,” Draco replied easily.

“Why? Was it illegal?” Theo’s eyes had darted back to Hermione’s but before she could reply he quickly added, “Wait! Don’t answer that! It’s not my last question. We’ll chat tomorrow in

depth about Time.”

Hermione laughed at his enthusiasm. “Sounds marvelous. We can do Time over breakfast and get into Resurrection over lunch.”

Theo raised his glass to her. “Smashing. I’ll bring the croissants, you can mix the cocktails.”

“Speaking of.” Draco rapped a knuckle on the table. “Zab?”

“Go on then.” Blaise leaned back in his chair, pushing his empty bowl aside and dragging his bread plate nearer with a finger. “Double up on the lime again, that last was just right.”

Draco nodded, retracting his limbs and making to stand. “Happy with wine or want something else?” He asked Hermione.

“Oh. Wine is fine.” She wasn’t an experienced drinker, her dalliances beyond wine confined to a Butterbeer Seamus had spiked with Firewhisky the first night they’d been back at the castle at the start of term. It had been a truly horrendous combination.

Draco didn’t bother asking Theo, who was taking the liberty of topping up Hermione’s wine glass after having refilled his own, and made his way over to the butler’s pantry. He disappeared from view and Hermione turned to face front.

Blaise was observing her as he slowly chewed a piece of bread. She held his gaze, curious about the new level of warmth she saw in those rich brown irises. Her knowledge of the handsome, dark-complected man was tangential at best. They’d shared a few classes over the years, of course, but he’d always been the silent sort. Not shy, exactly, but...reserved. She’d always assumed it to be a quiet scorn of his perceived less-than peers but now wondered if he just hadn’t ever felt the need to prove himself.

She recalled the tidbit Draco had provided, that Blaise had come into his inheritance at fifteen. She wondered if that was when his father had died. What would it have been like, to lose a father but gain an estate? She only had experience with the former.

She gave Blaise a quick smile and then broke the eye contact to sip from her newly-full glass, feeling the warmth of it suffusing through her. She was glad to have paired the drink with pasta and bread but even so, she could feel the alcohol beginning to unspool her. She resolved to slow down.

Draco was clinking about in the pantry, likely mixing a drink for himself and Blaise. She wondered about that, too. Was that something all Purebloods normally did? She’d always assumed that House-Elves fulfilled the role of bartender in addition to their other domestic tasks but if Draco was right and the ownership of Elves was less universal than she’d assumed, then—

“I can see why he likes you.” Blaise’s deep voice cut through her thoughts.

She blinked, bringing herself back to the room. Blaise and Theo were both looking at her with interested expressions. She blushed at the unexpected attention but concealed it with a

quick gulp of wine. So much for slowing down.

“Oh really? Why?” she asked, dabbing at her lips.

“You’re very calculating.”

She blinked. “Thank you?”

“Coming from a Slytherin, it’s a compliment,” Theo assured her. “And I agree. Most people would probably reduce it to ‘being observant’ but I’ve always gotten a sense from you that you aren’t just passively taking in data for the sake of it. You want to *use* your knowledge.”

“Of course I do. Things are only worth knowing if they’re useful.”

She startled slightly as Draco’s arm appeared over her shoulder without having made a sound to warn of his approach, leaning across the table to set a low ball glass in front of Blaise. She was so used to the click of his dragon leather shoes that him wandering around barefoot had severely dampened her ability to keep track of him.

“I don’t believe that for a minute,” he said, regaining his chair beside her and fixing her with a raised brow. “I’m sure you’ve been interested in all sorts of things that have no use.”

“Ah,” she smirked. “But who knows when something will earn its usefulness? Hence: learn everything.”

He laughed. “Touché.”

She eyed his drink as he took a sip. It could have been water except that the alcohol was slightly filmy around the large ice sphere. He held it out to her as she’d done with her wine.

“What is it?” she asked, taking it and giving it a sniff. The scent of quinine hit her first, familiar to her from the potions classroom and Draco’s tongue when she’d kissed him on the deck.

“Gin, tonic water, lime.”

She took a sip. It wasn’t *awful* but it wouldn’t be her first choice if she ever switched to spirits.

“It tastes better secondhand,” she told him diplomatically and he chuckled.

“I suppose that’s all I can ask for.” He accepted it back from her and took a pointedly large gulp, flicking his brows suggestively as he swallowed.

“Rein it in,” said Blaise dryly.

“Shh, don’t listen to him.” Theo had propped his chin on his hands, watching them. “It’s so bizarre seeing him like this. I can’t look away.”



“What, taunting me? That’s his *modus operandi* where I’m concerned,” she said dryly. She opened her mouth to continue but the rest of her comment (*You were around him enough at Hogwarts to have witnessed it in spades*) died on her tongue. They *hadn’t* been around Draco very regularly, at least not until Fifth year. Before that, he was exclusively flanked by Crabbe and Goyle

A new question blossomed. “When did you three become friends?” She asked.

Theo leaned back in his chair, hands dropping to his lap. “Ah. Well that’s an interesting story.” His eyes flicked to Draco. “How much to share?”

Draco replaced his arm on her chair back, fingers toying with her curls. “As much as you want. I don’t intend to hide anything from her.”

It was a bit annoying to be discussed as if she wasn’t sitting right beside them but as the consensus was candor, she withheld her complaint.

“Well, I’m sure you know that my father was a Death Eater, alongside Draco’s,” Theo began.

Hermione snorted. “Yes, I am intimately aware of that,” she couldn’t help but interject.

“*Intimately?*” Theo raised his brows. “Merlin, I don’t like the sound of that.”

She regretted her comment. It wasn’t exactly good manners to brag about having Stunned and then crushed someone’s parent.

“No, I just mean...” She cleared her throat. “I’ve actually encountered your father before. Or rather, he’s encountered me.”

“End of Fifth year,” Draco supplied coolly. She turned surprised eyes on him but he was holding Theo’s gaze.

“Oh shit.” Theo looked from Draco to her. “That was you? Fuck, I really *do* love you.”

It wasn’t the exact reaction she’d been expecting but then again, nothing about these three had fit neatly into the boxes she’d had ready and waiting for them in her mind.

“I’m relieved that you’re not angry with me for it,” she admitted. “But you should know I’m not proud of it.”

“You bloody well should be,” said Theo firmly. “He was incarcerated as a direct result. Seriously, you probably saved my life.”

She wasn’t entirely sure what to make of — or do with — that response but thankfully Draco picked up the explanation.

“Theo and I had known *of* each other our whole lives but it wasn’t until Fifth year that we found cause to become properly acquainted. Our fathers were back playing their little game of ‘who has the most obedient heir’ —“

“I always lost,” interjected Theo, pouting theatrically.

“Yes, thank you — I know I was under my father’s thumb,” Draco sighed. “Anyway, it was getting obvious that things were going to escalate so all of us with Death Eaters for fathers got together to get a sense of what was going on. Theo had the most information at the time.”

“My father didn’t have the tempering influence of a wife so he’d gone quite mad with bloodlust by that point.” Theo’s nose twitched and he sniffed compulsively. Blaise slid his eyes sideways to him covertly, a quick check, before refocusing on his drink. Draco’s hand had come to rest around the back of her neck but at Theo’s brief pause, she felt it twitch.

Hermione had a sense she was missing something but it felt indelicate to pry. “So you became friends after that?” She asked, to redirect back to safer ground.

“Yeah. Things were going downhill quickly so it seemed like the right time to find allies. Couldn’t have picked worse if I’d tried though, eh?” Theo had regained his devil-may-care attitude and Hermione felt Draco’s fingers relax as he snorted.

“At least we’re pretty,” Draco said, winking across the table. Theo smirked.

“As for Blaise and I,” Draco continued, “we were acquaintances from the start but as he was free from such childish pursuits like trying to live up to his father’s ideals, we weren’t particularly close until last summer. He and Theo have been best mates for...?” Draco trailed off looking between them.

”Millenia,” said Theo, reaching over to pat Blaise on the head.

Blaise tsk’d and caught his wrist. “Don’t touch the hair, you degenerate.” But the corner of his mouth ticked upward at Theo’s affection.

Hermione smiled at their display, nuzzling back into Draco’s hand until he got the hint and picked up his playful twirling again. When she didn’t continue her interrogation, Blaise tilted his head at her.

“So that’s it then. No special questions for me?”

She laughed. “Loads, actually. To start, can you give me the recipe for this? It was *so* good.” She tapped the edge of her bowl, scraped clean.

Blaise corralled a pleased expression. “Cheers. And sorry, no recipe. I cook by instinct.”

“Ugh. I’m so envious,” she griped. “I wish I had that skill. I need step by step directions or else a tin opener to get anything palatable on a plate.”

“Yes, well, we can’t all be perfect at everything.” His pleased expression was less easy to contain now.

“Oh? Alright then. What’s something else you’re perfect at?”

She should have predicted the salacious grin that Blaise shot at her but the topic of discussion had been so serious she'd forgotten that she was having dinner with three nineteen year old men. Or eighteen, in Draco's case. The *baby*. She bit the inside of her cheek to stop her amused smirk but then considered it an appropriate reaction to Blaise's so let it unfurl.

"Am I to use my imagination?" She asked him sweetly.

He chuckled. "Draco will probably smother me in my sleep if I took *that* bait, Granger. Nah. Let's see...ah ha." He flicked a glance to Draco, mouth curling into a devious grin as he met her eyes again. "I'm a good swimmer. I can do a *perfect* breaststroke."

He expertly dodged the crust of bread Draco pinged at him, snickering.

It suddenly felt like she was sitting around Molly's table, the Weasley boys passing puns and thinly veiled innuendo back and forth until Ginny one upped them all with a mastery cultivated from her years fighting the expectations of her position as *baby sister*.

The unexpected sense of familiarity, of *family*, warmed her. All the way down to her toes.

## Chapter End Notes

They say write what you know, and what I know is that that pasta dish is delicious and you should all make it.

Also my headcanon has slowly shifted into Draco being a gin man, not whisky. You better believe that boy tastes like G&T all summer long.

And since there wasn't really a slow burn for DHr this story, we can enjoy one for the snakes party because there's at least one more chapter until anyone else shows up 😂

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## Chapter 21: She watched as suds slid down his shoulders.

### Chapter Notes

Okay I lied, there are now *two* chapters (this one and one more) before anyone else arrives because this one got long so I split it. Which means the next chapter will probably be up tomorrow or Monday since it flows right in with this one and is almost done 🙌🙌

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

It was dark when Hermione was tugged into the shallow waters of sleep. She opened her eyes halfway but her lids were heavy so she let them slip back shut as she considered what had woken her. All was quiet, including the man sleeping beside her. Draco was on his side behind her with enough space between their bodies that she couldn't feel his, except where he'd slung his arm over her waist while asleep.

But then his hand shifted higher on her ribs until he was cupping her breast and she reconsidered if *asleep* was accurate.

He didn't move his hand further, just gently held her. The warmth of his palm felt good and she shifted back sleepily until her arse was nestled against his groin. His hand flexed around her flesh and he made a deep, rumbling sound low in his chest when she wiggled slowly back against him, nudging his obvious erection.

"Are you awake?" She whispered.

He mumbled something incoherent and she breathed a laugh. That was a no then. She wondered what he was dreaming about.

She relaxed against him, no longer trying to provoke a reaction out of him. He nuzzled his face into her hair and his hand massaged her breast a few times before he murmured something else and slid it down her torso.

Hermione was tempted to wake him up fully, rather interested in the trajectory of his hand, but she was only half awake herself.

*In the morning*, she thought drowsily.

She overlaid her hand with his and redirected it back around her middle, snuggling against him. He curled around her and exhaled a mumble of gibberish against her crown. She smiled to herself and drifted seamlessly back to sleep.

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When she woke next, pale morning light was filtering in through the crack in the curtains. She shut her eyes and inhaled deeply, stretching long and savoring the buttery soft sheets along her bare legs. She exhaled happily and then sent a foot out on a mission to find Draco. His middle of the night groping had come back to her and she found herself still quite interested in finishing what he'd subconsciously started.

But her foot found nothing but cool, soft sheets.

She opened her eyes and lolled her head to his side, confirming that she was alone in bed. She harrumphed. He wasn't one to linger in bed so she suspected he'd woken and then slipped out to let her sleep in a bit longer. She stretched out like a starfish and let herself sink into the plush bedding.

The sound of rain pitter-pattered pleasantly against the window, welcoming her to what promised to be a perfectly lazy morning. But after a few minutes of luxuriating, the sound of the rain inspired another response in her: she really had to pee.

They'd all stayed up rather late chatting and Hermione had downed a personal-record-amount of wine — three glasses! — which her bladder was now rudely reminding her of.

She tossed back the covers and trotted to the bathroom, throwing the door open and striding in on a mission to relieve herself and then find some breakfast and her blonde.

The rain had covered the sound of the shower so she was completely unprepared for the sight of Draco lathering his hair in the glass-walled enclosure. She watched as suds slid down his shoulders, running down the planes of his chest and over the contours of his abdomen, all of his muscles and tendons in hypnotizing motion as he worked the shampoo in. Before she could get a good look lower, he turned to lean back under the spray, tilting his head to rinse and sending the suds — and thus her eyes — down the expanse of his back to map the curve of his arse.

She sucked in a breath and promptly choked on her spit.

He turned his head at the sound and spotted her, her body frozen in the act of shutting the bathroom door, mouth ajar.

He smiled. "Morning."

"Um." She was certain she looked like a brainless twit, gawking at him as she was.

The smile turned wicked at her reaction. "Care to join?"

Yes. Very much yes.

“Yeah, I just...need to pee first.” She scrubbed an eye with the heel of her hand, making sure she was actually awake and this wasn’t just part two of a dream. He was still just as naked and soapy and wet as before. *Thank Merlin.*

“Go on then,” he said, reaching for a bottle of something else he intended to rub onto his body. “I’m not into getting pissed on but you’re welcome in after you’re done.”

His joke restarted her brain enough that she scoffed an amused “*Charming,*” and finally secured herself behind the toilet door.

“Get a grip,” she muttered to herself, elbows on her thighs and face in her hands. She’d seen him naked plenty of times. But...wet only that once in the Prefect’s bath and...*gods wet was so good.*

She finished and let herself out, going to the sink to wash her hands. She could see him in the reflection and met his eyes in the mirror, swallowing over a dry throat at the way he was rubbing body wash in maddeningly slow circles down his torso. He smirked, looking ridiculously pleased with himself.

She huffed and looked away to dry her hands before locating her toothbrush and conducting the most abbreviated oral hygiene routine a Granger had ever performed. Mouth minty, she stripped off her t-shirt and soft shorts without fanfare and pulled the shower door open. He stepped aside slightly to let her in under the spray, tugging her closer with slick hands on her hips. She stabilized herself on his ribs.

“You certainly know how to flatter a bloke,” he told her, rotating them so her back was to the hot water. “All dazed like that, just at the sight of me? *Mmm.*” She felt the vibrations of his low hum through her fingertips. He brought his hands up to push her hair off her face, tilting her head into the spray and running his hands over her hair, squeezing the water in until it was saturated.

“I’m blaming it on the wine,” she informed him, her eyes half-lidded. “And the midnight groping.”

“Midnight groping?” He reached for the shampoo and squeezed a dollop into his palm. “What?”

“You must have been having a *very* good dream because I woke up in the middle of the night to your hands on me and *something* poking my back.”

He raised a brow, amused. “Really?” He snorted. “I suppose I broke the third rule of bed sharing then. My sincere apologies.”

“Yes, it was quite rude of you.” She ran her hands down his chest but then he was working the shampoo into her hair, fingers massaging her scalp, thoroughly distracting her. It felt marvelous; relaxing and gently arousing and intimate. She melted into his touch, eyes sliding all the way shut when he tilted her back under the water to wash it all out.

“Shit, sorry.” He winced when he accidentally yanked on a knot his fingers had made while trying to detangle themselves a third time. “Help. I don’t know what I’m doing.”

She smiled, eyes still closed despite the twinges of pain, charmed by his efforts. “Is there any conditioner in here? I didn’t bring my stuff in yet but conditioner is what you need.”

“Hmm.”

He moved away and she relaxed under the hot water as she heard him picking up bottles. When he went quiet, she cracked an eye to see if he needed help. He was holding a bottle of something, gaze raking slowly over her body. She’d caught him with his eyes on her breasts so brought her hands up to cup them playfully for him. His gaze flicked up to hers and his mouth twisted ruefully at having been caught. He waggled the bottle. “Conditioner.”

“Excellent.” She took a step closer so that she wouldn’t get sprayed in the face with water and then turned so he could work it through her hair.

He groaned. “*God*, your arse looks *so* good wet.”

She snorted and shook her hair at him. He clicked the conditioner open and deposited what she expected would be a paltry amount into his palm. As predicted, he had to go back for more almost immediately. She closed her eyes and leaned back into the feeling of him gently combing his fingers through her hair, goosebumps rising whenever he grazed her skin. By the time he was turning her back around to rinse it out, she was a mixture of supremely relaxed and deliciously turned on.

While he rinsed her hair, she finally let her hands drift across his chest and down his torso. He breathed a laugh as her fingertips traced the subtle lines that led right to her final destination, squirming ticklishly. It was fun to explore solely by touch, unable to look down while his hands kept her head where he wanted it under the spray. She fixed her eyes straight ahead on his mouth. A mouth she hadn’t kissed in hours and *hours*.

Her hand finally bumped into his cock and she flipped her wrist so she could wrap her fingers around him. He was hard, the length of him hotter even than the water cascading down her back. He made a noise in his throat and she watched, a little mesmerized, as his Adam’s apple bobbed on a swallow. She gave him a little squeeze.

“You’re going to end up with half-rinsed hair if you keep that up,” he warned her.

She fake-gasped. “Oh no!”

His lips curled into a smirk. “Such a troublemaker.”

“You have no idea.” She rose up to press her lips to his, her patience fully depleted.

He encouraged her forward with a steadying hand on her ribs, his other tilting her head just so. She gave his cock a luxurious stroke right when her tongue met his, and he bucked forward into her fist. She let him, completely distracted anew.

He tasted like her toothpaste.

Her distinctly spearmint flavored, *Muggle brand* toothpaste.

It made her breath constrict in her lungs, both from the simple intimacy of tasting the same and of him having helped himself to her things. But then he nipped at her lip and her breath gusted out on a gasp.

“Unfair,” she whimpered as his hands slid to cup her breasts.

“What’s unfair?” He plucked at her nipples playfully. It zinged through her and she squeezed his cock reflexively.

“How stupidly sexy you are.” She was drifting back toward dazed. Between the taste of him, the feel of him, and the way the steam was perfuming the entire space with the woodsy scent of the body wash he’d used, she felt surrounded by him.

“Yes well, you don’t call me Handsome Sex God for nothing, do you Granger.” He sounded so cocky that she came back to herself, the stupid pet name making her laugh.

She gave him a firm stroke and his chuckle transformed to a punched-out gasp. “*Fuck.*”

She considered carrying on until he was groaning and coming, but she wanted to show him she wasn’t completely witless around him. Surely his ego wouldn’t survive the inflation her current state was providing it. Mind made up, she gave him another stroke and then let go.

“Thanks for washing my hair, baby. But I’m *starving* so I’ll just leave you to clean yourself up while I get breakfast going.” She tapped the head of his cock with her forefinger, making it dip and then bounce up against his abdomen. “Make sure you do a really thorough job here, won’t you?”

“*Granger,*” he warned but she slipped out of range before he could trap her, his reaching fingers unable to find purchase on her water-slicked skin.

She darted out of the shower and grinned at him, her sodden curls hanging long over her shoulders and dripping ceaselessly onto the tiles. With a final, impish smirk she bounced once on the balls of her feet to make her breasts jiggle for him.

He pressed his forehead against the glass wall and groaned.

Feeling victorious, she reached to pull two towels from the stack neatly folded on a shelf, wrapping one around herself and then flipping her head over to carefully encase her hair in the second. Draco hadn’t moved but she could see his eyes tracking her through the glass, so she pulled a third towel down and dropped it on the low stool beside the shower door.

“For when you’re all done,” she told him with a wink and then shut the door behind herself as she left, grinning.

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The sound of rain was much stronger in the kitchen, the drops having additional surfaces to strike against on the deck just to the right of the large kitchen windows. Hermione found Blaise there, leaning against the counter by the sink and pouring a cup of tea from a teapot. He looked up when she entered, his face softened by the residue of sleep.

“Morning, Hermione.” He had the deepest voice she'd ever heard, except for perhaps Kingsley's, and it rumbled through the room like distant thunder.

“Good morning, Blaise.” She offered him a smile which he returned with a small quirk of his mouth.

“Tea?”

“Sure, thank you.”

He brought down a second mug and filled it for her. “Milk? Sugar?”

“Just sugar.” He indicated the little jar beside the tea things and she stepped forward.

“Thanks.”

She dithered momentarily but then went for it. “Is it alright if I make breakfast? For everyone, I mean.”

“Have at it,” he said, straightening from the counter and rounded the island to slide onto a stool. “My kitchen is yours.”

She beamed at him. “Thanks.”

“Mmhmm. So where's Draco? Surely not still sleeping.”

“He's just finishing up in the shower.” She bit her lip to smother her giggle at the inadvertently accurate phrasing, glad her back to was Blaise as she added sugar to her mug.

“Ah.” She heard him sip his tea. “So what's on the menu?”

“I'm in the mood for pancakes.” She replaced the sugar spoon on the spoon rest and rotated to face him, bringing her mug up for a sip of her own. “Do you have lemons?”

“Course. What else do you need?”

She rattled off the ingredients (flour, eggs, milk) and watched as they appeared on the island for her, summoned by Blaise's wandwork. She got to work, combining the ingredients carefully but with a practiced hand, working from the memorized recipe she'd learned in her mother's kitchen so many years ago.

She was swirling a pat of butter around the pan when Draco joined them, hair still damp and dressed comfortably in black joggers and a grey t-shirt. He appraised her at the range with a

pleasantly surprised expression which she was sure matched the one on her face as she took in his apparel. Would she ever get used to seeing him looking so casual? So... *Muggle*?

He rounded the island and squeezed the muscle of her shoulder, thumb giving her a little stroke of greeting along the back of her neck as he peered over to see what she was making.

"I thought you needed a recipe to cook," he teased.

"Who says I don't have one?" She tapped her temple with a smile.

"Ah." He kissed the spot then kept his mouth close to her skin to murmur, "I hope you know how much trouble you're in."

"Did I not give you enough material to work with?" She asked quietly, voice tinged with faux-concern but conscious of Blaise's presence not a meter away.

Draco tutted and picked up her mug to steal a sip, also keeping his volume private. "As if I'd let you win so easily."

Surprised, she half turned and looked down at the front of his joggers. He snorted.

"Subtle, Granger. Ever heard of a cold shower?"

"That works?" She screwed up her nose and turned back to the range. "Anyway, I'm not sure what you mean about me not winning. If you think about it, I set it up so that I'd win either way."

He clicked his tongue. "Devious, Granger."

She shot him a coy smile as she swirled batter around the pan. He left her to it, walking down the counter to the teapot and pouring himself a cuppa before sliding onto a stool beside Blaise.

Once a handful of pancakes were ready, she brought the plate to the island and, after modeling it once with her own, they took turns squeezing lemon, sprinkling sugar, and rolling them up. The first set devoured, she cooked several more. They were always best — and the most pliable — when eaten hot.

By the time Theo graced them with his presence, there were only three pancakes left and hardly a single squeeze of lemon. He didn't seem fussed, loping straight over to them with hardly a look of acknowledgement.

"Good morning," she greeted him with a laugh when he draped himself sleepily over Blaise's back, arms hanging down on either side of the bigger man's neck.

"S'coffee?" He mumbled, eyes sliding shut.

"I told you not to call me that," Blaise joked, yanking on one of Theo's limp wrists playfully.

"No quips yet. Still...asleep." Theo complained, half muffled against Blaise's shoulder.

“How late did you stay up?” asked Draco, regaining his stool after having gone to retrieve the cafetière of coffee he’d brewed twenty minutes earlier but not drunk a drop of. She saw now who it was for and bit her cheek so as not to melt at the gesture.

“Dunno. Heard birds. Oi!” Blaise was aggressively shrugging his shoulders to dislodge Theo, who finally cracked an eye. “Have a heart.”

“Get off me, you lump. Go collapse on the fainting couch or, better yet, *go to bed at a reasonable fucking time.*”

Theo slid to the empty stool between Blaise and Draco and took a few hearty gulps of the black coffee Draco had poured him, undoubtedly room temperature by now. “Ah, but Time is just a construct, isn’t it? So what could possibly be reasonable or unreasonable about it?”

Evidently the caffeine worked fast.

“Don’t even start. Finish that and then talk the ear off Hermione. I can’t hear another word about it,” griped Blaise, but then laughed, swaying a few inches side to side, when Theo shoulder-checked him.

“Oh, because *I’m* so completely riveted by your monologues on the *right way to invest in order to create a diversified portfolio* or whatever-the-fuck *you* blather on about. You gorgeous, dull ignoramus.” Theo grinned at Blaise and then topped up his cup. “Right, Hermione. You kept me up all night with thoughts of why you might’ve used a Time-Turner and I find I can withstand the suspense no longer. Get a top up and let’s go lock ourselves in Blaise’s study. We can use his banking statements as scratch paper.”

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Hermione knew for certain she’d never had more fun discussing a topic as she had while teasing out esoteric nuances and lobbing theories back and forth with Theo. So much fun that she had no sense of where the day had gone (“*Well, we’ve succeeded to lose track of time even with our entire focus on it,*” she’d quipped as they unearthed themselves from the study and was rewarded with a genuine bark of delight from Theo. She’d never have risked such a baldly nerdy pun with anyone else) nor what Draco and Blaise had gotten up to.

The answer, as they located the last two of their quartet by the billiards table, was: probably late afternoon and, not much.

Blaise rested both hands on his cue stick with shoulders against the wall while Draco was leaned over to take his shot. His eyes found hers as they walked over and he held her gaze while he took his shot. She shook her head, pressing her lips together to quash her amused smile as his shot struck true and sank a ball.

“Sexy,” Theo purred. Draco gave him the finger as he walked around the table to pick his next shot.

Hermione sank onto one of the nearby armchairs, taking in the space properly for the first time. It was a large rectangular space which Blaise had portioned off into three distinct areas. The area they were currently in, against the rightmost wall and furthest from the kitchen, was dominated by the billiards table and further kitted out with a glass-doored liquor cabinet and a few high top tables with stools against the wall, giving it the feel of a mini-pub.

The middle area was centered around the fireplace which took up a majority of one wall, a couch facing it with a second arranged 90 degrees in an L-shape. The back of that couch divided the room into the final area, the most open of all with plenty of space to traverse between the bedroom hallways, staircase, kitchen, and back deck. She imagined that once the glass wall was retracted, it would make for a lovely indoor-outdoor living space.

“So, the plan for tomorrow,” said Blaise, drawing her attention back to the boys. “I’ve already gotten everything we need for entertainment ready, so all that’s left are sorting drinks and nibbles and such. Parks will be here around five to help and the others probably closer to seven. What time are your invitees arriving?” He directed the last at Hermione.

“Luna and Neville will be here just after dinner. Harry, Ron, and Ginny just before, probably around six.”

“Heard from Daph?” Theo asked.

Blaise nodded. “She has a work thing tomorrow so she’ll be ‘round on Saturday for when we take the boat out. Same with a few others who couldn’t swing the weeknight.”

Hermione held up a hand. “Sorry, *boat*? But it’s April.”

“In the south of England,” Theo reminded her.

“And we happen to know a handy little thing called *magic*,” Blaise added dryly. “Repelling charms, heating charms...really, there’s almost nothing it can’t do.”

“Oh. Right.” She furrowed her brows. “But I still can’t imagine how a boat in the river-cum-sea would be enjoyable this time of year.”

“Don’t tell her,” said Draco quickly. “I want to see her face.”

She looked at him. “Wait, tell me what? What face?”

He gave her a pitying look. “I just said I wasn’t going to tell you.”

“You—” She cut herself off with a click of her tongue, deciding not to give him the satisfaction of being baited. She turned back to Blaise. “Dare I ask what ‘*entertainment*’ entails? That word doesn’t inspire a lot of confidence in me after years with Seamus and the Weasleys.”

Blaise scoffed. “That comparison wounds me. I facilitate only the *finest* divertissements.”

She looked at Theo for a translation.

“He plans crazy drinking games,” he supplied. “Extremely fun and extremely pedestrian.”

“*Pedestrian!*” Blaise looked affronted and Theo grinned, evidently hoping for that very reaction.

“Nuanced and multifaceted,” he corrected. “Though I was right about them being extremely fun.”

“What sort of drinking games?” Hermione asked. “Like, contests?”

Blaise wagged his hand in a *sort of* gesture. “It’s competitive, yes, but it’s not just standing around chugging. You’ll get to exert your brain while you slowly destroy it.” He winked.

Although the prospect of winning some sort of brains-required competition had her heart all aflutter, Hermione was slightly wary of the implied heavy drinking while in a mixed group. Even though she trusted Blaise and Theo more than she’d anticipated, Pansy would be there tomorrow and Hermione still had no clue what *that* reunion would be like.

Although...perhaps the alcohol would help?

Chapter End Notes

Of course, it's not a Snake Party™ without a Blaise-run drinking game 🙌

Obligatory pancake recipe link (is this story becoming Like Water for Chocolate? I promise to tone it down) which I highly recommend you make any hour of the day but particularly for dinner on those “I cannot possibly fathom making another decision nor exerting additional effort today” days 😜

[English pancakes with lemon & sugar](#)

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Chapter 22: “Don’t make this weird, Zabini,” he warned.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has possibly my favorite scene, one I wrote ages ago and am so glad is finally here. Maybe a few of them, actually.

I might have been switching between giggling and maniacal laughter the entire time so...

Enjoy! 😊

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

After dinner, they settled in on the couches by the fire in the downstairs lounge, Blaise and Theo on one and Hermione and Draco on the other. Hermione sat with her toes tucked under his thigh and her back against the arm of the couch, cradling the mixed drink he’d convinced her to let him make for her. She sipped the vodka and peach schnapps concoction with a frequency that suggested he’d guessed correctly when thinking of what to make her.

The pale rosy hue achieved with a splash of cranberry juice had inspired his own beverage choice for the evening, and he’d mixed himself a Negroni; he wasn’t the biggest fan of sweet drinks. Blaise and Theo had opted for somewhere in the middle, sipping twin Campari Old Fashioneds with generous stirs of brown sugar. Perhaps he was just feeling sentimental, but Draco thought the tinge of red in all their glasses felt like a subtle nod to Hermione.

He knew his friends would be welcoming to her, and not only because they’d accepted the reality of Muggle equality sooner than him. She fit in with their dynamic, finding a common interest with each of them with seemingly little effort. Cooking with Blaise, Time with Theo... Draco wondered if he could possibly be so hopeful as to ponder what it might be with Pansy. He sipped idly on his drink while he watched the flames flirt along the edges of the logs, not paying any attention to the conversation until he heard his name.

“Draco’s never done anything with a bloke,” Theo sighed.

He looked up, wondering what on Earth had inspired that comment but before he could inquire, Hermione was speaking.

“That’s not true.” She looked at Blaise. “Didn’t you kiss him once?”

Blaise raised both brows, glancing at Draco. “You told her about that? Salazar, she *has* gotten to you.”

“I guessed, actually,” Hermione said, before he could. She sounded rather proud of herself which, frankly, she should be. Her deductive skills had been frighteningly good.

“Hmm, that’s lucky,” mused Theo, clinking his ice contemplatively.

Draco resisted for as long as he could but then: “What’s lucky?”

“Uh oh.” Theo grinned, his blue eyes sparkling in a manner that heralded mischief. “It seems to me that little Drakey forgot a very important condition of that dare.”

“Don’t call me that,” Draco interjected. Theo ignored him.

“What important condition?” asked Hermione, also ignoring his outburst.

“Oh, just that if either of them told anyone about the kiss, outside of the original witnesses that is, then they’d be compelled to do it again.”

Draco relaxed back, smirking smugly. “I didn’t forget that, actually. Hence the delightful loophole of her guessing it. I never actually said it out loud.”

Theo scoffed but Hermione had perked up. “What do you mean, they have to do it again?”

“What it sounds like.” Theo held up his hands, touching the middle two fingers and thumb on each so they resembled beaks. He tapped his two puppets together, making kissy sounds. Blaise snorted.

Hermione observed this, head tilting thoughtfully, then turned to Blaise. “Blaise, any fond memories of Third Year?”

“Oi!” protested Draco but Theo crowed a laugh and Blaise was smirking.

“As a matter of fact...” He lingered long enough that Draco felt a flash of hope, but it was quickly dashed. “Giving Draco his very first kiss was a highlight.”

“Bastards,” he accused his friends, then turned on Hermione. “What, you *want* to see me kiss Blaise?”

She raised her brows. “Uh, *yes*.”

“What? *Why*?”

“Academic curiosity?” She suggested with an altogether too innocent expression. He narrowed his eyes at her and she grinned in a manner frighteningly similar to Theo.

“I’m pretty sure watching them go at it is what clued me in to my sexual preference,” offered Theo. “So I do recommend it.”

By some miracle, this distracted Hermione. She turned to Theo with fresh interest. “Oh! I didn’t realize you were gay.”

He pouted his bottom lip out at her. “Ah yes, sorry to disappoint. Rest assured, if you were a bloke you’d be just my type.”

She laughed. “You’re sweet. But really? You sleep with men?”

Theo’s eyebrow flicked up. “That *is* what the term implies, yes.”

Hermione’s posture had gone perfect, a sign Draco recognized as meaning that she’d discovered something interesting. He wondered what had snagged her inquisitive brain this time.

“Are you a top or a bottom?”

Blaise choked on his drink.

“*Granger*. You can’t ask that,” Draco chided.

She glanced at him and then back to Theo. “Why not? Aren’t those the terms?”

But Theo was laughing. “It’s fine, Draco. I’m *beyond* curious why she’s even asking.” He smirked at Hermione. “I prefer to bottom but I’ve topped before. Why?”

“Are you open to questions? I’ve read about the basic mechanics, of course—“

“*Of course*, she says,” interjected Blaise in a stage whisper to Draco.

“—But I’m sure there’s nuance to it that books don’t cover.”

Theo sent Draco a look of pure delight then nodded to Hermione. “I would love nothing more. Owl me and we’ll have a drink and I’ll tell you how to make it good to *receive*.” He winked at Draco.

Draco, who was currently losing his mind at the thought of Hermione letting him claim yet another sacred part of her, frowned. And then Theo’s implication hit him.

Oh...shit.

Was this another case of him assuming one thing and her meaning the reverse, like with the bondage? Did Granger want to...to *him*?

He sat with the thought for a moment.

He’d never once considered the act in that direction but if he was going to let anyone touch him *there*, it would certainly only be Granger. Her single-minded swottiness, her desire to always exceed expectations — no, to be *outstanding* — not to mention the filthy things that came out of her mouth...she’d make sure he enjoyed himself.

And shit, why was that so hot?

Oh god. He was going to let Granger do whatever she wanted to him.

He downed his drink and stood to mix another.

“Alright, I’m ready now,” Hermione said when he rejoined her on the sofa.

He glanced over, momentarily panicked. “What?”

She gestured with her glass. “For you and Blaise to reenact a formative moment.”

His mind was so stuck on buggery that it took him a moment to catch back up. He shook his head, amused. “Oh. No, I’m not going to kiss Blaise.”

“Why not?” asked Hermione at the same time Blaise made a sound of affront and Theo said “You don’t really have a choice,” in a lilting sing-song.

Draco ignored his friends. “Because I’m dating you?” He tried. “And we’re exclusive?”

She made a face like he was adorable. “Aw. While I’m sincerely charmed by that, it’s not going to work. Sorry.” She didn’t sound sorry.

“If I kiss Blaise, then you have to…” He searched around for something equally upsetting. “Kiss Theo.”

She snorted. “Is that supposed to be a punishment?”

“Thanks, gorgeous!” Theo called from the sideboard where he was getting refills for himself and Blaise.

“It seems fair. He won’t enjoy it just like I won’t enjoy kissing Blaise.”

“You’re breaking my heart over here, Drakey,” said Blaise.

“Ah.” Hermione smirked over at him. “I see. So you’re more concerned with punishing Theo than me?”

He wanted to kiss that knowing smirk off her face.

He wanted to know what her intentions were with his body.

She was so unpredictable and so *deliciously* unapologetic at the current moment that he could hardly contain himself.

“I’ll punish you for it later,” he promised her, just above a whisper.

Her grin, if anything, grew.

“Right.” Theo dropped down beside Blaise, passing over a tumbler. “Who’s going first then? Shall Hermione and I crack the ice?”

Draco raised his brow in challenge at her, which he should have known would only encourage her. Indeed, she mirrored it and then handed him her glass.

“Gladly.”

She stood and walked over to Theo, who simply reclined back to make space for her on his lap like some sort of prince, holding his drink out of the way for her to perch sideways on his

thighs. She did so without hesitation but then glanced over her shoulder at Draco.

He was already giving her a nod of permission, assuming she was checking in that he really was alright with her kissing someone else, so her question didn't immediately register.

"You'll kiss Blaise how I kiss Theo?" She confirmed.

He was still nodding before he'd fully parsed her phrasing and then corrected hurriedly, "Wait, no, I'm not going to sit on his sodding lap. And no tongue!"

But it was too late; she'd closed the distance and pressed her perfect mouth to Theo's smirking one, shifting his expression from amusement to distraction almost instantly.

Draco sighed, slumping back and sipping his drink. Leave it to Granger to finally find a way to shut Nott up.

He watched them with absent curiosity, feeling none of the jealousy he'd expected to. Maybe it was because he was complicit in it, or simply that he knew Theo wasn't a threat...actually, it was rather interesting to watch her kiss someone else. Maybe he'd search for the Pensieve back at the Manor and watch himself kiss her. Or, even better, watch himself fuck her.

He quickly thought about anything else, lest he get himself all worked up. The last thing he needed was getting an erection while being strong-armed into kissing Blaise.

Hermione pulled back, giggling, and his attention refocused on her and Theo. His dark haired friend smiled back and then sipped his drink. Draco was almost offended that Theo was so hasty to remove Hermione's taste from his mouth. She slid off Theo's lap and dropped back down beside him, making grabby hands for her glass.

"Your turn," she said, dabbing her mouth demurely with the back of her hand after she swallowed her sip.

Draco sighed, resigned. "Fine. How should we do this then?" He directed the last to Blaise but Hermione answered.

"Well, how did you do it the first time?"

"Standing." Now that he'd said it, it was clearly the only way to do it. He got to his feet and walked over to Blaise to get it over with.

Hermione made a disinterested sound. "Hmm. No, I think you'd better sit on his lap."

He snorted, glancing back at her. "I'd better? Or what?"

"I sat on Theo's. You'd let your girlfriend be braver than you?"

He raised a brow. "Sorry, that doesn't work on me. I don't give a shit about bravery. And anyway, I'm not *scared* so there's nothing to be brave about."

Blaise leaned back and patted his thighs, grinning. "Well come on, then. Sit on Daddy's lap."

“Do *not* refer to yourself as *Daddy*. Jesus Christ. See, Granger?” He gestured to Blaise. “It’s obscene. Look at him.”

She raised her eyebrows. “I am. Why do you think I want you to sit on his lap?”

Blaise chuckled while Draco spluttered. Why had he thought that she would be a good influence on Theo and Blaise?

“How about this,” she said, sipping her drink for dramatic effect. “You sit on his lap and I’ll give you a back rub afterward.”

“Make it a front rub and you might convince him,” Theo suggested.

“Don’t be crass to her,” Draco warned, pointing a finger at him, but Hermione only laughed.

“You can have whatever you want for it, alright?” She said magnanimously. “But do make up your mind. You could’ve kissed him and been done with it by now.”

“Don’t rush me,” he said reflexively, then sighed and scrubbed his hand down his face.

“Fuck. Fine. But I don’t want to hear any further directions.”

Hermione squealed in an extremely uncharacteristic manner and Draco couldn’t deny the little throb his heart did at hearing her so happy.

“Eee! Wait, wait, I want a better view.” Hermione put down her drink and scurried over, tucking herself beside Theo with her back against the curled arm of the sofa so she could face him and Blaise two cushions over. “Okay. Please continue.”

Draco sucked the inside of his cheek as he surveyed Blaise. Blaise kept his gaze steady on Draco while he took a sip his drink, maintaining it even while he leaned to set it on the side table. When he settled back, he flicked his brows in invitation.

Literal bastard.

There was no suave way to do it, so Draco just gave up any pretense and sank his left knee onto the cushion beside Blaise’s right thigh. Theo and Hermione let out twin squeals, but he dashed their clearly salacious hopes by leaning over to brace his hands on the back of the sofa so he could pull his other leg up on the same side in a variation of a sideways perch, his second knee pressing against Blaise’s torso to maintain crucial space. There would be absolutely zero sitting on Blaise astride, at least not from him.

He looked over to Hermione for her approval, which she gave with a devilish quirk of her brow and a bitten lip.

Fucking Granger.

He turned back to face Blaise, arms still braced on either side of his friend’s head, his fingers curling into the velvet of the sofa.

“Don’t make this weird, Zabini,” he warned.

“Don’t enjoy it too much then,” Blaise returned with a smirk, then cupped his palm around Draco’s jaw and tugged him closer.

“*Merlin*,” Draco muttered under his breath, then gave in.

After having only kissed women since his infamous first, Draco marveled for a moment at the sensation of being the smaller of the pair. Blaise had a few inches and several stone on him and his hand was strong and large against Draco’s cheek, his mouth pliant but not waiting for Draco’s lead. In a bizarre way, it felt rather similar to kissing Hermione, the give and take that of equals, but perhaps how it felt from Hermione’s perspective.

He tried to stop thinking about kissing Hermione.

Blaise helped by nipping softly at his lower lip, jerking Draco firmly back to his present circumstances. Did he pull back and berate Blaise, as was his first impulse? Or did he make Hermione wish she’d never challenged him? He scoffed audibly against Blaise’s mouth, the answer abundantly clear, and flicked his tongue against his friend’s full bottom lip in answer to the nip. Blaise’s hand sank into his hair.

“Bloody fucking Merlin,” came Theo’s voice, distinctly strained.

Draco felt Blaise grin and returned it with his own, finally pulling back. Theo was staring at them, mouth agape. Draco’s attention instantly flicked to Hermione and felt a pool of satisfaction well up inside him at her wide-eyed stare.

“Circe, I’m so gay,” whined Theo, dropping his forehead pathetically onto Hermione’s shoulder.

She brought her hand up to absently pat his cheek. “And I’m so straight. *Lord*, you two.”

“And I’m so both,” Blaise chimed in, using the pad of his thumb to wipe at Draco’s lip. Draco swatted his hand away, but smirked.

“Second time was better than the first but I’m not sure I’ll go in for a third,” he said, rising and retrieving his drink from the coffee table as he passed it.

Blaise snorted. “Whatever you say, Drakey.”

Draco let it slide, sinking back onto the sofa across from the other three. “Well, Granger?” He teased. “Enjoy the spectacle?”

“Do you want your reward now?” She asked hopefully. Her cheeks were pink, eyes bright. That little deviant.

He savored his mouthful of Negroni, considering her over the rim of his glass. It felt good to have the power, even if only until she remembered it was hers by right.

“Hmm,” he mused, “I don’t know...it *would* be rather rude to leave off socializing so early.”

“They won’t care,” she said, waving a dismissive hand in the general direction of Theo and Blaise as if they couldn’t hear her. “And if they do...” She shrugged to indicate *oh well, their problem*.

“Never thought I’d be privy to Hermione Granger publicly begging you for sex,” said Theo thoughtfully. “Always figured it’d be the other way around. Given, you know, how you—“

“Shut up, Theo.” Draco tried to sound long-suffering and not panicked, and thought he did a good enough job given that they were all at least two drinks in. “You interrupted Hermione. Go on, sweetheart. I believe you were in the middle of convincing me to...?”

He grinned when she huffed, her cheeks a little flushed from the public pet name.

This was well deserved payback for her little stunt that morning in the shower, he thought. After she’d sauntered out like the little vixen she was, he’d wanted so badly to wrap his hand around his cock and chase the ghost of her touch. It wouldn’t have taken more than a handful of strokes, not with the image of her slick, bouncing tits in his head and the feel of her round little arse—

He took another sip of his drink lest she win in the end.

But as he watched her expression shift from flushed to nonchalant, he knew his reign of power was over.

“No, you’re right. It would be terribly rude of you to abandon your friends so early. But I’m suddenly *exhausted*, so I think I’ll head to bed. Perhaps I’ll refresh myself on a few of your early lessons to unwind but I’m sure it won’t take long until I’m...*all tuckered out*.” She flicked a brow at him as she raised her glass to slowly swallow the dregs, then set it primly on the coffee table.

“Good night, Theo. Blaise.” She slipped around the far side of the table, out of his reach, and then past him to the hallway.

Blaise watched her retreat with two raised brows then snorted and shook his head, standing and heading to the billiards table to rack it. Draco watched him corralling the balls for a moment, brain at half capacity as the implication of her words sizzled through him.

“Just out of curiosity,” said Theo idly, crossing an ankle over his knee as he leaned back to sip his drink. “What is it you’re waiting for?”

Draco carded a hand through his hair. What *was* he waiting for? Her to come back and say she was kidding? *Pfft*. That was as likely as Pansy having been sorted into Hufflepuff.

He tossed his drink back and slammed the glass on the coffee table. “Right. See you boys later.”

“Good luck!” Theo called after him.

He’d probably need it.

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Hermione wasn't on the bed as he'd expected when he pushed their door open but he could hear the tap running in the bathroom. He rapped a knuckle on the door to be polite but then let himself in anyway. She was standing at the sink brushing her teeth and when she saw him, she grinned around her toothbrush. A tiny bit of lather escaped the corner of her mouth so she bent and spat, rinsing her toothbrush and then dabbing her mouth. By the time she straightened up, he was standing behind her.

"We're going to have sex," he informed her. "You can play whatever game you want while we do it but I swear to Christ, if my cock isn't inside you in five minutes, I'm going to die."

She pressed her lips together, meeting his eyes in the reflection. "That's very dramatic, Draco."

She replaced her toothbrush in the cup beside the sink then planted her hands on the counter and then leaned her weight on them, arching her back so that her arse was pressed against his front. She frowned at his reflection.

"You're not even hard yet."

He snorted. "Believe it or not, but kissing Blaise doesn't get me as worked up as it evidently did you."

"*God*," she groaned dramatically. "It shouldn't have been so arousing but *Merlin*. The thoughts that went through my head watching you two..." She made a pitiful little sound that went straight to the tip of his cock.

"Please don't get me hard while you're talking about me and Blaise doing...I don't even want to know what," he complained, then pressed forward against the invitation of her arse. "C'mon Granger. Don't you want me to fuck you?"

Her eyes glittered as she ground back against him. "Pretty much always," she told him.

"Okay then." He wrapped his arms around her middle and tugged her away from the counter and toward the bedroom.

"You still don't feel hard yet," she grouched.

He snorted. "Merlin. Just give it a second."

He turned her and nudged her down to sit on the edge of the bed. She looked up at him, eyes bright. "Can I watch?"

"After all your teasing today, you want me to do all the work? Nah, Granger. You missed your chance for a wank viewing when you left the bathroom this morning."

“You said you didn’t wank, though,” she reminded him.

He inclined his head in agreement. “But if you’d stayed, I would have come on the glass for you.”

He enjoyed the way color rose instantly to her skin. Not embarrassment but arousal.

“I would have liked to see that.” She dropped her eyes to his groin, eye level with her with her sitting on the bed. “But that wasn’t what I meant just now. I mean I want to watch it happen.”

“You want to watch it happen,” he repeated. “What, me...?”

“Getting an erection. Yes. Can I?” She looked up at him, eyes shining with the prospect of fresh discovery. That look did something to him, something deep and yearning.

He tugged his t-shirt off from behind his head and tossed it carelessly to the floor.

“You’ll have to hurry if you want to see the full effect,” he told her.

He had only barely been holding it off by keeping more than half a mind on the logistics of the party tomorrow and — the ultimate boner killer — what in Salazar’s name he’ll say to Weasley and Potter. *Welcome* seemed laughably polite. *We meet again* overly dramatic.

Hermione’s fingers curling under the waistband of his joggers and briefs shoved all thoughts of greetings from his mind completely. She tugged his clothes down eagerly and he kicked them aside.

He was proud of his body now. He’d put intentional effort into filling out from the veritable waif he’d become during his stint as a Death Eater. The most difficult part had been making sure he was eating enough for his frame, but once he got his appetite back (consistent high-grade anxiety and watching people be eviscerated by snakes and aunts alike had had a rather dampening effect on it), the rest came easily. Running, flying, and lifting heavy things had helped to both reset his mind and reform his body.

It was flattering to see the way it affected Hermione, her eyes tracking down his abdomen to his cock with an increasingly hungry expression. It amused him that she wanted to watch him get hard but now that she’d asked, he was retrospectively surprised it had taken her this long to inquire about it. His cock was nothing special to him (well, it was *very* special to him, but it was nothing *new*) so seeing her attention so rapt on him certainly helped matters along.

He looked at her mouth, waiting for the flick of her tongue he knew would be appearing soon, and then the subsequent rolling in of her lower lip and the hidden bite to it from her teeth. It played out a moment later and the fact that he’d known to predict it affected him almost as much as the actual sensual act of it. His cock began to swell, the warmth of arousal sinking lower with his blood. Her eyes widened slightly as she watched him grow, the progress steady now that his focus was on her. When she tilted her head, eyes never leaving him, it finally overcame gravity and bobbed up and slightly to the left, perhaps a result of his handedness, like his cock was used to searching for pleasure on that side of him.

He made himself stop personifying his cock and gestured at himself. “Well, there you go, Granger. That’s about as hard as it gets. Now what’ll you do with it?”

She licked her lips and looked up at him. “What would you like?” she asked sweetly.

Arousal sluiced through him leaving raised hairs and tingling nerves in its wake. He felt his cock stiffen even further and her eyes dropped back down. She chewed the side of her lip, pleased.

“Touch me,” he implored.

She looked back up at him. “With what?”

He stroked his thumb along her cheek, cupping the back of her neck and sliding his fingers into her hair. “Your tongue.”

She let him tug her closer and gave him a kittenish lick on the underside of his shaft then looked up at him expectantly.

“I know you don’t need instructions,” he joked, running his thumb along her jaw to her chin.

“If I recall,” she said softly, “You said you’d punish me.”

“I did say that.” He brushed his thumb along her bottom lip and she opened for him, her tongue flicking against the pad. “What sort of punishment were you hoping for?”

“I didn’t get you off in the shower. And I kissed another man.” Even though he knew it had been Theo and he honestly hadn’t minded at the time, hearing the words from her made jealousy flare hotly in his chest. “I think you ought to reclaim my mouth. And make me wait.”

She flicked her tongue against the pad of this thumb again and his nostrils flared on a slow exhale. “Yeah? You want me to fuck your mouth, princess?”

She nodded, closing her lips around his thumb and sucked softly, her tongue laving against it in a slow undulation that made his cock flex. He pressed down on her tongue, trapping it and forcing her mouth open.

“It would be my pleasure.” He arched an eyebrow, “But I suspect it would also be yours, hmm?”

Her eyes glittered and he felt her tongue twitch under his thumb. “Uh huh. So is that a good punishment then?”

She shook her head, as much as she was able in his hold. He ran his thumb back and forth on her tongue and watched her throat contract on a swallow.

“How about this then. I’ll fuck your mouth until you’re nice and ready for me, and then I’ll fuck your cunt until I come. And *then*...” He rubbed her tongue again then let his hand drop away. “Only then, I’ll let you come. Alright?”

“Yes. Yes please.” She curled a fist around him enthusiastically but he knocked it away.

“Hands on bed, princess.”

She planted them on either side of her hips, fingers curling into the duvet. He raked both hands through her hair, getting a good grip, and took a half-step closer until his cock bounced against her chin.

“Tap my thigh if you want me to stop,” he told her, eyes intent on hers.

She nodded and opened her mouth in invitation. He tilted his hips to slide in cock along her tongue and she closed her lips around him, suckling wetly like she had on his thumb. The pressure was dizzying and he let out a low groan.

“Fuck, that feels good. Wanted this all day.”

He palmed the back of her head, fingers flexing in her curls to hold her steady as he slowly pressed himself further inside. He knew she could take him but suspected it would feel different when the control of depth was out of her hands. When he nudged the back of her throat, her eyelids fluttered but she maintained her eye contact with him. He held himself there, like she always did when doing this to him, and then pressed a little further when he felt her relax. She swallowed around him reflexively and he had to pull back before his hips sent him deeper the other direction.

She gasped a quick breath but then opened her mouth for him again. He didn’t go as deep but picked up his pace, holding her head between his palms and fucking into her mouth in quick, shallow movements.

As he predicted, it looked like anything but punishment to her. He could see her hands flexing in the bedding like she wanted to touch either him or herself, her hips shifting slightly with the rhythm he was setting. He hadn’t taken a scrap of clothing off her yet and the sight of her in little sleep shorts and a loose t-shirt while he was fully naked, using her mouth, sent lust crackling through him. He tightened his grip and pressed deep again, accidentally going further than he’d intended. She moaned around him but raised a hand to tap his thigh.

He immediately pulled back, gasping. “Shit. Sorry, sorry. You alright?”

There was a line of saliva connecting his cock to her mouth but she didn’t bother swiping it away, just panted, “*Please*. I’m so ready for you.”

He huffed a laugh, part relief that he hadn’t hurt her but mostly to control himself. “Oh yeah? You thought you needed to tell me that? I know you’re ready for me. I bet you’ve been ready for me since the first lick.” He watched her want to deny it and smirked when she didn’t. “I thought so. Alright, baby. Show me how ready you are.”

She tugged her shirt over her head, finally breaking the spit connecting them. Her chest was flushed, her nipples tight and gorgeous. He inhaled slowly, licking his lower lip into his mouth and running his tongue along it while he fantasized doing it to her tits. She flopped onto her back and raised her hips to shuck her shorts off and then planted her feet wide,

entirely unashamed. He gave himself a stroke to stop himself from dropping to his knees at the sight of her. At least, not yet. She'd wanted to be made to wait and he was certain that if he got a single taste of her, he wouldn't be able to stop until she was coming.

"Gorgeous," he told her, and then patted her flank, jerking his chin. "Scoot up."

She shifted up the bed and he followed her, settling himself between her thighs and dropping down until his cock slid through the arousal pooling at her center. She squirmed under him.

"See?" she whined. "I'm so wet."

"I can feel it." He ground against her again and she keened. "I bet it won't take long for you at all, will it?"

"No." She rocked her hips against his, keeping the friction going. "Not...not long at all."

He drew back and battered at her clit with the head of his cock, watching her squirm. "I like you like this," he told her. "You make me an incoherent fool and I make you a squirmy, needy little mess. Don't I?"

"*Draco*," she whined. "Oh god. *Please*, I..."

He lined himself up and sank inside, her body welcoming him in excitedly until his hips were flush with hers. She moaned and throbbed around him.

"Fuck, that's good." He drew back and sank deep again. "Jesus, you're so wet."

"Need to be fucked," she groaned, "Need to come."

"You're not allowed to yet," he reminded her. "Me first."

She whimpered and he slid his hand up to push his thumb back into her mouth. "But I'll give you a little something. Here, baby. Suck."

She did and he felt her squeeze around him in response. Her eyes were locked on his, cheeks pink and lips so pretty and plush around him.

"You really do like something in your mouth, don't you? I like it, too. Your tongue drives me crazy, Granger. Every time I catch a glimpse of it, I think about how it feels against mine. Or how it feels under my cock, so soft and wet and – *fuck*." His eyelids fluttered as he felt his orgasm rise.

He hadn't meant to come yet but filling his head with thoughts of her while fucking into both places she was so wet for him had proved to be more than he could bare. He whined, jaw tight, and held himself at the edge.

"You're gonna make me come," he told her, voice strained and hips bumping against hers with increasing force as the tension coiled to breaking. "I'm trying to hold it, baby, but this fucking little cunt is gonna make me come. Oh shit. Oh... *shit*." He lost control, cock throbbing on the final rise and then he was falling, pulsing into her and groaning.

She sucked hard on his thumb, rocking her hips under him and making warm sounds of encouragement in her throat. He lost himself for a moment, forehead sinking against her shoulder as the pleasure rolled through him. He dropped a kiss to her collarbone and then reared back, nudging his cock inside her twice more while he still had a little stiffness to offer her and then pulling out all the way.

“Squeeze tight,” he told her, “Don’t let any of it out yet. I want you to come while you’re still full of me.”

She gasped and he watched her opening contract. He could tell she was struggling to stay the line.

“That’s it.” He was breathing heavily, as if he’d just run the circumference of the lake. *God*, the things she did to him. “Tighter, baby.”

He dropped to his stomach and pushed her thighs open, swallowing thickly as his mouth flooded with saliva at the sight. A bead of moisture dripped out of her as she followed his instruction and he couldn’t stop himself from chasing it with his tongue. And once he started, he couldn’t stop.

He licked through her hungrily, dipping his tongue inside her without hesitation. He felt her starting to come around his tongue, her fists tight in his hair as if worried he’d back off and leave her ruined. She’d have to pry him off her, he thought savagely, fucking his tongue deeper.

“Oh...my... *god*.” Her register skyrocketed, going almost shrill when he broke away to suck rhythmically on her clit.

He was certain that shriek had carried all the way down the hall and the stupid, prideful, possessive part of him puffed up knowing the *man who had kissed her* could hear it. Which was...stupid, because that particular man had no natural desire for her, and yet...and yet the beast inside him purred with satisfaction.

He slowly eased off until he was simply kissing her cunt, then slowly worked a trail of kisses up the length of her body, pausing to suck lightly on a nipple and then again to nip at her collarbone, before finally pressing his lips to hers. She kissed him back, mouth lax but smiling.

“That was so good,” she murmured. “You’re so perfect, Draco.”

He rolled them onto their sides and held her tight.

Chapter End Notes

Draco POV is just... 🤩 🤩 🤩 I can't control him. (Not that I try 🙄)

Thanks, as always, for reading! I love hearing your thoughts and feedback 💕

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 23: Theo grinned and waggled the cigarette up and down along with his brows.

Chapter Notes

Hi friends! Starting things off with a little more setup and then the guests begin to arrive



Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Knowing it would likely be a late night, they all had a lie-in on Friday morning and assembled piecemeal around the kitchen table for a leisurely breakfast. By the time the last bit of toast disappeared, it was half eleven, meaning there were only a handful of hours left until Hermione would be reunited with her best friends. The thought filled her with a mix of excitement and trepidation. Their letters had seemed positive enough but she was sure actually seeing her on the arm of Draco Malfoy wouldn't be a pill easily swallowed.

It seemed she wasn't the only one whose thoughts were on the arrival of her friends.

"So," began Draco, resting his arm along the back of her chair. "Anything I should prepare myself for when Potty and the Weasel arrive? I've been practicing a wandless *protego* but any tips you can lend would be most appreciated."

She took advantage of his raised arm to poke sharply at his unprotected side and he jolted, but laughed.

"I honestly have no idea," she sighed. "Their reaction thus far has been suspiciously mild so I can't tell if they truly don't care or if they were just forced to be nice on paper by Ginny. But either way, might I suggest you start off on the right foot by calling them Harry and Ron?"

Draco's instant expression of disgust earned him another jab, but he caught her hand before she could deliver a third. "I can offer you Potter and Weasley, but anything else is a hard limit," he said with mock seriousness.

"You're ridiculous." She sent him a stern look and he grinned. "Just...be nice to them, and they'll probably be too shocked to be anything but nice back."

"I suppose we could discuss films with them," suggested Theo, pushing back his chair and standing. "That's neutral enough territory."

Hermione made a little noise of disagreement. "Actually, I'm not sure either of them has ever seen a film. Well, on purpose, anyway. They know what they are, of course, but we've never

really had occasion to put one on.”

This revelation was met with three blank stares.

“Potter, Savior of the Muggles, has never seen a *film*?” said Draco incredulously.

“He’s not the *Savior of Muggles*,” she tutted. “I don’t actually think he cares all that much for Muggles.”

They all blinked.

“Wait. Wait.” Theo had stopped halfway around the table and appeared to be having his mind blown. “What are you *talking about*? Potter hates Muggles?!”

“I didn’t say he *hates* them. Obviously he doesn’t hate them. He just didn’t have a very good childhood amongst them and has always favored wizards for bringing him out of it.”

“Okay, so then what about Weasley? His dad is a Muggle-lover of legend,” Draco insisted.

She shook her head. “Again, not a *Muggle* lover exactly, more like a Muggle *things* lover. Arthur always saw Muggles as an oddity, like something to gawk at in a fun fair. And honestly I think that made Ron even less interested in them; it was just his dad’s quirky hobby.”

This appeared to only add to their bafflement. She tried once more.

“Just to be really, *really* clear: none of them dislike Muggles. They don’t want them to die but they also don’t care if they live. By which I mean, they think it’s fine that they live.” She eyed them each in turn. “I can see I’m not explaining it well.”

“I think I need to sit down,” said Theo. “The only thing that would shock me more is if you told me Potter plays for my team.”

“Oh.” Hermione pressed her lips together to hide her smile. “Well, you might actually want to sit then.”

“Oh my *god*.” Theo dropped his face into his hands. “Salazar’s saggy balls. You’re ruining my life.”

She laughed. “If it makes you feel better, it’s most accurate to say he plays for *Blaise*’s team. And it’s only been recently that he confirmed he wasn’t strictly, uh, on Draco’s.” She’d almost lost track of the euphemisms in light of her next thought. “Actually, I’m surprised that you didn’t know. There was a whole double spread about it in Witch Weekly when he went on a very public date with a bloke from work.”

“I know we’re not the most stereotypically macho-macho bunch, but do look around, Granger. Does it look like we subscribe to that particular periodical?” Blaise drawled.

“I fucking will be now,” grouched Theo, “if it’s the only one reporting on news that actually matters.”

“You’ll be disappointed, mate,” Draco told him regretfully, “Most of the articles are about which fashion trend will knock his socks off or how to use your wand to charm your way into bed with him. *Actually*—” His eyes brightened with humor as they settled on Hermione. “As I say that out loud, I’m realizing I should get a subscription for each of you.”

He grinned and she rolled her eyes.

“Pass,” she deadpanned at the same time Theo nodded and said, “Yes please!”

“Dare I ask why you even know the typical content?” She asked.

“Pansy, obviously.”

“Ah.”

“Anyway, aren’t we focusing on the wrong Weasley? I’m not exactly shaking in my boots over *Ron*,” said Blaise.

Hermione turned curious eyes on him. “But you’re shaking in your boots over *Ginny*?” It was a healthy and rather logical reaction, she thought, but a surprising one for Blaise to admit to. “Have you ever even interacted with her?”

“I played Chaser against her in Sixth year. And she threatened to hex me quite often in Seventh,” he said dryly.

“*And* he thinks she’s delicious,” Theo chimed in. “And Blaise doesn’t think *anyone* is delicious.”

“I didn’t use that word,” said Blaise but then he smirked. “But it’s definitely more appropriate than what I *did* say.”

Hermione sent him an unimpressed look mostly because it felt expected of her while privately chuckling to herself. She’d gathered that Ginny had similar feelings about Blaise but didn’t particularly feel like sharing and giving him any sort of advantage over her. Although...he’d probably need one.

“Charming,” she told him, and then pushed back her chair. “Right, I’m going to have a bath and then I’m happy to help do whatever needs doing before people arrive.”

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She was just getting out of the bath when Draco walked into their bathroom. He gave her naked body a cursory sweep as he leaned back against the door, watching as she reached for her towel. Her bath time thoughts had wandered again to Harry and Ron, specifically all the events in their past which might come up and lead to tension with the mixed group. She’d

hardly gotten through half of them in the twenty minutes she'd been soaking. But one thought had triggered another, and with it an unanswered question. She posed it now.

"How did you know it was me who had injured Theo's father in the Department of Mysteries?"

Draco's brows flicked up once in surprise. He pushed off the door with a shoulder and walked over to her. She still held the towel in front of her so his hand met warm, damp skin as he raised it to her ribs and moved the towel aside.

"Aunt Bella. She screeched about it all through the Manor for days." His thumb traced the scar bisecting her side, faded to a muted lavender, indicating just how detailed his psychotic aunt had been. "You got this that night, didn't you?"

"Yes." Having lived with it for almost four years, she often forgot it was even there. She tried to catch his gaze but his eyes were on her scar. "You've never brought it up before."

He dropped his arm, flexing his fist and making the muscles of his forearm ripple. It was his left. "You've never mentioned mine. And mine's a bit more...public knowledge."

She hadn't. His Mark had been a slight shock the first time she'd seen it but of course she'd known it was there. She'd never known what to say about it so had just chosen to...not say anything at all.

"It didn't feel polite."

He snorted, glancing up at her. "*Polite?* What, you didn't want to offend me by mentioning the most offensive thing on my body?" His tone was wry.

"I didn't want to bring attention to it," she rephrased.

"Why? It's not like I've forgotten about it."

She reached out to wrap a hand around his elbow, thumb pressing slightly on the taut muscle until he relaxed his fist. He was looking down at her hand, a tension in the cadence of his breath. Surely she'd touched his Mark before on accident, through his shirt or perhaps mindlessly while grabbing onto him during sex, but she couldn't bring a specific occurrence to mind.

On the off chance she never actually had — and he'd noticed and read something more into it — she ran her thumb gently over the top of the skull and said quietly, "I know. But I see more to you than just...that."

He huffed a sound, like a laugh he was trying to force out to cover something else.

"Do you *want* to talk about it?" she ventured, when he still hadn't looked up from where she was still gently gripping his arm.

He sighed, like a pressure valve being slowly let up. "Maybe. But not right now."



“Okay.”

“We need to talk about it,” he said, sounding more decisive. “Soon. It’s important to me that you...well, hear a few things, I suppose.”

She slid her hand up from his elbow to grip his shoulder and went up on her toes to meet his downturned face.

“I’ll listen,” she promised softly.

He nodded, the grim line of his mouth lifting just barely at the corners. “Thank you.”

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It didn’t take long to set up for the party, both because magic was a helpful little devil and because Blaise kept his home ready for company at all times. Once they’d corralled some basic necessities (drinkware, serviettes, little paper plates) and Blaise returned with food from a local shop, they rewarded themselves with a round of the punch that Draco had been bullied into preparing. He declined sampling the mix, reciting the contents as reason enough — he really didn’t like sweet drinks. Hermione and Theo filled glasses merrily and settled onto the sofa while Blaise and Draco played billiards.

The punch really was quite potent and Hermione was a bit giggly by the time she set down her empty glass, though her humor was further enhanced by her companion. Theo had been whispering a running commentary in her ear about the potential inner-thoughts of Blaise and Draco while they played, and had gotten quite silly with it.

But when he paused the dialogue to dig into his pocket and draw out a slim, silver cigarette case, she tutted.

“Oh Theo. That’s a terrible habit.”

He glanced up at her, an unlit cigarette dangling between his lips. “What? It’s sexy.”

Hermione made a face of mildly-apologetic disagreement. “It’s actually not.”

“Okay, not on me maybe but what about...” He leapt over the arm of the sofa and looped his arm around Draco’s shoulders, sliding the cigarette between his lips. Draco automatically adjusted it with his tongue, craning his head to look at Theo as he bracketed his fore and middle fingers around it. He pulled it from his mouth unhurriedly, flicking his tongue along his bottom lip where the paper had pressed.

“What the hell, Theo?”

But Theo was looking over at her expectantly. “Eh?”

She cleared her suddenly parched throat, that flick of tongue and those dexterous fingers having sparked something. “Yeah,” she croaked. “Sexy.”

Draco looked around at her, confused until he noticed her blush. He raised an eyebrow and then smirked and tucked it back between his lips.

“Don’t worry, gorgeous. I never light ‘em. It’s just to draw the eye.” Theo winked at her then tugged it from Draco’s mouth and put it back between his own lips. “Maybe if I’m lucky, Harry will find it just as alluring as you did.”

“*Harry*,” snorted Blaise. “Salazar save him.”

“Which ‘him’,” muttered Draco, taking his shot.

Theo grinned and wagged the cigarette up and down along with his brows.

But it appeared that Hermione wasn’t the only one appalled at Theo’s apparent disregard for his health. It had been ages since she’d heard Pansy’s voice but as it sounded across the room, it hit her like it’d only been yesterday.

“You’re *smoking* now?!”

They turned to see the dark haired woman standing at the foot of the stairs.

“Calm down, mum,” Theo said with an eye roll. “It’s just a prop.”

Pansy scoffed and waved a dismissive hand. “Well it’s very unbecoming. I would have thought Granger’d have put a stop to this sort of behavior.”

And with that careless assumption — not to mention, lack of any proper greeting — Hermione relocated her spine. She scoffed. “And why would you think that?”

Pansy’s shapely brows dipped once in confusion at the question and then repositioned themselves to best demonstrate her incredulity. “I assumed you’d have had plenty of practice corralling those Gryffindor boys.”

“As neither their minder nor their mum, I actually never put in the effort. Well, beyond staying on their case about schoolwork, I suppose.”

Pansy tilted her head appraisingly at Hermione. “Then it’s a miracle even a single one of their hair-brained schemes succeeded.”

“*Actually*, I came up with most of those ‘*hair-brained schemes*’. Or at least did my part in making them successful.” She paused in silent acknowledgement of all those that *hadn’t* quite been a success. “Well, maybe not *unilateral* successes but we...survived.”

Pansy blinked. “What a stunning endorsement.”

“Pansy—“ Draco began, the first any of the boys had said. Hermione appreciated that they didn’t immediately assume she needed their assistance. After all, it was only *Pansy*.

“Now you’re here,” Hermione interrupted, standing. “Come help in the kitchen.”

“*Help in the kitchen?*” Pansy tutted. “I thought you’d be more women’s lib than that.”

“Blaise is coming too.” Hermione strode past her, not looking back to check that he was following since Pansy’s raised brow expression over Hermione’s shoulder hinted that he was. She was determined to find an accord with Pansy, considering the woman was Draco’s best friend and therefore would be a long-standing figure in Hermione’s life. At least, Hermione hoped so.

In the kitchen, she waited for Pansy to join her at the island and then gestured with an open hand to the various snacks and ingredients strewn about.

“Obviously this won’t do as is but I think between the three of us we can sort out something more presentable. I’m no good at arranging food or, frankly, even making it. But I can help complete specific tasks if you give them to me.”

Pansy flicked her gaze over the assembled food items, up to Hermione, and then back down. She took a breath and then raised her chin. Hermione swallowed her smile; *success*.

“Well. These should be put into bowls, first off,” Pansy said, pointing at the large bags of crisps. “No one wants to get greasy wrists digging in those.”

“Okay. I can do that.” Hermione glanced at Blaise, who pointed to the open shelving behind her at two large bowls. Hermione got them down.

“And Blaise, you come chop these into sticks. Not a julienne, mind you; *sticks*.”

Blaise’s mouth was curled into a soft smile of amusement at Hermione’s obvious tactic but came forward as bidden, pulling the vegetables Pansy had indicated toward himself. Pansy busied herself sorting through the rest, dividing things into groups of either how they’d be arranged or prepared or some other scheme Hermione didn’t bother figuring out. Once she’d emptied the crisps into bowls, Pansy set her a new task of spooning the berries she’d tossed in sugar, cornflour, and cardamom into the little pie shells she’d whipped up with neither recipe nor magic.

Hermione had intended for her gesture to be an olive branch but was finding the experience to be quite more illuminating than simply a truce. She’d never have expected to see Pansy Parkinson so adept in a kitchen, her wand yet to make an appearance and her movements deft, well practiced.

It was another wash of color to the picture Hermione was slowly coming to see: Purebloods — of the Slytherin sort, specifically — were not at all like the caricature she’d drawn in her head.

Once the work was done, Blaise poured them each a short glass of punch and raised his to Pansy.

“Ta, Parks.”

“Anytime, darling.” She saluted him back and sipped, then hummed appreciatively. “For a man who won’t drink it, Draco certainly is dangerous with his punch. Mmm.”

She took another sip then turned to Hermione.

“So,” she began and Hermione prepared herself for anything. “Can I add you to my roster?”

Hermione furrowed her brow. “Roster?”

“Of girls I’ve indirectly given an orgasm to. Or—” Pansy grinned wickedly. “Orgasms.” She emphasized the plural.

Hermione raised her brows at the jump in topic. She decided not to be cowed. “Is this you asking if Draco makes me come?” she asked baldly.

Pansy gestured impatiently, face arranged with purposeful boredom like she was hoping to be shouted at for asking such a personal question so blithely.

As Hermione had already decided not to be baited if she could help it, she simply nodded. “Oh. Then yes. Put me at the top, assuming you rank it by number of times. Frankly, I’ve lost count.” She smiled pleasantly. “Of this week alone.”

“It’s been two,” supplied Blaise. “Unless you’ve figured out how to do it quietly?”

Pansy raised a brow, her expression dropping from bored to wicked instantly. “Granger, are you a *screamer*?” She hummed thoughtfully. “Actually, now that I think about it, I find that entirely unsurprising. You’ve always been rather shrill.”

Hermione, who had scoffed to cover her blush at Blaise’s comment, flicked her eyes to Pansy. “*Shrill*?” She’d said it more, well, *shrilly* than she’d meant to but there was something about the word that activated her higher register in a frustratingly self-fulfilling prophecy manner.

Pansy looked rather satisfied at her reaction. Blast.

“I’m not shrill,” she said in a more moderated tone. “And I’m not a *screamer*. I just...”

Draco had chosen that moment to come to see what they were up to. Either that or his ears had been burning. He met her eye and smirked. “Don’t let me interrupt you, Granger. You just...?”

She blushed but rolled her eyes to offset it. “I was talking to *Pansy*, not you,” she said crisply.

“Of course.” He leaned a hip against the island beside Pansy and across from Hermione. “Ignore me then. I’m just here for a bite.”

He reached for one of the carrot spears Pansy had arranged in a sunburst and bit off the tip with a snap, teeth flashing and eyes on Hermione.

“Tone it down, you animal,” Pansy chided. “I don’t need to know what sordid things you do behind closed doors.”

“Not always closed,” Blaise said coolly from the other side of Draco.

Draco chuckled but Hermione scoffed. “Don’t you start. They’ve always been closed.”

“Whatever you say.” Blaise smirked as Theo poked his head around the door jamb and then came through. “Speaking of sordid things behind closed doors, wait until you hear who Theo is set to seduce this evening.”

Pansy looked past Draco to Blaise. “Oh?”

Blaise waggled his brows. “Potter.”

Theo leaned his forearms on the island beside Pansy as she gasped. “*Potter?* How on earth will *that* come about?” Blaise opened his mouth but Pansy clicked her tongue. “Ooh no, that was rhetorical. I don’t want to hear anything about Theo’s attempts to shag *Potter*.”

“I can hear you, you know,” grouched Theo.

“Yes, I know. You’re literally touching me. Which I’m not the biggest fan of, by the way.” Pansy lost half of her iciness when Theo dipped down to nuzzle his face against hers, his obnoxious, puppy-like behavior melting her. She laughed and shoved him. “Off! *Salazar*, you lot are *all* animals.”

But she was smiling as she took another sip of punch. It was so similar to the jocular teasing Hermione was used to with her own friends that she felt a pang of nostalgia. She was looking forward to seeing them tonight and was filled with fresh determination that everything would be amicable. She needed her friends in her life as much as she needed Draco.

And on that, she refused to compromise.

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Neville and Luna arrived about thirty minutes later, earlier than expected but bearing gifts. Neville, charmingly, had brought a plant as a host gift which he handed to Blaise but then immediately took back to find the best location for it. Blaise allowed it with an expression of muted amusement and a permissive wave of his hand, eyes trailing over Luna’s white lace pinafore under which she’d worn teal leggings and a bright pink shirt. It was an interesting sartorial choice and one Hermione complimented with a polite, “You’re so colorful!” as she gave Luna an air-kiss.

The arrival of Harry and the Weasleys garnered a bit more of Hermione’s attention. When the knocker struck, she was up the stairs and opening it before she considered the etiquette of greeting guests on Blaise’s behalf. But sod it, she *missed them*.

Her squeal of delight was uncontrollable as she flung her arms around Harry and Ron, almost knocking their heads together with the force of it.

“Hi!” she gushed. “Oh, it’s so good to see you!”

“Hi, Hermione,” Harry laughed, squeezing her back as best he could manage with how she’d pinned his arm.

“Missed you too,” put in Ron, his arm around her other side.

She drew back and hugged Ginny next, just as enthusiastically even though she’d seen her only days ago.

“I’m so glad you came! Come in.”

They crossed the threshold rather trepidatiously, taking in the room.

“Everyone’s downstairs,” Hermione told them. “Neville and Luna are here.”

“And...?” Ginny prompted. She looked the least wary of the three, likely due to her existing friendship with Draco and her supposed attraction for Blaise. And, well, she was Ginny. She didn’t spook easily.

“And Draco, Theo, Pansy, Greg, and Blaise,” Hermione supplied.

“*Greg?* ” repeated Ron. “You mean Goyle is here?”

“He prefers Greg,” Hermione corrected. “And yes, that’s who I mean. He’s actually quite nice, though a bit reserved.”

“This is bizarre,” mumbled Ron but Harry was looking at her carefully. She met his gaze, smiling sincerely.

“I’m happy, Harry,” she assured him. “He’s wonderful to me. And I really, *really* like him so *please* be nice.”

Harry inhaled deeply then let it out in a short puff through his nose. “Of course. We’re here, aren’t we?”

“Yes. And thank you, by the way. I’ve been missing you both terribly.”

Ron looped his arm around her shoulders and smacked a kiss to her hair. “Course, Hermione. We’re not in the business of turning down a chance to see you.”

“Thanks, Ron.” She met Ginny’s eyes and saw the glint of satisfaction there.

Yep, Hermione definitely owed Ginny a massive thank you for whatever sense (or fear of retribution) she’d talked into them.

Hermione led them down the stairs, relieved she'd been able to greet them privately but again preparing herself for anything. Draco caught sight of them halfway through the descent and made his way over, meeting them at the base of the steps. A little fissure of anxiety spiked through her but the boys seemed to be on their best behavior.

"Malfoy," said Harry neutrally.

"Drink?" Draco offered, in lieu of any proper greeting.

"Probably better had," said Ron, glancing around at the Slytherins in the room beyond.

"Hi bestie!" Ginny maneuvered around them and punched Draco lightly on the arm.

"What the fuck?" muttered Ron. Hermione shushed him.

"Hey, Ginny." Draco turned to her. "So you follow through with party invitations but not Quidditch drills? I'm still waiting to be shown what an amazing Chaser I can be."

"Wouldn't you know it, I somehow forgot to bring my Quidditch stuff to a party." She slapped her forehead theatrically.

Draco sighed. "Ah well. C'est la vie."

"La vie," Ginny quipped and Draco snorted, face breaking into a wide grin.

Harry and Ron both turned shocked expressions to Hermione. She laughed and shrugged as indifferently as she could manage, which wasn't much. "They're friends."

The boys exchanged a look of pure bafflement until Harry barked a laugh. "I mean, sure! Why not, right?"

Ron chuckled at Harry's humor. "I suppose it's not even the fifth strangest thing we've witnessed, eh?" He jerked his chin to Draco. "So how about that drink then, Malfoy?"

Hermione trailed after them anxiously, despite it seeming like things were not going to suddenly devolve into wandwork, and accepted a cup of punch when they were passed around. But before she could initiate a neutral topic of conversation – ugh, it'd probably be *Quidditch* – Ginny hooked her arm through Hermione's elbow and dragged her away.

"They'll be fine," she said when Hermione opened her mouth. "Come on, introduce me around."

Hermione cast a quick look over her shoulder and took in the truly surreal sight of Draco, Harry, and Ron just...talking. She couldn't hear what they were saying but it looked like it wasn't thinly – or not so thinly – veiled threats.

"Fine. Here's Theo. Theo!" She raised her voice slightly to catch his attention from where he was perched on the arm of the couch above Greg. Both men looked up and Theo smiled.

"Hello, gorgeous," he called.

“*Gorgeous?* ” Ginny hissed in her ear as they made their way closer. “Just how many Slytherins have you gotten wrapped around your finger?”

“Calm down,” Hermione whispered back. “He’s gay.”

Ginny raised her eyebrows like *so what?* “Does that somehow contradict my statement?”

Hermione clicked her tongue. “They’re friendly. Hush.”

Ginny gave her a look but then smiled over at Theo when he turned his expression to her.

“Hi Ginevra. Thanks for coming.”

“Call me Ginny. And thanks for the invite.” Ginny nodded at Theo and then glanced down at Greg. “Hi.”

“Lo,” mumbled Greg, blushing and looking away. Ginny pressed her lips together to hide her amused smile.

“It seems like the boys are playing nicely,” observed Theo, jerking his chin behind them. Hermione forced herself not to check, wanting to show all three of them that she trusted them to behave well.

“Yes, it appears everyone has been properly motivated to be civil,” she said, glancing at Ginny. “Thanks for that, by the way.”

“No bother.” Ginny settled herself on the sofa beside Greg. He shifted slightly to make space but shot her a small smile. “It turns out that they do listen to common sense once in a while.”

“Threatened them with a thorough hexing?” guessed Hermione and laughed when Ginny grinned.

“And what was Draco motivated with, I wonder?” asked Theo, peering at her over his glass.

Hermione tutted. “Don’t be vulgar.”

“Don’t be correct, is what you mean.” He hummed and nodded to himself. “Perhaps I can strike up a similar deal with *my* chosen one. ”

Hermione laughed. “Oh Merlin, *please* call him that, I’m begging you. But only when I can witness his reaction.”

“Oh?” Ginny leaned forward to look past Greg at Theo. “Set your sights on someone special, have you?”

“You two probably have a lot in common, actually,” interjected Hermione. “I’ll leave you to chat amongst yourselves.”

She’d given Draco and the boys almost five minutes alone and her need to assess things was burning through her intention to let them sort it out themselves. She excused herself from the



sofa and marched back across the room. They were right where she'd left them, standing around the table of drinks set up outside the kitchen.

"Hi," she said, slipping her arm around Draco's waist and giving him a squeeze. "I've just left Ginny and Theo together so...prepare yourselves."

Ron glanced over to locate his sister but Harry had clocked her hand around Draco, his attention then jumping to her face and then flicking over to Draco's. She felt Draco's lips press against her temple the moment before Harry's eyes skittered away to track Ginny's location, too. Always in Auror mode, she thought fondly, and always her protective best friend.

"Bold of you," Draco murmured, and she wasn't sure if he meant her introduction of their two most insouciant friends or her physical touch to him in front of Harry and Ron.

She wanted to kiss him so badly but thought that might be pushing her luck so soon in their reunion. She satisfied herself with a low hum of agreement and an affectionate nuzzle against him.

## Chapter End Notes

Fun and games coming soon 🕶️🎉

Credit for the "C'est le vie // Le vie" line goes to Easy A, one of my fav comfort rom-com movies. It is *such* a Ginny/Draco line that I just had to include it.

And on the off chance anyone is interested in a lil Blairon, I posed a new work in my Anytime universe of my favorite little rare pair. Chapter two (the final part!) will be up this week. Read it [here!](#)

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## Chapter 24: “Thestral, again? Jesus, we’re a cheery bunch,” remarked Draco.

### Chapter Notes

I apologize in advance if this chapter's game explanation is complicated at first but it's SO FUN and I want you all to play it IRL. It's an actual board game but I've always played it where the participants write the cards and IMO it's way more fun that way.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione was having a wonderful evening. After a bit of hyperactivity, she'd managed to believe that things were going well (which they were) and allowed herself to relax. She stuck by Draco's side for the first hour but then slowly drifted off once he got roped into a game of billiards. There was only so much spectating she could do before getting bored.

She was wandering around the room, considering who to go and sit beside for a chat, when she spotted Ginny and Theo. Both looked rather giggly and she had to imagine the punch wasn't helping. She went over, interrupting their whispered conversation.

“Hi,” she said. “You two look like you’re up to absolutely no good.”

“We’ve discovered that we want to shag each other’s best friends,” revealed Theo in an excited undertone. “So we’re plotting.”

Hermione raised her brows. “Why do you need to plot? I thought Bla—“

Theo widened his eyes in a warning not to continue. Ah. He wanted to have his fun with the theatrics of the chase. Hermione coughed into her fist to cover the abrupt end to her word and Theo pressed his lips together to hide his amusement at her terrible attempt for nonchalance. She gave him a glancing glare, quick enough that Ginny didn't catch it when she turned her head at Hermione's bitten off comment.

“What were you saying, Hermione?”

“Oh, I...just that...” She glanced over Ginny's shoulder and then feigned a look of acknowledgement to an imaginary person in the kitchen. “Sorry Gin, duty calls. Happy plotting and...whatnot.”

She slid away and found Luna, Ron, and Greg in the kitchen. It was such a bizarre trio that she did a double take.

“Oh!” She blinked then carried forward.

“Hey, ‘Mione.” Ron was filling a plate with food, the amount he was choosing second only to the amount already on Greg’s plate. “Have you tried these little tarts yet? They’re smashing.”

“You’ll have to let Pansy know,” Hermione said, coming up to stand beside Luna.

“Let Pansy know what?” asked Pansy, approaching out of nowhere and standing beside Greg.

“That these tarts are delicious.” Ron ate another whole, humming appreciatively.

“Mmm,” agreed Luna, looking over at Pansy. “Mouth watering.”

“You’ve not tried one,” Ron said, looking at the lack of food in front of the blonde.

Luna looked over at him, tilting her head. “One what?”

“Bloody hell,” he muttered, shooting a glance toward Hermione at Luna’s perpetual Luna-ness. “Nothing, Loons.”

But Hermione had caught a flash of something across Pansy’s face at the comment, like she’d received an electric shock and was trying to hide it. But then she flipped her hair and announced, “Games are starting,” and the look was gone.

They followed her through to the lounge where Blaise had begun corralling the others.

“Right,” he began once everyone was gathered in. “The first game is just something fun to get things going. I’ll explain the rules *in their entirety*—” He looked meaningfully at Hermione and she frowned. “—before I allow for questions. So, listen up. The game is called Monikers and—”

“Oh, I know this one,” Ron interrupted immediately. “Bloody hilarious toward the end.”

“You’ve played?” Blaise looked uncharacteristically excited but then caught Theo’s raised brows and quickly corralled the expression. “Brilliant. You can head the other team and keep them in line.”

“Righto.” Ron saluted him, earning him stares of bewilderment from Harry and Draco. Hermione concealed her amused grin at their twin expression behind her glass.

“So, Monikers. We’ll be splitting into two teams and competing against one another for points. There are three rounds and the team with the most points at the end of the third one wins. I’ll be handing round some blank slips of paper and everyone will write down a noun. I’ll collect all the papers and make a stack, which will be the deck we work through in each round. One person will go at a time and the objective is to get their teammates to guess the word written on the slip of paper.” He paused, looking around to make sure everyone was following. Hermione held her questions obediently.

“In the first round, the player can use any word *except* the one written on the slip to get their team to guess. Round two, they can only use *one* word. And round three is charades. We’ll pass the stack of words back and forth between teams until it’s depleted, and then will start

fresh with it in the next round. So *pay attention* to what words are used in round one to get the correct answer because that may be the single word used in round two.”

He looked around at them again, eyes lighting on Hermione but then flicking to Ron. “Did I miss anything?” he asked.

Ron raised his brows but offered. “The timing. Each player only has thirty seconds to get their team to guess, and then it’s the next person’s turn.”

Blaise snapped his fingers and pointed at Ron. “Of course. Thanks. And the stack goes back and forth between teams every other turn.”

Ron nodded and Blaise looked satisfied, then turned to Hermione. “Any questions?” he asked her pointedly.

She had a few but they were probably quite pedantic and she was rather touched at his effort to include Ron, so she shook her head. Blaise waved his wand and distributed two slips of blank paper and a pencil to each of them and they all took a few moments thinking and writing before sending them back to Blaise.

After that, he and Ron took turns selecting their teams. They were an uneven set but as Blaise had graciously allowed Ron to go first, he ended up with the bonus player. Privately, Hermione thought Blaise had done an excellent job selecting his team as it included herself, Draco, Neville, and Ginny while Ron ended up with Harry, Theo, Luna, Pansy, and Greg.

They divided themselves between the two couches by the fire and Blaise nominated himself and Ron as the first two players to give the others an idea of the game play. He charmed a thirty second timer and then stood, holding the stack of words and facing his team. When the timer began counting down, he flipped the stack.

“Right. This is the ice cream parlor in Diagon.” He looked around at them.

“Florian Fortiscue’s!” Hermione and Ginny answered in unison. He nodded and dropped the slip of paper to the floor, reading the next.

“A confectionery that comes with a card of a famous person,” he said, then glanced at Draco. “Your favorite.”

Draco made a face but said, “Chocolate frog.” Blaise dropped the slip.

“Ghost of Slytherin house.”

“Bloody Baron!”

“Time!” called Ron.

Blaise handed him the stack and picked up the three they’d gotten right, holding onto them as he dropped down onto the couch beside Neville.

The timer reset and Ron flipped the stack.

“Bloody hell, this handwriting is...” Ron squinted. “Oh! Okay, you can only see this magical creature if you’ve seen death.”

“Thestral!” His team blurted excitedly. He dropped the slip and read the next.

“We crashed this into the Whomping Willow.” Ron looked right at Harry.

“Your dad’s car?” Harry guessed. Ron gestured excitedly. “Uh, a Ford Anglia? No? Erm, your dad’s *flying* car?”

Ron dropped the slip and read the next.

“What Hermione gave us after that curse!” He looked back at Harry excitedly.

“You have to be *so* much more specific than that,” said Harry, gesturing impatiently.

“Uh, after the dragon!”

Harry waved again. Hermione was bouncing in her seat, itching to answer it. Draco snorted and laid a hand on her thigh, stilling her.

“It heals! She fixed my arm with it when I splinched it!”

“Dittany?” guessed Pansy and Ron pointed at her, dropping the slip.

“Time!” called Blaise and Ron looked up, passing the stack over to Neville and then stooping to collect his correctly-guessed slips. He counted them quickly. “Four.”

They reset the timer and looked at Neville. He flipped the stack and began.

“Death creature again,” he said concisely, and was rewarded with instant responses of “Thestral!”

“Thestral, *again*? Jesus, we’re a cheery bunch,” remarked Draco. Hermione shushed him, listening to the next clue.

“Plant that helps you breathe underwater,” said Neville.

“Gillyweed!”

“Object that determined our Hogwarts House.”

“The Sorting Hat!”

“The class with crystal balls.”

“Divination!”

“Honeydukes sweet made of honey and almonds. In a blue and gold box.”

“Nougat Chunks!”

Draco narrowed his eyes suspiciously at Hermione, who smiled innocently back at him.

“Time!” called Ron.

“Fair play, Longbottom!” praised Blaise, jostling his shoulder when Neville regained his seat. Neville flushed, pleased.

Pansy flipped the stack and began.

“What the fuck,” she muttered to herself. “Uh...has four legs and is furry?”

“A dog. A rabbit. A lion,” rattled off Theo.

Pansy shook her head. “It meows.”

“A cat!”

She nodded. “Yes, but...not *just* a cat—”

“Can’t say the word,” reminded Blaise.

“He already guessed it!” she shot back.

“Focus Pansy!” Theo hollered. “A cat! What else?”

“In its other form, it teaches Transfiguration.”

Beside Hermione, Ginny snorted. “I wrote this one,” she whispered gleefully.

Theo was frowning. “What the...Professor McGonagall?”

Pansy nodded excitedly. “Yes! Say it all!”

“Professor McGonagall’s cat?” said Theo dubiously.

“I can’t believe Ron and Harry right now,” Ginny told Hermione behind her hand. “Look how confused they are. Wow, she is absolutely butchering the hell out of this if they haven’t guessed it by now.”

“No!” Pansy snapped at Theo. “But so close!”

“Oh!” Harry tilted his head. “Professor McGonagall’s cat animagus?”

“Yes!” Pansy threw down the slip defiantly.

“Time,” drawled Blaise and she screeched.

Hermione took the stack next, turning to face her team’s couch. The timer started and she began. The first one was *so* simple.

“The fifth ingredient in a Calming Draught!” Hermione looked around at them expectantly and heard Ron and Harry’s chuckle to her left but ignored them.

Draco frowned. “...Peppermint?”

“Yes!” She dropped the slip and read the next.

“*Hermione*,” Ron chided. “You couldn’t have said the flavor of toothpaste?”

“Shush.” She waved her hand at him. “Okay, the mollusc that lives in the Hogwarts lake.”

“Her’s is spearmint, anyway,” Draco said idly. “And, Giant Squid.”

“Yes! Okay, uh, this is that stupid thing that Viktor did that one time.”

“Jesus,” muttered Theo. “What the hell are these clues, Hermione?”

“Wronski Feint,” said Ginny at the same time Draco guessed, “Kiss you by the lake?” rather dubiously.

Hermione dropped the slip, nodding.

“Time!” called Ron.

“Wait, wait, which was it?” demanded Blaise. “We need to know for the next round.”

“Kissing me by the lake is an *action*, not a noun,” Hermione told him, collecting her cards. “It was the Feint thing.”

Ginny snorted. “Merlin, you are impossible. You do know you’ll have to say it properly to guess it correctly later, don’t you?”

Hermione passed the stack to Luna and then rolled her eyes at Ginny as she took her seat beside Draco.

“How on earth did you guess it from her rubbish clues anyway?” demanded Ron.

“I wrote it, obviously.” Ginny told him dryly.

“My clues weren’t rubbish!” Hermione insisted. “They elicited the correct answers!”

Ron held up his hands in a peace-keeping gesture but Ginny leaned across to pat Hermione’s knee. “They were shit,” she told her kindly. “*Way* too specific. Broaden things up so someone other than Draco knows the answer.”

Hermione huffed but Luna was starting her turn, so turned her attention forward.

By the time they were on the third round, things had gotten competitive and wildly, wildly hilarious. Watching Luna pantomime ‘pumpkin juice’ was second only to the hilarity of Draco having to act out driving a flying car. She supposed it was due to his exposure in films that he even knew what to do with his hands.

In the end, Ron's team scraped the win by a measly two points but as the group was properly loosened up, Hermione didn't chalk the whole thing up as a failure. They scattered momentarily for top ups on drink and food but Blaise was already preparing the next game so they didn't dawdle.

"Okay, the next one is a game of physical acumen. It's called Suck and Blow."

"Jesus, Blaise," muttered Draco.

"Ooh, this is a fun one!" Luna chimed in. "We played this all the time in Ravenclaw."

"I *knew* I was sorted into the wrong House," sighed Theo.

Blaise held up a piece of paper, roughly the size of a 3x5 notecard. "This one is easier to demonstrate than explain." He made a show of looking around casually and then locked eyes on Ginny. "Care to help me demonstrate?" he asked her.

Theo met Hermione's eye and wiggled in his seat, expression delighted. She smothered her smile, turning back to watch Ginny stride over to Blaise and face him expectantly. He stepped closer and held up the paper.

"I'll put this against my lips—" he began.

"—and I suck it off. Don't worry, babe, I understand the concept." She winked at him and Theo squealed.

Blaise raised a brow but brought the paper up to his mouth. Ginny leaned forward, pressing her lips to the other side and then sucked, stepping back with the paper suctioned to her mouth. She let it drop and caught it before it fluttered to the floor, raising a brow back at Blaise.

Draco chuckled. "Oh, he's in so much trouble."

Hermione caught Harry's eye and shared a rueful shake of the head with him.

Blaise snorted at Ginny's antics but a muscle in his jaw feathered before he looked away. "To make things even more fun, there will be penalties. If the card is dropped, it's torn in half and only half is used going forward. Also, the person who dropped it has to drink; if it was the result of both people, they both drink."

Theo rubbed his hands together eagerly as he stood up. "Sounds fun. Anyone need a top up?"

As they'd all just gone for fresh drinks, no one did. Theo went off to get his as everyone else formed a circle. Hermione watched him walk into the kitchen and then immediately turn around and come back. She frowned, wondering what he was up to, until she watched him make a beeline for Harry, slotting himself casually between him and Luna. Such a little Slytherin, she thought, shaking her head in amusement.

Hermione hadn't paid much attention to who was on her right, having let Draco tug her into the circle while she'd been distracted by Theo, so was surprised to find Greg there. He caught



her eye for a second and then looked forward. She opened her mouth to say something friendly but then Blaise was holding up the paper again and calling the start of the game.

He fixed Ginny with a look of absolute challenge and then leaned close. Ginny pressed her lips to the paper, sucked firmly, and then turned to face the person next in the circle: Neville. Neville adeptly sucked the paper from her and turned to pass it to Luna, who took ownership with equal skill and turned to Theo. Theo took it from her and turned to Harry, leaning in and then letting it drop the instant before Harry's lips met it. Harry's momentum kept him moving, kissing Theo firmly. Beside her, Draco snorted.

"Drink, Theodore!" Blaise called. "You absolute scallywag."

Theo and Harry broke apart, one grinning broadly and the other pink but laughing.

"Ah, sorry about that Potter," he said, raising his glass. "I promise I'm usually much better at blowing."

"Merlin, Theo," Pansy said, breaking the circle. "No offense, Potter, but I want a reshuffle. Break it up people."

"If you want to stand between Ginny and Luna, just do it," Theo told her sweetly.

"Aw." Luna smiled. "You're welcome to, Pansy."

Pansy narrowed her eyes, suspicious.

"Yeah," Ginny dipped behind Neville and linked her elbow through Luna's. "Come on over, Pansy."

"If you want her to do something, you have to tell her not to," Theo piped up. "She's contrarian like that."

"Shut the fuck up, Theo." Pansy tossed her hair and marched over to the girls. "I do what I want."

"Atta girl." Theo wrapped his hand around Harry's bicep and pushed him down a few steps to make room, but then didn't remove his hand. Harry didn't seem to mind, and actually seemed in on some sort of joke when Theo leaned in and gave him a private, knowing look.

Thusly rearranged, Theo tore the paper in half and the game began again, starting with Harry. But with Pansy having relocated, it now meant Harry had to pass it to Draco. Hermione experienced the strange sight of her best friend simulating a kiss with her boyfriend, and had to blink. *Bizarre*.

Draco turned to her and she leaned up to secure the paper to her own lips. She half considered letting it fall so she could kiss him but then couldn't make herself willingly lose the game, so sucked firmly and turned to Greg.

It was *doubly* bizarre to be that close to Gregory Goyle, but not as absolutely *staggeringly* bizarre to watch him then turn and pass the page to Ron. Hermione caught Harry's eye again,

widening hers in an expression of utter amazement that this was how their lives were unfolding. Harry met her expression and then flicked his eyes quickly to Theo then back to her. She made a covert 'OK' symbol with her fingers and he grinned bashfully.

She turned back around to witness Ron passing the paper to Blaise who then passed it to Neville, a low intensity building in his eyes as he watched Ginny go up on her toes for Neville and then look back over her shoulder at Blaise after transferring it to Luna.

It was adorable watching Blaise slowly figure out who the predator was in their little flirtation.

Draco slung his arm around her shoulders, tugging her to his side and leaning down to murmur, "If it makes it around to us again, I'm dropping it."

She tutted but smiled to herself. "You'd willingly lose like that?"

"Believe it or not, but I actually consider kissing you to be a win."

She laughed. "Sap."

He slid his hand to the back of her neck, giving her an affectionate little squeeze before moving away. She considered not even waiting for the paper to make it to them before kissing him, that touch having stoked the always-smoldering embers of desire for him.

"Am I crazy, or is Luna attempting to seduce Pansy?" He muttered, and Hermione refocused.

Luna had control of the paper and was maintaining eye contact as she took a graceful half step toward Pansy, leaning forward in offering. When Pansy approached, Luna laid a hand delicately on her jaw, guiding her in.

"Huh." Hermione watched as Pansy's hand twitched by her side but then she sucked the paper and pulled away. "Godric, I think she might be."

The paper passed from Theo to Harry without incident and then it was back to Draco. When he turned to her, she could see the wicked glint in his eye and resigned herself to the loss. Or, as he'd reframed it, the win.

He made no pretense of even trying to pass it, letting the paper flutter to the ground and closing the distance with a hand behind her head. She kissed him back happily, the sounds of their friends hooting and whistling the perfect backdrop to their first properly public kiss.

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They took a break from games to mingle. Draco had gone off with Blaise and Greg somewhere she'd lost track of, but as she was wrapped up in an engaging conversation with Luna and Neville, she didn't mind too much.

Neville was right in the middle of a fascinating analysis on the biological imperative of carnivorous plants when Theo sidled over with a begrudging looking Pansy in tow. Their arrival cut him off halfway through a sentence but he didn't seem to mind, making space for the new arrivals with a small sidestep toward Hermione.

"Sorry to interrupt," said Theo. "Carry on."

Neville waved a hand. "Oh, no. I'm sure it was only interesting to me anyway."

Hermione fervently disagreed and opened her mouth to say so, but Luna beat her to it.

"Oh, I found it extremely interesting, Neville. People don't think enough about the duality of nature like that."

He smiled down at her. "Thanks Luna. I agree. Things are a lot more eat or be eaten than it seems."

Theo, having missed the context for that comment entirely, raised his brows.

"Absolutely," Luna agreed airily, looking around at them. "For example, I love eating pansies."

Theo arched a brow suggestively. "Eating Pansy's *what*, Luna?"

Pansy swatted him but Luna just smiled serenely and tilted her head at the dark haired pair. "The flower. But I do find *all* pansies quite edible."

Theo's eyes glinted. "Is that so. And I bet you take your time savoring, hmm?"

"*Theodore*," Pansy hissed.

"It's usually better not to rush," agreed Luna, eyes tracking slowly from Theo to Pansy. "You wouldn't want to leave a single petal untasted. And the flavor is always better if you get the stamen properly wet first."

"Uhh..." Theo darted an unsure glance over to Hermione, evidently not having expected Luna to play along so well.

"I wouldn't know," said Hermione, amused at Theo's uncharacteristic bewilderment. "I've never eaten a *flower* before."

"You really should," said Neville. "The flavor is a little strange at first but Luna is right, once the nectar from the stamen gets wet, the sweetness really comes through."

"Are you lot serious right now?" Theo looked between them all, eyes ending on Neville, who sipped his punch placidly. "I can't tell if you're *actually* talking about flowers or if this is all double-entendre about cunts."

"Oh." Neville chuckled. "Well, I *was* talking about flowers but...yeah, the same applies for cunts."

Theo's eyes went so comically wide that Hermione burst out laughing.

"Oh my god. I...*Hermione*, you didn't prepare me for them at *all*." He ran a hand through his curls, ruffling them absently as he looked at them all perhaps for the first time. "I...yeah, I'm gonna go find Potter. This is changing everything for me."

But where Theo had spiraled toward discombobulation, Pansy had built herself back up to quippish.

"Eaten many cunts, have you, Longbottom?"

Neville took a slow sip, shrugging. "A fair few. How about you?"

Pansy looked taken aback at his nonchalance and the hint of flirting his sustained eye contact suggested. "I...yes. *Exclusively*."

"Ah." Neville inclined his head in acknowledgement. "Shame. Lucky girls."

Pansy gaped, eyes darting to Hermione for a second before she snapped her mouth shut and smirked up at Neville. "You act all polite but you're not, are you? Big beast of a man, just like the rest of them."

Neville laughed, shaking his head. "Nah. I'm polite." But his amused smile as he took another drink belied his total truthfulness.

Pansy snorted and turned to Hermione. "So that was some kiss, Granger. I've never known Draco to give such public displays like that."

She bit her lip to stop the foolish grin that teased at her cheeks. She was opening her mouth to respond but suddenly all thoughts were succinctly swept away as her knickers suddenly buzzed to life. It felt almost exactly like the intense, pulsing pulls Draco favored right when she was close to coming, when it felt like he wanted to suck her very life force out of her clit.

The sudden, shocking sensation of it had her sagging against Neville's arm, her hand curling into the sleeve of his jumper at the intensity of it as her body shot from nought to sixty in a perversion of a Pavlovian response.

She whined, audibly.

"Hermione! Are you alright?" Neville's free hand closed around her elbow, stabilizing her.

"I..." she swallowed as the vibrations switched to a lower frequency, giving her a brief respite. *Oh*, she was going to fucking *kill him*. "I'm fine, sorry. Just...erm, dizzy for a moment. Should get something to eat."

"Yes, I expect you'd do to have something in you," remarked Pansy lightly.

The words didn't immediately make sense, but Pansy's knowing look made them click. She blushed, annoying herself for being so transparent.

“There’s a snack for you by the billiards table, if you do have an appetite,” Pansy continued blithely.

Neville peered around to see but Hermione knew damn well all the food was in the kitchen. She swallowed her pride and handed Pansy her drink.

“Thanks, Parkinson.”

Pansy grinned, receiving the glass with wicked delight.

“Bring me a tartlet or something, will you?” Neville called hopefully after her. “Or something filled with cream?”

Hermione only just caught Pansy’s responding comment of, “As wonderfully suggestive as those requests were, it’s only sausage that way. Or perhaps just a cornichon.” If Neville knew what to make of the cackle with which she punctuated her statement, Hermione was too far away to tell.

She spotted Draco perched on a stool against the far wall, sipping on a pint and engaging in what looked to be a perfectly civil conversation with Harry. If she wasn’t in such a state, she might have considered not interrupting, but when he caught sight of her approach and could only conceal his smirk by taking a sip of his ale, she didn’t even consider backing down. She drew up short right in front of him.

“My knickers are red,” she accused fiercely, perhaps louder than she’d meant to.

Beside her, Harry muttered, “Merlin, Hermione.”

Draco grinned. “Thanks for the update, Granger.”

“*Red*,” she emphasized. “Not blue.”

He sipped his drink, looking exceedingly indifferent. “So you’ve said.”

“I’m gonna go see if...yeah, I’m just gonna go.” Harry saluted them with his glass and wandered off. In his absence, Draco stretched his legs long and tugged her closer until she was standing over one of his thighs, his hands settling on her hips.

“How’re you doing, Granger?”

“Did you charm them a different color so I’d wear them again? Or...” The realization struck her. “*Draco Malfoy*,” she hissed in an undertone. “How many pairs of my knickers have you altered?”

“Improved,” he corrected. “And I’ll never tell.”

“I almost just had an orgasm while holding onto Neville,” she deadpanned. “Is that what you want?”

He ignored her tone, tongue poking into his cheek and eyes glittering. “But you didn’t. You held it and found me instead.”

“To shout at you,” she informed him.

He smirked. “Go ahead. See what happens.”

Damn him for enjoying it. Damn *her* for the very same.

“Where’s your wand?” She asked instead.

“In my pocket.”

She huffed, doubly annoyed at herself for encouraging his behavior. “Can you reach it?”

He quirked a brow and slid a hand from her hip and to his pocket, slipping his fingers halfway inside. His expression said *your move*.

Her breath was coming in short, her heart racing at the fact that she was considering having an actual fucking orgasm in front of all their friends. She saw the moment he read her mind, so adept at it after all these times.

“You’d better stay quiet,” he murmured, tugging her closer with his right hand so that she was pressed against his thigh properly. “And don’t grind on me. They’ll know right away what you’re doing. Especially Pansy. She keeps looking over at us, like she knows what you’re up to.”

Hermione squeezed her eyes shut, then bit her lip when he murmured something that sent the frequency up several notches from the low buzz it’d been at since she’d marched over.

“How does it feel being watched like this?” His question was soft, serious. Checking in with her.

“So wrong,” she whimpered, fist curling around his collar, not caring that she was crumpling it. “But...so *hot*. Really...really freeing.”

He hummed low and flexed his thigh under her. The pressure of it held her knickers firmly against the entirety of her cunt, from arse to clit. It was making her desperate to grind down against him, confident she’d come in seconds if she did.

“Why is Pansy even looking over?” She asked, voice just above a whisper, trying to hold herself together.

Draco snorted softly. “Why do you think?”

“I don’t...” She swallowed her moan when he changed the pattern to alternating pulses. She tried again. “To catch me indisposed?”

He laughed. “Maybe that, yeah. But more because you have the look of someone about to have an uncontrollable orgasm. And you’re a pretty girl. *Gorgeous*. That combination is

practically catnip to Pans.”

It shouldn't have been arousing, knowing someone else — *Pansy Parkinson*, specifically — was eager to see her come but something about it made everything inside Hermione pull tight.

“Fuck,” she whimpered. “Fuck, please keep talking.”

“Actually, I have a question. The very first time you let me touch you, you moaned Pansy's name.”

She didn't follow, rather distracted as she was. “What's your question?”

He snorted a soft laugh. “I suppose my question is, did I mishear?”

Oh. She'd almost forgotten her feeble attempt at separating the man from the orgasm.

“You didn't,” she admitted.

He paused. “You said you've never thought about being with a woman.”

“I haven't.” God, couldn't he pick up this line of question later?

“So why did you moan a woman's name when I had my fingers inside you?”

“Not a woman. Pansy.” For some reason the correction seemed extremely important.

“I know she acts a bulldog, but Pans *is* a woman,” Draco said, amused.

“I just mean...I specifically moaned...her name.” She was so close.

“Granger.” His voice dropped a register. “You're talking in circles.”

But his deep, almost scolding voice had sparked hot.

“Need to come,” she gasped. “Talk...talk after— *oh fuck*.”

He shushed her, smirking. “Go ahead then, pretty girl. But be discreet.”

The vibration shifted back to the throbbing pulse and she was gone. She dug her fingers into his forearm, hips begging to grind. She resisted and it made the waves feel even stronger with nowhere to go but crash inside her. She choked out a sob and he hummed in response.

“G-god,” she gasped, eyes squeezed shut against the rapid assault of pleasure. “*Fuck*. Enough, enough.”

He canceled the charm and withdrew his hand from his pocket, sweeping it up her spine.

“So sexy,” he murmured. “You've got me in quite a state now.”

“You...your fault.” She sucked in a lungful, slowly calming her racing pulse.

“Mm, I suppose so.” He stroked her back again, hand resting just above the curve of her arse. “And as much as I’d love to see to it, there’s no subtle way to get across the entire room for some privacy and I don’t fancy coming in my trousers in front of Weasley.”

Hermione snorted, combing her fingers through his hair. “Fair enough. I’ll make sure to get you good later, baby.”

“Not helping.”

She grinned.

“Tell me why you said Pansy’s name. I’m sure that’ll get me under control in no time.”

Hermione huffed a breath, thinking how to explain it. “I was trying to keep some separation between you and what you were making me feel,” she said at last. “The line was blurring between you getting me off and me getting off because of you, specifically. So I was reminding myself rather fervently that Pansy had taught you and was trying to pretend that it was just you passing on her knowledge. Instead of what was *actually* happening, which was you turning me on so much that I had to stop myself from coming at least twice before I finally let go.”

“Fuck.” Draco thumped his head back against the wall. “I was wrong. That only made it worse.”

Chapter End Notes

All 🙌 the 🙌 side 🙌 pairs 🙌

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Or come chat on [Discord!](#) The lovely and generous Catmintandthyme set up a channel on her server for me, so come say hi if you like 😊

Chapter 25: Greg didn't hesitate. "I dare you to get in the pool."

Chapter Notes

This might have been the longest break between chapters (and it's only been a week 😂 though it somehow feels like so much longer?) but between me getting sidetracked on my [Blairon bs](#) and ao3 being attacked, it is what it is.

The next couple chapters are mostly done so we'll be back to my chaotic 2-4 day posting soon 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione took pity on Draco and looped her arms around his neck, chatting to him about mindless topics even though what she really wanted to do was turn around and grind her arse against him until he couldn't hold off any longer. He stroked her back with one hand and sipped on his pint with the other, offering it to her each time before he took a drink. By the time they'd drained the last drop, he deemed himself once again in a socially acceptable state for mingling. She stepped back and he levered himself up off the stool, reaching for her hand and twining their fingers together.

They'd been in a bit of a bubble for the past several minutes so resurfaced surprised to find themselves in a mostly vacant room. Greg and Luna were still in the main lounge space, sitting on either end of a couch and holding a conversation seemingly made up of murmured words and contemplative tilts of the head, but noises from the back deck suggested the rest of their friends had drifted outside. It was a mild evening and the cooler air was refreshing as Hermione stepped through the open back door, towing Draco behind her.

"Perfect timing!" called Theo, "We were just about to start the next game."

He was seated on one of the outdoor sofas with Harry and Ron beside him, Ginny on the floor leaning back against the adjacent chair upon which Pansy perched like a queen. As Hermione and Draco approached, Neville scooted closer to Blaise to make space for them on the other sofa.

"Thanks." Hermione smiled down at him, taking the middle seat beside Neville while Draco squished in against the arm.

"Where're Greg and Luna?" Blaise asked, peering around Neville.

"Here." Luna drifted into view, Greg trailing behind her. Luna copied Ginny's cross-legged position on the floor, leaning back against the empty chair beside Theo, into which Greg settled.

“So what’s the game?” Ginny asked.

“A classic.” Blaise leaned forward, resting elbows on knees and flicking his brows at her.
“Truth or Dare.”

Ginny scoffed at the same time Pansy grinned and Draco sighed. Hermione wasn’t sure what to make of their reaction but she had a sense it didn’t bode well.

“Not a fan?” Blaise asked, responding to Ginny’s noise of derision.

“Isn’t it a kids game?” She looked around at them. “I mean, didn’t we all play this as Firsties?”

“Well that’s just unimaginative of you,” said Pansy loftily. “Life is made up of figuring out truths and seeing how far people will dare to go, isn’t it? The only immature thing about the game is what you choose to contribute to it.”

“Nice, Pans,” snorted Theo. “Very poetic.”

But Ginny had tilted her head, eyes flicking from Pansy back to Blaise. “Alright,” she said. “You’ve convinced me, Parks. I suppose the possibilities *are* endless, aren’t they?”

“That they are.” Pansy gestured to Blaise. “I assume you’ll kick it off?”

“Mm-hm.” He leaned back, eyeing them each in turn and ending on Neville. “Longbottom. Truth or Dare?”

“Oh!” Neville hesitated. “Truth?”

Wrong move, thought Hermione ruefully.

As she’d expected, Blaise grinned. “Brilliant. What’s the most adventurous thing you’ve ever done?”

Neville’s brows furrowed. “Adventurous? Like, anything?” Blaise nodded. “Uh, cut the head of a giant snake?”

“Would we call that adventurous?” mused Pansy. “Or just idiotically brave?”

“I *was* hoping for something more depraved but I’ll let it stand.” Blaise gestured to Neville. “Your turn.”

Neville cleared his throat. “Uh, okay. Ron, truth or dare?”

Ron lifted his chin. “Dare.”

“I dare you to...let the group mix together five liquids, and then you have to drink it.”

Ron made a face but nodded. “Fine.”

Neville grinned and looked around. "Right, does anyone want to help?" Pansy, Ginny, and Harry all stood in unison, which Ron observed with great wariness.

"Wait, wait." He raised his hand. "Can we specify that they have to be liquids that won't make me puke? Or kill me? And that are meant to be consumed? And no potions!"

Theo whistled. "These are real concerns for you? Salazar, Gryffindors don't mess around."

"To be fair, he *has* been poisoned twice," offered Harry, then cast an apologetic look to Draco when he realized the implication of his comment. "Although only one of them was intentional."

Beside her, Draco dipped his chin in acknowledgement. Hermione's hand instinctively found his knee and squeezed.

"Plus you have no idea the shit Hermione has made me drink," Ron grouched.

Hermione scoffed. "As if I wasn't right there, suffering along with you!"

Ron waved his hand in a *fair enough* gesture and Neville laughed. "I promise not to let anyone mix in something that could kill you."

They disappeared inside for a few minutes and then returned bearing a pint glass half full of murky brown liquid.

"Merlin's bloody fucking beard," Ron moaned. "Why does it look like that?"

"See if you can guess what's in it." Ginny jostled him on her way back to her seat on the floor. "I made sure and added some of your favorites."

"Fucking hell." Ron swirled the glass then smelled it. "I knew it. You're the worst sister imaginable."

"That means there's gin," Hermione whispered to Draco. "He hates it and she loves reminding him why."

Draco clucked his tongue in mock-disapproval. "I can't believe they wasted the good stuff on him," he whispered back. Hermione snorted a laugh.

Ron held the glass at arms length while he took a deep inhale, then held his breath and chugged the liquid down in three hearty swallows. Even Pansy's eyebrows went up, impressed. Ron gasped out his exhale and then thunked the glass down on the low table in front of him.

"*Blech*. Gin, definitely. Brown sauce. Rose water. Pickle brine? Or...or olive? And...fuck, *milk*?"

"Olive. Nice." Neville gave Ron a thumbs up from across the space and Ron returned it with a middle finger.

“Quite the palate you have there, Weasley,” Blaise said. “Much more refined than I anticipated.”

Ron turned his attention to the right of Neville. “Just for that, you’re next. Truth or dare, Blaise?”

Blaise grinned. “Truth.”

“Right.” Ron scrutinized him for a moment. “What’s the weirdest thing you do when you’re alone?”

Blaise hummed, propping an ankle on his opposite knee. “*Weird* is subjective though, isn’t it?”

Ron shrugged. “I suppose we’ll find out. Go on then, stop stalling.”

Blaise rubbed his chin, thinking.

“I can offer some suggestions if you’re unsure, mate. I’ve caught you doing some objectively weird shit when you thought you were alone,” Theo said sweetly.

Blaise *tsk’d*. “Shut it. Alright, I sometimes narrate what I’m doing out loud.”

“Like a Quidditch commentator,” Theo added excitedly. “Oh Salazar, it’s so adorable. *‘Another excellent slice by Zabini, that is going to be one delicious tomato sandwich’.*”

Ginny squeed and Blaise shot Theo a death glare. “*Oi*. Not your turn, dickhead.”

Ron snorted, nodding. “Yeah, that’s weird. I’ll accept it.”

“Glad to hear it.” Blaise gestured to Greg. “Right, Greg. Truth or dare?”

Greg shifted and looked over. “Truth.”

“Naturally, naturally. Let’s see...what’s the most embarrassing thing you’ve been caught doing?”

“Merlin...” Greg glanced around the group, cheeks flushing. “Um, the usual thing, probably.”

“And what’s that?” Blaise cocked his head, expression faux-confused.

Luna reached behind herself to pat Greg’s knee kindly. “That’s alright, Greg. We all do it.”

He blushed redder but mumbled a quick. “Yeah, suppose so. Thanks.”

Blaise snickered but let it drop. “Go on then, your turn.”

Greg cleared his throat and looked straight ahead. “Pans. Truth or dare?”

“From you? Dare, love.” Pansy flicked a brow but her smile was affectionate.

Greg didn't hesitate. "I dare you to get in the pool."

Pansy's expression morphed from sweet to affronted. "The *pool!* Gregory Goyle, this is *cashmere*. It simply can't get wet."

Greg nodded easily. "Okay, so take it off first then."

Ginny gasped. "Oh, *bold!*"

Pansy tutted, waving her hand at the redhead. "Hardly. Fine, I'll take off my jumper. Any other instructions?"

Greg twisted his mouth to the side, considering this sarcastic offer with utmost seriousness. "Trousers off, too. But you can leave your underthings on."

Pansy shot him an icy smile. "How benevolent." But she stood and stripped off her jumper without a care, revealing a delicate black lace bralette. Theo catcalled encouragingly, earning himself a glare as she stalked past the group toward the inset pool, unbuttoning her trousers as she went and then shimmying out of them at the water's edge. Her knickers matched her bra – of course.

"I'm not getting my hair wet," she cautioned, glancing back over her shoulder. "So don't even fucking *bother* asking." Without any more fanfare, she marched down the steps and into the pool to her waist, turning to face them and crossing her arms defiantly. "This doing it for you, Greg?"

Greg had turned in his chair to watch and gave her a shy grin. "Perfect, as always."

Pansy rolled her eyes, but the look of soft affection was back. It faded quickly as she looked around at them, her gaze landing on Hermione.

"Truth or dare, Granger?"

Of course.

But Hermione was ready. "Dare, obviously."

Pansy cocked her head. "*Obviously?*"

"Yes. One *obviously* only requests dares from Slytherins and truths from Gryffindors. The reverse is playing too much into the strengths of the asker." She gestured broadly at the others as evidence for her statement.

Pansy raised a brow in challenge. "I see. Well in that case, I *dare* you to answer my next question."

Hermione rolled her eyes at the loophole but resigned herself to it. "Fine. Go on then."

Pansy fixed Hermione with a steady gaze. "Have you had an orgasm in the past...oh let's say, thirty minutes?"

“Pansy,” Draco cautioned but Theo was already laughing, interrupting him.

“You must be more bloated than I thought! You said *minutes*, not days.”

“I said what I meant,” Pansy said, her smile going distinctly feline.

Hermione felt her cheeks warm but refused to be cowed. “That’s a rather boring question. Don’t you want more than a yes or no?”

“Believe it or not, but I actually prefer succinct answers. Verbosity won’t increase your letter grade with me, Granger. And I have a feeling your response will teach me quite a bit even in its brevity.”

Hermione glared. “Yes.”

Pansy looked delighted but Blaise only frowned. “Wait, yes that you agreed with her hypocritically long monologue? Or yes...?”

“Yes, I’ve had an orgasm in the past thirty minutes.” She grabbed Draco’s wrist to check his watch, deciding to really push the point home that she wasn’t intimidated by them. “Last twenty, actually.”

Neville made a soft, interested sound, likely remembering when she’d suddenly gripped him and then darted off about twenty-*five* minutes ago. Ginny wagged her brows in Hermione’s direction while Ron scoffed and crossed his arms.

Harry groaned. “Merlin, I did not need to know that.”

Blaise golf-clapped for her rather sarcastically. “And I didn’t even hear it. Well done.” But then he cocked his head at Draco with an exaggerated downturn of his lips. “Or was it not a very good one?”

Draco scoffed. “Please.”

“What’s this then?” asked Ginny, looking interestedly between Blaise and Hermione.

“Nothing,” said Hermione firmly, giving her friend a look that promised a chat later, then fixed her gaze on Theo. “Theo, truth or dare?”

Theo opened his arms wide, one bumping against Harry’s chest beside him. “Truth me, Hermione.”

“Hmm.” She considered him. What to ask someone who probably had a whole hoard of things he’d willingly spill? She pressed her lips together, thinking, and then smiled when the obvious answer occurred to her. “Tell us something you don’t want us to know.”

“Oof.” Blaise reached around Neville, presenting her his palm to slap. “Brutal, Granger. I love it.”

She rolled her eyes but slapped his palm, attention on Theo. He shifted in his seat, eyeing her with a keen gaze. After a moment, he cleared his throat.

“Alright, here’s one that won’t immediately kill the mood. I may have boasted to several people here that I determined my sexual proclivities by watching them kiss, when in actuality, getting them to kiss was an intentional choice because of already-acknowledged said proclivities.”

Draco shook his head at Theo, laughing. “God, you’re such a dick.”

Theo toffed an imaginary hat to Draco then looked down to Luna. “Lunes. Truth or dare, love?”

Luna cocked her head. “Dare.”

“Ah.” Theo narrowed his eyes, appraising her. “I dare you to do something you’ve always wanted to do. Because I have a feeling whatever *that* might be will be better than anything I could think up.”

Luna beamed at him. “Okay.”

She got to her feet in a fluid movement then spun on her heel and walked to the edge of the pool. Pansy watched her approach with a cool expression, Luna’s own gaze fixed on Pansy where she still stood, arms crossed in the pool. Hermione had to imagine that it was a heated pool, judging by the fact that Pansy wasn’t shivering.

“Let me guess, you’ve always wanted to drown me?” Pansy snorted. “Well, I can’t say I’m surprised.”

“Actually, eagles are known to *eat* snakes, not *drown* them. Which makes this—” Luna gestured to herself and then Pansy “—all the more representative of our animal kind, especially as most snakes are caught by eagles when in bodies of water. Or really any time they’re *wet*.”

The statement might have seemed merely educational except for the cute flick of tongue she paired it with, and that her eyes hadn’t left Pansy’s. Hermione had to give to her, Luna’s ability to pair innuendo with subtle yet pointed biological facts was quite impressive.

Theo whistled. “Oh shit, Parks. Are you gonna let her get away with this again?”

Pansy was pink cheeked, her eyes narrowing speculatively at Luna. When she did nothing more than glare, Luna made a little noise of understanding and slid gracefully into the water, fully clothed.

“That’s alright,” she said as she waded over, the tips of her long blonde hair trailing through the water behind her like a veil. “I don’t mind a little fishing.”

Pansy watched her approach with ever-widening eyes but managed a scoff at Luna’s quip. “Watch it, Lovegood.”

Luna drifted to a stop right in front of her, her wake lapping around Pansy until they were encased by twin ripples. She tilted her head calmly. “Am I allowed to complete my dare, Pansy?”

Pansy only managed to resist for a breath before she bit her lip hard and then exhaled gustily.

“Fine.”

Luna beamed. She floated her arms around Pansy’s waist, drifted another step closer, and kissed her. Pansy abandoned the facade of further reticence by cupping a hand around the nape of Luna’s neck, immediately deepening the kiss to wolf whistles and hoots from the spectators.

“Two down, one to go,” Draco whispered and Hermione laughed.

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The party wrapped up a few hours later, with invitations for guests to return the following afternoon for a boating excursion. Hermione was still highly dubious about the plan but Draco was adamant that no one answer her questions about it, going so far as to press his palms to her ears when Theo looked like he might say something inadvertently revelatory.

Hermione hugged Harry and Ron tightly. She hadn’t gotten nearly enough time with either of them but just being in the same physical space as them had filled her with a cozy sense of comfort. She’d missed them more than she’d realized.

“Come to Grimmauld for a weekend sometime,” Harry said as he hugged her to his chest. “I’m always around so no need to even owl me.”

“I’d love that.” She squeezed him back. “And if I bring Draco, maybe he could...bring a friend?”

She felt his chest lift on a laugh. “Yeah, ‘spose I wouldn’t mind that.”

She chuckled as she released him, sharing a smile before she turned and hugged goodbye to Ron and Ginny.

Once everyone had left, she drifted to the large window overlooking the view, admiring the lights of Southampton from across the river and the contrasting dark stillness of the land on her side of the water. The evening had been a smashing success and she savored the sense of unimpeded relief. Movement below caught her eye and she peered down to see Theo clapping Draco on the shoulder, saying something through a wide smile that made Draco tip his head back and laugh. Her heart swelled even fuller at the sight.

She turned and made her way down the stairs, reaching the bottom just as the boys were coming indoors. Draco’s face was still open with humor and he closed his arms around her



waist as soon as he could reach her.

“All gone home then?” he asked, pulling her close.

“Mmhhh.” She wound her arms around his neck, lifting her face to his hopefully.

His eyes flicked to her mouth and then back up, a smirk uncurling. “Tired?”

She almost said no, because she wasn’t, but then caught his intention. “Exhausted,” she agreed, drooping in his hold.

His smirk broadened. “Better get you to bed then, hadn’t I?”

“Merlin, you two are something else.”

Hermione had altogether forgotten Theo, standing several paces away over Draco’s shoulder, but she didn’t really care. They *were* something else – she agreed wholeheartedly.

“Goodnight, Theo,” she said, not looking away from Draco. Draco snorted and began walking her backwards to the hallway.

“Yeah, yeah.” Theo waved them off. “Keep it down, eh?”

“Don’t listen to him,” Draco murmured. “I want you unrestrained this time.”

They had made it to the mouth of the hallway, so she took advantage of his momentary pause to jump up and wrap her legs around his waist. He caught her reflexively, holding under her thighs and hoisting her up a few inches to get a steady grip and then walking them down the hall with renewed purpose. He kicked their bedroom door shut behind him and went straight to the bed, turning to sit himself on the edge so that she was astride him.

She kissed him instantly, wiggling until she was pressed up tight against him, welcoming the sweep of his tongue. He was warm under her, his tongue tasting of the punch he’d been anticlimactically dared to drink, his hands forging paths of sensation up and down her sides. When they dropped to palm her arse, she broke their kiss to watch his expression as she performed a slow grind against him. His cheeks were flushed with arousal, his eyes riveted on her mouth.

A plan formed.

“As much as I would love to shag you right now, I think I want something else more,” she told him.

He licked his lips, eyes tracking from her mouth to her neck. “Anything.”

She grinned. “Brave boy.”

“Smitten boy,” he corrected, leaning forward to kiss along her throat. She tilted her head to give him room, grinding herself lightly on his lap again. He nipped at her, his hands closing around her hips to bring her down harder against him.

“I want to watch you make yourself come,” she told him, “And to sweeten the deal, I’ll make myself come, too.”

He groaned against her skin. “You’ll touch yourself for me?”

“Mm-hmm.” She batted his hands away and slid off his lap, facing him. “Take your shirt off.”

He did, tossing it to the side and immediately working his trousers open. She undid her own and shucked them down, then scooted a few feet further away from him. He watched her go as he lifted his bum to push his trousers down, then pulled a leg up so he could face her, the other braced on the floor.

“Where do you want me?”

She pointed to the pillows, settling herself onto her elbows by the foot of the mattress. “Shorts off, Draco.”

He eyed her mostly-clothed form speculatively but did as he was told, stripping his boxer briefs off and then leaning back against the headboard. He was well on his way to fully hard and she watched him get the rest of the way there under her gaze. He gripped himself and stroked a few inches up and down right below the tip in a lackadaisical manner that she suspected he hoped hinted at his composure, but which was belied by the tightening of his jaw and a thick swallow.

“It’s been less than a day,” she told him, amused. “You’re really already that desperate?”

He scoffed but dropped his facade, tightening his hand ever so slightly and working himself over more fervently. “This is the third time I’ve gotten hard for you today, don’t forget. But the first time I’m allowed to do anything about it.”

She pouted at him with fake-sympathy. “Poor thing.”

He tilted his head back, watching her from under half-lidded eyes. He licked his lips absently, eyes raking over her. She could tell he was working himself up fast, which wouldn’t do to fulfill her plan.

“Stop for a moment.”

He breathed a short sigh, like he’d half been expecting it, and let go of his cock. It bobbed tantalizingly for a moment and her traitorous tongue pressed hard to the roof of her mouth. She refocused.

“I think you deserve a little payback for ambushing me with my knickers earlier,” she said. “So how about this: when I touch my clit, you can touch the head of your cock. Otherwise, shaft only. Balls too, I suppose.”

“They’re offended at being an afterthought,” he told her, bringing his other hand down and cupping them.

“I’ll make it up to them later.” She rolled her eyes and lay flat to shimmy out of her knickers. “Not that I don’t trust you but...” She gave him a look and he smirked, catching her knickers when she threw them at him.

“Smart girl, as usual.” He brought them to his face and inhaled, watching as she stripped her shirt up and over her head, letting it drop off the mattress.

“And you need to match my pace. Alright?” She went back up on an elbow to unclip her bra, then tossed it aside too.

“Yeah.” His eyes dropped to her breasts and he heaved a breath. “This is going to be hell, isn’t it?”

She grinned, biting her lip to try and hide it but completely unable to. He shook his head at her, bemused. She lay flat but tilted her head so she could see him, lying head to toe as they were. She brought her hand between her legs, letting her knees fall open so he could see.

“Touch yourself,” she reminded him, when he was just staring.

His hand was back around his cock in an instant, squeezing around the shaft in a way that made his abs tighten. She half regretted her decision not to fuck him but couldn’t deny that she liked watching him. She stroked her fingers along her slit and to the wetness that had accumulated, surprisingly turned on by just how turned on she was.

“Oh my god, Draco. You wouldn’t believe how wet I am.”

His jaw tightened. “Yeah? Show me?”

She circled her entrance slowly and then showed him her fingers. He groaned from deep in his chest, hand squeezing around himself again.

“I wanna taste you.”

She brought her hand back, circling again. “I know you do.”

He snorted, shaking his head again. She had a sense he was fighting an uphill battle with his restraint so she brought her other hand into the mix, raising a pointed eyebrow at him as she plucked at her nipple. His nostrils flared but he took the hint and copied her, lifting his right hand to drag a thumb across his nipple. His abs flexed in response and she felt her body flush with heat.

She finally pressed a finger into herself, immediately adding a second. She watched his hand mimic her movement, so rapidly increased the pace. He copied her, jaw hanging lax at the pleasure of it.

She decided to test his obedience and buried her fingers deep, but held them still. He groaned but stopped, fist snug around the base of his cock. She flicked her brows at him in acknowledgement, and then brought her other hand down to circle her clit. When he didn’t do anything but watch her, she stretched out her foot to nudge his thigh.

“C’mon, Draco. Play along.”

He began to stroke himself again but she shook her head. “I meant both hands. Use both hands.”

“You have a lot of faith in my stamina right now,” he groused, but complied, reseating his hand down at his base and then using his other to squeeze the tip of his cock. “Fucking Christ, woman. I...*god*.”

“Don’t stop.” She kept up her circles on her clit, watching his hand match her. It was obscenely sexy, watching him steadily losing control.

She took pity on him for a moment, slowing her pace on her clit and setting a slow motion with the fingers inside her, savoring the way she could feel her body reacting: the slickness of each press and the clutch on each withdraw. She slowed, mesmerized by the feeling and half forgetting that her actions were dictating his until it went on long enough for him to whine through a clenched jaw. She looked over at him.

“Please go faster,” he begged.

“Not yet.” She curled her fingers a little further and her hips rose instinctively to meet her hand.

“Fuck.” The word sounded torn out of him.

She slowed again and he groaned. “Baby, *please*.”

“Hold on.” She could feel herself tightening, the top of her walls closing down around the tips of her fingers when she pressed as deeply as she could. “Oh, I’m so close. Getting...so tight.”

“I...*fuck*, I don’t...” He thrust up into his fist in an uncontrolled movement and she almost lost it.

“God, your cock would put me right over,” she whimpered. “I swear, one push and I’d be coming. Oh fuck.” Her toes curled at the thought and she whined.

“*Jesus Christ, Hermione*,” he grit out.

But she’d quickly readjusted her plans. She scrambled up and straddled him, batting his hand away and resting her other on his shoulder for stability. She gripped him, aligned him, and sank down.

“Don’t come,” she told him and he swore.

“I might not be able to stop,” he groaned, hips flexing under her and trying to find friction.

She sat heavily on him, pinning him down. “Don’t move.”

“C’mon.” He tipped his head back, hands squeezing her hips. “C’mon, baby. Fuck me. Fuck my cock. Please?”

She almost broke.

“No.” She ran her hands lightly down his chest. “You didn’t let me move earlier.”

“You liked it.” His muscles tightened under her hands, a model of tension.

“You don’t like this?” She thumbed his nipple and felt his cock jerk inside her.

“Fuck, careful, baby.”

She did it again, just to see if she could really make him come from that alone. It was a near thing but he held it, jaw tight.

“I love edging you.” Her heart was throbbing, body suffused with heat and need and adoration. “You are unbelievable when you’re like this. I feel like I could come just watching you want it so badly.”

“Please come.” He squeezed his eyes shut. “Fuck, please come. Please come.”

She stroked her clit with that same light touch she’d done to his nipple and felt herself squeeze around him. He whined through his teeth and her eyelids fluttered at the sound.

“Felt that?” He ignored her question, which was fine; it had been mostly rhetorical anyway.

She repeated the touch but this time paired it with a light graze over her own nipple and the combination finally overloaded her system, her cunt spasming once more before contracting so tightly that she gasped out her breath.

“Oh fuck.” His hands gripped her hips almost painfully tight. “Oh god, I’m...I can’t...fuck, *fuck—*”

He finally lost control, hips bucking helplessly under her as he came. She let herself go too, moaning and grinding on him as her orgasm pulsed through her.

She tried to catch her breath as he slowly opened his eyes, staring at the ceiling.

“Holy. Fuck.” He sounded awed. Almost...incensed.

“I know,” she gasped.

His eyes flicked down to her and he laughed a short, sharp sound – something like disbelief but mixed with incredulity, or skepticism, or something Hermione couldn’t quite define in her current mental state.

“Shit. You have no idea. Fuck.”

She wasn't quite sure what to make of that but then he was sliding her off him, rolling her onto her back and following her down.

“God, you have no fucking idea,” he muttered, and kissed her hard.

## Chapter End Notes

Oh boy oh boy, I wonder what his deal is 😊

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## Chapter 26: The mass was Adrian Pucey.

### Chapter Notes

Today we have some some mild angst/tension and ✨feelings✨ because I felt it was high time to have some and honestly I was just in the mood to sow just a teensy bit of chaos 😊

Also TW maybe? See end notes if you need 💛

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

By some miracle, none of them required hangover potions the next morning, although Hermione had to give credit where credit was due. After kissing her absolutely senseless, Draco had tugged on a pair of joggers and acquired them a plate of assorted nibbles and glasses of water, which they consumed in their entirety while rehashing the finer points of the evening, particularly the successes or failures of their friends coupling. Unfortunately for Blaise, he hadn't managed to steal a kiss from Ginny so remained the sole Slytherin to not have closed the deal (neither Hermione nor Draco had any idea on the yearnings of one Gregory Goyle, but had so assume he wasn't pining after Ron or Neville).

After a rousing full English with several pots of tea, she and Blaise wandered through to the lounge while Theo and Draco cleared away the breakfast things. Hermione observed the tidiness with fresh eyes, having personally done nothing toward straightening up from the evening before. Everything was in its place, not a single stray drinks glass to be seen.

"Blaise? Who cleans your house?" she asked, looking over at him.

"Hmm?" He was slouched on the other couch, legs long toward the lit fire. "Oh. I do. Well, and Mary."

Hermione wasn't sure which of those to jump on first, which Blaise noted with a little chuckle. "Unsatisfactory explanation, I see. I have the usual gamut of cleaning and tidying spells which I top up monthly. And then every other week, a lovely lady called Mary comes up from the village and does a spot of hand-cleaning. Sometimes things need a proper bit of elbow grease to actually feel clean."

Mary, she surmised, was Muggle. She tried not to make a big deal over it and thereby make him self-conscious, so simply nodded with mild interest. "And Merlin forbid it be *your* elbow doing the greasing, hmm?"

Blaise smirked. "Certainly. And anyway, it'd be *de*-greasing."

She opened her mouth to rebut that *he'd* been the one to say grease in the first place but saw his eyebrow flick up expectantly so instead rolled her eyes and sipped her tea. "Does someone from the village help with your boat, too?" She asked with utterly unprovoking nonchalance.

From behind her in the kitchen, Draco called, "Oi! Heard that, Granger!"

Blaise shrugged his shoulders, hands lifted palm-up in an *oh shucks* gesture. She pouted her bottom lip and he snorted.

"I keep my boat at the marina," he told her. "And I do get help winterizing it, yes. That pass your muster, Draco?" He raised his voice on the last.

"Yes, thank you!" Draco called back.

"You're no fun," Hermione accused Blaise on an undertone.

He laughed. "Now, you *know* that's not true."

"Stop scheming." Draco tapped her on the head with a finger as he walked around the back of the couch to drop down beside her. "You only need to wait a few hours and all will be revealed."

She harrumphed, crossing her arms over her chest and watching Theo plop down next to Blaise.

"Speaking of waiting, what was that with Ginny last night?" Theo twisted sideways to lean against the sofa arm, shoving his toes under Blaise's thigh. Blaise shifted to accommodate him, sighing longingly.

"I dunno, mate. She's something else."

"Did you two talk much? Or was it just a game of sexy cat and mouse?"

"We chatted a bit, yeah, but *Merlin*, I haven't had to work for it in ages and she is..." He raised a brow at the fire, shaking his head slightly as his mind obviously took him somewhere else. "...making me work for it."

"Gross." Theo prodded him with a foot, which Blaise slapped down, shooting him a look sidelong.

"Oh really? Don't tell me you wouldn't go wild if Potter played hard to get."

Theo shuddered theatrically. "Ooh, you've got me there. I do love the chase."

Hermione considered this. She'd been the exact opposite of hard to get — in fact, she'd literally asked Draco for it. And *kept* asking him for it. She wondered if he'd have liked a bit of chase too, and couldn't help the niggling feeling that she'd accidentally robbed him of a degree of satisfaction. As if he'd intuited her thoughts, he slung his arm around her shoulders and tugged her to him, kissing the top of her head.



Still, she pondered.

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Harry had a weekend Auror shift and Neville was spending the afternoon at St. Mungo's with his parents and grandmother, so only the Weasleys and Luna returned just after lunchtime. Hermione watched Blaise's eyes brighten when he caught sight of Ginny on his stoop, gaze tracking her friend as she stepped in and wrapped her arms around Hermione.

"Hi again," Ginny said cheerfully, then dropped her voice conspiratorially. "Any interesting conversations after I left?"

Hermione hummed. "As if you don't know exactly what you're doing. He's on your hook."

"Mm." Ginny drew back, flicking her brows. "Yum."

Ron made a face at his sister. "Tone it down in front of me, would you? I don't exactly enjoy watching you flirt with boys."

"Ah, but he's not a *boy*, is he?" Ginny elbowed Hermione suggestively. When Ron scoffed, Ginny turned knowing eyes on him. "Anyway, *you're* one to talk."

"What does that mean?" Hermione asked, looking from Ginny to Ron.

Ron shook his head minutely at his sister. "Don't. We're not ready. And for the record, I sincerely regret confiding in you about it."

"Is it 'confiding in me' when I walk in and catch you—" began Ginny with a faux-contemplative tone but Ron interrupted her with a quick "*Zzp!*" and pantomimed pinning her lips shut.

Hermione bounced on the balls of her feet, painfully curious, but Ginny just patted Ron's shoulder agreeably and let it drop. It seemed that everyone was intent to conceal things from Hermione today.

As Blaise had indicated, there would be more Slytherins joining them today now that it was the weekend. Indeed, when they had trekked down to the marina, they were met by a handful of faces both familiar and unknown to Hermione. Pansy and Greg were there, of course, but Hermione didn't have a chance to make out all of the others before getting thoroughly distracted by the sight before her.

They'd said 'boat' and she'd automatically pictured the modest, out-board motorboat her family had once rented when on holiday at Windermere. What rocked pleasantly at the dockside was something else entirely.

She turned on her heel, facing a grinning Draco. "Boat?!" She exclaimed. "This is a *ship!*"

Draco's eyes glittering with delight. "Surprise."

"It's actually a yacht," interjected Blaise, gesturing grandly. "A 70-foot Monte Carlo Skylounge. Wait 'til you see the kitchen – excuse me, *galley*. You'll keel right over."

"Nice boating pun." Theo jostled Blaise on the other side. "Come on, Captain. Let us aboard."

Blaise savored Hermione's shocked reaction for another moment then wagged his brows and turned, greeting a nearby marina employee with a handshake and then leading the group to the gangplank.

"Don't tell me he operates this thing." Hermione waved a hand at the vessel. "It's practically seaworthy!"

"It *is* seaworthy." Draco tugged her hand down and interlaced their fingers, walking her toward the plank. "He's taken it to Spain a few times. He's sound, don't fret."

She let herself be led on board, marveling at the luxurious finishes and the two — no, *three* — levels. She was altogether a little starstruck by the opulence. She'd become somewhat desensitized to things like English country manors and inherited estates but seeing wealth casually flaunted in such a *Muggle* manner had finally hammered home just how different her own upbringing had been. Her parents had kept them comfortably in the upper middle class but that had just meant they'd gone out to nice restaurants with some frequency and always went on holiday during the summer break. This was a new economic tier entirely.

She didn't put much stake in how much money someone had but nevertheless, she couldn't fully squash how out of place she felt. But it seemed she was the only one. Even Ron, usually so conscious of this sort of thing, walked easily through the saloon and out to the front deck, looking around admiringly but not even hesitating before plopping down onto one of the built in, semi-circular sofas.

Draco recaptured her attention with hands on her hips, guiding her over to a narrow staircase. "Up," he instructed her. "The top deck is the best."

The stairs opened out into another living space with a glimpse of the bridge through an open door to her right. Draco pressed her forward with fingers on her back, encouraging her through the saloon to a narrow hallway on their left, then over the threshold at the end and out onto the deck. It was big enough for three or four people and overlooked the deck below, empty but for two chairs. Hermione leaned against the railing, looking down at their friends and then out at the horizon. The river gave way to the sea, she knew. She wondered how far they'd take the boat out.

She felt the distant rumble of the engines starting up and leaned back against Draco when he came up behind her, bracketing his arms on either side of hers, fingers curled around the top of the railing.

"This is crazy," she told him. "Now I know why it being April doesn't matter. If it rains, we can just go indoors."

Draco chuckled at her tone. “He’s also charmed it to be impervious to rain, so we could actually stay out on the deck if we wanted.”

She laughed. “Of course he has. And what about you?”

“Hmm?” He slid his hands in to overlay hers. “No, I get wet when it rains.”

She snorted. “No, I meant, do you have a ridiculous boat like this too?”

“Ah. No. Not much water up in Wiltshire and anyway, Father isn’t one for the sea.” He paused. “We do have a property in France though, if you’re asking generally about the extravagance of my family.”

Of course they did.

“Paris?” She kept her tone conversational, watching Luna tuck a wayward lock of Pansy’s hair behind her ear on the deck below. Pansy tried to act like she was indifferent to the gesture but even from her distant vantage, Hermione could see the way it affected her.

“Avignon.” Draco’s voice was right by her ear.

“Ah, of course. Anything else?”

He nosed along her neck, tossing her hair over the other shoulder so he could reach skin. Down below, Theo looked up at the movement and caught her eye, but he just smirked and looked away.

“Why do you ask?” Draco dropped a kiss just below her jaw.

“Curiosity.” And a growing sense of insecurity. She tried to tamp it down but it was difficult to look past it.

This lifestyle was nothing special to Draco, but only because he was used to it. It might actually be *everything* to him, a fact he’d learn only if it were taken away. Because what would Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy do if they knew their son was canoodling with a Muggleborn? Draco had already hinted that they’d be less than thrilled if they knew he was trying to make a name for himself. How far would they let that stretch, before they cut him off?

She didn’t want to be the reason he lost anything that he wanted.

He nuzzled along her jaw, drawing her attention back to him. “You seem distracted,” he murmured. “But not in the way I’m aiming for.”

She opened her mouth to apologize but he kissed her cheek with a noise of disagreement. “Don’t apologize. Shall we go watch Blaise make a fool of himself?”

She smiled, grateful. “Let’s.”

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They sailed for an hour, mingling in the various socializing spaces and eventually separating to their own conversations. Hermione finally sequestered Ginny on a sofa in the main saloon, each clutching a glass of something mixed for them by Theo, and pestered her about her pursuit of Blaise.

“He’s rich and handsome,” said Ginny and Hermione balked for a moment at the unexpectedly vapid reasoning. But she shouldn’t have doubted, because Ginny shot her a wicked smile and carried on. “Which means he’s used to getting everything he wants, so of course I’m going to be difficult. He ought to work for *something*, don’t you think?”

Hermione laughed and clinked her glass against Ginny’s proffered one, each smiling over the rim of their drinks as they sipped, but her mind had snagged on the concept again. Draco was rich and handsome, too.

“Now—” Ginny tucked her feet under her bum, resting her glass on her knee. “That’s not to say I’m giving him *nothing*. I made sure he’s properly motivated.”

Hermione raised her brows. “And what does *that* mean, Ginevra Weasley?”

Ginny shrugged her shoulders innocently but her brown eyes sparkled with mischief. “It’s possible I pretended to be bad at billiards and asked him to help me. And equally possible that I pressed my arse against him when he helped me adjust the cue stick.”

“Uh-huh.” Hermione eyed her skeptically. “And...?”

Ginny tossed her hair over her shoulder. “And...perhaps I suggested that I thought he felt *really* good behind me like that.” Ginny emphasized the word *really* with a throaty moan. “He liked that quite a bit.”

Hermione snorted. “I’m sure he did.”

Ginny sipped her drink nonchalantly, then caught sight of something behind Hermione. Judging by the way her tongue darted out to flick along the rim of her glass, Hermione surmised it was Blaise. She decided to vacate the room rather than be sucked into their game of flirtation.

“I’m going to get something to eat,” she said, getting to her feet. “Play nicely.”

Ginny saluted her, looking about as obedient to the instruction as she did whenever Molly told her the same before releasing her to join her brothers in the air for a pickup game of Quidditch.

Hermione downed her drink as she turned, finding Blaise standing several feet away with a drink in each hand. She plucked one up as she passed him, offering him a rueful, “*Have fun*”, then took the stairs to the upper deck, wondering where Draco had gotten to. There were enough people milling around – and it was a big enough boat – that she wasn’t able to

immediately locate him. The upstairs interior seemed empty so she meandered to the top deck to see if she could spot him down below, sipping the drink she'd pilfered from Blaise. It was gingery and zingy; she quite liked it.

On the deck, she leaned against the railing and looked out over the water first. They'd gone all the way down to the mouth of the river and had dropped anchor within sight of Calshot Castle, just this side of the sea. She admired the crumbling stone walls, doing her best to ignore the modern, commercial buildings alongside it.

Draco's distinctive hair caught her eye and she diverted her gaze downward. He was exiting the main level, meaning he'd likely been down on the stern deck or else below where the cabins were. She watched him walk, talking over his shoulder to a woman with sleek brown hair, pulled up into a bouncy ponytail. Hermione tried to place her – she was obviously one of the add-on Slytherins that Hermione hadn't yet chatted to – but it wasn't until the woman half turned to face Draco by the outdoor sofas that Hermione saw who it was.

Daphne Greengrass.

She was pretty. Much prettier than Hermione recalled. She watched Draco smile at Daphne, so widely that his perfect teeth were on display, then chuckle at something the woman said. He gestured to the seats around them and Daphne sat with a practiced sweep of her hand under her bum to keep her skirt smooth. She settled in, crossing her legs at the ankle.

Legs that Draco had been between.

The thought hit her out of nowhere. Hermione tried not to think about it. It had been years ago, for one, and his first time so...probably nothing to write home about?

But where one thought struck, another quickly followed: *had* it been just the once? Hermione hadn't asked and now she burned with curiosity. Had he slept with Daphne more times than he had with her? Hermione absently began calculating the number but made herself stop.

They had plenty of sex.

*A lot.*

...too much?

She admittedly had no idea what was a normal amount of sex to be having. Did the frequency make her seem desperate? Or like she was overcompensating for her lack of experience? Said lack of experience had never felt as acute as it did in that moment. She didn't *want* to broaden her horizons, but what if one day she regretted it?

Gods, she was acting like they were married. Who knew if they'd even last beyond graduation?

The thought made her palms sweat and she took a long pull of her drink, the ice clinking against her teeth as she sucked the dregs down. Shit, she'd drunk it entirely too quickly

considering she actually hadn't eaten anything since breakfast. She huffed to herself but her brain, once on a topic, worried at it like a loose thread.

Maybe it wasn't the *quantity* of sexual rendezvous between them but the *quality*? She'd asked quite a lot of him already, was always wanting to try something new and pushing the line of discovery further and further. Was it all too much work? She was self aware enough to know that she was a difficult person to be with, and not necessarily in the sexy, fun way that Ginny was currently teasing Blaise with. Hermione strove for excellence, always wanted to achieve just that bit higher... what if Draco just wanted a relaxed girl, one who was perfectly content to have sex only twice a week and who let him get on with whatever imagined hobbies Hermione was likely keeping him from and who wasn't so *goddamn needy*.

She lifted her glass again to stem her spiral but it was just ice, the piddly amount of water formed from the heat of her palm just enough to wet her lips. It was incredibly unsatisfying to swallow nothing and she moved the glass to the other hand in agitation, wiping the condensation from her palm onto her jeans.

The boat rocked gently against the wake of a passing speedboat and Hermione was glad she'd automatically wrapped her now-dry hand back around the top rung of the railing. She watched as Draco shifted on his feet to keep balance. Watched as Daphne scooted over and patted the open spot next to her, face upturned toward Draco. He laughed at something she said and then sat down, pulling his knee up onto the cushion so he could angle his body toward hers.

It was one thing to know he'd been with other girls before her but another thing altogether to be presented with a clear picture of how they might've been. Daphne was grace personified. Sweet and friendly, from the right House and the right sort of family, someone who knew what was expected of her and what she was meant to do.

What the fuck was Draco doing with Hermione? *Rebelling?*

And honestly, if he'd sink so low as to bed *her* — someone he'd mercilessly teased for years, who he'd once bemoaned to his friends about not having been killed in Second Year — then who else had made the cut? Oh god. *Had* Luna been one of them? She was obviously into Pansy now but maybe she was bisexual? Or had given Draco a turn just for the hell of it?

And even beyond *that* hypothetical, he'd told her point-blank that he'd last been with someone else at Christmas, which meant it had happened while he'd been home for the holiday break. Had it been Daphne then, again?

Her stomach twisted at the thought that she might be surrounded by other women who'd seen Draco as she had, who'd been intimate with him in possibly more ways than one. As she watched Draco rest his arm along the railing behind Daphne, the sick feeling in her gut shifted fluidly into jealousy. And when he tugged playfully on the long length of Daphne's ponytail, making the woman giggle, Hermione saw red.

She went to slam her glass on the ledge but then thought better of it: a refill would be preferable. She turned to storm away from the balcony but as soon as she turned, she ran headlong into a solid mass.

“Steady on!”

The mass could speak, and sounded male.

She stumbled back half a step — the mass had caught her around the elbow so she couldn’t go far — and peered up.

The mass was Adrian Pucey.

“Oh! Sorry.” She blinked, disoriented for a moment by the fact that *Adrian Pucey* was smiling down at her like bumping into her was exactly what he’d hoped for. Adrian Pucey, who was older and a Slytherin and, if she recalled correctly, had laughed openly when Draco had called her a mudblood that very first time on the Quidditch pitch.

“You alright?” He asked.

He still hadn’t released her but his hand felt warm around her arm, fingers secure but not restraining.

“I am now,” she said, brain still catching up, and then winced internally at the inadvertently flirty response.

Adrian picked up on it instantly. “Well then I’m glad I decided to take in the view. I didn’t realize just how much natural beauty was on display up here.”

She had to look away to hide her amused smile at his unbelievably corny line and as she did, her gaze caught on Draco’s. He was looking up at her, his brows furrowing. Her smile dropped and she flicked an eyebrow at him, annoyed anew, then turned back to Adrian.

“Yes, I’ve been taking in the sights as well,” she said pleasantly. “Though it was rather boring until now.”

Adrian’s smile was genuine, his little pleased laugh harmless, but his reaction fizzled through Hermione like acid.

It felt *wrong* to talk to him like that. To flirt, even accidentally, with anyone who wasn’t Draco.

She chanced a glance back over her shoulder to see what Draco was doing now, but he’d gone. She was filled with a desperate sort of helplessness, not unlike when she’d seen Ron kissing Lavender in the common room, so publicly and so proud of it. It was a potent mix of jealousy and envy and regret and shame and *anger*.

She fixated on the last.

“What’re you drinking?” Adrian was asking, eyeing the empty glass in the hand attached to the elbow he was still holding.

The boat was steady now.

She ought to shake him off.

Instead she said, “Tequila I think. And ginger beer? I’m not certain.” She laughed self-deprecatingly. “Honestly, I just drink whatever I’m handed.”

It was true, of course — she had no great knowledge of nor interest in the mixology of cocktails — but it had come out sounding rather suggestive, almost tawdry.

“Granger.”

She stiffened immediately as Draco appeared beside Adrian, looking carefully collected except for the way his eyes were absolutely boring into hers. She hated what the tone had done to her, the hard authority in it. Like she’d been bad and he’d caught her.

*No*, she told herself fiercely, *she* hadn’t done anything wrong. It wasn’t like *she* had been the one sitting so close to another woman, a *former lover*, touching her so casually in front of everyone.

“What?” She asked him, tone matching his.

“I’ve been looking for you.”

She snorted indelicately. “Right. Behind Daphne’s ear?”

He frowned. “What?”

“Did you need something?” She asked crisply. “Because if not, I’m just having a chat with Adrian so...bye.”

Both men reacted to her use of his first name: Adrian raised an intrigued brow, Draco glared even deeper. She realized belatedly that Adrian hadn’t introduced himself which meant she’d just revealed she knew his identity even though they were from different Houses and Years.

Bugger.

“I do, actually,” replied Draco.

She’d lost the thread of conversation so furrowed her brows at him. “What?”

“*Merlin*,” he muttered and finally tugged her out of Adrian’s grip.

“Hang on,” began Adrian but Draco *tsk’d* and pushed past his former Housemate, pulling Hermione along.

“That was rude,” she informed him, doing her best to keep her feet under her as he opened the interior door and stepped over the raised threshold.

Draco barked a humorless laugh. “I really don’t fucking care.”



Once they were alone, he turned to her, stepping into her space. She took a reflexive step back and felt the smooth wall behind her.

“How much have you had to drink?”

“*Nothing*,” she seethed. How dare he assume she was without all her wits.

“I can practically taste the tequila on your tongue from here,” he told her lowly. “So why don’t you try that again.”

“I don’t know!” She shot back. “Theo made me a drink and then I took one from Blaise. Go shout at them about it!”

He took in a measured breath. “I’m not shouting at anyone.”

But she was primed for it now, actually rather missed the rush of a good shouting match with Ron or Harry.

“No, you’re not,” she agreed heatedly. “You’re smiling and *touching* them instead.”

He looked confused and then, to her utter shock, *laughed*. “Are you talking about *Daphne*?”

His humor was infuriating. “*Yes*. Or are there others you’ve been touching that I just didn’t bear witness to?”

“I haven’t been touching anyone.”

She gasped at his audacity. “I *saw* you! You had your arm around her and you touched her hair!”

She knew she was overreacting but her mouth had gotten the better of her, the alcohol and adrenaline fueling her emotions. “You shouldn’t be touching anyone but me!”

Saying it made her cringe. She wasn’t this person: clingy and paranoid and jealous. She was independent, logical, and self-confident. She seethed, freshly frustrated.

“Is that what this behavior is about?” He asked.

She shoved him but only succeeded in making him take a half step backward. “*Behavior*? Don’t talk to me like I’m some child acting out.”

“Don’t act like one then,” he rebutted, stepping close again. “Did you need attention?”

She glared at him, feeling herself heat with his proximity. She didn’t deign to answer but he saw the truth in her body language. His eyes were intent on hers.

“Tell me, Granger. Is that it? Are you *needy* for me?”

It was the exact word she’d been flagellating herself with and hearing it from him did a complicated thing to her psyche. She made a noise between a frustrated groan and a whine,

and his nostrils flared.

“Yeah? But rather than come find me, you put on a little show?”

“No!” She was furious at how fast he’d figured her out, faster than even she had. “It wasn’t a *show*. I was just—“

He tugged her from the wall and maneuvered them a few feet further down, shoving a door open and hauling her inside. “It wasn’t a show? So you really did want to fuck Pucey?”

Her back was against the wall again, this time inside what appeared to be a small study. Who the hell had a study on a *yacht*?

Draco wound a fist into her hair, tilting her head back to meet his eye. “Well?”

“Is that what it looked like?” She taunted, trying to ignore the way arousal pulsed between her legs. He’d never been so physically controlling with her and a stupid, simpering part of her brain was on her knees over it.

“I heard what you said to him.” Draco flexed his hand in her hair and the motion zipped through her nerves, the soft caress of his loosening fingers followed immediately by the sharp zing of his tightened fist. She moaned and he swore.

“Fuck, just tell me.” He sounded strained.

“I...don’t know.” His words were on the edge of meaningless, the way he was handling her so much more interesting that it captured all her focus. “I can’t...think.”

He was breathing hard, she realized. His body was hot against her. She needed him to prove that he wanted her – wanted her despite it all – so viciously, it overpowered all her other thoughts.

“Please,” she whined.

“What are you asking for?” His voice was taut.

She snaked her hand between them to press her hand to his groin and everything inside her tightened when she felt him already thick and hard.

He laughed, the sound derisive and desperate all at once. “You are so greedy. Always so fucking hungry for it.”

The accusation sparked her simmering anger, flaring her hot again. “I’m not the one hard as a rock over a fight!” She retorted.

He batted her hand away, shoving his into her jeans and going right to her knickers. “What’s this then?” He challenged. He pushed her knickers out of the way and slid two fingers into her without resistance. She squeaked, her hand gripping his forearm on reflex.

“*Wet*,” he accused. “Don’t tell me that’s not from fighting.”

She'd intended to use her grip to tug his hand away, determined not to let him best her but she was slipping back and forth between anger and arousal, the seesaw of it flooding her with adrenaline as her body tried to figure out what to prime her for and in the end, her traitorous libido won out.

Her hips rocked against his hand and she could feel the muscles in his forearm shifting within her grip as he curled his fingers inside her. Her moan was guttural.

"Jesus, you're such a filthy little—" he cut himself off with a sharp inhale through his teeth.

*Mudblood*, her brain finished automatically. And just like that, she snapped back to anger. All her fears about his interest in her being a sham, some grand experiment or Pureblood curiosity to tangle with a *mudblood*, came rushing back. She tugged at his arm but he was immovable.

"Oh you bastard," she hissed, incensed. "Say it. Don't hold back now, *Malfoy*. Fucking *say it*."

She could see he'd followed along by the way his jaw ticked and his expression darkened. "No. That wasn't even what I was going to say."

"Oh really? Why did you hesitate then?"

She saw him actively holding back, his jaw tight. She squeezed her fist around his arm as hard as she could, feeling his blood pulsing under her fingers. The muscles in her hand and forearm screamed and she couldn't help the urgent rock on his fingers as the tension overflowed. He finally broke, wrist flexing in her grip until he could move his fingers inside her again.

She'd gotten even wetter while he'd been buried motionless, not unlike the way saliva collected around a Sugar Quill when she got distracted writing notes and left it on her tongue for too long. She'd gotten used to the sounds of how her body responded to his touch, the way she coated his fingers or cock, but hearing it in the otherwise silent room, when she hadn't really expected to, sent a rush of pure lust through her. Draco seemed similarly affected.

"*Christ*. You want to hear me call you a filthy little *slut*, Granger? Is that what you want?"

The word went straight between her legs and she couldn't hold the keen that escaped her.

"Fucking hell." He lost himself for a moment, pounding his fingers inside her frantically and making her eyes roll back at the intensity of it. "Fuck you for liking that. God *damnit*."

He pushed her further up the wall with his hand between her legs and the other in her hair and the casual show of strength made her spasm around his fingers. He swore again. "Is that it? You like being my pretty little slut?"

He'd changed it slightly, perhaps unconsciously, but it did her in. The possessiveness of *my*. The blush-inducing *pretty*.

She was gone. Her eyes fluttered shut as her cunt squeezed tight, her jaw lax as she gasped.

“Are you fucking *coming* over that?” He twisted his hand between them so his thumb could find her clit. “You *are* my pretty little slut, aren’t you? Coming so nicely for me. Only for me. Not for fucking *Pucey* or *anyone*. Only *me*.”

“Only you,” she gasped, riding the edge of her orgasm as it gripped her with almost unbearable tension. His thumb found her clit and the aggressive, absolutely uncaring way he swiped hard over it drove her completely over the edge. Her next moan was unrestrained.

“Shit.” He didn’t have a hand free to muffle her but pressed his forehead against hers. “Quiet, Granger, or everyone’s going to know what we’re up to.”

“*Good*.” It was forced out through tight vocal cords, the pulsing clenches of her orgasm unrelenting in the face of his unceasing pace. If anything, he was speeding up.

He panted a strained laugh. “Yeah? Marking your territory?”

“Like you’re not,” she parried on a gasp, the intermittent aftershocks of her orgasm making her feel hazy.

“Oh, I *absolutely* fucking am. It’s insanely fucking hot that you are too.”

He buried his fingers deep, rocking his hand against her so that the heel of his palm massaged just above her clit, keeping her just this side of overstimulated. She felt completely surrounded by him, his forehead hard against hers and his body as close as he could get until, and that, combined with the raw intensity he was still giving off in waves, was keeping her adrenaline surging and making her heart race.

“Do you want to know how I fuck what’s mine?” His voice was low and harsh. It made the top of her spine tingle and her thighs shake.

“Yes,” she breathed. “*Yes*.”

He pressed a hard kiss to her mouth, teeth biting at her lip as he pulled his fingers out of her, working her jeans open one-handed. She clung to him, gasping a breath into his mouth at his intensity. He kissed her once more and then flipped her around to face the wall. She caught herself reflexively on her palms and he pushed her forward until her cheek touched the cool surface. He yanked her jeans and knickers down just far enough until she was bared to him, hands immediately squeezing her arse and then sliding around to pull her hips back until she was angled out to him.

She turned her head to press her forehead to the wall, panting and flushed, as she heard him undo his belt. He was back against her a moment later, his cock thick and hot along the crease of her arse, grinding against her.

“I’m going to be rough with you,” he told her. “Use your word if you want me to stop.”

She’d stopped listening after that low-voiced promise and pressed back against him eagerly, needing him so badly in the wake of her first, quick orgasm that she almost begged. He took

this as approval and reared back enough to line himself up and then, with a forceful snap of his hips, sank fully inside her to the hilt. She squealed, the suddenness of it making her clit throb.

“Fucking *Christ*.” He held her steady with hands around her waist, fingers digging hard into her ribs as he pulled back and then slammed straight back in. “You drive me *insane*. Fuck.”

He did as he promised he would, fucking her so hard she had to actively brace herself against the wall lest she bang her head. He slid a hand up her spine and grabbed a fistful of hair, turning her head so her cheek touched the wall again. She couldn’t help herself.

“Say it again,” she begged. “Tell me what I am.”

“You’re *mine*.”

But she wanted to hear that word again. “Your what?”

He tightened his grip in her hair. “You’re my little...fucking...*slut*.” She moaned and he swore. “God, you are so fucking perfect. I can’t *stand it*.”

His fingers were tight in her hair, the tension past the point of pain to somewhere that was making her eyes roll back, her mouth ajar as she took him in again and again and again. Her orgasm curled through her like a fist closing one finger in at a time; her thighs tensing first, and then her deep core, and then her cunt, until she was strung tight like a bow.

“Oh fuck, I can feel you squeezing me. You gonna come from this? Don’t even need your clit touched, do you? Just need a cock inside you and you’re ready to come on it, aren’t you? Fuck. Such a good little whore. *Fuck*.”

The hand on her hip slid up and groped her breast roughly through her shirt, finding her nipple and plucking at it. Her orgasm punched through her, her moan almost soundless as all the breath left her in an open-mouthed gasp. He fucked her through it, swearing and groaning and strumming at her nipple until she couldn’t take it and captured his hand in hers, pulling it off her. He squeezed her fingers and finally himself let go, burying deep and shuddering against her as he came.

The sudden silence made her ears ring.

She let go of his hand to press it back against the wall for stability, her legs weak in the aftermath. He pulled out of her and she felt the wet slide of his cum down her inner thighs. For once he didn’t do anything about it, hands skimming down to pull her knickers and jeans up for her.

She could feel the crash coming, the rush of emotions and hormones trembling through her as she sagged against the wall, letting him redress her. He was breathing hard behind her, his forehead against her shoulder but his body curled away as he righted his own clothing. She both needed him close and wanted space but before she could decide which, he was wrapping his arms around her middle, tugging her back against his chest and walking them to the small built-in sofa against the wall.

Yes, she thought. Yes. She needed him close.

He sat, pulling her onto his lap sideways, one arm banded around her middle and the other coming up to cradle her head under his chin. She could feel his heartbeat against her temple, throbbing rapidly up the side of his neck.

“That was a lot,” he said softly. “Intense. You alright?”

She nodded automatically, but pressed her lips together feeling for all the world like she was about to sob. She forced herself to get it together.

“You’re shaking.” His voice was still low and calm, but she felt the way his throat bobbed on a difficult swallow. “I want to make sure you’re really alright.”

“I’m okay.” Her voice sounded paper-thin but she cleared her throat and asked, more confidently, “Are you?”

He pressed his cheek to the top of her head, thumb stroking her ribs. “I don’t know.”

She wanted to cry all over again.

“You don’t know?” she repeated hesitantly.

“You were upset with me. I don’t think I reacted well. I’m worried I made things worse just now.”

His arms were strong around her and the comfort of it, the security of them, had eased her nervous system, any residual quivering fully dissipated. But even still, she felt a little tremulous.

”You didn’t.” It felt like insufficient reassurance but she hadn’t yet figured out how to express what she’d been reacting about nor how his intense need to lay claim to her had been the exact thing she’d needed.

He made a soft sound of disagreement. “I hardly think the way I just treated you could have made things *better*.”

She still wasn’t yet sure how to respond but he saved her the effort by continuing.

“I’m not sure what I did to make you think...” He cleared his throat. “I’d never cheat on you, Hermione. Never. You’re it for me. So...so if I need to do something to prove that to you, I’d like to know what it is. Because for a moment, I was worried that you...” He trailed off, inhaling slowly.

She wiped her traitorous, wet eyes.

“I know that, Draco,” she managed. “You don’t need to prove yourself to me. Merlin, I’m so sorry. I don’t know what came over me.”

“Was it something I did?” He paused. “You mentioned Daphne. Did something happen?”

She shook her head. “No. I just saw you with her and got in my head about it. I was being silly.”

She felt immensely foolish for having doubted his loyalty; embarrassed for the way she’d behaved, spoiling for a fight like some impulsive child. He tightened his hold on her, pressing his lips to her head.

“You’re not silly, Hermione.” He spoke the words against her hair, like he was hopeful they’d bypass her cognitive processing centers and sink in deep without alteration. She tried to fight her nature and offer him that. “But I can’t convince you of that properly unless you talk to me about why you feel that way.”

“I know.” She let herself simply be held for a quiet moment. It was an unfamiliar sensation to be emotionally vulnerable around someone who wasn’t Harry, or Ron, or Ginny. She collected her thoughts carefully. “Things are so good with you. I think I’ve just been waiting for reality to hit and for a moment, I thought it finally had.”

“Reality?”

She gestured between them and then the room at large. “Us, out in the real world and not the cocoon of Hogwarts.”

“I see.” She had a sense he was choosing his words even more carefully than she was. “And it’s been...different than you expected? Worse?”

“Not worse, *definitely* not worse. But yes, different. I...can I be completely candid with you?”

“I hope you always feel that you can.” There was a touch of offense in his tone. This conversation was too important for any miscommunication, so she shifted on his lap, leaning back until she could see his face. He looked serious, his attention wholly focused on her, even with the just-fucked color high on his cheeks.

“I just mean, I’m not going to beat around the bush or be vague.”

He dipped his chin. “Good.”

“Okay.” She swallowed. “I don’t know what I’m doing after Hogwarts. Literally, not a shred of a clue. Not what I’ll do or even where I’ll live exactly, any of it. The only thing I’m starting to know for sure is I want you to be there. In my life. And this week has made it even more clear to me.” She bit her lip. “I’m sorry if that’s too much. I know we’ve only been together for a couple months.”

There was a faint crease between his eyebrows, like he had no clue what she was on about. She panicked for a moment that she’d completely misread what was going on between them, that she was just his *school* girlfriend and he’d known their expiry date matched that of their graduation. But then his expression softened into something fond.

“Oh. *Hermione*. You’re never getting rid of me, not if I can help it. I’m sorry you didn’t know that to your bones.”

She swallowed over a sudden lump. “Really? Because I wasn’t sure what your plans were after graduation and I don’t want to get in the way of anything.”

He frowned. “What would you get in the way of?”

“I don’t know. Your family? Your plans?”

He shook his head. “I don’t have concrete plans either. And don’t worry about my parents. They aren’t vindictive or...*evil*.” He had enough awareness to quickly qualify this with, “Well, not universally. They’re flawed and have some deeply wrong opinions — which they’re working through, by the way — but after the war, they’ve given me even more leeway with making my own decisions. They’ve lost quite a bit of their superiority on that front, given...everything.”

“You said you thought they’d disapprove of you making your own name,” she reminded him, confused.

He inclined his head. “Oh. Yes, they’d be a bit put out by that I think. But that’s got nothing to do with anything beyond their pride about what it means to be a Malfoy, socially. Working for a living is below us, and all that rot.”

“But being with a Muggleborn isn’t?” she pressed.

He didn’t answer right away but his gaze was steady on hers. She could tell he was thinking rapidly but couldn’t tell if it was about something good or bad. Finally, he took a slow breath and broke the silence.

“It took conscious effort on my part, but I’ve learned that despite every technique in the book, you can’t actually control how you feel.”

She chewed on that, trying to figure out the connection to his future plans. “So you’ve just... given up control?” It seemed highly unlikely but she couldn’t think what else his point was.

“Not exactly.” He tilted her chin up. “I’m just not fighting it anymore. I’m...leaning in.”

He completed the metaphor by doing just that, touching his nose to hers and then kissing her, soft and sweet. She kissed him back, bringing a hand up to cup his jaw.

“Are we okay?” he murmured, hardly drawing away before kissing her again.

She nodded against his mouth, holding him closer for a firm, heartfelt moment and then drawing back.

“I think this conversation has been a long time coming. And I still have some questions — not ones I want to get into here.” He nodded, closing his mouth on what she’d inferred was an invitation to ask them. “But maybe when we’re back at school, we should lay it all out on the table.”



He pressed his lips together but then nodded. “We should. Frankly, that concept scares the shit out of me but you’re right. We have...a lot to work through.” He ran a hand through his hair, leaning back on the couch.

“As long as we do it together, it’ll be fine.” She smoothed her thumb over his cheek where she still held him.

He grimaced. “And you promise you’ll still want to fuck me, even if I...I don’t know, have a complete breakdown?”

“Draco.” She couldn’t help her laugh. “Don’t take this the wrong way, but that’s not even a blip on the radar of things about you that might have made me not want to fuck you. Trust me, you being emotionally vulnerable is only going to make me want you more.”

His jaw had tensed at her reference to their fraught history, but he managed a smirk and leaned forward to kiss her again. “Okay then. In that case, I look forward to it.”

## Chapter End Notes

TW: Rough sex and use of the words 'slut' and 'whore' without explicit prior discussion.

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Hopefully anyone who was waiting for a bit of jealousy and the slut-calling enjoyed themselves, though I promise we will revisit the latter in a much more fun way shortly 😊

And although I maintain that this story will be a lazy-river fun time, we will be exploring a bit of their history and getting some reconciliation on the insecurities Hermione has finally acknowledged.

Thank you so much for still being here, reading about them! It truly means so much to me 💖

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## Chapter 27: “Can I try again?”

### Chapter Notes

I just want to say a quick but heartfelt thank you for everyone's comments on the last chapter. It was a bit of a diversion in tone but I wanted to experiment with a little tension between them to give them the chance to get a little deeper in their relationship. It was a bit of a bump but hopefully the quick resolution kept things right where we like them: fun and easy, smut for the sake of it, and everyone being friends 🤗 Anyway, it was lovely to read all of your thoughts and chat a bit about it. I swear I have the best readers 😭 ily all!!

Today's chapter is much lighter as we'll be getting to the start of Their Talk™ in the next, which will be a fun exploration into their relationship and the start of some real intimacy between them. And then plenty of spice-for-spices-sake thereafter 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Draco held Hermione for as long as he could, finding immense comfort in the fact that she leaned into his touch just as much as ever. He'd never reacted so impulsively in his life and the recklessness of it shocked him after the fact.

He'd never been so rough with anyone, hadn't known he had it in him. Perhaps the physical aspect, yes, but the emotions that had fueled it, the way he'd half lost his mind...that had been new. He had been consumed by an almost primal need to...what, fuck her into submission? He wasn't sure anyone had the ability to do that, let alone him. No, it hadn't been a desire to contain or control her.

It had been, pure and simple, a fear response. Fear that somehow the universe had heard what he'd silently acknowledged to himself the evening before and now was going to take it away, like some (frankly well-justified) act of karma.

He stroked her hair as his breathing regulated, focusing on the feeling of her relaxed against him. She'd done nothing more than share a few friendly words with Pucey and he'd been struck with a bolt of fear so pervasive, he'd stood halfway through Daphne's sentence and gone to Hermione without any consideration of the ramifications.

That alone should have scared him more than anything, but he'd been honest with her when he'd said he'd stopped fighting for control over his feelings. He'd lived in that flat place of apathy for long enough and knew first hand how hopeless it was.

And even though leaning into them meant that he now had to *face* said feelings, it was still preferable. Vastly so. Even if she wasn't in complete accord with him yet, he had a quiet sense of security that she would be eventually. She said she wanted him in her life, at least. That was huge.

"We should probably join the others." Her voice was soft but relaxed now. "As much as I sort of never want to get up."

He hugged his arms around her in a fresh squeeze and she hummed a warm sound at the constriction. "Well that works perfectly then because I never want you to get up either."

She giggled and raised her head from below his chin, kissing his cheek. He turned his head and captured her lips with his before she got too far away, pressing firmly for a moment, hoping to convey his intention and adoration. She pressed back and hummed again, pleased, then drew back and stood. He steadied her with hands on her hips, helping her find her footing before standing himself.

Mercifully, the top level was empty so he was spared any immediate confrontation with Pucey. Now that Draco acknowledged that Hermione hadn't been intentionally soliciting anything from Pucey, he felt a little badly for his brash manners (even if he still considered himself well within his rights to reclaiming his girlfriend from the man). He probably owed Daph an apology too, abandoning her mid-conversation as he had, but thought it mightn't be tactful to do it right after Hermione had misunderstood the dynamic between himself and his friend.

They descended the stairs and Draco reached for Hermione's hand, interlacing their fingers and dropping a kiss to her temple. If she wanted to be publicly his, he had no problem upping his PDA.

The main saloon was occupied by several of their friends but his attention went immediately to Theo and Pucey where they stood on the far side of the room. Theo caught his eye and then gestured broadly to them, turning to face Pucey with a *see?* expression on his face. Pucey's gaze dropped to where Draco was holding Hermione's hand, his mouth downturning into a resigned expression which sent a surge of satisfaction through Draco. It was beastly of him, perhaps, but he liked seeing the disappointment on the other man's face.

Hermione, unaware of this exchange, twisted halfway to catch his eye, her own widening meaningfully. "Oh my god. *Look!*" she hissed excitedly.

"What?" he asked, looking around. And then he chuckled. Barely visible through a front window was the iconic coppery-red hair of a notable Gryffindor being tangled up in the dark fingers of a certain Slytherin. "Three down," he noted.

"I wonder what he did to get her to break," Hermione wondered, tilting her head in an unconscious mirror of the way Blaise was currently tilting Ginny's to kiss her more deeply.

"Whatever he could, I'm sure." Draco was happy for his friend – friends, plural, he supposed – but it did give him a moment's pause. While it was rather convenient that his closest friends were coupling up to some of Hermione's close friends, it also risked future friction if either

couple ever *de*-coupled. He didn't exactly have the right to demand fidelity from his friends but he thought a little reminder of the potential fallout of a badly-ended hook up might mean for the rest of them wouldn't hurt. He made a mental note to bring it up at an opportune time.

He caught movement in his periphery but before he could waylay her with a pointed look, Daphne was in front of them. She smiled widely at them both.

"Hermione! Hello!" Daphne beamed at her. "It's so nice to see you! I've heard so much about you."

Hermione glanced up at him at that and he frowned minutely at Daphne. She was probably just following the small talk script worked into her through years of practice, but it wasn't entirely helpful to allude to them having talked about Hermione, especially considering it was untrue since he hadn't seen nor talked to Daph in several months.

"Oh! All good things, I hope?" Hermione replied, sticking to her lines in that same script whether she knew it or not.

"Only the best, of course." Daphne smiled between them, then settled her eyes back on Hermione. "I hope we'll be seeing more of one another going forward," she said earnestly. "It seems our two groups are finally coming together."

"Yes, it seems that way." Hermione smiled politely and then shifted on her feet. Draco looked around for a change of conversation, sensing she was a little uncomfortable chatting with Daphne, and noticed Weasley leaned back against the high top bar, watching them from across the room. His eyes were fixed beyond Draco on the girls chatting, expression almost... wistful.

Well. That wouldn't do.

Draco slipped his arm around Hermione's waist, tugging her to his side. She wound her arm around his back without hesitation, leaning her head against him while Daphne chatted on. Draco glanced over to see what Weasley thought about how happily Hermione held him back, but saw that his attention hadn't flickered from where it had been. Which meant... *no*.

Draco turned to stare openly at Daphne. Her eyes flicked to him mid-sentence, and then beyond him to Ron, and then back to his without breaking her flow, the only acknowledgement of his nonverbal accusation a tiny tilt of her head in warning. A skilled conversationalist indeed. Her lack of denial shocked him and he made a mental note to write her a plainly worded letter demanding an explanation for *that* unlikely coupling. Because if Daphne was with *Ron fucking Weasley*, then Draco was certain he'd accidentally stumbled into another dimension. It definitely made Hermione's interest in him make more sense.

Hermione gave his ribs a subtle squeeze where her hand rested and he remembered his mission of finding them someone else to talk with.

"Seen Pans?" he asked, half-interrupting Daphne as she took a breath between comments.

She glanced around automatically even as she replied, “No, haven’t seen her for ages actually.”

“Ah. Well, I’ll just go see if Theo knows.” He looked down pointedly at the empty glass she was holding. “Perhaps you need a fresh drink, anyway?”

Daphne glanced back over to the bar – and Ron leaning against it – and then narrowed her eyes at Draco before smiling. “I suppose I do. I’ll be hearing from you then, I expect?”

“Count on it.”

Draco steered them around her, headed toward Theo who was still in conversation with Pucey. At least, until Pucey saw them approaching and made a hasty exit. Typical Slytherin self-preservation. Draco preened internally at having scared the other man off.

“I can’t believe Harry couldn’t come,” Theo moaned as soon as they were within range. “I’m wild with envy at you and Zabs.”

“Not enough to try and pull elsewhere, I hope,” Draco remarked with a meaningful look to Pucey’s retreating form.

Theo snorted. “Yeah right. In his fucking dreams, maybe, but not in mine.” He sucked his teeth like he’d gotten something stuck in them, an old-world mannerism of distaste he’d unconsciously picked up from his father.

“He seemed rather put out earlier though.” Theo turned back to them, glancing between them. “Came lolloping down the stairs in a right snit, going on about *Malfoy having nicked Hermione Granger right from under his nose*. I set him straight, of course, and will accept payment in the form of you telling me what the hell he was going on about.”

He looked expectantly at Draco but it was Hermione who cleared her throat and spoke. “Erm, he might have gotten caught in the middle of a bit of…” She glanced at Draco, who simply raised a brow, curious how she’d define it. “Miscommunication.”

He snorted. Mild but accurate. Theo seemed vastly unimpressed by this vague response but further interrogation was abandoned by the arrival of Pansy and Luna from the lower cabin level. There was no reason to suspect anything untoward had occurred between them were it not for the uncharacteristically rumpled collar of Pansy’s silk blouse and the way Luna’s long blonde plait looked unintentionally disheveled.

“Oh *really*,” intoned Theo, eyeing their progress across the room. “That little scamp. Bugger, now I’m envious of Pans, too.” He sighed forlornly. “Hermione, please tell me Harry doesn’t work more than 40 hours a week?”

She patted his arm consolingly. “I’m sure he’ll cut it back if you give him something better to do. But I’m afraid we’ve never really learned the concept of relaxation when it comes to figuring a mystery out.”

“Well, that’ll change sharpish.” Theo nodded decisively. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I have to go tease the ever loving shit out of Parks.”

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It wasn’t until just after nine that Draco was finally able to get Hermione back to their room. He managed to be sociable enough on the way back to the dock and even throughout dinner and the after dinner chit chat but his mind was never more than halfway off her. There was so much he wanted to say to her, both to make sure she heard it and also to convince himself that they really were alright. The incident on the boat had raised more than a few rather serious topics, and ones that he knew they’d need to broach if their relationship was going to survive. And he so dearly wanted it to survive.

In their room, she collapsed back onto the bed with a long sigh of contentment. “This really is the nicest bed I’ve ever slept on,” she said, eyes closed and savoring it. “Think Blaise would let me take it to wherever I end up in July?”

Draco leaned his shoulders back against the door. “I’m sure he’d be happy to give it to you. Or get you one of your own.”

She hummed happily. “I want this one. I’ve made quite a few good memories in it.” She peeked an eye open at him, her smile impish.

“Have you.” He smirked, but then looked down under the guise of toeing off his shoes to steal a quick moment for himself. He felt uncharacteristically nervous but sucked in a bolstering inhale and he pushed off the door, walking over to her to sit on the edge of the bed beside her.

“Can I set the record straight on something?”

She angled her head to look up at him and her expression was so open, so trusting, he couldn’t help but interrupt himself to lean down and press a soft kiss to her mouth. He found what he wanted to say easier to express against her lips, so didn’t draw too far away before beginning to speak.

“Earlier today, I asked if you wanted to see how I fucked what was mine.” He kissed her again, then pressed his forehead against hers, eyes closed. “And then I was so rough with you. Demeaning. That’s not how I want to treat you; it’s not at all how I’d like to show you what it means to be mine. So…” He nudged his nose against hers. “Can I try again?”

Her hands slid up his arms to cup his jaw. “By all means.”

He sighed into the next kiss, grateful for the second (third? hundredth?) chance that she was giving him. “Thank you, sweetheart.”

She tilted her head to give him space to pepper kisses along her jaw and mused softly, “And just to *really* set the record straight, I didn’t mind what you did earlier. I, erm, quite liked it actually.”

He drew back at that. “You did?”

She went a little pink but her lips curled upward. “Mm-hmm.”

Her reaction unfurled a little of the tension in him. “Am I to interpret that sound as you...?” He trailed off, hoping she’d say more.

She nodded. “Went a little brainless from it? Yes.” He raised his brows and she carried on. “You were so intense. *Passionate*. It felt like you had sensed exactly what I needed from you in that moment and gave it to me.” She laughed, a little shy. “It was actually sort of perfect.”

He searched her expression for any hint that she was saying it just to placate him but found only honesty.

“I’m so glad,” he said at last. “I know you said you were alright after but I haven’t been able to stop thinking that I acted terribly toward you.”

“I’ve come to learn that human sexuality is quite a variable thing,” she said contemplatively, sending a hand up to stroke softly through his hair. “Deep and nuanced, too. There are so many ways to be together and as much as I love when you’re all...reverent and desperate for me—” He scoffed and she bit her lip, grinning. “—it was *really* hot to feel your need for me like that.”

“Well.” He smirked down at her. “I’m more than happy to fuck you against a wall whenever you want, Granger.”

She returned his smirk. “Ditto.”

And then she curled her fingers in his hair and used her grip to bring him back against her mouth, flicking her tongue against his lower lip and then immediately sweeping into his mouth when he opened for her. He groaned and kissed her back, stroking his tongue against hers and raising all the fine hairs on his body at the sensation of it. She was kissing him hungrily and he almost let her, aligning his body over hers so his hips were cradled between her thighs, until he remembered his objective and gentled his mouth against hers. She followed his lead – that small act of deference sending his blood surging south – and let him set a softer tone.

“I cherish what’s mine,” he murmured between kisses, reminding her of what he hoped to convey. “I’m greedy for it. I covet it. Protect it.”

She sighed happily as he worked his kisses down her throat. “Do you also call it a slut now and then?” she asked with excessive nonchalance.

He nipped at her on instinct but soothed the hurt with his lips before rearing back to look down at her. “Does it *want* to be called a slut now and then?”

“*It* does.” She rolled her eyes but they were sparkling with mischief. “*It* liked it so much *it* almost came on command.”

He clucked his tongue at her and then slid it back into her smirking, sinful little mouth. She wrapped her arms back around his shoulders, claiming her victory by tangling her tongue with his.

“I’m trying to be sweet and take my time with you,” he complained against her lips when he broke away a moment later. “But you’re making it hard.”

She hooked a leg over his thigh and pressed her hips up. “I should hope so.”

He pushed her hips down with a firm hand. “*Granger*,” he warned.

She squirmed. “Ooh, that’s not helping. I rather like it when you get all bossy and authoritative with me.”

He heaved a breath, girding himself with his purpose so that he didn’t let her tug him back into his lust. “How about this,” he began, dropping his hips to press hers down with his weight so that he could use both hands to support himself over her. “You tell me where and when, and I’ll be just as authoritative as you like. I’ll even return the *incarcerous* favor. But right now, let me be sweet to you. I haven’t tasted you in days and I’m dying for it.” He gave her a slow, dragging grind and savored the way her mouth dropped open. “That sound good, baby? Can I get my mouth on you?”

“*God*, please.” She rocked her hips back against his, tongue darting out to wet her lower lip.

He pushed back to his haunches between her knees, letting his hands trail petal-soft over her chest, between her breasts, down the midline of her torso, and to the button of her jeans. He undid it and then the zip with one hand while his other rucked up her shirt to stroke his fingers on the warm skin of her waist. She watched him with heavy-lidded eyes.

He stripped her slowly, each article removed with grazing touches so that by the time she was naked under him, her limbs were languid and the color was high on her cheeks and chest.

“Take your shirt off?” she asked.

He did so, tossing it aside and then leaning into her touch when she pressed her palms to his chest. He caught her wrists before she skated them too far down, gently pressing them back to the mattress.

“It’s gonna be a slow burn, baby,” he murmured. “So be patient, hmm?”

“Okay.” Her voice was already a little uneven.

He liked that, and showed her as much with a long, lingering kiss. He sent his mouth down her neck, paying special attention to the place he knew she was extra-sensitive until she sighed and squirmed, pressing closer to his mouth. His hands forged the trail for his lips and tongue, coasting along her collarbones and then to her breasts. He cupped them each in a

hand, pressing them together and running his tongue from one nipple to the other. She moaned and he glanced up, meeting her eye when he did it again.

“That feels so good,” she whispered.

“Good.” He swirled his tongue around a bud and then sucked it into his mouth, rolling his lips around it while he brushed his thumb across the other. Her eyes slid closed and he hummed a low sound of satisfaction, kissing his way lower to suck a mark on the underside of her breast and then down the slight well at the base of her sternum. She didn’t rush him, even as he spent an inordinate amount of time on her stomach, her navel, her hips, and that alone had him pressing promises into her skin.

Repositioned on his stomach between her legs, he slid his hands under her sides, thumbs coming to rest just above her hip bones and fingers spanning almost to her spine. He kneaded the muscles of her lower back affectionately as he leaned in to press a kiss to the top of her mound. She bit her lip as she looked at him, her eyes tracing over his face to where his chin was resting gently on her pelvis and then up to his hair. She brought a hand down and carded her fingers through it, running her nails against his scalp in a way that him want to purr. He dipped his head, kissing along the top of her thigh and then down to where he could feel the heat radiating from her, the scent of her pooling saliva in his mouth. She dropped her knees even further, welcoming him in, and he acknowledged her offering by continuing his trail of kisses down over her clit.

“Draco.” It was almost a prayer and he huffed a laugh at her audacity to think he was the one to be worshipped between the two of them.

He traced the pointed tip of his tongue around the entire shape of her cunt, slowly so she could feel the full, gorgeous shape of herself. He made it three slow circuits before her hand was in his hair again, tugging him to center. He smiled against her cunt but gave her what she wanted, sweeping his tongue through her and then lapping at her entrance. She whined, hips rocking up. He let her set the pace she wanted and then pressed gently against her hips to hold her still so he could copy the rhythm she’d found.

He worked her over slowly, steadily, tongue shifting from firm to soft, alternating pointed presses with long, fat sweeps. He let her feel the rough texture of the top of his tongue and then curled it up to glide the silken underside against her clit, repeating the contrasting strokes until she was gasping. He wanted her to feel all of him, to sense the words that lay behind his lips and tongue and careful application of his teeth.

Her nipples were tight little buds and not for the first time, he lamented only having two hands and one mouth. He sacrificed one hand to the honorable task, sliding it up her torso to stroke his thumb soft and slow up the underside of her breast and then around her nipple. He rolled it softly between his thumb and middle finger, circling her clit with the tip of his tongue in sync, and then sucked her clit into his mouth as he plucked her nipple. She made a surprised sound that morphed into a throaty groan when he did it again. The third was her undoing.

“Oh! *Oh, oh—*” She pulled on his hair with such sudden urgency that it sent a flash of pure pleasure down his spine and right to the tip of his cock.

“That’s it, princess,” he groaned, half muffled by her cunt. “Come, baby.”

She didn’t hold back and he didn’t even consider asking her to, letting her rock her hips against his face as her orgasm pulled her under. He teased his tongue inside her, stroking as deeply as he could and feeling his cock throb in cadence with the way her walls pulsed around his tongue. Her hand was urgent in his hair again, tugging upward.

“Up here,” she whimpered, “Please.”

He gave her cunt a few soft licks in farewell but she was still tugging him up and so he cut the goodbye short, climbing up until he was settled on his elbows over her. Her hands clung onto his arms, fingers curling around his biceps and hips shifting against his.

“Inside,” she pleaded, “Inside me, please, please.”

“Yeah?” He ground his erection against her, almost jumping out of his skin at the electricity of the contact. She was so wet and warm against him and he was so hard from the scant friction he’d gotten against the sheets while fucking her with his mouth. She ground up, whimpering. He needed to be inside her so badly he was panting for it, so he didn’t delay further, aligning himself just with his hips and pressing forward until he’d slipped inside a few inches. Her walls gripped him, and then released, and then gripped him again.

“Oh fuck.” He stared down at her. “Are you still coming?”

“Cock feels so good,” she groaned. “Need all of you.”

“Christ.” He slid home and she moaned, the sound of it and the feel of her squeezing around him making him flush with heat, sweat prickling. “*God*, Hermione, you...oh Merlin.”

He fucked her through the aftershocks, mouth parted in a continual pursuit of oxygen and eyes never leaving hers. Her hands slid from his biceps to his shoulders and then his back, gripping his arse and pressing him in deep, wrapping her legs around the backs of his so he couldn’t get too far away. He slid a hand under her head to tangle in her hair, the other cupping the back of her neck, fingers curling up to hold her securely. The position locked his elbows against her shoulders so that when he thrust up into her within the limited space the tight grip of her legs allowed, the force of it had nowhere to go but inside her. They panted in unison and he dropped his mouth to hers in a semblance of a kiss, lips pressing only for a moment until they rested lax against hers, sharing breath.

He was going to come.

He’d hardly been inside her for two minutes and he was going to fucking come, her clinginess for him having shot him right to the edge.

“Hermione,” he groaned in warning, “I...fuck, I’m so close.”

She tightened her legs around him and nodded, her lips shifting against his. “Oh please. Yes. Please.”

“Shit, don’t beg for—*ah* fuck.” He bumped his hips against hers desperately as the tension snapped, groaning into her mouth as he came deep inside her. She squeezed around him, her legs and hands and cunt, and his arms shook at the brain-numbing pressure, of being so wholly surrounded by her with every single one of his senses. He panted into the pillow, tasting her on his tongue; his cheek pressed to her hair so his nose was buried in the scent of her curls, her sweat; his ears full of her catching her breath.

“That was so lovely.” She ran her hands softly down his back, fingertips tracing the divots of his spine as far down as she could reach. He squirmed on top of her, nerves sensitive, and she chuckled softly. “I think I rather like being yours.”

Her tone was light, almost teasing, but even so the words sank in deep, curling up in the space just below his lungs so that his next breath was hard to take. He rolled half off her so that he could collapse without crushing her and tilted his face to the side, nosing her jaw and then pressing his lips to the hinge.

“One day I’ll make you love it,” he whispered.

Chapter End Notes

We all needed something sweet after the turmoil of the last chapter, and to prepare us for some emotional talks coming in the next. But rest assured that even with some future angst, they will always be a team going forward 🤝

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 28: And...fuck. He sobbed in earnest at that.

Chapter Notes

Alright. I'm going to preface this by saying that I did a poll on twitter asking what intensity The Royal We wanted for The Talk and the results were basically 50/50 "emotive and soft" and "make him cry" so...you (possibly) asked for this 🥲

Here we go.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

“When are you heading back to Hogwarts?” Blaise glanced between them then back down to where he was forking a bite of breakfast.

They were sitting around the kitchen table with their preferred hot morning beverages, Hermione hardly believing it was already the last day of break. Even more hard to believe was the degree of melancholy she felt at the prospect of leaving to head back to school. She’d only been at Blaise’s house for five days and yet it felt as homey and comfortable to her as the Burrow. They’d have to come back for another visit, she thought. They could see Harry one weekend and then these boys the next...

Theo came out from the pantry with a tin in hand, plonking it onto the counter as he searched for the opener. Hermione redirected her attention back at Blaise.

“I’ll probably go just after breakfast,” she replied. “I’d like to get my head reoriented toward academics before classes start up again tomorrow. What about you?” She directed the last at Draco.

“Whenever you do.” He sipped his tea.

Theo rejoined them at the table with a bowl of what appeared to be pineapple tidbits. It was such a strange thing to eat that Hermione just stared for a moment. He misunderstood her attention as interest and tilted it toward her.

“Want some?” He offered.

Hermione looked dubiously at the dish of fruit he had haphazardly dumped out of the tin with the sort of disregard for presentation that would’ve sent Pansy into a tizzy.

“No, thank you,” she said graciously.

“Draco?” Theo proffered the bowl. “The tinned stuff works just as well as fresh, if you know what I mean.”

Draco’s hand froze in the middle of lifting his cup for another sip, expression shifting from nonplussed to horrified. “What.”

Theo grinned and ate a forkful. “Your loss. Or rather—” His eyes darted meaningfully to Hermione. “Hers.”

“*Don’t* insinuate—no, I can’t even berate you for that until I—come with me.” Draco stood and snapped his fingers at Theo, not waiting for agreement before striding from the table and into the lounge. Theo chuckled to himself as he stood without any urgency, leaning down to slip another piece of pineapple into his mouth before following after Draco.

Blaise snorted but didn’t look up, cutting into his French toast as if that sort of breakfast time dramatics were commonplace. They probably were.

“Any idea what that was about?” she asked.

Blaise shook his head, eyes still on his food but expression amused. “No thanks, Hermione. I don’t want a private talking-to as well.”

She furrowed her brow. “What?”

“Ask Draco about it later. He seems especially protective of you today so I’m not tempting him.”

“Why would you tempt him by telling me about pineapple?” she pressed, still nonplussed.

Blaise shook his head, miming the act of locking his lips, but then opened them right away to eat a bite of food. She tutted and rolled her eyes and sniffed primly, employing all her standard tricks to annoy someone into giving her the response she wanted. Annoyingly, Blaise ignored her.

The boys came back a few minutes later, Theo possibly not having learnt his lesson judging by the way he met her eyes immediately and waggled his brows. He certainly didn’t *look* like someone who’d just suffered a thorough telling off. Draco regained his chair beside her, picking up his tea as if he’d not even left the table and sliding a hand to her thigh to give her a little squeeze. She couldn’t make heads or tails of their interaction so left it alone for now, resting her chin on her fist and smiling over at him.

They retreated back to their room to pack up their things in preparation for the trip back to Hogwarts. Draco passed her bag over from where he’d stashed it beside the bureau and then pulled the drawers open, scooping out her things and dumping them on the bed for her to pack up. Clothing distributed, he turned back to begin filling his own bag from the drawers. She folded quietly for a moment and then couldn’t help her curiosity.

“What did you say to Theo?”

Draco glanced over his shoulder at her. “Nothing. I just wanted to make sure Theo remembered that actions have consequences.”

She raised her brows. “That sounds rather ominous. Over pineapple?”

He chuckled, turning back to the drawers. “The implication underlying the pineapple.”

She was lost again. “What implication?”

She watched Draco deliberate briefly, the line of his shoulders shifting, then he turned to her, leaning back against the bureau and crossing his arms. “He said he was going to see Potter later today, which was his reasoning for eating it. Pineapple is known to make come taste better, so the implication is that he and Potter are going to...” He grimaced. “For the record, it’s just that it’s Potter. I have zero issues with men being together.”

“Theo is...preparing himself to taste better for Harry?” She jut her lip out in an adoring pout as if she’d just seen a baby Kneazle. “That’s so *cute!*”

She could tell that Draco didn’t share the sentiment, judging by the way his mouth curled downward at one side. She opened her mouth to insist that it was thoughtful, at the very least – perhaps he could give Theo that much credit – but then the real implication of the situation struck her. She tilted her head, intrigued.

“But wait, that’s very interesting...I didn’t realize the flavor could change. I wonder why that is?”

His mouth quirked up at that. “I can already see the gears turning,” he teased.

“What, that doesn’t sound like a fun experiment to conduct?” She fixed him with her most innocent expression. “I could draw up a chart and we could conduct taste tests.” Her expression faltered into amusement when his eyes flicked to her, heated.

“Yeah? You want to feed me and then sample my cum?” He laughed, but it was a little strained. “Why is that the hottest thing you’ve ever suggested?”

“*Ever?*” She tutted. “Sounds like I need to up my game then.”

“Please don’t, you may actually kill me if you do.”

She was sure she looked inordinately pleased but didn’t bother trying for coy. He rolled his eyes at her, turning back to finish packing, and she laughed.

“But what are the consequences of Harry and Theo getting together?” she asked after a moment. “They’re lovely together.”

“They are,” Draco agreed. “I was simply reminding Theo of that fact. And that if he had intentions of getting off with Potter and then moving on, he should recalibrate his mindset.”

“You want them to stay together?” She felt herself melting a bit at the thought of Draco caring enough to pull Theo aside for a private chat about it.

“I don’t want tension between our friend groups,” he corrected over his shoulder, stowing the last of his clothes in his bag and zipping it up.

Oh, now she really was going to melt. She rounded the bed and hugged him around his middle, pressing her cheek to his back. “I was wrong before: *you’re* the cute one.”

He snorted but closed a hand over hers where they pressed to his stomach. “Hardly. This is probably just the first time you’re witnessing Slytherin traits being exercised for good.”

“Oh? Such as?”

“Well, I don’t want to be forced into a position of having to choose between hanging out with Theo or you and Potter, should the two choices ever arise. So it was an act of self-preservation. Long-term strategy, cunning, resourcefulness, ambition...I could keep going.”

“Mmm don’t stop,” she fake-moaned and he clucked his tongue in chastisement. She giggled and kissed his back then squeezed him once more and released him. He glanced back at her over his shoulder as she retreated, a half-smile curling his mouth.

As they said goodbye to Theo and Blaise, Hermione marveled at how much she’d already grown to care for the two Slytherins. It only renewed her intention to discuss abolishing the House tables with McGonagall, the first step in her mission to subvert the entire House structure – at least, in the way it was currently being divided. What would Hogwarts have been like if the students were assigned dorms based on nothing more than a random lottery and not some preconceived, antiquated notion that *like belonged with like*. Surely diversity was a much better medium for development and growth.

Theo smacked a kiss to her cheek and tried to do the same to Draco but was strong-armed away. “Save it for Potter,” Draco advised, but then pulled Theo in for a hug with the same arm that had pushed him away.

“Right then.” Draco faced her, hoisting his bag. “Shall we go together, or will I meet you there?”

She appreciated that he gave her the choice; side-along apparition was not the most enjoyable sensation. Even so, she reached out for him.

“Together. Though, do you mind if I do it?”

The edge of his mouth lifted in a bemused smile, closing his hand around hers. “Go on then. Whisk me away.”

“Merlin,” groaned Blaise. “You are corny as fuck. I’m embarrassed on your behalf for that one.”

“Shush.” Theo pantomimed a swoon, wrapping his arms around Blaise’s bicep and fluttering his lashes dramatically at Draco and Hermione. “He’s getting more action than the both of us combined. You should probably take notes for courting Miss Weasley.”

Blaise scoffed but sent them a rueful grin. “Perhaps I should.”

With a final little wave, Hermione tightened her hold on Draco and spun them away to Hogsmeade.

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Draco settled into the final term of his education with greater ease than his zealous girlfriend. Hermione took the entire institution quite a bit more seriously than anyone he'd ever met before, to the point that when he'd laughingly caught her elbow as she'd veered off toward the library rather than her dorm, she'd looked at him with genuine surprise. He'd learned then that she'd been serious about getting her head back in the books, even though it was ten o'clock on a Sunday morning and they didn't even have any assignments yet.

He'd left her in the Great Hall with a lingering kiss and a promise to catch up with her in a few hours, then went off to fly for a bit, then had a shower, then lunch (with only Ginny and Neville for company), then lingered in the general common room with a book. When she *still* hadn't shown her face, he'd sought her out amongst the stacks and made a very convincing argument (with low, murmured suggestions and well-placed hands) for how he could show her the *proper* way to prepare for another grueling term. In the end, she'd had been quite amenable.

They started Monday off together with back-to-back double Potions and Charms, but the coursework had ramped up its intensity with N.E.W.T.s only a few months away, so there wasn't time for anything but nose-to-the-page focus. She tugged him aside in the corridor afterward, stealing a quick moment alone while their peers streamed past on their way to lunch.

"We should talk before we get too caught up with classes again," she said. "What do you think about coming to my room tonight?"

She said the word with enough special emphasis that he knew exactly what *talk* meant.

"Tonight?" The thought made his heart kick up double time, but he nodded. It would be better to address things soon, while they were in such a strong place together. Better to strike while the iron was hot to make sure that things cooled off into the shape he wanted for them. "Alright. Right after dinner?"

She nodded at once and the ease with which she put off her usual post-dinner library session in favor of what would undoubtedly be an uncomfortable conversation filled him with a mix of stomach-churning anxiety and a deep sense of purpose. She was taking it seriously, which meant she was taking him – *them* – seriously.

"Alright," he repeated. "After dinner then."

The afternoon was comprised of the classes they didn't share: a double-period Muggle Studies then Herbology for him and a double-period of Herbology then History of Magic for



her. (He was in a lower level Herbology class than Hermione and Neville because, with the exception of their use in potions, plants were fucking *boring*, so he'd never devoted more than half his brain in their study).

It wasn't until dinnertime that he saw her again. She and Neville were sitting together at the Hufflepuff table, heads bent over what he assumed was their Herbology textbook, talking animatedly. He slid onto the bench across from her, amused that it wasn't until he'd filled his plate and cut the first bite that she noticed his presence. Such a little swot.

"Oh! Hi, Draco." She smiled, then furrowed her brows at him. "Why are you sitting over there?"

He slipped the bite into his mouth and chewed it slowly, eyes on her in a way he saw was making her blush. "View is better from over here," he said after he'd swallowed.

She rolled her eyes, flushing a little deeper when Neville chuckled. She liked an audience, he knew.

"Idiot," she said fondly, going back to her own dinner. "How were your classes this afternoon?"

"Tedious. I learned all about the various methods Muggles take to accomplish long distance travel and then had to retrieve pods from a Snargaluff."

"Oh!" Neville perked up. "I *love* that plant. Did you know that—" Draco held up a hand. "Longbottom, please. I'm begging you: no."

Neville deflated but sent Draco a wry smile. "Fine, fine. Live an uninteresting life if you wish."

"Gladly." Draco ate a few more bites, keeping an eye on Hermione's progress through her own meal. He was both looking forward to spending more time alone with her and practically shaking in his fucking boots about saying the wrong thing and having her upset with him again.

She must have sensed his nervous attention because under the table, her foot found his. He nudged hers back in acknowledgement and then brought his other foot to surround hers, keeping her close. Neville started up another conversation with her about whatever they'd been debating beforehand and Draco finished his meal with a greater sense of calm.

He was grateful that Hermione didn't draw it out, finishing her conversation with Neville at almost the same time as her pudding and then gathering her things together to depart. He slung his bag over his chest and stood.

"You two off then?" inquired Neville around a mouthful of banoffee pie.

"Yes. Goodnight, Neville." She smiled down at her benchmate, swinging her legs over and standing. Draco regretted his choice to sit across from her now, the length of table between them in the way of being able to hold her hand.

“Night.” Neville waved them off with his fork before tucking back in.

They walked toward the doors on either side of the table and as soon as they reached the end, he went over and snagged her hand. She squeezed his back, smiling up at him, and his nerves eased just that little bit more.

In no time at all, they were safely sequestered in her dorm, bags dropped to the floor and outer robes slung over her desk chair. He sat at the foot of her bed, one knee up and the other foot braced on the floor with his back against one of the posts.

“Alright.” Hermione faced him cross-legged in the middle of her bed, hands pressing the center of her skirt down when it dared offer him a glimpse below. “I think we should set a timer and after it goes off, we talk about something else or do something fun, something to break whatever tension we might build up. And then we can pick things back up again later. That way we won’t get too overwhelmed trying to deal with everything all at once.”

It was painfully logical, but perfect.

“Good idea. How long?”

“An hour?”

He nodded. He could manage an hour, though it would be an insufficient amount of time to apologize for even a portion of his wrongdoings. She twirled her wand and started the countdown, then pointedly placed her wand to the side. Neither of them spoke. He took a calculated risk and went for it.

“I have a lot to apologize for, to you specifically, but I’m not sure where to start. Is there something that you want to hear my apology for first?”

She blinked, surprised. “Oh! I...” She looked at him thoughtfully, head tilting. “I actually don’t think I need an apology from you. For anything. I already know you’re sorry.”

He hardly believed it could be true, but allowed himself the fantasy of it for a moment. “Well, what did you want to lay out on the table then, if not our unfortunate history?”

“Oh, no, I *do* want to talk about the past, but not to solicit apologies from you. I’m more curious about the *why* of things when it’s comes to those topics. But, erm...” She wrung her hands together, suddenly awkward. “I actually do have something I’d like to talk about first?”

He gestured. “Of course.”

“I feel, well, *silly* for even caring, but it is what it is.” She took a rallying breath. “Have you ever slept with Luna?”

The question took a moment to register, so unexpected was it. “Have I slept with Luna?” He shook his head. “No. Why?”

She let out a little breath, seeming relieved. “Okay. And, um, how many times have you slept with Daphne?”

He frowned. “How many times?” He felt idiotic to be parroting her words back to her again but the questions were so far from what he’d mentally prepared himself for, he felt rather slow on the uptake.

“Yes.” She chewed her lip. “And given that you haven’t immediately answered, I’m assuming it’s more than just that first time?”

He hesitated for half a second, instinctively trying to find her angle but made himself stop. It would be only honesty between them. “Yes, it was more than once.”

“More than ten times?” She wheedled.

“I don’t know. I didn’t keep an active count.”

“Will you try and remember?”

He waited for the logic to surface but it appeared that Hermione was operating completely without it for once. There was nothing to do but state it plainly. “You want me to sit here, on your bed, and think about all the times I’ve had sex with another woman?” He clarified dubiously.

“I know how it sounds, but I just need to know so I stop thinking about it.” She rolled her eyes at herself, cheeks flushing. “I know it’s petty and foolish but I just can’t help mentally keeping score.”

He could see where the conversation would inevitably take them — to the full listing of his sexual partners — and he prepared himself for the shame of not actually knowing, with one hundred percent certainty, the complete list. But he’d promised her candor and this was hardly the worst topic she could have selected, so he nodded and thought back.

After a moment, he ventured, “I think it was eight times, although we didn’t have full sex every time. Seven were before the war, all in Fifth year, and then once after. The last time was around the end of June. And we left it there — we both agreed it was the last time.” He added the last, unasked-for details knowing she’d appreciate them.

She absorbed his answer for a moment, then: “Can I ask why?”

“Why we decided it was the last time?” She nodded in confirmation. “To be honest, it was half a pity fuck from her to begin with.” He laughed at her expression. “I just mean, after everything that happened with the war, I wanted someone comfortable to...sort of...cleanse myself from it all. She agreed to be that for me, but even beforehand she told me it would be the last time. She’d met someone recently, had just started chatting to them and...thought she had a chance at happiness with them.”

“Oh.” She let out her breath again. “Okay. Thank you.”

But he sensed there was more. He waited.

“And — god, I’m honestly so embarrassed at myself for asking this—“

He silenced her with a raised hand. “Hermione. It’s okay. Please believe me when I say that if you’d shagged a single person before me, I’d be even less blasé about not knowing absolutely everything about it. Ask me whatever you want. You want the full list?”

She chewed her lip again. “Is it wrong if I say yes?”

He held out his hand to her, palm up, letting himself show her a similar amount of embarrassing neediness. When she didn’t immediately take it, he beckoned her with his fingers. “C’mere, please. I’d feel better talking about all this holding your hand.”

He watched with a chest-tightening amount of affection as his words had a literally melting effect on her, her shoulders relaxing down and her grip softening as she unlocked her fingers to slip a hand into his. He squeezed it gratefully.

“I don’t know how to say this without sounding like an absolute cad but I’m not actually sure I know the full count.” He grimaced. “I definitely don’t know all of their names.”

She squeezed him back. “You said you used sex as an escape for a time. I’m assuming that was during Sixth and Seventh year?” Her voice was, somehow, without judgment.

He nodded and she made a little sound of understanding, the softness of it making his heart throb.

“Alright. That’s okay, Draco. I don’t need to know.”

He shook his head, eyes fixed on where her thumb was stroking his knuckles. “No, I’ll tell you whatever you want to know. Don’t let me off the hook just because I had a bad year.”

She surrounded his hand with her other. “How about a compromise? Just tell me how many were people I know and...and maybe who the last one was? That’s plenty.”

It was a concession she didn’t need to make and his instinct was to fight her on it, but he hesitated before insisting. There would be more than just this hour of honesty between them; maybe starting slow would be the best route forward anyway. He inclined his head.

“Alright. Uh, so Daphne you know, obviously. Tracey. Mandy. Not sure if you know Cara Spungen..?” Hermione shook her head. “Well, her. Erm, then Annette Rincorn. I don’t think you’d know anyone else; they were mostly in the year behind us after that.”

She accepted this with a nod. “And last Christmas?”

Merlin, she’d remembered the exact timing.

“Rosanna Avery.”

Her brows went up at that. “Avery?”

“Unsurprisingly, my post-war partners have been of the Sacred Twenty-Eight Slytherin variety — not many takers when you’re a former Death Eater.” He sent her a rueful smile. “Yourself, notwithstanding.”

She rolled her eyes, but the tension was lessened. “Well, I do always like to be an outlier in the dataset.”

“And aren’t you just.” He wanted to kiss her little smile but a glance at the timer told him he still had almost forty-five minutes left of, presumably, non-kissing activity.

She noticed his attention and evidently interpreted it as him hoping they were done talking for reasons other than him wanting to kiss her, because she cleared her throat and offered, “Do you want to go next? Ask me something?”

He knew immediately what he needed to get out in the open. It had been weighing on him ever since the moment it had happened.

“You thought I’d call you *that* word.” He glanced up, chewing the side of his lip as the shame settled in again, thick and sickly. “Still.”

Her expression went a little crestfallen but she firmed her mouth and maintained her eye contact with him, letting him see her disappointment either in him or herself or both of them. “I...suppose I did.”

His stomach sank. “Shit. I half hoped I’d made that part up.” Agitated, he ran his free hand through his hair. “I know I’ve given you plenty of reasons in the past to think that I’d call you that but, Hermione, please know that I’ll never use that word again. *Never*. Not about you, or anyone.”

She flexed her fingers in his hand and he realized he’d been squeezing her tightly. He loosened his grip, letting her pull away if she wanted, but she only turned her hand so that she could weave her fingers between his, getting even closer. He exhaled a short puff through his nose at the gesture.

“When was the last time you did?” she asked. “Or, even thought about me in that way, I suppose?”

He’d been right before: there were much worse recollections she could summon from him than just the number of girls he’d slept with.

He inhaled slowly, deeply, and made himself think back. As it so happened, the last time he’d used that word in connection with her was during one of the worst moments in his life, a moment when he’d truly found he didn’t have what it took to protect his family, which had been, at that point in his life, the only shred of purpose he’d been clinging to.

“I said it in the Astronomy tower,” he finally confessed. “About you. I said it to...to Dumbledore when I...” He swallowed. “When I...”

But he found he couldn’t say it. Not with how his throat was constricting, his heart suddenly racing and palms sweating. He hadn’t let himself think about that moment – had blocked out as much of those last months as he could, shoving the memories of them so tightly and messily into a corner of his mind that he’d hoped unpacking them would be impossible. But peeking around that corner now, he found them spilled about and as easy to pick up as a pair

of discarded socks. He took a shuddery inhale and closed his eyes, as if it would do him any good when the things he feared were inside his head.

“Draco,” she began, voice hesitant.

He looked at her and the empathy on her face cut straight through him. He looked away and bit down on his lower lip again, harder this time, to stem the pathetic quiver in it. She made a low sound of dismay and shifted closer to him, one of her hands lifting toward his shoulder. He held up his hand, warding her off.

“Please don’t comfort me about this.” His voice was low and tight, the last barricade against the well of emotion building up hotly behind it. “I don’t deserve it.”

“*Draco.*” Her voice was full of emotion now, and the way she said his name, surrounded by concern and gentle rebuke and *kindness*, broke his composure. His breath escaped him in a choked sob.

She was on her knees in front of him a moment later, climbing onto his lap and pulling him against her, holding him close with a hand in his hair and an arm along his shoulders. He could feel her murmuring softly to him but couldn’t hear the words, his head full of the tension and mounting pressure of not completely losing it in front of her. He grit his teeth so hard that his jaw ached, but it lessened the pressure enough that he could focus on her voice.

“It’s in the past,” she was whispering to him. “You’re alright. You’re safe now. It’s in the past.”

And...fuck. He sobbed in earnest at that.

He wrapped his arms around her and clung on, burying his face against her chest and getting his tears all over her. He wasn’t a stranger to a good cry but wasn’t accustomed to letting others see him do it. Well, with the exception of when Potter had barged in on him, and the times with Luna, and then all those with Moaning Myrtle hovering around him, and then that once with Theo, and certainly countless times around his mother...gods, maybe he *was* a bit of a public crier.

But in all those times, he’d never felt cared for as intentionally as Hermione was now: her grip firm and steady around him, her tone soft and tender, her weight on him grounding him and keeping him in the present. He honored the gift she was giving him and let himself truly give in.

He thought of her first. He made himself feel his regret and his shame, both very real, almost overwhelming.

He made himself picture every time he’d said the word to her, each time he’d demeaned her and felt that gut-curdling superiority over her, that spineless loathing of her.

And while he was at it, he let himself hate himself, just a little bit, for making the memories of him calling *her* a horrible word something that *he* was crying over.

He let himself feel his disappointment, both at his parents and in himself, when he'd realized how far astray he was.

He let the months and months worth of fear coat him, oily and rank, and then washed it away with saline and great, wracking sobs.

And he cried in relief, too, that it really was in the past.

He'd made terrible choices – the *wrong* choices – but he'd come out of it. He still had breath in his lungs and blood in his veins and he was able to do better now.

He cried until his head ached.

Until Hermione was quiet and simply holding him, her hands soft in his hair and her heartbeat steady when he was calm enough to feel it through his cheek.

When he was depleted, sniffing in her arms, he expected to feel ashamed of himself, embarrassed for how splotchy his face was now, streaked with tears and Merlin knew what else. But she just pressed her lips to the top of his head and murmured, "Let's go get in the bath," and he felt nothing but peace.

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Hermione left Draco on her bed while she went to her loo to draw the bath, giving him a moment of privacy if he wanted it. He'd joked about having a breakdown but she hadn't really expected he'd let himself give into it. It had been gut-wrenching, almost physically painful to witness but simultaneously heart-throbbingly endearing; a privilege. It was the most open display of trust he'd ever given her, a rending of the veil that concealed what preyed on his soul; proper, honest intimacy. She didn't take it lightly.

She'd hardly straightened fully after turning on the tap when she heard him come in behind her. She glanced over her shoulder to check that he was alright but before she'd properly faced him, he was curling his arms around her and hugging her from behind, his face sinking to the crook of her neck and his hands warm and heavy where they rested on her ribs. She worried for a moment that he was still upset but then he was kissing her softly and running his now-dry nose up to her jaw, and she realized he was just fine.

His hands worked her shirt up, the warmth of his body leaving hers only for as long as it took to get the garment over her head. She felt his skin bare against hers when he pressed back close: he'd already taken his shirt off before joining her. She could sense from the way he was curled around her, his hands greedy but reverent, that he needed a little reassurance from her. Comforting and closeness of another sort than they'd shared on the bed. She was more than happy to oblige him.

His fingers lifted then slipped under her skirt to run his hand between her legs, rubbing firmly over her knickers. It was so different from when he'd done it on the boat – no less nor more arousing, just *different* – that she could manage nothing but a soft sound of surprise. She let her head lean back against his shoulder and felt his rumble of satisfaction against her spine.

“You’re perfect,” he murmured. “I...thank you. Thank you for being so generous with me.”

“Of course,” she whispered back, letting her eyes fall shut as his stroking fingers melted her even further against him. “Of course, Draco.”

He huffed a soft breath at that, the air tickling the fine hairs along her nape. “Not ‘*of course*’. None of that was expected of you.”

“Don’t tell me you don’t deserve it again,” she chided. “I won’t stand for that sort of talk.”

“Well.” She could tell he wanted to argue but had finally learned enough to recognize the futility of it against her, so instead he diverted the topic. “I didn’t mean to get us off track like that. I do want to talk through why you still thought I might call you that term. I’ll be able to listen properly now.”

She paused for a moment and he stilled his hand then slowly drew it from between her legs to rest warmly over her stomach. She liked that he wasn’t retreating but still acknowledging the shift in tone. There was something comforting about him knowing she wouldn’t want to associate his intimate touch with any sort of discussion about him calling her a bigoted term. That awareness had desire coiling in her stomach just as much as the purposeful way he was touching her. She turned in his arms and tried to pull his mouth to hers, but he smiled and leaned back, not letting her.

“The timer isn’t up yet. We still have seven minutes left before we can do something *fun*.”

It was the last thing she thought he’d say and it brought a bright bubble of laughter out of her. “*You’re the one who started undressing me!*”

He shrugged, smirking. “Whoops.”

“*Whoops?!*” She laughed again. “Oh my god.”

She went up on her toes and pressed her mouth to his, her teeth clinking inelegantly against his. He let her this time, still smirking, and dipped his hands down to palm her arse. She pressed her hands against his stomach and he shivered, working his tongue against her bottom lip to seek entrance. She granted it for a moment, flicking the tip of hers against his in a little tease before pulling back and meeting his gaze.

“Get in the bath, Draco.”

He quirked a brow, playful even with his eyes red from crying, his face now dry (probably a quickly cast *scourgify*) but still flushed. He stripped dutifully, eyeing as she pulled her own clothing off. He sank into the water first, the line of it lapping just below his pecs. He ran his

wet hands over his face, sniffing once as he tracked them up through his hair, leaving it partly pushed back, the fine blonde strands streaked a slightly warmer tone where the water clung.

He held out his hand to help her step over the edge, his eyes only leaving hers to flick down along her body once before finding her gaze again. He looked so adoring that she restructured her plans and settled herself onto his lap facing him rather than away. He sank down a little deeper into the water, shifting so that she sat right over his cock. She acknowledged this with a teasing lift of her brow and he an unapologetic waggle of his.

She dipped a hand under the water to adjust him so he pointed straight up toward his navel, wiggling her hips until she was resting snugly over him. His hands gripped her arse, spreading her slightly so that when he ground his hips up, his cock slid right against her center. They both swore, his half muffled when he leaned forward to get a mouthful of her breast.

“Do you have your wand?” She asked, hopeful. He shook his head, lips working down her chest, hips pressing up again, seeking friction.

She sank her weight on him, stilling him. “Get it.”

He grunted a frustrated sound against the swell of her breast but splashed a hand out of the water, holding it open expectantly. A moment later, his wand zipped into it through the open door and she didn’t even try to control her fervent grind against him. He wrenched his mouth off her long enough to bark “*Lubricus*”, and then dropped his wand to the tiled floor, hand diving back below the surface to grip her arse anew. She felt the magical slickness oozing between them, smoothing the glide as she coasted along his cock, beyond turned on that he’d known exactly what she’d wanted him to do with his wand.

“Fuck.” His mouth was on her breast again and he panted open-mouthed over her nipple. She rocked on him and he clenched his jaw. “Merlin, my tolerance is so fucking low right now,” he groaned. “It wouldn’t take much of that to push me over.”

“Can’t have that,” she murmured teasingly, then reached between them to align him at the source of wetness, letting the tip of his cock slip through her. His hands flexed on her arse like he was resisting pressing her down onto him and she rewarded his restraint by sinking on him an inch before drawing off.

“Merlinfuck.” He inhaled sharply, gasped it out. “Fucking Christ, baby. *Please.*”

She gave him another shallow press but retreated again, holding herself above him on her knees.

“Are you trying to make me cry again?” He tipped his head back against the edge of the tub, watching her under heavy lids. “Because I fucking will if you want. If that’s what—” She sank down in one slick, sudden motion and he choked on his words, groaning, “*Oh fuck, thank you.*”

He panted at the ceiling for a moment and then curled forward so he could look down the length of his body to where she was rocking her hips over him. It did a complicated thing to

her, to watch his expression tense in mounting pleasure while having so clearly recently been crumpled in despair. She decided not to psychoanalyze herself on *that* too closely.

Instead, she rose and fell on him at a steadily increasing pace, sloshing water over the rim of her tub and not giving a single fuck about it, her focus fully absorbed by him and the way he was swiftly deteriorating under her.

“You feel so good.” His head tipped back to rest against the edge of the bath and she couldn’t help but grind forward with a touch more urgency at the revealed line of his throat, inexplicably sexy to her. He made a low, desperate sound. “So fucking good.”

“Good.” She was a little dazed by it herself, her brain not finding the words that normally came so easily to her. She leaned forward to rest her elbows on his shoulders, fingers raking through his hair on either side of his head, slanting her mouth over his. He kissed her earnestly, his hands coming up to press against her back, keeping her near.

She worked her hips as best she could at the angle and with the water impeding her rhythm somewhat, and he did his best from below, and together they built up the tension and heat between them until she was gripping his hair tightly and moaning into his ear and squeezing tight around his cock. He moaned out his own release, his hands holding handfuls of her arse to keep working her over his cock when she went a little boneless in the wake of her orgasm. He collapsed, spent, against the edge of the tub, breathing hard.

They came down slowly, his hands sliding up to stroke his thumbs along her low back under the water while she draped herself over him. After a few moments, she heaved a deep breath and sat back, running her hands through his hair and settling the places she’d mussed it.

He was relaxed under her, smiling and lethargic. “I feel wrung out.”

She bit her lip at that, eyes raking over him with only partially-sated hunger. He observed her reaction with a wry smile.

“You know, when they say women get off on emotional vulnerability, I didn’t think they meant *literally*.”

She scoffed. “It’s just...” She tried to find the words but they were fleeting and clumsy, her mental processes still coming back online. “You’re like a husk right now. All...all crinkled and washed out. I just want to get inside you. I can’t explain it.”

He screwed up his nose at the image and then laughed. “Trust me, that’s a feeling I’m well acquainted with. Well, the getting-inside-you part. The husk part was fucking creepy, Granger.” But he softened his teasing with more kisses, smiling against her skin, then drew his hand up out of the water, showing her his fingertips. “I’m more of a prune than a husk, see?”

She swiped her tongue up along the length of his middle finger and then caught his wrist so she could kiss the pruny fingerprint.

Chapter End Notes

I hope everyone is okay 🙏

This is the worst (read: most heavily emotional) that this fic is going to get, I promise! But in my opinion, they both needed this level of intensity to kick things off. They hardly made any progress with the topics they need to discuss but the major hurdle (beginning to acknowledge what's between them) has been crossed and all future discussions will be better because of it.

I'll be out of town all next week but probably still tapping away on my phone writing this damn thing in all the little spaces in between my life, like usual, so probably not too long a wait for the next bit. We have some *very* fun smut that I am simultaneously bouncing on the balls of my feet and laughing maniacally about, and can't wait to share. I'm also loving the suggestions in the comments (you guys have inspired a thing or two 😄) so if there's something you'd love to see (smut or just life event), don't be shy 🙌

As always, thank you so much for reading!

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 29: “I thought we could make a list.”

Chapter Notes

Hello friends! I'd just like to calmly and very coolly flail in gratitude that this story broke 2k kudos 🥹🥹🥹 I still feel like a total imposter out here half the time so seeing that really made my day 💖 Thank you for reading!! Y'all make it fun to be here 😊

Without further ado: a list, a challenge, a letter, and an invitation 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

They settled back into the routine of rigorous academic schedules, grateful to share most of their classes as it meant that study sessions and schoolwork could be conducted jointly and therefore allowed them time together without falling behind. They were holed up in their usual spot in the library after dinner on a Tuesday, working on their Transfiguration assignments.

Draco sat back to shake out his hand when it had begun to cramp from a solid thirty minutes of writing. He looked to his left to see how Hermione was getting on and found her still dutifully scribbling away. He flexed his hand a few times and then pulled his book toward himself to review the second half of the chapter.

She glanced over at his motions and then heaved in a sigh and sat tall, stretching her spine. “Want a break?”

“Sure.” He turned halfway in his chair to face her. “How much more do you have left?”

She looked down. “Oh, I finished the essay a few minutes ago. I’m doing something else now.”

Of course she was. He snorted delicately in amusement and fondness.

“I’ve been thinking about the things we want to talk through together,” she began, tone hesitant. “And I have an idea for a way to approach it that might take some of the fraughtness out of it, if you’re in the mood to hear it?”

He nodded. “I’m all ears.”

She turned to face him, hands falling to her lap. “I thought we could make a list of the potential points of tension or things we’d like to say or discuss, and then we strategically pick which to talk through during our structured hour. That way, we both know what’s on the table and can make a choice, together, on which to tackle. Of course, the conversation may

organically shift to include more topics than we list or expand beyond what we pick on a given day, but I think that's something we can assess in the moment." She wrung her hands. "What do you think? Is that too...clinical and controlling?"

He had a sense that she considered both words to be negative but in this context, they were exactly what they needed.

"Yes, but I think it's brilliant."

She brightened. "Really? Okay, great! And I thought we could also make a list of *fun* things to do together, to strike a balance."

He lifted a brow at that. "Oh? What sorts of things?"

She smirked. "Now, now. Can't skip ahead to the fun bits."

He rather wanted to, though. He gestured to her quill.

"Well, shall we start the list now? Maybe just a few things in the serious discussion column and then, say, twenty things in the fun?" He waggled his eyebrows and she rolled her eyes.

"Fine, but let's make it a 2:1 ratio." She pulled a fresh sheet to the top and readied her quill. "Go on then. Give me two important or serious things you want to discuss and then one fun thing, and I'll do the same."

He didn't have to think; the important and serious topics between them didn't ever fully leave his mind. "I want to talk through you thinking I'd use that word still. And...*this*." He turned his left forearm face up. Even though the Dark Mark was hidden by his shirt and jumper, it still felt like it was staring right back up at him.

Hermione nodded, writing them down. He saw she'd cut right to the marrow, listing them simply as: *Mudblood*. *Dark Mark*. What a bizarre set of words to be written together.

"And your fun thing?" She prompted.

He didn't have to think hard about that either. "I want to tie you up."

Her eyes flicked up to his, a coy little smile teasing her lips as she looked back down, writing it in a second column. She cleared her throat.

"Right. I'd like to discuss money and family. And for my fun thing—"

"Wait," he interrupted, heart skipping a beat. "What do you mean by 'money' and 'family'?"

She looped the tail on the first Y as she explained, "I mean that we have very disparate financial situations and backgrounds and I apparently have some rather annoying feelings about that. And then I'm curious about your family. And...the ramifications for you of being with me." She finished writing and glanced over at him. "I can see you already have things to say, but let's not jump in just yet."

He nodded, pressing his lips together. He had *so* many things to say on those topics.

“And my fun thing...” She put her quill down and gave him her full attention. “I’ve been thinking about someone watching us.”

He chuckled. “Ah-ha. I *thought* you’d liked almost being caught by Pansy. So what, you want to take the knickers for another spin? And be even *less* subtle until we’re properly caught?”

She tilted her head side to side in a *so-so* gesture. “Well, yes, that. But what I actually meant is that they watch us on purpose. We ask them to.”

That got his brows up. “You want to invite someone into bed with us?”

“Not *into* bed,” she clarified. “I’m not sure I’ll ever be okay with someone else touching you like that – and I think that’s actually a *good* thing so I’m not trying to change that — no, I just meant them watching while we...do what we want.”

He observed the way that even talking about it in loose terms was bringing a flush to her skin.

“You always were such a show off. It’s killing you that you can’t be graded for how thoroughly you destroy me, isn’t it? Even though I reward you with O’s every time, it’s just not the same as an impartial rating of perfection.” He smirked and she scoffed at his obvious joke.

“*You reward me with O’s?* Merlin, you’re such an idiot.”

He pouted at that and she rolled his eyes, bemused. He grinned and then brought the topic back around.

“But this is intriguing, Granger. Do you have someone in mind?”

She toyed with the feathered end of her quill. “Not exactly. But I did come up with a basic criteria, so that we could decide who together.” Her eyes held a question and he gave her a little nod to proceed. “Well, they should be someone we trust, first and foremost. I don’t know about you, but the thought of a stranger watching us and then doing Merlin knows what with the knowledge afterward doesn’t appeal at all.”

He quite agreed and told her as much. She carried on.

“And then I think it ought to be someone who won’t mind being purely a watcher.”

“A voyeur,” Draco corrected. She noted it with a tilt of her head.

“Purely a *voyeur*. And then obviously it needs to be someone who won’t be awkward during. *Or* after.”

He leaned back in his chair, running the pads of his fingers over his lips as he considered it.

“Someone we trust,” he mused. “Who won’t be put out about not being physically included, and who wouldn’t be weird about it afterward...” He met her eye, mouth quirking up ruefully. “Yeah...I don’t know anyone who fits that criteria.”

She looked thoughtful. “What about Pansy? She’s already heavily involved in your sex life.”

He grimaced. “Don’t phrase it like that. And she definitely wouldn’t be happy being regaled to the sidelines if you’re involved.”

Hermione rolled her eyes but blushed. “If you say so, though I don’t personally get the sense from her that she wants me like that.”

Draco snorted dryly. “Okay, Granger. You tell yourself that.”

She ignored him. “Anyway, you’re probably right that she’s not a good choice. She’s obviously very into Luna and I don’t want to cause friction there.” She hummed to herself in thought. “I can’t imagine Ginny would be keen...she’s adventurous but that might be too far for our friendship. What about Theo?”

Draco laughed. “Sorry, you think *Theo* would be happy sitting out? And wouldn’t make things weird? Granger.” He chuckled again. “He’d be an utter nuisance.”

She smiled at that. “Fair enough.” She observed him for a moment, eyes discerning. “Theo aside, would you mind if it was another man?”

Assuming criteria one and two were heavily adhered to, he found he didn’t mind. Actually, the thought of another man seeing what he did to Hermione, how enamored she was with him, sent a little flicker of primal satisfaction through him. Despite his teasing to her earlier, he was a bit of a show-off himself. He liked it when he had something others wanted but weren’t able to have.

He corralled his smirk at that imagined future as best he could. “That wouldn’t bother me. Do you have someone in mind?”

He saw her hesitate for a split second, then nodded and said, “Neville.”

Draco hesitated, a little surprised by the suggestion, but then considered it. Longbottom was definitely trustworthy. He’d only known the man — properly — for a few months and even in that time, he’d seen it enacted again and again. He had a good demeanor, too: he wouldn’t be aggressive or demanding, probably wouldn’t step out of line. And he was a nice enough bloke to not be a bother afterward. Plus, as far as Draco knew, Longbottom was straight and had known Hermione for years, meaning there was a non-zero chance he’d lusted for her at least once, and that fulfilled Draco’s secret fourth criteria nicely as well.

“That’s interesting,” he said at last. “You think he’d be up for it?” He snorted at his own phrasing. “Mentally and emotionally, I mean.”

Hermione acknowledged the innuendo with a bemused shake of the head, then refocused. “I’m not *certain*, of course, but I think so. And if we’re going strictly by the criteria, he fits.”

“Hmm.” Draco appraised her. “You don’t think he wants to shag you?”

“Not everyone wants to shag me,” she tutted with a roll of her eyes. “But no, I don’t. I think Neville is neutral in that regard.”

“You’re lying to yourself again, but such is your right I suppose. I can get behind the idea that he’d be fine sitting on the sidelines though. He strikes me as...” He looked around like the words were hiding around the edges of the room. “An accommodating bloke. But not timid. You should have seen the hell he gave Snape and the Carrows. It probably would have actually been quite inspiring, had I been in any sort of headspace to be inspired.”

They hadn’t yet talked about that year, but Hermione acknowledged this small morsel with a soft look. He made himself not shy away from it. She acknowledged this by not drawing attention to it and he felt a pang of fondness for her.

“Yes, he *is* an excellent mix of the best qualities of both Gryffindor and Hufflepuff,” she said agreeably.

He nodded absently, considering the last piece to align on before agreeing. “What made you suggest him?” He didn’t get a sense she harbored secret feelings for Longbottom but it was probably responsible to assuage any sources of jealousy before they arose.

She shrugged. “The pool of eligible people is rather small and I’ve noticed that you two get on very well. The more thought I give it, actually, the more he seems to fit.”

“And you wouldn’t mind him seeing you...” Draco considered how to phrase it.

She raised a brow. “Naked? Desperate for you? Having an orgasm?”

He felt himself getting a little turned on by her frankness, and the images she’d painted. He raised a brow in agreement for her finishing of his question.

She smiled, a little coyly. “Draco, that’s the whole *point*.”

Jesus, she was something else. He shifted in his chair, trying to make space for the way his cock was swiftly crowding his trousers.

“Alright. Longbottom it is. So...how exactly do you plan on bringing this about?”

She tucked her hair behind an ear, picking up her quill now that the discussion had reached an agreement. “Well, I know him a bit better than you do so I was going to just ask him.”

Draco barked a laugh. “Right. Gryffindors.”

She shrugged. “We’ve been through a lot together. And he’s said no to me before so I’m not worried that he’ll feel obligated if he’s not keen.”

“By that statement, you think he *would* feel obligated to say yes if I asked him?”

She waved him off. “No, of course not. But he’d probably doubt the verity of the offer. If I ask him, he’ll know it’s real.”

“Because I do whatever you say.” He’d meant it as a dry statement but she nodded easily.

“Exactly.”

He scoffed but couldn’t exactly deny it. “When will you ask him?”

She glanced at him side-long. “Do you prefer sooner or later?”

He plucked the quill out of her hand and turned her to face him, one hand pulling her half off her chair by the waist, the other cupping her jaw. “You, witch, have made me rather insatiable for discovery. I’m not sure I’ll be able to think about anything else until we do it.”

She smiled, laughing under her breath at him. “I didn’t realize you’d be so eager.”

“When it comes to you and your sordid plans for us, I find I have no taste for delaying them.” He pressed a kiss to her cheek, and then the corner of her mouth. Her smile expanded under his lips, shifting them closer to center. He gave her a little peck but she pulled him back with a hand in his hair. He groaned at the force of it and the loss of her mouth.

“Soon, then,” she agreed. “But now that you mentioned it, it might be fun to *delay* until then.”

He caught her meaning instantly.

“Come on,” he complained. “He might agree but want to wait for the weekend.”

She made a sympathetic noise, full of faux-mockery. “Poor Draco. You can’t manage four days without it?”

Oh, two could play at that.

“Says you,” he returned, pulling out of her space and poking his tongue in his cheek with amusement. “You’re undeniably the more insatiable between the two of us.”

She scoffed at the accusation which made him laugh. Despite the fact that he was half-hard just from their discussion, he knew he had much more self-control than she did. “How about this, then: we don’t have sex — actually, neither of us is allowed to come by *any* method — until we have someone watching us. Hmm? What do you say to that.” He flicked a brow in challenge at her.

“Easy.” She picked up her quill again, dismissive.

“I’ll make sure it isn’t,” he promised quietly and delighted in the way her hand tensed around the implement.

She cleared her throat and pointedly ignored him, inking the quill and carrying on with her writing. He left her to it for a few minutes, pulling his own work back toward himself but

thoroughly distracted by all the ways he could make her eat her words. He forced himself to focus on Transfiguration but then noticed that she wasn't doing schoolwork either. Judging by the formatting, she was writing a letter. He frowned.

"Who're you writing to?"

"Theo." Her quill was unceasing, the parchment already long enough to curl.

"Oh." He went back to his work but then the implication of *that* penpal landed. He'd half forgotten their planned correspondence (and the purpose thereof) and couldn't help his automatic next question. "What're you asking him?"

She glanced up, her expression was knowing. "Why? Anything in particular I should ask? Or... *not* ask?"

He appreciated her offer but he'd been thinking offhandedly about all the possible acts Theo's knowledge could unlock for them and found himself curious about practically everything he'd been able to imagine. He cleared his throat, going for casual. "I'm open to...anything."

She raised a brow. "Oh? Interested in knocking out a few more firsts?"

Yeah. He really bloody was.

He maintained his air of nonchalance, inking his quill. "Something tells me I'll regret it if I don't."

"Mm." She went back to writing. "Something tells me you might be right. I've read that it can be an entirely different way to orgasm but of course I look forward to Theo's first person perspective."

He considered not requesting clarification, still not one hundred percent certain if she was referring to anal sex from just him to her or the other way around as well, but he knew he'd stew on it until he found out so blotted his quill and inquired, "And he'll know what you need to, erm, *acquire* in order to do it?"

She looked over properly at that, amused. "As someone who is *regularly* penetrated, I do actually know what's needed in order to be the *penetrator*. I've figured that bit out on my own."

Right then. So...buggery was definitely on offer.

He nodded to himself, rolling his bottom lip into his mouth and worrying it with his teeth. If the state of his cock was any sort of barometer for how he felt about the notion of her, Merlin, *penetrating him*, then, well...he rather regretted instigating an orgasm ban. He resisted palming himself and instead shifted again, trying to ease some of the pressure.

"I've never had anything...inside me before," he said, sure she already knew but wanting it stated plainly.

“My little virgin,” she cooed. He sent an unimpressed look her direction which only made her grin wider but then she sobered her expression. “We’ll take it at whatever pace you want, of course. We won’t do anything you’re not comfortable with or aren’t curious about.”

He heard what she hadn’t outright said but checked anyway. “And you’d be comfortable with whatever I wanted? You’re curious about it all?”

“I’ve been burdened with an unquenchable thirst for knowledge,” she said. “I’m curious about almost literally everything.”

“Yeah?”

“Yes.” She eyed him. “I don’t know if you know this, Draco, but you’re extremely fuckable.”

He laughed. “Is that so?”

She nodded, tone matter of fact. “It is. And I want you to feel everything you want, like you’ve done for me. I want to make you come like you never have before.”

Jesus. Fucking. *Christ*.

He shifted again and her eyes tracking the motion.

“Regretting your challenge yet?” She asked mildly.

He stilled. “No.”

“Really?” Her eyes flicked down again and then back to his, all wide-eyed innocence.

“Speaking of, we didn’t discuss the consequences of being *bad* and coming. Nor the reward for being good and waiting. I have some ideas, if you want to hear?”

He saw the trap but couldn’t help himself. “Yes.”

“Well.” She inspected her quill, dabbing at the tip with her cloth to wipe away a smear of ink. “If you’re bad and just can’t wait, then I’ll make you wait when the challenge is over. I’ve read about a sex act called ‘cock warming’ and it sounds rather fun. It’ll be good for me because I could still come on you if I wanted to, which sounds like a *wonderful* way to punish you for not having self-control.”

She flicked her gaze over to him, the edge of her mouth curling up when she saw his expression and the way he was not-so-subtly practically denting the table with his fingertips.

“And if you’re *good*,” she carried on, twirling her quill so it brushed against her lips. “Then I’ll suck your cock. Nice and slow. I’ll take my time with it, *really* make sure you enjoy yourself. And then when you can’t wait a moment longer, I’ll put my tongue just where you like it, right below the head? *Mmm*, you always get *so* hard when—”

She broke off laughing when he banged his forehead several times on his open textbook.

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Hermione cornered Neville the next day after Herbology. They'd been working on exsanguinating the Blutbusch that Professor Sprout had imported from Germany and both of them had the iron-rich sap all over their gloves to where they stretched halfway up their forearms. It had been messy, strenuous work to restrain and then milk the bush's phloem for the magically powerful blood-like sap and both she and Neville were slightly out of breath and a little sweaty. She'd never tell Draco, unwilling to give him the satisfaction of knowing just how insatiable she *actually* was, but she'd found herself getting inappropriately aroused by the activity, primal and physical as it has been.

It perhaps contributed to her eagerness to extend their invitation to Neville.

"Nev," she began when it was just them over the wash basin at the back of the greenhouse, the other four members of the advanced class having already departed. "Can I ask you something?"

He nodded, pushing his slightly sweaty hair back with the sleeve of his jumper, hands still encased in dirty gloves. "Of course. What is it?"

"It's an invitation." She considered the best way to phrase it. "Do you know what a voyeur is?"

Neville's brows went up. "Do I...? Uh, yeah. I do."

She brightened. "Oh! Great! That makes it easier then. The invitation is for you to be a voyeur to Draco and I." She waited expectantly, then realized she hadn't clarified, "We could agree ahead of time what we get up to, if there are things you're not keen on seeing."

Neville blinked, and then his brows came together. "Sorry, did you just ask if I want to watch you and Draco have sex?"

Perhaps *voyeur* wasn't isolated to viewing sex acts, if specification was needed. She made a note to check later but for now nodded.

"Oh. Yes. I'm sorry if that wasn't clear. And it wouldn't have to be *sex*, necessarily, but it could be, if you wanted."

"If *I* wanted?" Neville's frown deepened for a moment and then a look of understanding dawned. "*Ohh*," he said, drawing out the vowels as if he'd just put something together. "Oh, I see. Okay. Sure."

Her stomach surged with an excited flutter of anticipation and eager nerves. "Really? You will?"

Neville gave her a little smile as he peeled off the bloody gloves. They hit the bottom of the wash basin with a thwack, splattering sticky, dark red sap across the porcelain.

“I can’t say I’m not surprised at the offer but, yeah. That sounds like something I’d be into.”

“I thought you might.” She performed the nod she reserved for when she’d figured out the correct answer, following his example and tugging off her own gloves.

“Why’s that?” Neville grabbed the soap and nudged the tap on with the edge of his wrist, dipping the bar under to wet it and then rubbing it briskly to lather it up. He passed it to her next and she felt another surge of gratification at having been so right in his perfectness for their criteria. Even now, he was being so normal about it. Beyond the slight pinkness to his cheeks, it was as if they were discussing something wholly innocent.

“Lots of little reasons,” she said, “but mostly you’re just such an open, warm person.” She crinkled her nose, laughing at herself. “That seems like an odd reason to give for thinking you’d like to watch us.”

Neville chuckled, rinsing his hands and forearms under the spigot and then reaching for his wand to spell himself dry. “Nah, I think I get it.”

He held his wand up in an offering to dry her too. Normally she was hesitant to allow other’s magic on her (with the exception of Draco’s) but in an intentional showing of trust, she nodded and let him perform the drying spell.

“I have a private room, so I thought we could do it there,” she said as she followed Neville back to their work area to retrieve their bags.

He sent a glance back at her over his shoulder as they went. “Wait, do you mean you want to do it tonight?”

She shrugged. “If you’re free?”

He looked chagrined. “I’m actually not. And tomorrow I promised I’d help Pomon—I mean, Professor Sprout harvest Aconite. But maybe on Friday?”

She considered asking what his plans were for Thursday evening but restrained herself, lest she come across as overly desperate. She allowed herself a moment of frustration at the stupid challenge she and Draco had made, and then smiled up at Neville, picking up her bag.

“Friday sounds great. My room? After dinner?”

Neville inhaled slowly, eyes dropping for a moment to her mouth before he cleared his throat and glanced back up. He smiled again when he met her eyes, friendly and a little pleased.

“Can’t wait.”

Hiiiiii Nev 🤔 Did anyone suspect he may be involved in their Lingering Curiosities?

Next chapter features their Friday night and I have 100% made myself blush while writing it (which literally never happens 🙈). It's a fun one!

I also had fun writing my first ever Dreomione piece this weekend. It's a short little one shot [here](#) if you're interested.

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 30: “I bet that feels good,” Neville mused.

### Chapter Notes

Look. I don't want to talk about the fact that this chapter somehow became ~9,000 words, making it my longest chapter across any of my works 😊💀...my only excuses are that I love Neville and I love DHr and my desire to self-censor is practically zero at this point 😬 (Is anyone surprised? I think not).

Also hi chapter 30...I see you.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione found Draco in the general common room, the typical place they met up on the rare days they had a break between classes. Even though he slept in her room each night and she'd given him the password to unlock her door, he had yet to broach her space without her there. It was sweet of him, thoughtful, if not wholly unnecessary.

She went over to where he was sitting at one of the tables, his books and notes spread out around him. The common room was otherwise vacant, their peers either stuck in double-periods, stuffing their brains in the library, or sunning themselves in the courtyard.

“Hello,” she said and he looked up, a smile instantly curling the corners of his lips.

“Hi, Granger.” He put down his quill and sat back, angling himself toward her as she leaned a hip against the table by his chair. “You look pleased about something.”

“I spoke to Neville,” she informed him, too excited to delay.

“Did you.” He lifted a brow and then reached out to pull her onto his lap sideways. “And?”

“And you’re officially not getting laid until Friday evening.” She bit her lip to temper her grin.

“Fuck.” Draco sighed. “God, I bet you’re so wet over it, too. And now I can’t do anything about it.”

“That’s right.” She combed her fingers through his hair. “You’re not allowed.”

He smacked a quick spank to her arse and she yelped, heat surging. “Neither are you,” he reminded her lowly.

“Not fair,” she complained.

“Did we specify fairness?” he asked mildly. His free hand coasted over her breasts, fingers wrapping around the knot of her school tie. “This is crooked,” he admonished, tugging gently on it. “Want me to fix it for you? We can’t have the Head Girl with an untidy uniform, can we?”

She wanted him to make her even more untidy, her body still thrumming with residual energy from her talk with Neville and Draco’s playful swat and, more than anything, knowing it would be breaking a rule.

Rather than letting him win, she turned on his lap to face the table, pressing her arse into his groin as she leaned forward under the guise of inspecting his work. She hummed an interested sound and shifted her hips, pretending to read but rather distracted by the increasingly-prominent erection under her. He closed his hands around her hips, his fingertips almost touching across her stomach as he pulled her back against him, shifting his thighs apart slightly to make space.

She tutted, tapping his parchment. “This isn’t quite right,” she told him in her swottiest voice. “The moon has to be a *waning* gibbous. You wrote waxing.”

“Don’t correct my schoolwork,” he groaned, trying to get her to grind back against him again. She kept her weight heavy on him, resisting, even as she bit her lip in her small victory.

“Goddamnit. You’re gonna edge me for three fucking days, aren’t you?” He sighed forlornly. “Longbottom will think I’m useless in bed for how fast I’ll be coming.”

She snorted. “Worried what Neville thinks about your sexual prowess? How intriguing.”

He slid his hands up to cup her breasts in retaliation, kneading them with an intensity that had her mouth popping open. Her hips rocked, unbidden, and he huffed a little laugh.

“You need to get off my lap,” he said, squeezing her once more and then finding her nipples through her jumper, blouse, and bra with a precision that worked to destroy her, doubly so when he stroked over them repeatedly with his thumbs. “*God*, you need to get off.”

“Yeah, I do,” she agreed breathily, speaking to the double entendre. “Why’d you make such a stupid challenge?”

“You agreed to it.” He finally dropped his hands back to her hips, squeezing her there instead. It wasn’t any less sexy.

“I can’t help myself,” she whined. “I’m a Gryffindor.”

“You’re a cocktease.”

She panted a breath as the accusation soaked her.



That was evidently the last straw for him because he pushed her up off him forcefully until she was standing, her balance off-kilter enough that she had to catch herself with her hands on the table in front of her. He stayed seated behind her, hands moving from her waist to her legs to slide up the back of her thighs and under her skirt.

“Draco,” she gasped, a plea and a warning wrapped into one breathy sound.

His hands continued up until he was palming her arse, kneading it like he had her breasts. She seriously considered letting him get her off even if it meant losing the challenge but then he was drawing away, straightening her skirt and running his fingers down her legs to her calves. He fixed one of her knee socks, tugging it up and then smoothing a hand over where it met her bare skin. Her legs wobbled.

“I hope you appreciate my self-control right now, Granger,” he told her, voice strained. “Because when this is over, I’m going to fuck you over a desk, just like this.”

She straightened and turned, propping her bum against the edge of the table because, frankly, she needed the support. “When this is over, I’ll be sitting on your cock, doing whatever I want while you have to be good and wait,” she taunted, eyes dropping to his obvious erection.

He crossed his arms over his chest, pointedly not touching himself. “We’ll see about that.”

She nodded with faux-seriousness. “Yes, we will.”

He snorted and shook his head. “I know you’ll do anything to win. Should I sleep in my own bed for the rest of the week, to avoid temptation?”

She pouted at that. “No. I’ll miss you.”

His mouth curled up at that, the smile fond. “Yeah, I’d miss you too. Do we need to set rules of engagement?”

She rolled her eyes. “I’ll behave.”

His smile went sly. “You’re only half of the problem.”

~~~

By the time Friday morning dawned, Hermione felt ready to explode. It was idiotic how much of her brain was devoted between her legs but Draco had done nothing but subtly, at times almost inadvertently, increase her libido until she was practically vibrating with horniness.

Every class they shared together had been an opportunity for him to turn her on, with stupidly innocuous things like when he’d caught her eye while he took notes, his handwriting perfect

and unfaltering even as he sent her a wink.

Or when he'd solved Arithmancy problems at the chalkboard, one hand in his trouser pocket while the other had scribbled numbers and symbols with a confidence that'd had her crossing her legs tightly.

Or when he'd adjusted himself over his trousers across the Charms classroom, the act for her eyes only, and her brain had been filled with a low buzzing sound for a solid two minutes thereafter, to the point she'd had to ask Professor Flitwick to repeat himself when he'd asked her a direct question.

Just the barest shred of his attention, any tiny glimpse into what he might have been thinking about, sent heat furling through her. Every time his gaze dropped to her lips, or her tits, or especially when she'd turned to face him only to find his eyes flicking back up from where he'd evidently been admiring her arse, set her on fire.

Sharing a bed with him had been a mistake on both their parts, but no more so than on Friday morning when she woken up with his cock, lovely and thick, pressed right between her legs. Grinding back on him was pure instinct and when he, still half-asleep, responded by pressing her onto her stomach and rolling on top of her, she almost gave in and begged him to fuck her. Her harshly panted exhale woke him fully, only to find himself suspended over her and grinding his erection between her cheeks.

“Oh fuck.” He pressed a little more forcefully against her and then hissed in a breath and reared back, flopping over beside her and scrubbing his face with his hands. “Fucking shitting Merlin and all the Four fucking Founders, *goddamnit*.”

She laughed, exhilarated and a little wild, at his ardor. “Yeah. That about sums it up.”

He groaned, long and low. “Thank god it’s Friday. Remind me never to challenge you again.”

“There’s still time to lose,” she reminded him. “Neville isn’t coming by until after dinner tonight.”

“You want me to break, don’t you?” He said it matter of factly. “You like torturing me.”

She barked a laugh. “Oh, Draco. If I truly wanted you to break, I could do it in five seconds flat.”

He scoffed.

“Oh *really*?” She tilted her head to look at him, incredulous. “You think I couldn’t?”

“I think you underestimate my self-control,” he said smugly.

She kicked the covers down instantly, tugging her sleep shorts off without any hesitation and then spreading her legs, dropping a hand down between them. She let her hips twitch up to meet her hand as she petted a soft touch over her bare cunt, not restraining her little breathy squeak at the feeling.

“Fuck, Draco,” she moaned, making it extra throaty and needy for him. “Ohh I need you so badly.”

He rolled to his side, going up on an elbow and bracing his other hand on the bed beside her far shoulder. He loomed over her but instead of an expression of pained desire, she found his face full of victory.

“You’re nothing if not predictable,” he told her lowly. “I knew you’d put on a show for me. Go on then. Make me break, Granger.”

She canted her hips upward, stubbornly, and let her two middle fingers press inside. She squeaked again, for real this time, and his smirk spread.

“Uh oh,” he purred. “Now who’s going to break?”

She attempted to roll her eyes but his tone had cracked her lust on, and heat and light were now coursing through her. She ground the heel of her palm against her clit without thought and then had to do it again. And again.

"It's so hard to stop, isn't it? Feels *so* good, doesn't it?"

Her cheeks burned, her fingers moving without conscious thought, driving her higher and higher. His eyes raked down her body and his thick swallow made her cunt spasm. *Shit shit shit*. She needed to stop before it went past the point of no return. But then his eyes were back on hers and the lift of his brow, daring her, kept her hand moving, her palm rubbing against her clit in a way that was making her radiate heat.

“Mmhmm. Look at you. You’ve been strung so *fucking* tight and that needy little cunt needs to come. Isn’t that right?”

“Shut up,” she gasped desperately. “Fuck, shut up.”

His smile was purely wicked. “Make yourself come for me and I’ll let you suck my cock.”

She sucked in a breath and forced herself to stop, her fingers buried as her walls throbbed around them. She was so close – both to having what promised to be a truly exquisite orgasm and to winning the challenge – and for a moment she warred with which she wanted more. Victory, she decided, would taste all the sweeter.

She pulled her fingers out and panted, glaring up at him. He flicked a brow in acknowledgement of her decision and that cockiness had her bringing her fingers up to his mouth. He snagged her wrist instantly, pinning it to the bed.

“Now, *that* would break me,” he told her, exhaling hard.

Her heart was pounding, the sensation of it heavy in her core and her chest. He took a measured breath and then levered himself off of her, running a hand down his face and then up through his hair. His pajama bottoms were tented dramatically; she forced herself to look away.

“This is a masterclass in delayed gratification.” He chuckled to himself. “Fucking Christ. I’m not sure I can even take a shower right now without...fucking hell.”

She covered her face with her hands and whimpered.

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Thankfully, Friday classes kept them busy and mostly separated. By dinnertime, they’d only seen each other for a handful of minutes and Hermione had been resolute in her desire to see the challenge through to the end. If nothing else, it would cut through any nerves that having someone else in the room with them might inspire.

Neville was as relaxed as ever when they sat down across from him at the Ravenclaw table, offering them each a little smile before turning back to Luna. Draco stroked a hand down her spine, affectionate and comforting rather than with the intent to arouse, and she let herself slacken under his touch.

Neville finished his meal first but stayed at the table, still engrossed in his conversation with Luna, even after Hermione and Draco stood. He acknowledged their departure with another little smile and she confirmed the non-verbal check in she’d seen in his eyes with a nod. He inclined his head and reached to take a sip of his water.

Draco led her out of the Great Hall and up to her room, pulling her close once they were tucked safely behind her door.

“Congratulations,” he told her. “Victory is imminent.”

She swatted his shoulder playfully. “Don’t tempt me. There’s still time before he gets here to make you lose.”

He snorted delicately, leaning down to kiss her. She got a little lost in it so that when a soft knock sounded against her door, she startled.

“Oh!” She looked up, a final check that he was still onboard.

He smirked and gestured her forward with his chin. “Go on then.”

She pecked a chaste kiss to his mouth and then went over to her door, pulling it open to reveal Neville, standing with hands in his pockets.

“Hello.” Neville pulled a hand out to offer her a little wave along with his smile. “Still expecting me?”

She returned his smile at the unassuming question. Nerves fizzled through her but they were anticipatory, excited, so she stepped aside. “Yes. Come in.”

He walked in, nodding to Draco in greeting and then looking around her room as she shut and locked the door. “Nice room. I should have accepted Head Boy after all.”

He winked at her and she laughed, knowing full well McGonagall hadn’t offered it to him. He rocked back on his heels, looking between her and Draco, and she acknowledged the slightly nervous gesture with a need to take the lead and set the tone.

She flicked her wand at the armchair beside her little study area and levitated it over beside the bed, adjusting its location a few times until it felt right: not too close that he’d feel awkwardly on top of them but still near enough that there would be no forgetting about his presence. Hermione gave it a final assessment and then gestured toward it.

“How’s that?”

Neville moseyed over, running a hand along the backrest and then sitting down, stretching his legs out so his shoes touched the edge of her bed frame, then pulling them back. “Comfy.”

She rolled her eyes at his blasé comment, though his easy demeanor was relaxing her. Draco cleared his throat, drawing her and Neville’s attention.

“Any limits to what you’re willing to see?” he asked Neville. Hermione put her wand aside, appreciating the question.

Neville considered this for a moment and then shook his head. “Can’t think of any. Maybe if you intend to get rough with her, warn me first. I don’t mind it but after...” He sucked a canine, meeting Draco’s eye meaningfully. “I prefer to know both parties are into it. Beforehand.”

Draco nodded seriously. “I won’t be rough with her.”

Hermione wondered what had gone unsaid between them, and furthermore that Draco hadn’t taken offense at it. She tried not to think about how Hogwarts might have been with the Carrows wandering the halls — and Merlin knew how many other Death Eaters — confident in their authority and the way the tides had turned, so sure that any sins they committed wouldn’t be tallied against them. She left it alone for now and met Neville’s eye.

“Draco and I are very honest with one another,” she told him. “He knows what I like and I’m fully consenting to everything he does to me.”

Neville nodded. “Okay. Thanks. Any limits for me?”

“You won’t touch her,” Draco said firmly. “Or me, either, but especially not her.”

Neville held up his hands placatingly. “Not a problem. Just happy to be included.” He grinned.

“Neville,” Hermione sighed and he laughed softly.

“I’m just keeping things light, Hermione. I promise to be good and stay in my chair.”

“Thank you.” She glanced at Draco. He nodded so she turned back to Neville. “That’s not to say you need to pretend you aren’t here though. You can, erm...*interact*. Just...from the chair.”

Neville glanced at Draco, then back to her, his expression touched with that same look of understanding he’d had in the greenhouse. “By *interact*, do you mean you’d like me to direct you?”

She felt her cheeks warm a little at having been so easily read. Swotty little Hermione Granger, always wanting an assignment so that she could be given a gold star on it.

But...yes...that was what she wanted. To an extent.

“Sort of. We’ll do what we want but you’re welcome to make suggestions. We might not do what you say but the point is knowing that you’re here...” She trailed off.

“Watching.” Neville supplied, leaning back and propping an ankle on his opposite knee. He looked so relaxed, expression open and unbothered, that Hermione wondered if he really knew what he was getting himself into. Or...had he done this before?

“Right. Watching.” She cocked her head. “Ever watched before?”

“Not like this.” Neville looked between them. “But I’ve been privy to some unconventional sex, yeah.”

Hermione raised her brows. “Unconventional? Like what?”

Neville drummed his fingers on his shoe. “Erm, got caught in the Forest during Centaur mating season once. *That* was educational. I had to hide up in a tree for hours but they were really nice about it after, even invited me back to witness the foaling if I wanted to. And then there was an incident in the Forest harvesting *Cupido gemmas* that ended up with me, Hannah, and Susan needing to, uh...” He drummed his fingers again. “Release some tension.”

Draco snorted. “Remind me not to wander in the Forest with you.”

Neville laughed self-deprecatingly. “Probably wise.”

Hermione was bursting with questions about the mating ritual of Centaurs — they were usually such private creatures, insular even between herds, that proper firsthand knowledge of the process would be invaluable and surely fascinating — and about the *Cupido gemmas* experience. The plant was difficult to locate and was the inspiration behind many commonplace lust potions, though none had ever fully captured the nuances of the original *desire buds*.

But she saved her questions for later and gave Neville a little nod. “Good. I just wanted to make sure you weren’t going to freak out if I started taking off my clothes.”

His eyes flicked down her body before he caught himself and cleared his throat, again glancing to Draco. “I won’t freak out. It might inspire something else but I’ll behave myself.”

“Yes, you will,” Draco agreed.

His hands slipped around Hermione’s waist to start undoing the buttons of her white school shirt and Hermione’s focus zeroed in on the action just as quickly as Neville’s eyes did. Well then. No reason to delay any further. Draco got her shirt halfway open and then turned her to face him before he finished the last of the buttons.

“You still sure?” he murmured, fingers skimming up the skin he’d revealed and ending on the soft fabric of her bra.

“Yes,” she said, tilting her face up to his. “You?”

He smirked. “Yeah.”

He dipped down to kiss her, a firm press that he softened with a little flick of his tongue, capturing her bottom lip between his. For a moment, she was very aware of Neville sitting to the side, seeing them kiss and knowing where the kisses would be leading. It sent a tingle of electricity through her and she vented it into the kiss, sucking lightly on Draco’s lip and then easing her tongue into his mouth. He pressed his mouth harder against hers in response and then broke away to drop kisses across her cheek and to her neck. His hands cupped her, kneading her breasts gently and then stroking over her nipples. Hermione squirmed on her feet, a little gasp escaping her.

“Sensitive?” Neville’s voice was soft but the renewed awareness of his presence shot through Hermione as if he’d shouted the word. It sent a shiver through her and the wave of goosebumps tightened her nipples even further.

“Yes,” she breathed as Draco repeated the touch, his eyes rising to meet hers. “He hasn’t touched me properly for days.”

The corner of Draco’s mouth lifted in a tiny smirk and he murmured, “Poor little Granger.”

She had to bite her lip rather forcefully to contain her moan that look pulled from her, but then he dipped his thumb under her bra to swipe against her nipple directly and she couldn’t hold the sound a second time.

“You’re gonna come quick, aren’t you?” He whispered, squeezing his thumb and forefinger around the bud in delicious little pulses. “Will I even need to touch your clit?”

She grappled for a reason not to let him make her come right that very second and thankfully was given one by their friend in the chair.

“Why was he so withholding?” Neville inquired.

“He wants a blowjob,” Hermione replied, the statement solidifying the idea she’d felt flittering around her mind.

“And not touching you is the way to get one?” Neville sounded doubtful. “I’ve seen you with those Sugar Quills, Hermione. I’m betting it’s no great hardship for you, is it?”

“See,” Draco murmured with an arched brow. “He wants to shag you.”

She tutted at him, then told Neville. “He made a stupid bet but managed to succeed, so that’s his reward.”

“Ah. And did *you* succeed?”

Hermione huffed at Draco’s victorious expression and his smug response of: “Barely.”

Neville chuckled at their interaction. “So what’s your reward then?”

Draco cocked his head. “You never did specify, did you? Well, what’ll it be, Granger?”

“Neville’s right,” she said sweetly, “Getting to suck your cock isn’t exactly a *punishment*.”

She delighted in the way his jaw tightened, eyes going flinty and dark at the way she’d phrased it. The challenge was over, technically, but she sensed there was still a tension between them to see who would properly let go first. She was determined that it would be him.

She ran her hands down his chest to his belt, holding his eyes as she loosened it. “What do you say, Draco? Can I?”

His nostrils flared on his next inhale and she watched the moment he finally gave her the win. His expression softened and he exhaled slowly. “Yeah.”

His hands began working his shirt open, eyes flicking once to Neville and then back to her. She wondered if he felt self-conscious at all, to be doing this in front of someone else. She kept her motions slow, just in case he needed time to acclimate to it, waiting until he’d tossed his shirt aside before she worked her hands under his trousers to push them down. He stepped out and then tugged her backward to the bed. He sat on the edge and pulled her between his thighs.

“Shirt on or off?” he asked her, expression steady. She combed her fingers through his hair, feeling so safe with him. So protected. It empowered her.

“Off.”

He pushed it over her shoulders and she worked it the rest of the way down, tossing it aside. Draco ran warm palms up her back and toyed with the clasp of her bra, raising a questioning eyebrow at her. She nodded and he divested her of that garment as well.

“Missed these,” he murmured, hands replacing her bra instantly and giving her breasts a few good squeezes before leaning forward to flick his tongue across a nipple. Her whole body shuddered.

“Will I even need to touch your cunt?” he asked, mouthing over to her other nipple and suckling on it.



If there was ever an instance where she might come just from nipple stimulation, surely it was this one. She couldn't decide if it would embarrass her to come practically untouched in front of Neville, or if the thought alone was ramping up the possibility of it happening.

But, no. No, Draco would be coming first.

She nudged his shoulders with her hands, indicating how she wanted him. He obliged her, scooting backward until he was lying on her bed, legs spread just enough to give her space to kneel between them. She filled the space instantly, fingers curling under the waistband of his briefs. She met his eye, another quick check, and he nodded right away. She bit her lip at his enthusiasm and tugged his briefs down. His cock sprung free as soon as the fabric was out of the way and her first thought was that she'd missed it. She pressed her lips together, amused at herself, and stroked her fist firmly down his shaft. She bent forward and followed her fist with her mouth, endeavoring to show him just how much she'd missed him. His hand dropped to her head with a harsh exhale as she took him as far as she could.

Neville made a sound of surprised interest. "Merlin, she took more than I expected. Can you feel her throat around you?"

Draco's hand tightened in her hair and for a moment she thought he wasn't going to respond but then he inhaled a quick breath. "Yeah. I can."

Hermione stretched her tongue long and felt immensely proud when she managed to flick it against the top of Draco's sac. He groaned lowly and Neville hummed again.

"I bet that feels good," Neville mused. "You're lucky, Malfoy. I've never had anyone able to get that far on me."

"No one ever tried or was...was that a humble brag, Longbottom." Draco seemed more confident now, Neville's tone exactly right for coaxing him out of any shyness about being observed.

Neville laughed softly. "Ah now, that'd be telling. And anyway, I was under the impression my cock was banned."

Hermione instinctively swallowed and Draco sucked in a harsh breath. "*Christ*, Hermione."

"D'you just let her do whatever she wants?" There was no mockery in the question and when Hermione cut her eyes sideways to him, she saw that Neville had leaned forward to rest his elbows on his thighs, watching them with curiosity.

"Usually," Draco bit out as Hermione slowly drew off, working her tongue along the underside as she went. She suckled on the head of his cock for good measure and his hips rocked under her.

"Huh." Neville sounded thoughtful. "But I bet the reverse isn't true. Is it, Hermione?"

She licked a slow line up the path of his frenulum and across his slit with a pointed tongue, flicking the end as she drew away. "Nope," she agreed, eyes on Draco. "Not always,

anyway.”

His eyes were half-lidded already, mouth parted and an arm tucked behind his head so he could watch her. He didn't look at all bothered that he was lying naked on her bed, his cock currently being sucked with quite a bit of enthusiasm, while Neville watched. She wondered if he was just tolerating it or if he *liked* it. He'd always been a bit of a peacock.

She kept her fist moving steadily over his cock and in her periphery, she saw Neville sit back. She looked over to see how he was doing and her eyes snagged on a rather obvious bulge in his trousers. Her gaze flicked up to his, half surprised to see him aroused, and then back down when he brought his hand over to squeeze himself. Knowing that she was eliciting a physical response from him filled her with a warming sense of pride. She knew she aroused Draco but it was nice to have the validation that he wasn't the only one. Not that she wanted anyone else, of course, but it was electric to feel desired.

Neville noticed her attention on his squeezing hand and moved it away to rest on his thigh instead. “Sorry,” he said sheepishly.

Hermione glanced up at Draco, a question in her gaze. They'd loosely discussed the idea of their voyeur showing them their *appreciation* in that way and had decided to play it by ear, both not wanting to pre-judge the dynamic and also not knowing what Neville would be comfortable with. But now, Hermione found herself rather aroused at the idea of making two men weak for her.

“Whatever you want.” Draco ran his hands through his hair and she watched a fist tighten in the silky blonde strands. He was getting close. “Fuck, whatever you want, baby.”

She bent forward and sucked on his cockhead in reward for that deference and he groaned, his fist tightening in his own hair again. She drew back but kept her hand working him over.

“You can, if you want,” she offered Neville, glancing meaningfully to his lap and then back up to his eyes.

Neville raised his brows. “I can...? Just be clear...are you giving me permission to touch myself?”

She bit her lip and nodded. “Yes.”

Neville's eyes flicked to Draco, perhaps confirming that he wasn't about to be hexed to kingdom come for pulling his cock out in front of Hermione. Whatever he saw on Draco's face set his hands moving to his belt. She tore her eyes away to catch whatever it had been but Draco was looking up at the ceiling again, face calm if not a little more flushed than before.

Fuck, he was so cute.

She gave him a few affectionate swirls of her tongue, stroking up along the underside of his cock from root to tip and then kissing the head. He exhaled with forced control, hand coming down to pet over her curls.

She heard the sound of Neville's zip and then the soft rustle of fabric, but couldn't turn to look with the way Draco was holding her head. She let her curiosity simmer for now and worked her mouth over him as she listened to the low groan from the armchair as Neville, presumably, paid some direct attention to his own cock.

She saw Draco's head turn in Neville's direction and then return back center to snort an incredulous sound to the ceiling. "A *very* humble brag then. Jesus, Longbottom."

Neville's laughter was gracious. "Ta, Malfoy. That's nice of you."

"Don't look at it, baby," Draco muttered. "Fuck, I should have guessed he'd be big, what with how fucking egoless he's always is. So damn self-assured even when—"

She shut up his (rather adorable) babbling with another firm suck around the crown of his cock then released him with a pop. "Hush. You're more than enough for me."

"She's right, Malfoy," offered Neville kindly. "You're nothing to complain about. And she's just a little thing anyway."

"God, don't remind me," Draco groaned, hand tightening in her hair. She sucked him deeply and reached down to tug gently on his balls. They were high and tight, ready to flood his cock with come. She hummed a pleased sound around his cock and his hips lifted, pushing his cock so deep her lips brushed his pelvis.

"Shit, Hermione." Neville sounded awed.

She flushed with pride. All jokes aside, Draco had been right about how validating it was to have her skill acknowledged by someone not currently under its thrall. She swallowed around Draco's cock, eyes watering, and his abs spasmed.

"You close?" Neville asked.

"Yeah." Draco's voice was taut, ragged.

She was just preparing to swallow him down deeply, sure it would be his end, when Neville spoke.

"Don't let him come yet, Hermione. Give him a little payback for it all, yeah?"

"Fucking...shut up, Longbottom," Draco panted. "Don't listen... *fuck*, no—don't stop, oh god, please don't stop."

But Hermione pulled back despite his whimpered pleas, catching her breath and watching his cock throb at the orgasm denied. The suggestion had been so strangely vindictive that she couldn't help glancing over at Neville, but he was watching them with that same warm expression as ever, if not with a slightly heavier breath.

"I like that he pretends not to love it," he remarked lightly when he noticed her attention. Draco groaned and covered his face with his hands as Hermione breathed a laugh. It seemed they'd picked extremely well when it came to inviting Neville in.

“Oh, I know just how much he likes it. Don’t I, Draco?” She stroked his cock slowly, hand loose enough to not offer him any real friction.

“Fuck.” He tried to thrust up into her hand. “Yes.”

“Put your mouth back on him.” Neville was pink cheeked but his voice still held that low, steady tone. “I want to hear him beg you for it again.”

“Fuck you, Longbottom.” Draco grit out.

Neville chuckled. “No thanks. You’re pretty, but missing the key part for me, I’m afraid.”

Draco barked a breathless laugh, the humor of which slid into desperation when she heeded Neville and swirled her tongue wetly around the tip of his cock, intent to hear him beg again. “Oh god, baby. That tongue. *Fuck.*”

She took him deep and held him there, swallowing again even though she was almost out of air, and he choked on a groan. Satisfied, she drew off and dragged in a heaving breath, saliva stinging between her mouth and his shaft. She considered swiping it away but it was such an evocative way to still be connected to him that she couldn’t bear to sever it.

“Where will you let him come?”

She kept her eyes on Draco, a little enthralled by the color high on his cheeks and the way his hair was mussed from where he’d been running his hands through it. “Wherever he wants.”

It was an answer to one man and a question to the other.

“On your tongue,” Draco said. “Just like you said.”

She recalled her scenario for if he managed to be good, and smiled. She held his eyes as she lowered her mouth back down, circling the crown and then lapping her tongue lazily down the shaft. She had to break their eye contact in order to get him into her mouth, filling herself with him as far as she could and then doing it again, and again, and again.

She swirled her tongue around the ridge and then fluttered it along his frenulum and he swore under his breath. She went in for the kill, tilting her head so she could suck that tight band of skin into her mouth, flicking her tongue across it within the vacuum of her mouth. His cock throbbed and he groaned from deep in his chest, his thighs flexing under her hand.

“C-coming,” he warned and she swept her tongue along him, rotating back up so she could suck him down deep. He came in several long pulses, flooding her mouth. She swallowed on reflex but then made herself hold off, filling her mouth with it instead. She worked her fist along his shaft, moving with the small flexes of his hips as his body instinctively fucked upward.

She drew off when he settled down, sitting up on her knees between his thighs and then showing him her tongue and the cum she’d collected on it.

He was breathing hard but sucked in a harsh inhale when some of his cum dripped off her tongue to streak down a breast. He sat up in a smooth curl and licked up the mess without hesitation, working his way up her neck with open-mouthed kisses until they were nose to nose.

“Swallow,” he told her lowly and she closed her mouth to obey, opening it again to show him that she had.

He kissed her, sweeping his tongue into her mouth and tangling it with hers, hands greedy for her breasts and waist and hips. He broke their kiss and had hardly taken a full breath before his hands were twisting her so her back was against his chest, turning them both until they were facing Neville. She knew she probably looked a mess, lips swollen and spit-slicked, cheeks flushed, hair unruly. But Neville was looking at her like she was an idol and he was a second away from dropping to his knees in supplication. That look breathed fresh life into her arousal, fanning the flames that already felt incendiary.

The motion of his hand caught her eye and her gaze dropped to his lap. She’d only ever seen Draco’s cock before this, the pictures in her scientific textbooks hardly counting what with the way two dimensions obfuscated the effect of a real, live cock, but even with that limited experience, she knew right away that Neville was...on the outer edge of the bell curve. He was a tall and broad man, his pudgy-ness from childhood having been redistributed rather well, and it appeared the rest of him was suitably proportional.

She let herself watch as he stroked himself, his hand coasting up his length in a way that seemed to be pacing himself and not that he was actively seeking for the end. Just for a scant second, she let herself imagine what it might be like to sink down on him, how tight the stretch would be; let herself wonder if he’d even be able to fit. He seemed to read her thoughts, or at least understood their general theme, because when she finally raised her gaze back up, his smile was knowing.

“You suck cock like a goddess,” he told her. “I bet you fuck like one too.”

She made an embarrassing sound at that, like a wild animal caught in a snare, her cunt holding tight for a moment before fluttering around nothing, so *so* empty.

“Shit, Longbottom. I’ve never heard her make that sound before.” Draco’s hands slid up to cup her breasts again. “I’d be furious if it wasn’t so fucking hot.”

“You have nothing to be cross about,” Neville returned, voice a little strained but still bemused. “If anything, this is going to make me hate you a little bit. Knowing you get to have her.”

Draco chuckled, the sound deeply pleased. “*Good.*”

Draco tugged her skirt up and spread her legs over his, tangling his calves around hers to keep her bared. Neville let out a slow breath, eyes raking slowly down from her breasts to where Draco was tugging her knickers to the side. Hermione flushed white hot at the masculine sounds that filled the room as she was bared: Neville’s a needy whine, Draco’s a low hum of satisfaction.

“Wet.” He murmured in her ear. “Little slut.”

Draco traced a light circle over her clit with the tip of his middle finger and she dropped her head back against his shoulder at the pulse of pleasure. She felt Draco head tilt up to look across at Neville.

“Tell her how good she looks,” Draco told him. “Tell her how sexy she is.”

“You’re gorgeous,” Neville’s eyes were on Draco’s hand between her legs but flicked up to meet hers. “You look so sweet. I want to taste you. But he won’t let me, will he?”

“No.” Draco’s voice was firm but amused. “She’s not yours to touch.”

“That’s fine. Looking is plenty.” Neville’s eyes trailed back down. “Fuck, Hermione. *Look* at you.”

She squirmed against Draco and he sank two fingers deep, the sound obscene with how wet she’d gotten. Neville laughed a pained sound, hips shifting forward.

“*Listen* to you. Oh, Circe, you’re making me sweat.” He licked his lips. “Tell me how she feels?”

“No.” Draco curled his fingers, increasing her awareness of them inside her and making her feel even more full. “You’ll never know.”

Inexplicably, that made Neville groan, his fist bobbing over his length with increasing vigor. “Oh Godric.”

He panted to the ceiling for a moment and then looked back at Hermione, eyes soaking in her breasts before zeroing in on where Draco was rocking his palm against her clit, fingers buried deep. She watched his jaw tense, and then slacken.

“Last chance to...to change your minds,” he panted. “Or else I’m going to come.”

“Don’t let it touch her,” Draco warned but brought his free hand up to squeeze her breast.

Neville’s gaze jumped from her cunt to her breast and she watched his eyelids drop to half mast. Draco thumbed lightly at her nipple and then plucked it firmly. The bolt of sensation made her squeal and then gasp, and that was the last straw for Neville. He came with a soft gasp, head tilting back to expose the lines of his neck, his cock sending pulses of cum across his shirt and then the back of his hand.

“Look at that, baby,” Draco murmured in her ear. “You made him come just from watching you.”

She whimpered and rocked her hips, sinking his fingers deeper as she watched Neville’s Adam’s apple strain through the taut skin of his throat. She could feel Draco’s cool exhale against her skin; imagined his nostrils flaring as he watched another man come at the sight of her.

It was her undoing.

She arched against him, moaning long and low as her walls hugged Draco's fingers, the crest of her orgasm rising fast. Across from her, Neville made a low groan of satisfaction and then slumped in the chair, giving himself a final squeeze. She met his eye half on accident but it was just enough connection for her to gasp out a staccato little breath.

"You gonna come?" Neville asked softly, catching his breath.

"Yes," Draco answered for her. Ever since he'd turned her to face Neville, he'd spoken for her. Kept himself firmly the way of any direct connection between them, and that subtle staking of his claim made her weak for him. "She's right there. Just barely holding on, aren't you baby?"

She moaned in the affirmative, almost trembling with the need to come, her orgasm lingering in the wings. *So so so close*. It was agony, the tension twisted up inside her like a stitch from running too hard, making her squirm against Draco, seeking whatever it was her body was demanding before it would succumb. She wanted...she needed...

"What's she waiting for?" Neville directed the question to Draco despite not having broken eye contact with her.

Draco hummed a thoughtful sound. "What indeed. Need your clit touched, princess?"

He brushed his thumb over it accommodatingly and she nearly burst out of her skin at the feel of it, but still...she *needed*...

"Ah." Draco chuckled knowingly. "Are you waiting for *permission*?"

She hadn't known she was but as soon as he said it, she felt warmth rush through her and her hips rocked urgently. He hummed in understanding.

"Go ahead, Granger. Show him how you come for me. Let him watch."

He worked his hand with new determination and used the other to pluck at her nipple again, and the sharpness of it combined with his words finally toppled her over, her body rocking against his as she rode out the intense pulses, gasping and moaning unrestrainedly.

"Such a good fucking girl." Draco dropped a kiss to her neck, lips lingering. "So perfect."

She shuddered even as the waves of her orgasm abated.

"I'm going to fuck you later," he promised her, low and soft in her ear. "S'gonna be a fast, hard fuck because that's what you need, isn't it? Need to feel how absolutely, uncontrollably *insane* you make me."

She whimpered, panting, half ready to go again right that very second but Draco just pressed another soft kiss to her neck and slid his fingers out of her, massaging her entrance and then her clit as he drew his hand away.

She almost begged.

“Tell her thank you,” Draco said to Neville. “You have no idea how privileged you are to see her like this.”

Neville was properly flushed, chest heaving, but his eyes were still so soft as they held hers. “Thank you, Hermione,” he told her earnestly. “Gods, you’re incredible.” And then his eyes flicked up to Draco. “You are, too. Just so you know.”

Draco made a dismissive sound but she knew him well enough to know he was secretly pleased with the compliment. Neville had done up his trousers and took that sound as his cue to leave. He stood, pushing a hand through his hair and then ruffling it, the sandy locks a little darker at the roots from perspiration.

“I’ll leave you to it,” he said easily. “Keep me in mind, eh? If you ever want to do this again.” He winked at them and made for the door.

“Thanks, Nev,” she managed. “You were lovely. Really, really great.”

He half turned to give her a little smile and a nod, then let himself out.

She sagged back against Draco with a long exhale, feeling like a bowl of unset jelly. He wrapped his arms around her waist and rested his chin on her head. She could feel his heartbeat against her back, strong and steady. As relaxed and sleepy as she felt, she thought a debrief was important before things faded from memory. If they ever would.

She wiggled out of his arms to pull her remaining clothes off properly and then slipped under the covers naked. He joined her and she snuggled up against him, enjoying the warmth of his bare skin directly against hers.

“So,” she said after a comfortable moment of silence, “How was that for you?”

Draco went up on his elbow beside her, propping his head on a hand and bringing the other to trace soft patterns on her chest. His expression was almost boyish, pleased and playful and just a taste of timid. “I liked it.”

She rubbed her lips together to stop herself from kissing him before they’d properly talked. “I did too. I liked that you...” It was silly to feel shy about it now but it felt like admitting more than just the surface level sentiment and nerves fluttered in her stomach. “I liked that you gave me permission to come in front of him.”

He hummed a warm sound, thumb stroking the line of a collarbone. “I liked that you wanted it.” His eyes flicked up to meet hers and his mouth curled into a smile that seemed almost proud. “I *really* liked that, actually.”

“Well then, we’ll have to do that again. If we ever do *this* again.”

“Mm-hmm.”

“And it didn’t bother you? Watching Neville...?”



Draco shrugged. “He’s hardly the first bloke I’ve seen come. Well—” He laughed at her wide eyed expression. “Maybe that was the most *upfront and personal*, but don’t forget that I spent seven years sharing a dormitory. With *Theo and Blaise*. If you think they’re unsubtle now, you should have seen them with even less self-control when first discovering their cocks.”

“Wait, they as in *they*?” She’d gotten a sense the two were close but hadn’t thought *that* close.

But Draco shook his head, fingertips swirling over her shoulder. “Oh, no, not with each other. Well, actually, once I think but just hands. No, I meant *self* discovery.”

“Just...out in the open? In the dorm?” She was aghast.

“Well it wasn’t in the common room.” He chuckled at her expression. “Don’t tell me you thought your Gryffindor boys abstained?”

“I didn’t think about it.” And she was trying hard not to picture it now. “Well, the girls’ dorm wasn’t like that at all.”

He nodded seriously. “Of course not.”

She frowned at him. “It *wasn’t*. I lived there, I would know.”

“The beds have curtains for a reason, Granger. Between that and a well-cast *muffliato*, you’d be none the wiser.”

She clicked her tongue. “Let me live in denial, won’t you?”

He grinned down at her. “How uncharacteristic of you. But fine. Would you rather hear what I got up to in my four-poster? I’ve always been a dab hand at *muffliato*.”

She chewed the corner of her lip. “Noisy, were you?”

He flicked a brow. “Sometimes. And sometimes I liked to muffle it the old-fashioned way, with my face in the pillow.”

Heat zipped through her out of nowhere, sparking hot where she’d only just barely cooled down. He cataloged her reaction with a keen gaze.

“Want to know what I thought about?”

“I think I already know: socks and skirts.”

He licked his bottom lip into his mouth, slowly, and she felt it between her legs.

“Yeah. Socks and skirts.” He slid his hand down her chest until it dipped under the covers. Her breath came in a little quicker, eyes locked onto his. His fingers grazed her navel and her mouth dropped open in a little gasp as he circled it, such an innocuous part of her suddenly made so erotic.

“And about what was under the skirts. Shifting around on the wooden benches all day. Pressed between crossed legs.” His fingers parted her and swept through the arousal that had returned in a rush. “Wet little cunts.”

“*Draco*.” She ground up into his touch and he hummed in agreement, sliding his fingers back inside her only once before drawing away.

“Did you think about cocks, Hermione? Ever?”

She wanted him so badly, she was breathless for it. “No,” she said honestly. “No, not until you.”

It had been the right thing to say. His nostrils flared and then he was ripping the blanket off her and covering her with his body, his cock thick and hard against her pelvis.

“Christ, you’re perfect. Ready for me?” He pressed his erection against her with a hand, rubbing along the crease of her thigh where it met her hip, leaving a damp trail in his wake.

She pulled her knees up even further and dropped them to the side, opening herself to him. “Yes. Please.”

He lined up and fed her an inch, then pulled back, eyes focused between her legs. “Hungry for it,” he remarked, half to himself. He pressed himself inside her again and then withdrew. “You’re thinking about cock now, aren’t you?”

“Oh my god.” She squirmed under him, so desperate to feel him inside her she wanted to scream. It had been so long. Almost a week. The longest she’d ever gone without him since they’d begun. She was *dying* for it. “Please fuck me.”

“So polite,” he muttered. “Such a nice girl. How’d I get so lucky, hmm?”

“Fuck me or get on your back,” she said with as much authority she could muster. It wasn’t much.

He laughed, eyes darting up to hers. “Sexy. Love your needy, slutty, demanding little brain.” He pressed inside her slowly, drawing out halfway but only to give her a shallow thrust before driving all the way in. She groaned, the fullness almost feeling like the first time.

“That’s as slow as you’re getting it,” he told her, hips already drawing back. “It’s gonna be fast now, baby. Ready for it?”

She nodded eagerly, one hand cupping her breast to toy with a nipple and the other slipping her middle two fingers into her mouth. She sucked on them with more pressure than was strictly required for simply getting them wet and watched with satisfaction as his eyes darkened, mouth parting.

“Fuck me then,” she told him, using her spit-slicked fingers to begin circling her clit. “Make me co—”

He pressed her knees up to her shoulders and slammed into her and she lost the rest of her taunt to a guttural squeal. He didn't hold back, driving into her with a rapidity that promised a quick orgasm, had he not just come twenty minutes prior.

"If only he could see you like this," Draco said, hands pushing down harder until she was practically folded in half. "Taking my cock so fucking well. Watching how you touch yourself like such a good little sex-crazed girl."

Her eyes half-crossed as his cock stroked against the sensitive spot inside her, the position he'd put her in forcing his cock in contact with it throughout every stroke in and out. She was going to come faster than she ever had, his words and the pace only driving her lust higher. It hit her a moment later, the clutch searing through her until she was moaning brokenly and coming hard around him. His pace faltered as her orgasm struck, his chest heaving with his exertions.

"Jesus, that was fast. Fuck. Can you take a little more baby? I want to come inside."

She nodded, gasping, her walls still fluttering.

"Thank fuck."

He picked his pace back up and her hands floated through the air to wrap around his neck, pulling him to her. He went easily, her knees hooking around his biceps as he lowered his torso over her. He slid his tongue into her mouth, the sensation making her bear down around him again.

"Tell me how this feels," he panted.

"I love it," she moaned. "God, don't ever make me go without it again."

He laughed, a little broken, a little strained. "I told you, baby. It's yours. I'm yours."

She kissed him again, fiercely, consumingly. Her hands held him close, gripping his jaw and his hair, until he was swearing against her lips and holding himself deep, shuddering as he came.

He lifted himself off her just enough to detangle himself from her legs, letting them relax down as he lowered himself over her on his elbows. He cupped her cheeks in his palms, forehead against hers. He was breathing heavily but held it for a moment to kiss her softly.

He drew back and she had a sense he was on the brink of saying something, but then he heaved in another breath and kissed her again.

I promise to stop teasing the you-know-what confession but I couldn't help myself with a tiny measure of slow burn 😊

Edit: I couldn't help myself and wrote the Neville/Hannah/Susan *Cupido gemmas* scene 🙊 Find it [here!](#)

Thanks for reading!

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 31: “I want a career,” she blurted.

### Chapter Notes

Hi friends! We have a little more of their chat today and some set up for the next few chapters.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Saturday morning dawned bright but chilly, rousing them from bed in time for breakfast but then sending them straight back upstairs afterward. Draco didn't waste any time in shucking his trousers and crawling back under the covers but Hermione went first to her school bag where she'd left it on the desk.

“C'mon,” he cajoled when he saw her trajectory. “Leave it for another hour. Come back to bed.”

“I will,” she assured him, “I'm just getting our list.”

She located it, and a quill, then joined him. He was sitting up against the headboard, watchful though it appeared to be thoughtful rather than apprehensive.

“We don't have to talk right now if you're not in the mood,” she began, “But I do want to keep the momentum going with it.”

He reached for the parchment, sniffing reflexively as he reviewed their lists of serious topics and fun things. “Now is fine with me. Shall we do another hour and then something fun? *Although*, I can't help but notice we only have *one* thing in the fun column. We ought to rectify that.”

“What, you don't want to tie me up today?” she asked with excessive innocence.

He cut his eyes to her, bemused. “Believe it or not, but I actually want to plan out that little scenario. I have a few thoughts of what I might like to do to you once I have you bound to my will, and we should talk about them first.” Her eagerness must have shown on her face because he chuckled. “Pace yourself, baby. Not happening today.”

“When, though?” she wheedled, “And what sorts of things? Because you must know that you saying that has made my imagination run absolutely rampant.”

“I bet it has. Anything you want to write down?” He tapped the parchment, smirking at her.

“You first.” She wanted to see what sorts of things he wanted to do to her, and then she wanted him to *do them*.

He sucked his canine, eyeing her speculatively. “Alright, Granger. Here’s one: I’d like to explore a little breath play with you. You seemed to like it when I held your throat that one time and I can’t deny it did a little something for me, too.”

She swallowed reflexively and his eyes tracked the movement. It had been for just the barest moment, once she’d untied him and he’d taken her down to the mattress, but the feel of his hand – careful, gentle, warm – around her neck was seared into her brain.

She nodded, clearing her throat, and he smirked again. “Okay. Write it down.”

He did. “Your turn.”

“On a similar vein...” She watched his fingers absently adjust his hold on the quill, the motion tensing the tendons in his wrist in a way that had her already warming. “I’m curious about spanking.”

His hand tightened on the quill and he met her eyes, a brow lifting. “Me or you?”

She tilted her head. “Oh! I hadn’t considered...that’s very interesting. I was meaning you doing it to me, but...”

He wrote it down rather hurriedly and she laughed. “Not keen on being spanked, Draco?”

“More keen on doing it to you,” he said, eyes flicking to hers again. “But I could write down both, if you want.”

“Hmm. You’d better, just to be thorough.” She grinned at him and he shook his head, snorting a soft laugh, but did it.

“One more fun thing apiece, and then let’s tackle another serious topic or two,” she said. “My second fun thing, which you already know but we should put it on the list anyway, is that I’d like to bugger you.”

“Fucking Christ, Hermione, prepare a bloke.” He exhaled hard, but bent over the page and wrote it.

“Oh I’ll prepare you plenty, don’t worry,” she teased and he huffed out another breath. She considered his reaction. “You like that thought?”

Draco leaned his head back against the headboard, eying her. He was a little pink-cheeked but his expression was overtly aroused. “It terrifies me and turns me on in equal measure,” he said. “I...yeah, I like the thought of it.”

She couldn’t help her little squirm. “Good. Because I have concrete plans in the works.”

“*Do* you.” He made a low sound of interest. “And those would be...?”

“Privileged information until I hear back from Theo,” she told him definitively, and then winked. “Something to look forward to.”

“Such a tease,” he bemoaned and she shrugged her shoulders, unfussed by the accusation.

He marked her blasé response with narrowed eyes. “In that case, my *fun* thing is fucking you over a desk.” She made an involuntary squeaking sound and he relished her reaction with a slow grin. “Mmm. Thought you’d like that one. Want to pick the classroom?”

She couldn’t help it, her mind instantly flicking through each classroom and visualizing the act on the various desk configurations. As she considered the Charms classroom, she blushed fiercely at the thought of combining it with her apparent penchant for exhibitionism...it *was* auditorium-style, after all...

“Fuck, you’re picturing it.” He groaned and her attention snapped back to him. “You’ve gone all pink and breathy. Which one caught your fancy? Or do you want them all?” He groaned again and mumbled to himself, “Of course, you want them all.”

He wasn’t wrong.

“You’ll have to pick. There’s no way I’d ever be able to decide.”

He scoffed. “Oh, no, I’ll definitely be fucking you in them all. On your desk, on mine, on the Professor’s, on the fucking *floor*.”

She made another choked sound and he shoved the parchment aside, leaning over and kissing her, his hand buried in her hair to hold her close. She gripped him back, opening to him when his tongue sought entry and greeting his with her own. His hands slid from her hair down her back, hands insistent on her waist, trying to get her to come sit on his lap. She almost allowed it but then broke the kiss, shaking her head.

“Talk first,” she reminded him, a little breathless. “Then fun.”

“We can’t do a fun thing first? And *then* talk?” he wheedled, hands tightening again around her waist.

She shook her head. “It needs to be the other order. We’ll never talk otherwise.”

He groaned but sat back, resigned. “Fine. You’re right. Okay, start the bloody timer so we can get on with it.”

“That’s the spirit.” She snorted. “Shall we choose the topic first?”

He wiped at his mouth with the back of his hand and she nearly tackled him, but stuck to her own advice. He brought his hands to his lap, interlacing his fingers. “How about we start easy today. Shall we discuss money?”

The underlying sentiments of that particular topic sent little fissures of nerves through her, but she nodded agreeably.

“Okay.” She waved her wand, starting the hour countdown. “Do you want to start or shall I?”

He gave her a deferential nod and she cleared her throat. “Alright. Well, I put it on the list because there's a rather large disparity between us as concerns it. And the amount we have or don't have has affected how we were raised, how we view the world, the opportunities we have after school, all of it.” She hesitated. “Do you agree with that so far?”

She could see he wanted to say something but contained it, giving her a simple nod instead.

“Okay. Good. That's good. Erm...” She considered how to approach the crux of the issue for her. “I suppose the thing that's on my mind the most is what it might mean for you to be with me. Um, long-term, I mean.”

He was listening carefully, eyes cataloging every micro-expression on her face and each shift of her hands. “Why does this topic make you so antsy?” he asked her, voice gentle.

She huffed a breath, forcing her hands to be still. “It's just the...implications of caring about it,” she said. “The assumption that it would ever be something I was involved with.”

He smirked. “If you're worried that I think you're only after me for my gold then don't worry, Granger. I know it's my other *assets* that've lured you in.”

She appreciated his humor for the way it relaxed slightly, and she rolled her eyes. “No, you prat. It's more that I'm worried what will happen to you if we're together long-term.”

“Don't say *if*,” he chided. “In fact, get that word right out of your head. You're my girlfriend, Granger. For as long as you'll have me.”

She reached out to grab one of his hands, needing to touch him when he said such heartfelt things like that. He closed his hand around hers instantly, caging hers in between both of his, and she relaxed further.

“But what do you mean when you say you're 'worried what might happen to me'?” he asked.

She'd have to spell it out more plainly, she realized.

“Well, I'm Muggleborn. And although you said they're ‘working on it’, your parents probably won't be jumping up and down over the fact that we're together. Will they?”

“They aren't the jumping up and down sort, no,” he agreed seriously but then laughed when she clucked her tongue in mock-annoyance. “But I think I understand what you're hinting at. You're worried they'll cut me off? Because I'm with you?”

She exhaled, relieved that it was out in the open. “Yes. That's my concern.”

He considered it, eyes on their twined hands as he stroked his thumb along hers. “No,” he said at last, “no, I don't think they would. Father has always been an opportunist so if anything, he'll probably view this—” He squeezed her hand, indicating he meant their relationship. “—as a boon; a way to repair our family image. And while that concept makes



me simultaneously sad and furious – for them to potentially use you in that way – it means they’ll probably be accepting of us. And, more importantly, will leave us alone.”

She absorbed this, taking in the way his expression had shifted while he discussed his parents. She could see it tore him up a little bit, to be able to see the callousness so plainly while still obviously loving them. But he was right: even if Lucius’ imagined motives were less than pure, the result was better than she’d feared. Being accepted as a token Muggleborn was better than being the reason that Draco lost his family and possibly one day resented her for it. It was, if nothing else, the lesser of two evils.

And if he was *wrong*, and his parents did react badly to the news, well, she had a little gold saved up from her Order of Merlin. It would be a drastic shift in lifestyle for him, but certainly Harry would let them crash at Grimmauld Place until they’d found jobs, and then–

She made herself stop planning for the worst, although doing so was akin to rounding up all those Cornish Pixies back in Second Year, her thoughts darting off in several directions at once to make note of and find a solution for various imagined tasks. She refocused on the present and the - hopefully - more likely scenario.

“And that wouldn’t put you in an uncomfortable place?” she asked. “To have tension between yourself and your parents because of me?”

He laughed a humorless sound. “There’s already tension between my parents and me, Granger. Them treating you like a commodity is only one of the sins they need to account for.”

Her heart went out to him but she didn’t want to trespass into topics of conversation they hadn’t planned to tackle yet - not without his prior agreement into something that would obviously be quite hard to discuss - so she cupped her free hand around the outside of his, letting him feel a little caged in and protected too.

“I suppose that’s true.” She sighed. “Well, I’m a little relieved then, if that’s your perspective on it. Even though it doesn’t exactly help the other facet to all of this.”

He looked up, curious. “Oh?”

It felt silly to say but she’d chosen honesty and wouldn’t back down yet. She swallowed her pride and admitted, “I feel a little out of place around it all, to be honest. It hit me quite hard on Blaise’s boat, to really see the level of wealth you all operate in and how much I don’t fit in.”

His brows furrowed. “What do you mean? You fit in perfectly.”

He was so sweet, if not a little delusional. And while she’d never been actively made to feel unwelcome – quite the opposite, in fact – it hardly mattered because the issue lay within her: *she* knew all the places she was lacking or different; all the ways in which she could make the wrong move or commit a faux-pas. It ramped up her anxiety about the inevitable meeting (or *re-meeting*) of his parents, and that interaction was only a small part of what weighed on her.

“I feel like an imposter,” she said. “I don’t know the customs, or the proper way to conduct myself, or what to wear. I mean, I wore *jeans* - even Ginny had a dress on, for Merlin’s sake! And then when I saw how easy it could be for you, to be with someone who *did* know all those things, I had a bit of a spiral.”

She could see he was struggling to make the connection between this and their disparate socioeconomic statuses but then his expression relaxed in understanding. “*Ohh*. Is this why you were fixated on Daphne when we argued? Because I was sitting next to her and you perceived her as fitting in better because she’s also from a wealthy, Pureblood family?”

She inclined her head in the affirmative. “Yes, that. And you’ve slept with her in the past. I couldn’t quite get that out of my head either.”

“Yes, I recall.” His smile was wry. “Do we need to talk about that, too? Why you immediately jumped to the conclusion that I was, I don’t know, *aiming* for something with her?”

“It was just a moment of madness.” She met his eyes, wanting him to see the earnestness in her words. “I know you’re faithful and that you wouldn’t do that. I don’t think that about you – I really don’t. It was more about me and my sudden insecurity. It all sort of...crashed down on me all at once and seeing you so at ease with Daphne just hammered home how much of an outsider I felt.”

His lips had turned down at the corners and he raised a hand to her cheek, brushing his thumb along her cheekbone with a tenderness that had her eyes pricking. “I hate hearing that I made you feel insecure,” he murmured. “That’s never my intention.”

She nodded, as much as she could in his hold. “I know that. I didn’t see it as your fault, I promise. And I’m feeling more settled about it already. Once I get used to it, it’ll be a non-issue entirely.”

He looked unsure for another moment and then pressed his mouth into a firm line. “Alright. Let me know what I can do to help, if there’s ever anything.”

She gave him a little smile. “I will. Thank you.”

She turned her face to press a kiss into his palm and then brought his hand back down to join the collection on his lap. He kept her hand in his, playing with her fingers with downturned eyes. She didn’t have anything else pressing to say and he seemed rather contemplative, so she let the silence linger. After a moment, he broke it.

“And you’re sure you’re resolved on the Daphne aspect? I meant it when I said we parted on amicable but firmly-friends terms. I don’t see her often as it is, but I can keep my distance from her going forward, if it bothers you.”

She tutted. “No, no, don’t be silly. She was just an unfortunate casualty of my spiral – of course you don’t need to give up your friendship with her for me. And anyway, you said she’s in a relationship with someone else now. Who is it, anyway?”

“Ah.” He looked apologetic. “I’m not sure I’m allowed to disclose it. She said they aren’t making things public quite yet.”

“Oh, that’s...” She trailed off as something in her brain sparked, and her eyes widened. “Wait. *Wait*. She’s in a relationship with someone that she’s keeping quiet?”

Draco hesitated, evidently thinking through how much of a response to give. “...Yes,” he said at last.

Hermione’s brain buzzed, recalling Ginny and Ron’s conversation, and then the way she’d caught a glimpse of Ron and Daphne making pleasant small talk at the bar on the yacht, their body language surprising her with how friendly it seemed. She searched the subtext of each of those observations for any conclusion other than the one that was currently standing at the edge of her brain, waving its hand.

“Oh...my god?” She cocked her head, eyes narrowing at the middle-distance as she formulated a new reality. “Draco, is Daphne conducting a covert relationship with *Ron*?”

He stared at her for a moment, face slowly taking on an expression of supreme disbelief. “What the fuck? How are you guessing these extremely unlikely things with such accuracy?”

She shook her head, amazed, then laughed. “I...hang on. Let me just...” She stared at the headboard unseeingly, processing it all. “Wow. Good for him. I wonder how on earth it came about?”

“I happen to know that answer. But—” He raised an eyebrow pointedly when she opened her mouth to demand he share it. “I’ll only divulge it if you tell me how you guessed it in one. *Again*.”

“Oh. Ron and Ginny were bickering over it in front of me. They didn’t say who, just that Ginny had witnessed something between Ron and someone, and Ron said to leave it alone. That they weren’t ready yet.”

Draco considered this for a moment and then nodded. “Alright, I can see how you made the connection then, even if it was still freakily accurate. They met at the Weasley’s joke shop, sometime last summer. Daph is an event planner and was stocking up on party favors for a birthday she was working, and Ron assisted her in finding the right things. Apparently that’s all it took to spark things and they’ve been covertly seeing one another ever since.”

That made sense. She relaxed a bit as reality as she knew it draped itself back around her.

“So why aren’t they making it public?”

“Apparently Weasley’s mother is a bit enthusiastic when it comes to marrying off her sons and Daph’s family isn’t much better, so they’re enjoying the calm before the *obligations*.” His emphasis, and the look he paired with it, made her heart skitter.

“Marriage? But they’re so *young*!”

He shrugged. “Not by Pureblood standards. My parents were married right after they graduated and my grandparents even younger; my Grandfather Cygnus was only seventeen when he had my mother, and she’s the *youngest* of three.” He gave her a significant look and she blanched.

“Good Lord! Are all Purebloods stuck in the sodding Middle Ages?”

He laughed. “Honestly, it seems like it sometimes. My father’s family is more modern than the Blacks though, so he waited until Mother was ready before they decided to have me.”

“And...how old was that?” She braced herself for another mind-bogglingly low number.

“Twenty-five.”

She relaxed. That was fine. Still young but...fine.

“Merlin. Well I suppose the pressure on Ron makes a bit more sense in context, especially given that Molly’s only just now turning fifty and yet Bill is...” She calculated it. “Godric, almost thirty.”

Draco hummed a little affirmative sound, seeming unsurprised. She wondered what he thought about all that – marriage, and kids, and the appropriate timing for it all. Her heart was beating out of her chest with sudden nerves but there was no time like the present to get it out in the open.

“I want a career,” she blurted, and then blushed when he lifted an eyebrow, the corner of his mouth quirking up with it in an altogether too-knowing expression. “Just...just so you know. Not that I don’t want kids eventually but...oh, stop it!” He was fully smirking at her now and she blushed furiously, unable to stop it.

“Granger,” he said in an amused little sing-song. “Are you suggesting that’s information I’ll be allowed to do something with? At some point?”

“Not anymore,” she said loftily and he laughed.

“Ah-ah, no take-backs.” He pulled his hands out of hers and immediately used them to push her onto her back. She went down with a little *oof* and a giggle and he followed her over, slotting himself between her legs and hovering above her. “Now, is the timer finished yet? Because you’ve put me in the mood for some *fun*.”

## Chapter End Notes

My first ever fade-to-black! How dare I. But they're about to have so much sex so I'm just pacing myself 😊

Thanks for reading!

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## Chapter 32: “How’s that?” she asked, pressing a little more firmly.

### Chapter Notes

Hello hello!

So, the great thing about this story is that there’s still basically zero plot, so if there’s ever content you’re not into, you can easily skip the chapter without missing out on anything (and I do promise to keep any scraps of plot outside the bedroom for that reason).

Anyway, the reason for the note: today we get start the journey toward pegging 🍌

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

As she’d predicted, Neville was completely normal the next time they encountered him. If it weren’t for the slightly warmer-than-usual smile he sent them as they sat down for lunch, she might have imagined the entire experience between the three of them. She certainly wasn’t against a repeat event, either, so was pleased that it seemed things wouldn’t be awkward if they did.

Draco took a seat to her right, immediately reaching for a serving dish. They’d had a full morning of classes and she was equally famished. She was halfway through her meal when an owl swooped low, dropping a thick letter beside her goblet. She snatched up the letter as Draco reached out reflexively to stabilize the goblet before it toppled.

She hadn’t expected a reply so quickly so at first wasn’t sure who it was from but when she tore it open and saw Theo’s sign off at the bottom, she made a little sound of excitement. “Ooh!”

“What is it?” Draco asked.

“Theo wrote back,” she said, skimming the entire letter eagerly, as was her way, and then starting at the beginning for a proper read-through.

Draco tilted his head to gauge the length of the letter. “Merlin. Didn’t spare any details then?”

“Mmm. No. Very thorough,” she said absently, reading. After a quick greeting and brief update on his pursuit of Time, Theo had gotten right into her questions. She was already riveted.

“You’re blushing,” Draco whispered.

She shushed him and he laughed softly, going back to his lunch. She read the letter twice and then folded it neatly and tucked it beside her plate, picking up her fork to assemble another bite of food.

“Fully educated?” Draco asked lightly, putting his cutlery together on his plate, having finished his meal while she’d been engrossed in the pages. His table setting vanished from in front of him — House-elf magic — and he filled the vacancy with his elbows, overlapping his hands and propping his chin on them.

She ate another bite, smirking at him around her fork in response. *Educational* was one word for what Theo had been. Elaborate, enthusiastic, and excessively detailed were some others.

“Am I allowed to hear your plans then?” His eyes flicked to the letter then back up to hers.

“Certainly.” She placed her own cutlery neatly on the plate and then matched his pose, angling herself toward him. “Want to hear them now? Here?”

Draco’s eyes darted to the empty seats across the table and behind her, then met her eyes with a raised brow. “Go on then.”

She slid her gaze to his lips, his throat, and slowly back up. Her plan of seduction would start immediately.

“Well, we’ll start slow.” She pitched her voice low, private, and he instinctively leaned in. “Theo gave me some excellent tips on warming you up to it...places to focus a little attention on and things to do *internally*.” She raised a brow and enjoyed the way his cheeks flushed a light pink even as his expression stayed intently focused on her. “I thought we could try some later today. Or do you want to experiment by yourself first? I can give you some suggestions.” She tapped the letter. “Or some reading material?”

His eyes dropped to the letter again.

“And steal my first time away from you?” He tutted, meeting her gaze again. “Thank you, Granger, but I’ll let you head the expedition.”

She nodded agreeably and smiled up at him, pleased and wildly excited to get on with it. He snorted a soft breath at her expression and shook his head.

“Yeah, let’s try something later. But now I...need to go burn off some energy.” He blew out a breath and looked down the table. “Oi! Weasley! Ready to see what a natural-born Chaser can do?”

Ginny raised her eyebrow over the rim of her goblet then tilted it back to chug down the rest. She thunked it down and wiped at her mouth, grinning. “That’s a pretty bold stance to take, *Malfoy*. Meet me on the pitch in ten minutes?”

“Ta.” Draco turned back to Hermione. “See you back in your room after?”

She grinned and tilted her face to his for a kiss. “Mmhmm. Have fun.”

“Not doing it for *fun*,” he murmured, and then kissed her rather more firmly than was strictly appropriate for the lunch table.

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Hermione spent a few hours in the library after lunch, burning off a little extra energy herself though in the form of completing assignments and working to further detail her study guides for each class. She called it quits just after three o’clock, figuring Draco had likely finished his self-inflicted arse kicking from Ginny and would be ready for the next phase of her plan.

She let herself into her room and stifled a laugh at the sight of Draco lying on his back on the floor. He was still dressed in his athletic clothing but had managed to unstrap the leather shin and forearm pads. They were scattered right beside the limbs they’d protected, making him look like a doll that had fallen from a shelf and had its outer decorations cracked off with the impact. He was as still as one, too, until she closed the door.

“You’re back,” he groaned.

“How long have you been lying there?” She asked, stepping around him to drop off her bag at her desk and then appraising him with hands on her hips.

“Dunno. Maybe half an hour.”

She snorted but took pity on him. “Come on. Let’s get you up and into the bath.”

She held out her hands to him and, with another groan, he raised his arms and let her tug him to a sit. “She’s a legend,” he sighed, using her hold to haul himself to his feet. “Bloody brilliant. But *god*, she called *me* a sadist?” He blew out a readying breath and then pulled his shirt off in a quick motion, shifting his shoulders and wincing at the movement as he dropped the garment to the floor.

“Poor baby,” she cooed unsympathetically.

He pouted dramatically and she laughed, leading him into the bathroom and turning the taps to fill the tub. He stretched his arms across his chest and then overhead, wincing again, and she ogled him unabashedly.

“Want some help with that?” She asked, eyes tracing the way his overhead triceps stretch was creating rather enticing lines across his torso.

He chuckled, gaze cutting to hers from under his raised arm. “This the first step then? You’re going to—“ he wagged his brows suggestively “—*stretch me out?*”

She rolled her eyes, snorting and gesturing to the bath. “Idiot. Get in and I’ll give you a massage. *Above* the waist.”

He laughed and dropped his arms, shaking them out and then stripping out of the rest of his clothes. She undressed herself efficiently and settled in the tub with her back against the edge. He eyed her.

“Where do you want me?”

She spread her legs and indicated the space between them. He stepped over the edge and sat with his back to her, curled forward slightly in the limited space.

She ran her hands up the muscles on either side of his spine, applying light pressure which intensified as it neared his shoulders. She kneaded against the tension she found there, experimenting with the firmness until he made a low sound.

“Does that hurt?” She checked, softening slightly.

“Yeah, but in a good way.” His head hung heavy and she worked her fingers up the back of his neck, sweeping up to his skull and then retracing her steps back down, across his shoulders, and down his arms. He groaned.

“That feels good.”

She did it again and then smoothed her hands over his shoulders to his chest.

“Lean back,” she told him, pressing softly to tug him against her. After a little shuffling, he did, his head resting half on her shoulder and half on the edge of the bath behind them and his bent knees breaching the water halfway up his thighs.

“We’ll need a bigger bath,” he murmured absently, relaxing against her as her hands began exploring the tightness across his pecs.

Her heart fluttered at that tiny reference to an imagined future where *they* had a bath. She made a little sound of agreement, fingers turning soft so that her touch was less physical therapy and more physically rousing. She trailed patterns over his skin, drawing circles around his nipples and swirls down his ribs. He shifted slightly when her hand sank below the waterline but she didn’t go any lower than his navel before working her way back up.

“Ready to get out?” She murmured, trailing damp hands over his chest again.

“What’ll you do to me?” He sounded lazy and when she peered up, she saw that his eyes were closed.

“Well...” She circled his nipples again and he squirmed a little but didn’t open his eyes. “I’ll kiss you first. On the mouth and then everywhere I just touched...and then I’ll get you on your back, on the bed, and I’ll put you inside me...” She worked her fingertips down the line of his sternum and swirled them absently in the concave little divot at the base. “And then I’ll touch you a few places I haven’t before, places I think you’ll like...”

She trailed off, letting the words linger for a moment before humming a little interrogative sound. “What do you think? Does that sound good?”

He captured her hand and dragged it down his body until it bumped into his cock, hard as a rock. “Yeah,” he murmured. “God, that sounds so good.”

She gave him a single stroke and then wiggled her hand out from under his, pleased with his response thus far. “Good. Let’s get out then.”

The bath has been a good idea, she mused, considering how much it had relaxed Draco. She hadn’t wanted him to feel nervous or antsy — no more than was expected before doing a new thing, at least — and as they stepped out and dried off, she was pleased to find him eager and affectionate without the pent-up energy of nerves.

They made it to the bed with minimal distraction, naked and kissing as they made the short trip across the room. She settled herself over him, leaning forward so that the act of kissing him pressed him to the mattress. He sent his hands up her arms in a barely-there glide that had goosebumps prickling in their wake and she licked into his mouth in response. He groaned, opening for her.

By the time she’d followed through with her promise of kissing down his chest and back up again, they were both a little frantic for more. She gave him a final kiss and then repositioned herself over his lap facing his feet. They’d never had sex in this position before and she was eager to try it.

She lifted up onto her knees over his cock, reaching down to align him and then slowly sinking down. He made a slightly strangled sound from behind her and she squeezed his thigh where she’d rested her hand for balance, rocking slightly to appreciate the fullness as she took him all the way. One of his hands gripped her hip while the other stroked a line up her spine, twisting a curl where it lay between her shoulder blades.

“Gorgeous,” he murmured. “Fuck, this view...”

His praise swelled around her heart, sending her blood pulsing through her. She leaned forward just slightly to balance a hand on the mattress and he swore again. She bit her lip, charmed and flattered and ridiculously turned on, then angled her left thigh up onto his and tapped his right.

“Bend your knee for me.”

He slid his foot up to accomplish it, heel catching the sheets and pulling them up along with him. She liked him all tangled up like that.

She lifted herself to slip her right calf under his bent leg until she was sitting over his lap at a slight diagonal, the other knee now planted on the mattress by his left hip.

“I hope you know,” he began, his tone that of strained amusement. “That you’re already killing me.”

She glanced over her shoulder at him, incredulous. “I haven’t done anything yet.”

“Fuck, but you’re going to.” He sent a hand up through his hair, holding on for a moment before carding it all the way through. “You have it all planned out and it’s just...fuck, you’re so sexy.”

“Did you get hit in the head earlier?” she teased, delighted by him. His eyes were warm and glinting as he rolled them.

“Hush now,” she advised. “So that I can enact all my *plans*.”

“Yes, Granger,” he quipped but she could hear the note of desperation creeping in.

She stabilized herself with a hand on his shin and treated them both to a handful of bounces on his cock. She was so wet that the strokes were easy, her body as welcoming to him as his was demanding of hers. He mumbled something under his breath that she couldn’t quite make out but preened in it nonetheless. She settled herself back flush on his lap before either of them got too carried away, rededicating herself to the main event.

She decided to start with familiar territory first so reached down and cupped his balls lightly, rolling them gently around in her hand until she felt the center seam. She angled her wrist until she could get her thumb on it, stroking along the slight ridge. He shifted slightly under her, like he wanted to thrust up into her, but she kept her weight on him, holding his cock deep so he couldn’t move.

“Relax,” she murmured.

He made a choked sound, like a scoff and a laugh had gotten tangled. “You’re driving me crazy.”

She couldn’t deny that she was maddening herself just a little bit, too. But she wanted to overwhelm him with sensation the way he always managed to overwhelm her. She hummed a sympathetic sound and then pressed her two middle fingers down under his balls to the soft skin she found there. He squirmed under her again.

“Relax,” she repeated.

She kept her fingers light, knowing he’d never touched himself there before. She tried a few patterns and paces from light to firm until she found the one that made him bite off a moan.

“That feel nice?” she asked.

“Fuck. That might make me come.” He sounded surprised. But with his cock deep inside her and her other hand still gently fondling his balls, she wasn’t.

“Come if you want to,” she encouraged him. “You can fuck me again after.”

“Don’t want to come yet.” He shifted around again. “But fuck, that feels...”

She slid her fingertips a little further back on her next stroke until she found his rim. She applied a little more pressure as she circled it and Draco groaned from deep in his chest.

“How’s that?” she asked, pressing a little more firmly.

“*Christ.*” She felt his cock jerk inside her and felt a thrill of satisfaction.

“Want more?”

His hips canted under her again so she pulled her hand away to discreetly lubricate it before pressed down again, a little harder, until her middle finger slipped inside him to the first knuckle. She watched his toes curl.

“*God*, Granger,” he whined.

“That alright?” she circled her finger inside, letting him feel the slight fullness.

“Yeah. Yeah.”

She pressed a little deeper and curled her finger slightly, searching for the spot which Theo had described in great detail. She knew she’d found it both by touch and by the way Draco twitched under her.

“What the fuck. Shit. Do that again.”

She did and he swore. His hands tightened on her hips, trying to move her on him. “Please give me a little,” he begged. “Fuck, I’m so...*fuck.*”

She obliged him, rising up a few inches and then sliding slowly back down, keeping her finger pressed exactly right.

“*Oh god.*” He sounded wrecked.

“Gonna come?”

“More. More. So close.”

She kept up her careful touches, increasing the pace of her rubbing inside him and rocking her hips as best she could without losing her balance completely. His reaction was making her whole body flushed with arousal. She could hear what a mess she was making of his cock.

He bore it for half a minute and then his hands were digging into her sides. She felt his balls pull tight in her hand, the base of his cock beginning to throb against her wrist and his arse tightening around her finger. He was so sexy, and his urgent inhale made her whole body flush with heat.

“I’m coming. Oh...*fuck*, I’m coming.”

“Such a good boy,” she gasped, the praise instinctive.

It was a new experience to watch him come without seeing his face or battling the waves of her own orgasm. She watched the muscles of his thighs flex, his feet arching then curling.

Next time she did this, she wanted to see his face. Wanted to see his whole body. She rocked her hips a little more urgently, suddenly feeling on edge herself. He was groaning and swearing behind her and it was making her crazy for him.

“Holy *fuck*.” He laughed, amazed. “God, I felt that to my fucking toes.”

She lifted off him with as much grace as she could, shifting to her knees on the mattress beside him and then leaning over him to kiss him. “I’m glad you enjoyed it. You are so ridiculously sexy.”

“Says you.” He sighed out a long breath. “Give me ten minutes and then I absolutely need to fuck you.”

“Yes.” To say she was enthusiastic was underselling it quite a bit. Her core was desperate for friction but currently getting the opposite. “However you want.”

She lay down beside him, wrapping an arm around his middle and resting her cheek on his chest. He slung his arm over her waist, the limb heavy with satisfaction. They lay there while his body reset, enjoying a little closeness without conversation.

After a few minutes, he squeezed her hip and she looked up. He brought his lips to hers, easing her into a slow kiss which he built up gradually until she had a thigh over him and her hands were in his hair, his palming handfuls of her arse.

“How do you want me?” she asked against her mouth.

“Hands and knees,” he told her, rolling them over so it was her back against the bed. “If you’re amenable.”

She nodded. “Extremely.”

“Hmm.” He flicked a brow then reared back, helping her flip onto her stomach under him. She rose up onto her hands and knees instantly, shifting her knees apart to make space for him behind her.

He nudged her stance a little wider and stroked his hand down her spine, his thumb following her sacrum down to the tip of her tailbone. When he brushed it across the pucker of her arse, she gasped.

“Fairs fair, Granger,” he said roughly. “If you get to touch me here, I want to play too.”

She arched into his hand to show her willingness. He used the flat pad of his thumb to circle around her rim and just that light touch of it made her insides tighten.

“You really are pretty everywhere, aren’t you?” he murmured, circling it again.

She blushed and muffled her moan into the mattress.

He kept his hand where it was while he aligned himself with the other and pressed inside her.

“I made a mess, didn’t I?” He dragged his cock out slowly and then glided back inside, the way eased by his first orgasm.

She rocked her hips with the motion, trying to encourage him to a fast pace, but he didn’t let her take over. Instead he pressed deep and then held himself there as his thumb teased lower, rubbing along her perineum just she’d done to him and then tracing where his cock was buried in her. He put a little pressure on that spot as he dragged his cock out slowly and she moaned, sinking down onto her elbows. It felt like every time he got his hands on her, she was introduced to nerve endings she didn’t know she had.

“Does that feel good?” He pushed back inside and the added pressure of his thumb gave her the toe-curling sensation of being twice as full. She moaned again, unspeakably aroused, and pushed back on him, needing him to fuck her faster.

He made an intrigued sound at her reaction and slid his hand over the globe of her arse, palming her and giving her a squeeze. His second hand copied the first, squeezing and spreading her open to his gaze, and he groaned.

“So fucking sexy,” he murmured. “God, knowing I might be allowed...Christ, you’re always finding new ways to tempt me, aren’t you?”

She felt the warm glide of his saliva down the crack of her arse, sliding until it mingled with the slickness he was fucking out of her. That slow glide alone had been sensorially evocative but when he used the pad of his index finger to gently circle it around her pucker, she whined and pressed into the touch.

“You like that?”

Her cheeks were burning but she nodded.

He drew out of her slowly and then adjusted his wrist so his thumb was back where he’d had it before. She was fidgety with arousal, so wet she could feel it on her thighs.

“Please,” she whimpered. “Please fuck me. I need it.”

“You need it?” His voice was gravelly but amused. He ran his thumb from her cunt to her arse, tapping over it lightly. “Naughty little Granger *needs* to be fucked?”

She was going to combust. She felt like she’d been edged for hours, the pressure of him inside her having been nothing but an endless tease ever since she’d first sunk down on him. She arched her back, trying to impale herself on his cock where it was just barely breaching her. “Yes.”

“Here?” He stroked her arse with his thumb and her cunt clenched desperately.

“Yes. I...fuck, please.”

“Okay baby. Hold on, I’ve got you.”

He pulled his cock out of her and ran it between her arse cheeks. She certainly wasn't against getting right to anal sex, *per se*, but she rather felt she needed a little preparation before she tried to take *that*.

"Draco," she started, but he patted her soothingly on her bum.

"Relax," he assured her. "I promise I'll make you beg for my cock there before I do it. I'm just getting it wet." He tapped his cock against her arsehole in a gesture that made her flush white-hot, then pulled his hips back to fit himself back into her cunt.

He sighed happily, hand flexing on her hips. "S'like slipping into bed at the end of a long day."

She snorted, half-delirious but cognizant enough to laugh. "*What?*"

"Shh. I don't have many brain cells left for similies at the moment."

His thumb swept through the wetness he'd dragged up and he pet over her arse again, thumb gliding in cadence with the moderate pace he was settling with his cock inside her. She wasn't going to last, the added stimulus stringing her tight like a bow, her back arching further and further until her chest was pressed to the bed, face buried.

"God, look at you." He picked up his pace with a little more desperation of his own. "Want it so bad, don't you baby?"

She didn't know if he meant her orgasm or his thumb inside her but either way her answer was the same. "Yes. Please. *Pleasepleaseplease*."

In the end, he gave her both. With a little extra pressure, his thumb popped past her rim. He held it there for a moment and then twisted his wrist down slightly so he could press the pad of the digit to the wall that touched her cunt.

"*Fuck*." He sounded suddenly on edge. "I can feel my cock inside you. I...oh fuck, that might...I might come."

Her looming orgasm gripped her with a vengeance and he panted out a groan. "*God* you get so unbelievably tight." He fucked his thumb and cock in cadence as she clenched and trembled. "You're gonna choke my cock if I put it here, baby, I'll never last a second in your pretty little arse."

Her eyes rolled back as her orgasm crashed down, her breathing catching on a moan which he echoed, his hips flush against hers as he came deep.

"I think I'm going to like this," he murmured. "Fuck, I...I think I'm going to like this a lot."

Oh yeah, he's gonna love it 😊

I've gone completely rogue and written a ton of future scenes for this and now need to bridge the gap between this and them, so bear with me as I do that 📖

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙋

Chapter 33: “Thanks, love.”

Chapter Notes

Hi! A slightly longer-than-usual delay in my posting “schedule” (if I may be so bold as to use the word) as I got thoroughly distracted by writing two other works and posting a pre-written third (check them out if you like: [A Gentle Haunting](#), [Darling](#), and [An Exception](#)), but I hope this chapter makes up for it.

The next is pretty much done, too, so we’ll have another update shortly.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

It seemed natural for their next talk to be focused on their physical forms, given how much they’d surrendered them to one another already.

Draco intentionally didn’t spend much time thinking about the ink on his arm — whenever it crossed his mind, the shape of it burned in an echo of how it had felt for so much of the prior year, a sensation that did nothing positive for his mental state, so he avoided it whenever he could — but he knew they needed to address it so that he could assure her of certain truths about it. It would be a symbolic blood-letting for him. A confession of sins and a pledge to be better.

And she was marked too, he knew. He’d witnessed the event which had left that thin white line across her throat and had seen the faded purple slash along her torso, though he only knew the circumstances of that one through his aunt. He wanted her to have a chance to talk about those scars as well, in case they had marked her deeper than just the surface. Like his own had.

They waited for the weekend before delving into the topic, classes and assignments having kept their week completely packed to the point they hardly even had a chance to chat before falling asleep.

They were lying in bed on Friday night, her back pressed to his chest and his face buried in her hair, when Draco broached the subject.

“I think we should talk about our scars.” His voice was soft in the hushed room and he paired the suggestion with an affectionate stroke to her collarbone where his hand rested. Hermione was still for a moment and then shifted slightly in his arms.

“Alright,” she said. “But let’s do it first thing in the morning.”

He paused. “Okay. But why?”

“It seems like something we’ll want to do in the light of day,” she murmured. “Maybe out on the grounds? Somewhere in the sun.”

He pressed a kiss to her curls, holding her more tightly. “Good idea.”

~~~~~

They waited until after breakfast on Saturday morning and then went in search of somewhere private out on the grounds. They ended up in a little clearing on the edge of the forest, shielded on one side by low bushes and open to a view of the lake on the other. She conjured a blanket for them and they sat facing one another, cross-legged and sincere.

She sent a little smile to him and then suggested, “Shall we do a show and tell? I can go first.”

The edge of his mouth quirked up in a grim smile, grateful that she was taking the lead. “Okay.”

She unbuttoned her shirt without fanfare, seemingly uncaring that they were sitting in the grounds where anyone could see, secluded spot aside. She didn’t remove it fully, just undoing it enough to bare the thin purple scar where it spanned from her sternum to her outer ribs.

“We’ve talked about this one a little already,” she began. “So you already know that I got it in the Department of Mysteries, from Dolohov. It took me a few days to heal since it was a curse that did it but honestly nowadays I half forget I have it.” She traced an index finger down the length of it almost contemplatively, and then straightened to point under her chin. “And then you saw when I got this.”

She traced the line of that one, too, the motion macabre enough that he had to glance away into the trees. He saw her hand drop back into her lap in his periphery and forced himself to meet her eyes again. Her suffering was not his to be emotional over. *Again.*

She looked half ready to say something but then just jerked her chin at him. “Your turn.”

He pulled in a quick inhale and then copied her, unbuttoning his shirt so he could start with the less fraught of the marks on his body. He glanced down at his bared torso and the faint zig-zag of pale scars.

“Potter,” he said simply.

She sighed softly but otherwise didn’t comment, so he worked his shirt off fully so that the Dark Mark was exposed. It was strange to be intentionally focusing his attention on it and he let the itchy, tingly sensation surge.

“I’m...not sure exactly how to begin,” he admitted after a moment.

She was quiet for a breath and then suggested, “Do you want to tell me what it was like to get it?”

He cut his eyes up to her, suddenly bemused. “Right to the worst part, then?”

She puffed a little laugh, shrugging a shoulder. “May as well start bad and work your way back up?”

“Yeah.” He looked down at the Mark and sighed softly. “In some ways, it was the beginning of the end. Which is ironic that as soon as I was permanently branded, I began having doubts.” He flicked his gaze up to her, apologetic. “I’ll be candid. It took me longer than it should have to completely understand how wrong my beliefs were. It had been such a…”

He looked out toward the lake, searching for a way to explain himself. Not to *justify* it but to do justice to how he’d changed. He tried again.

“Purebloods being superior was as much a fact as gravity. It just *was*, and I’d accepted it for so long that realizing it actually *wasn’t* took some time to properly comprehend. I had to unlearn something I hadn’t even known I’d learned. But once I did, I realized it had actually been dawning on me for a while. You helped it along, of course, by being so unapologetically yourself.”

He met her eyes and found her watching him, a little furrow between her brows.

“You said you last called me a mudblood last May,” she said. “But you were Marked in Sixth year, right?”

He winced. “If you’re asking if it took me over a year to go from Death Eater initiation to total realization, then the answer is yes. I’m not proud of it, Granger. *Hermione*. But I want to be honest with you.”

She held out her hand to him and he practically lunged across the space between them to take it. She pulled him closer until she’d wrapped her free arm around him. He accepted her hug with relief, slipping his hand out of hers so he could hold her properly. He buried his face in the crook of her neck and drew in a deep lungful of her.

“I know. Thank you.” Her voice was hushed.

He almost told her not to thank him for a courtesy he severely owed her but decided not to tell her what to do. So he let her say whatever she wanted and nuzzled his face further into her hair.

She ran her hands slowly up and down his back. “Tell me about getting it?”

He drew in a slow breath. It was easier to say half hidden like he was so he confessed directly to her skin, the words clipped.

“It was the summer before Sixth year. August. He did it himself. It hurt worse than anything I’d felt up to that point, like he was drawing it with acid, searing it all the way to my bone. Father was in Azkaban by then but they made Mother watch. She acted like it was an honor

but I know her. I saw what it did to her, to see me join the ranks. Seeing her reaction was the first real thing that twigged it for me, that maybe it wasn't a good thing." He exhaled slowly. "Not that I exactly had a *choice*."

She didn't immediately interrupt the silence that followed his words. He trusted that she wasn't disgusted by him — no more than she might have been already, anyway, since he suspected he hadn't surprised her with any of what he'd said — so he didn't let the lack of response get to him and instead listened to the sound of the birds in the forest beside them and held her.

After a moment, she sighed softly. "I forgive you, Draco."

Pressure built behind his sinuses at the unanticipated statement but he sniffed it away as casually as he could, pulling back so he could look at her. Her face was set in an expression of moderated concern.

"You do?" His voice was less stable than he'd hoped for.

Her expression melted into bemusement. "Don't sound so surprised. Surely you knew that already?"

He had and he hadn't in equal measures.

He didn't take forgiveness lightly and he had so very many things to make amends for with her, so he'd accepted that while she probably didn't hold *all* of it against him anymore, surely there were things they were covertly avoiding rather than facing.

"I appreciate you saying it — more than you know — but I hope you know I wasn't pandering for it. I..." He twisted his mouth to the side. "I've accepted that there are some things I can't come back from."

He had complicated feelings about his worthiness sometimes. Yes, he'd been taught to be the way he was, groomed for the life of sole heir of a Pureblood estate, but then again so had Theo. And Blaise. Even *Pansy*, who had sorted things out for herself despite her parents being just as evangelical and coddling as his own had been.

But unlike them, he hadn't questioned it. He'd accepted his rank as superior because it suited him and because the privileges that came with it were useful, and hadn't bothered confirming any of it for himself. He'd always prided himself in being a critical thinker and it was embarrassing to realize how little he'd turned that thought on himself. How easily he'd put others down to elevate himself further, just like he'd seen his father do.

So while his acceptance of his permanent state of forgiven-but-not-forgotten was perhaps a bit melodramatic, he wanted her to know he didn't expect miracles from her.

She was only human, too.

But he wanted her to know that he was okay with it. He was more than happy to be her boyfriend with boundaries, because it was *real*. And because it was what he deserved.

Her brows furrowed as she absorbed his statement and he prepared himself for an argument, but then her whole face softened.

“Draco,” she said, and the tenderness in her tone speared right through him. “Sweetheart. It was a *war*. We all did things we can’t come back from but that doesn’t have anything to do with forgiveness.”

His heart swelled with repressed feelings for her. He let it surge until the pressure of it was almost painful to contain and then let it go in a carefully controlled release, visualizing it spooling out through his limbs and to the tips of his hair rather than out his mouth. It wouldn’t be long though, he knew. It was getting harder to hold in.

He pressed his lips together in a grim line and exhaled.

“It was more than the war for me, though,” he said. “It was my whole life.”

She nodded. “Yes. It was. But it’s not anymore, is it?”

He inclined his head. “No. No, I don’t believe any of it anymore.”

She nodded again. “Okay then. So, I forgive you. I forgive the child you were because I see the man you’re becoming. And I like that person very, very much.”

Tears pricked again.

“Hermione.” He reached for her and she let herself be reeled in, wrapping her arms around his neck as his closed around her middle. “I...thank you. That means so much.”

She gave him a little smile and then kissed him, softly and imbued with meaning, then drew back.

“And for what it’s worth, I’m sorry for everything I did to you as a child, too,” she murmured, and then gave him a coy little grin. “Except the slap. I actually think about that a lot.”

He barked a surprised laugh. “Outrageous. The audacity you had to do it shocked me more than the pain.”

She pressed her lips together to hide her smile, shrugging an unapologetic shoulder. “Yes, well, it was perhaps immature of me to resort to physical violence but what can I say? Apparently you inspire plenty of physical acts from me.”

He snorted. “*Apparently*. Should I remind you?”

“Better had,” she said with faux-seriousness. “After all, we’ve done our tricky item for the day so something fun is certainly warranted.”

“Hmm, quite right. What’ll it be then? Fancy a little roll in the heather?”

She made a show of looking around. “We’re not sitting in heather.”

He took her down to the ground anyway.

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Despite it being a rather sunny Saturday, Hermione wasn't wired to spend all day outside, not when there were assignments to complete and books to be read. It was almost May and the end of term — and therefore exams — were looming ever nearer. Draco eventually bent to her will and accompanied her to the library after lunch.

He was just as academically minded as her, she'd found, once he had nothing else to distract himself with. He'd been good enough through their earlier years to stay toward the upper quadrant of their class standing but now that his focus revolved quite flatteringly around her, he'd put the long library hours to good use and had become rather exemplary.

Chatty, too, she'd found, and quite a fan of lengthy debates over even the most nuanced aspect of an assignment. She allowed the distractions because, somewhat annoyingly, they often revealed interesting new facts or connections she'd not previously considered.

He was a little more reserved than usual that afternoon and she put it down to their earlier talk, even if they'd cleared the air rather marvelously afterward. His contemplative air had settled on him after they'd righted their clothing and he'd slipped his hand around hers, giving her a little half smile that spoke to something unsaid. She let it be. He'd share it when he was ready, assuming it was even for her ears.

Now, seated beside her at the library table, he turned to her. She was in the middle of writing a sentence so flicked her eyes to him expectantly as she finished her thought.

"Can you pass me that book? The one on Runes from the 12th century?" he asked, nodding to the stack of books on her other side.

She finished her sentence then looked around for it. She located it then hefted it up and handed it over. He took it from her with a little smile, setting it down and cracking it open to what appeared to be a random page.

"Thanks, love."

"You're..."

Her mind was still mostly focused on her assignment but she trailed off when the word registered. Hadn't they agreed he wouldn't try that pet name again until it *meant* something?

"...welcome," she finished, after a beat. "But wait, didn't we...?"

She was going to ask but the almost shy look he sent her made his intent abundantly clear.

He *hadn't* forgotten. She froze, her heart stopping along with the rest of her.

“Really?” She breathed.

He laughed, part amused and part self-conscious, eyes darting from hers back to the book.
“Yeah.”

“Draco Malfoy,” she gasped, and then jostled his shoulder when he still didn’t meet her eyes.
“Look at me.”

He huffed a short exhale through his nose and then did. His uncertainty was constricting her chest to the point where she had to press a hand to her sternum, breathless. She found his hand with her other, eyes not leaving his.

“Draco,” she murmured. “You love me?”

He swallowed. “Yes.” And then he grimaced. “Sorry.”

She stared at him for a moment and then laughed, charmed by him even as her heart suddenly beat out of her chest toward him. “You’re sorry?”

“It’s so fast. I don’t want to overwhelm you with it.”

There was adorably unsure and then there was outright misconception. The latter would not do.

“Draco.” She slid from her chair and pushed him on the shoulders until he leaned back enough for her to sit on his lap sideways, hands cupping his jaw so he had to look at her. She didn’t beat around the bush.

“I love you too.”

He blinked, a furrow forming between his brows. She held his gaze patiently, lips quirking up at the edges as she pressed them together.

He exhaled shakily. “You do?”

“Yes. Would you like me to say it again?”

“I think you ought to. I might have just blacked out.”

She let her smile free. “Draco middle-name-redacted Malfoy,” she said, in her most official voice, and he rolled his eyes but laughed softly. “I love you. Now you.”

His eyes ate her up, taking in all the details of her face and lingering for a curiously long time on the little mole on her cheek. When they slid back to meet hers, he was smiling that little private smile he’d first gifted her with.

“Hermione middle-name-unknown Granger,” he whispered. “I love you.”

She allowed it for a moment, pressing a heartfelt kiss to his lips, and then fixed him with a stern look. “You really don’t know my middle name?”

He lifted a brow. “You *do* know mine?”

“Your father seems the type,” she said airily. “Ripe with the patriarchy.”

He snorted, inclining his head. “You’re not wrong. So, what’s yours then?”

“Jean.”

He tried it out. “Hermione Jean. Pretty. Named after anyone?”

She instantly realized her hypocrisy and evidently laid it out plainly across her face judging by the way he eyed her then laughed. “Oh, don’t tell me it’s your mother’s name.”

She sighed, chagrined. “Yes, it was.”

Keen as he was, he noted the past tense. His expression sobered. “Ah.”

“She’s not dead,” she said quickly, unsure why it was important he know it right that minute. “She’s just not...Jean anymore.”

She could tell he didn’t quite understand and now regretted bringing it up. “We’ll talk about it later. I don’t want to spoil the moment.”

“You can talk about your mother whenever you want to,” he told her gently. “It won’t spoil anything.”

“Even the moment you realized you love me?” She went for a light tone, the concept that he *loved her* still so precious and wonderful.

He gave her a strange look. “You do know I’ve loved you for longer than just right now, don’t you?”

Butterflies swarmed and then scattered. “You have?”

His expression went fond. “Of course.”

“Oh. When did you figure it out?”

He looked pensive. “It sort of...hit me like a Bludger Friday night at Blaise’s.”

She thought back. They’d had really excellent sex that night (not that that was rare — gods, she was so lucky) and he’d said he was *smitten*.

“And once the thought struck, I realized it had been there for a while.” He eyed her. “Why, have you just now realized you love me?”

She laughed and pushed back his hair from his forehead, admiring him with open fondness. “No. No, I knew I did.”

“Oh really. And why haven’t you told me yet then?” He smirked up at her teasingly and she laughed.

“I don’t know. It’s been slowly growing for a while so I suppose I wasn’t rushing myself with it.” She gave him a sweet little peck on the lips. “I’m glad you said it though. I like that we both know now.”

He cupped her jaw and pulled her back close so he could bump his nose to hers and then align their mouths. “Me too.”

She let him kiss her but then had to ask, “What made you want to tell me now?”

He drew back so he could look at her, tangling the fingers of one hand with hers. His expression was painfully sincere if not a little nervous. She felt a flicker of nerves in response, wondering what he was going to say.

“Our talk this morning...it solidified a lot of things for me. The predominant one being that I don’t want to keep things from you, and that these past months with you have been, quite literally, the best of my life.”

His frankness made her blush, the way he wasn’t breaking eye contact even more so.

“When we were down at Blaise’s, you said you didn’t see much decided in your future but that you knew you saw me there.” He tilted his head, confirming it, and she nodded. “Well, I see you in my future, too. A massive part of it. I suppose what I’m asking is, what do you think about finding a flat?”

Her brows went up. She wasn’t sure what she’d been expecting but it hadn’t been that. “A flat? You mean, in London? To live in? Together?”

His mouth twitched into an almost-smile at her reaction but he still looked apprehensive. “Yes, that’s what I mean.”

“Oh.” She blinked. “Oh my god. Of course!”

He couldn’t hold his smile, though it looked like he still tried. His barely-restrained hope swelled in her chest. “Yeah? You’d share a flat with me?”

“Yes!” Her heartbeat was steady if not a little stronger than usual. “Yes, I’d love that.”

“It’s not too soon?” he checked, eyes searching. “I don’t want to rush you.”

“You’re not. This is actually such a relief.” She buried her head in the crook of his neck, surrounding her senses with him. His arms wrapped around her and he tucked his face against her shoulder too.

“If you’re sure,” he said, the words muffled by her jumper.

“I love you,” she assured him. “I’m sure.”

Finalllyyyyyy 🥰🥰🥰

Also special nod to the fact that I have officially posted 500k words to AO3 🤯🥳 I knew I was wordy but damn.

Thanks to you, dear reader, for being here and commenting and generally encouraging me along the way. Readers are what makes it feel less like shouting/whispering/giggling into the void and even more so since I've begun to recognize so many of you. I appreciate you all so much!! (Okay, my Words of Affirmation heart is happy now 😊).

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 34: “It’s my, erm...monthly.”

Chapter Notes

Hi friends! Today’s chapter is dedicated to @CarrieMaxwell for the idea. It ended up being such a fun scene to write, so I’m very grateful for the inspiration! 🥰 Thanks, Carrie!

cw: period sex (no gratuitous descriptions of blood but heavy implication)

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

“So our flat,” she began. “Besides having a truly *enormous* bathtub, what are your other must-haves?”

Draco looked over at her. They were sitting in her room two days later, she on her bed and he at her desk, sorting through their upcoming weekly assignments before calling it a night. Or at least, *they* had been until *she*’d gotten uncharacteristically distracted by daydreams. *Planning for the future*, she reframed.

His expression turned thoughtful. “I...don’t actually know. I’ve never been in one before. I’m not sure what’s standard.”

She blinked. “I suppose you wouldn’t have. How...odd. It’s like you’re from another planet sometimes.”

He received that with a raised brow. She waved it away.

“Flats come in all sorts of conditions so I expect there’s a huge range in what’s on offer, depending on where we look. But in most cases, it’s just a kitchen, a lounge, a loo, and a bedroom.”

But then a thought occurred to her.

“Did you mean a flat in Wizarding London, or Muggle? I expect we’d have more luck finding something in our budget in Muggle London, to be honest. I have a bit of gold saved up and the exchange rate to British pounds is actually quite good at the moment.”

He waved a hand. “Oh, you don’t need to worry about the money. Heir to the Malfoy estate, remember? Let it serve a good purpose for once.”

She clicked her tongue. “Draco, you can’t pay for everything.”

His brows went up and he pushed his papers aside and leaned back, folding his arms over his chest. It was a pose that indicated his resolve and she shored herself up against it.

“Why not?”

“Because we’re equals,” she told him firmly. “In everything.”

He sent a wry smile her way. “That’s kind of you to say, but you *know* that’s not true. You’re superior to me in a great many ways.”

She opened her mouth to retort but the rest of her argument was now obsolete in light of his new tactic. “Well...that’s...”

He gave her the gift of interrupting her stammering. “You don’t need to worry about money,” he insisted. “Please, let me take care of this one thing.”

She pressed her lips together. It was more than the small thing he was making it out to be, both literally in that rent in London was quite a bit more than pocket money and in that in accepting his offer she would, in some tangential way, find herself under the Malfoy family wing. She wasn’t sure entirely how to process the latter but he was still looking over at her with a rather sincere expression, so she capitulated.

“Alright. I won’t be difficult about it.”

That got the corner of his mouth up. “That a promise, Granger?”

She gave him a toned-down version of her patented withering look and he chuckled, breaking her faux-sternness instantly.

“I’ll do my best. But really, London gets expensive. I know you claim to be quite well off but really, if it turns out it’d be helpful if I—what are you doing?”

He’d stood abruptly halfway through her sentence, the chair scraping as he pushed it back in the act of standing, his legs cutting through the space between them in a few long strides. He carefully pulled her papers away and dropped them to the floor, eyes intent on hers as he rested a fist on either side of her hips, the meat of them sinking into the bedding. He was looming over her and her heart shot into her throat before pounding through her at his sudden proximity.

“You’re being difficult already,” he told her lowly. “Couldn’t even go a full minute, could you?”

“I...I’m just trying to be practical,” she got out. He had an intensity about him that was stoking the always-smoldering coals inside her to a crackling inferno. “You said you’d never been in a flat, so you might not know how expensive they can be.”

He nodded down at her, his expression patient. “You remember Blaise’s house? His yacht?”

She nodded, eyes riveted.

“That’s *nothing*. I could buy you an *island*. I could buy you a *fleet* of boats. And that’s without even having to ask my parents for anything.”

It shouldn’t have been sexy, but it was. The careful planner in her — the person who thought and *overthought* about every scenario, who’d carefully plotted out her life only to watch it all crumble away — found what Draco was offering to be extraordinarily appealing. It gave her a sense of security where previously she’d had only fragments.

And she saw what the offer did for him, too. All that wealth, once a privilege and then a burden, now a gift.

She cupped her hands around his jaw and pulled him the last few inches to her.

“Okay. I’ll let you take care of me,” she whispered.

She felt strangely emotional about it and so kissed him before she did something foolish like cry.

He leaned into the kiss, putting his whole body into it until she had to extend an arm behind herself for support. She had a sense he rather liked how she’d reframed it.

She slid her hand from his jaw to around his shoulder and let him lay her back, pulling her other arm up to join its peer. But when he followed her down and pressed his stomach against hers, she felt a deep ache and a low twinge of pain. Her mouth went slack for a moment as she pondered the sensation but he was quick to slant his mouth and recapture her attention. She swept her tongue over his lip and he opened for her instantly, his own meeting hers and dragging a contented hum from him. He shifted over her again, working his way closer between her legs, and the movement brought her awareness down to where he was just beginning to grind.

She was quite wet, she realized. When another low ache surged and she suddenly felt *very* wet, the coin dropped.

It had been ages since her last period but that was still typical for her, the cycle still trying to regulate itself after having been so long being affected by starvation and anxiety. The realization of what was happening brought with it a wave of relief. It was a strange thing, to welcome a small amount of suffering because it meant she was healing in other ways.

It did, unfortunately, put a damper on her current plans.

Her next kiss had a finality to it that Draco picked up on, keyed into her as he was. He gentled his touch and then slowly pulled back, expression heated but affectionate as he looked down at her, a question in his eyes.

“I just need the loo quickly,” she whispered, a little embarrassed about the clunky transition but unwilling to stain her clothing or worse, her bedding, lest he see it.

He pulled back all the way, pulling her straight as he went and then stepping back once they were both level. She slipped past him and into the loo for a quick clean up. When she

returned, he was putting his schoolwork away and she breathed a little sigh of relief at not having to gently reject his advances.

He glanced over when she reentered the room. "Alright?"

She bit her lip, smiling at him. "Yes. Tired, I think."

He nodded easily. "Okay. Me too."

~~~~

The next day was uncomfortable. It had been longer than she could recall since she'd last menstruated and so it felt like body was giving her the complete overview of symptoms as a reminder for what she'd been without. She felt unbearably emotional, the smallest act of kindness witnessed between students in the hall making a knot form in her throat and further compounded by the whole gamut of physical pains: headaches, stomach cramps, and the ebb and flow of nausea. Sometimes she really hated having a uterus.

The only saving grace was that her day was packed with classes and so she was offered near-constant distraction until dinner time, and by then her body had laid off her for the most part. She ate better than she had all day and then sought out Ginny in the common room afterward so she could privately lament with her friend about it. Ginny was sympathetic and affectionate, which swiftly reinstated Hermione's great delight in having been born female.

She and Draco had developed a habit of sleeping in her room every night and after her chat with Ginny, she found herself eager for his comforting touch, so she found him and tugged him to bed a little earlier than usual. Once they got to her room, she deposited her bag on her desk and then walked into his arms. He wrapped his around her instantly, pressing his cheek to the top of her head. She heaved a great sigh, eyes slipping shut in contentment.

He pressed a kiss to her curls and then cleared his throat. "I have something to ask you."

She opened her eyes and leaned back to see his face. "What is it?"

He looked hesitant. "You can say no and I won't have any issue with it," he began, and nerves coiled within her. "But I've been thinking that I'd like to tell my parents about us."

She blinked, eyes widening. "*Oh!*"

She supposed it was only a matter of time but it still surprised her. The concept of being brought before Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy as a chosen partner to their only son and heir...it was a statement. It would be the end of their Pureblood legacy, assuming she and Draco stayed together and *doubly*-assuming they ever...in her fragile hormonal state, she didn't even let herself think the words.

"Oh," she repeated. He looked sure but she couldn't help but ask, "Really?"

He nodded. “Yes. I’d like to tell them myself before they catch wind of it through the paper or a gossipy acquaintance.”

“Well. That’s practical of you.” She worried her lip. “Is it silly that I’m nervous?”

His expression softened. “Of course not. But you don’t need to be nervous. Although I’m not so delusional as to think it won’t be difficult, at least initially.”

“For you?” she asked, stroking a hand over his back where it rested, to show she understood if his answer was yes. He copied the motion with a thumb on her cheek.

“In a way, yes. But mostly it will be difficult for them. They have certain ideals for me and it may be hard for them to let some of them go.”

That was the understatement of the century, she thought, but hummed and said, “I’m sure it will be. And you think it’s worth it?”

He lifted a brow. “Do I think it’s *worth it*? Telling my parents that I’m in love with the cleverest, kindest, sexiest witch to ever grace these halls? *And* that she loves me back? Yes, Granger. It’s very worth it.”

“Not sure I’d share that last with them,” she advised with mock-seriousness.

He smirked. “No. That part is just for me, isn’t it?”

“Mmhmm.” She accepted his kiss though it was more smile than anything.

But his phrasing had reminded her of another tricky social event for which they’d have to prepare, both individually and as a pair. She gave him a little pecking kiss and then met his eyes.

“Speaking of difficult events, the anniversary of the end of the war is next week,” she said.

The change in topic shifted his expression into something morose. “Ah.”

“McGonagall hasn’t announced it to the general population yet but she’s informed the Heads and Prefects that there’ll be a ceremony. And she’s asked me if I’d like to say a few words. I told her that I would.”

He looked contrite. “I’ll be sorry to miss it.”

She frowned. “You won’t be there?”

He shook his head once. “No. I’m going to spend that day with Greg. It’s the anniversary of Vince’s death and beyond the circumstances of *that* also being partly my fault, I’d like to be there for him. He was Greg’s best friend.”

She didn’t know what to say, first because she felt it wasn’t her place and then because the reality of it — that his friend had also died — brought her up short.

“Of course,” she said. “I understand.”

He was quiet for a moment, then said, “In the spirit of being open with each other...that’s not the only reason I won’t be there. It feels inappropriate for me to stand with everyone, mourning the dead while knowing the direct role I had in their deaths.”

“A role you were coerced into under threat of death,” she reminded him softly.

He didn’t reply right away, hands fiddling with hers with an absent mindedness that hinted his thoughts were churning. She let him take the time he needed to sort it out, even though more words of comfort and understanding were hanging off the tip of her tongue. It made something deep inside her ache to see him caught up like that but his introspection and reflection was so healing to witness that she didn’t try to insert herself just yet. The path to peace wasn’t smooth, she knew, and if she was allowed to tackle her own bumps in the road, then he ought to be, too.

He drew in a slow breath. “I know you mean well but I think I need to feel guilty about it. On the first anniversary, at the very least. The nature of my intentions aside, I still *did it* and ignoring that or pretending that I *didn’t* won’t help me come to terms with it.”

It was too much for her fragile emotional state and she couldn’t stop the tears from forming at the dejection in his voice, and the way he was genuinely, authentically making amends. They swelled with a rapidity that made it inevitable for them to fall and so she gave up and let them, blinking them down her cheeks. It was a relief of sorts and the sob that followed them spoke to it. After that, it overcame her for a few seconds.

Draco, expectedly, looked aghast. “What’s wrong?”

She shook her head but couldn’t speak yet, so just leaned her forehead against his shoulder in a non-verbal assurance that it wasn’t because of him. Not in a bad way, any way. The flare of emotion only lasted for a few moments. She took a shaky breath and then straightened, swiping at her eyes and sniffing.

“Nothing. God, sorry. It’s just my stupid hormones.” She could see he didn’t quite understand, so clarified softly. “It’s my, erm...monthly.”

His brows went up at that, and then quickly dipped down. “We’ve been together almost every day for much longer than a month. Have I been embarrassingly unobservant or has this not happened before?” He immediately looked apologetic. “If that’s an insensitive question, feel free to ignore me.”

She breathed a little laugh, the act making her acutely aware of how bunged up her nose was and how overall grotty she felt.

“It’s not insensitive,” she said, offering him a watery smile before walking into her bathroom. She turned on the tap and bent forward, not waiting for it to warm up before dipping her hands under and splashing her face. The cool water felt good; cleansing.



“It’s been unpredictable for a while.” She filled her palms again, wetting and then rubbing at her face. “I lost it altogether when we were on the run – we were always hungry and...and in a constant state of high anxiety.” Something soft nudged her hand and she cracked an eye to see he was holding out a towel for her. She took it, dabbing herself dry.

“And it’s still sort of...coming back. Sorry.” She pressed the towel over her face as she sobbed once more, uncontrollably. “*God*. Sorry.”

“Please don’t apologize.” His voice was soft and a little hesitant.

She could hear him shuffling around to her right so took a deep breath behind the privacy of the towel then swiped at her eyes once more before lowering it. He was standing beside her, hip leaned on the counter and expression that of mild concern.

“What can I do?”

She shook her head. “Nothing, nothing. I’m fine now. It’s just the second day of it so I sometimes get quite emotional. It’s actually rather annoying.”

He observed her with a knowing look and she suddenly recalled that two of his closest friends - Pansy and Daphne - were female. “Does it hurt?”

As if on cue, her stomach cramped. She winced but otherwise tried to ignore it. Her body didn’t like that, so sent her another cramp, stronger than the first. Draco caught the flash of pain on her face and when she dropped a hand reflexively to her torso, his eyes followed the motion.

“No, it’s fine,” she assured him automatically.

He eyed her dubiously. “Are you just saying that?”

His concern was sweet but she rolled her eyes. “I’ve handled worse.”

“Yes, well, fortunately for us, that’s not the way pain works. You’re allowed to be in pain now even if you’ve been in *more* pain before. And you’re allowed to admit it’s painful, even if this is something you’re used to just, going on your day as usual with.” He raised a challenging brow at her. “Right?”

He had her there. She sighed, ceding to his point. “Yes.”

“Okay. So, will you let me take care of you then?”

“I don’t need–” she began, but he raised that brow again and she subsided.

“You agreed to it in one manner already, *and* you let me take care of you in *other* physical ways, too.” He gave her a pointed look and she couldn’t help but bite her lip at the implication. “Why not this one?”

She tried to verbalize it. “Because you won’t get anything out of it?” But even as she said it, she knew that wasn’t true and his expression confirmed it. “Or because it’s nothing special.

You don't need to make a fuss."

He stepped closer, brushing her hair over her shoulders and then trailing down the length of it, clasping his hands together at her lower back and pulling her to him. "What if I want to make a fuss?" He tucked in his chin to catch her eye. "Hmm? Will you let me, baby?"

Her eyes welled with tears again and she sniffed. "Stupid idiot," she groused. "You'll make me cry again."

"Good." He dipped down and kissed her softly, getting her tears all over his cheeks. "Then we'll be even in one thing. *Finally*."

She laughed and let him kiss her then pulled back to burrow into his chest. He ran warm hands down her back, tucking her in under his chin.

"How about this," he murmured. "You get comfy in bed and I'll nip up to Pomfrey for a pain potion. And then I'll see if the kitchens have...chocolate? Pans always wanted chocolate. And judging by this—" He squeezed his arms a little tighter around her. "I'm guessing you're a fan of physical contact. Yeah? Or do you prefer not to be touched right now?"

"Contact is lovely." As was everything else he'd suggested. She wanted to cry for a whole new reason now but instead just inhaled his familiar scent until she was full to bursting with it. He hummed a warm sound and she felt it everywhere.

"Okay. Then when I'm back, I'll come get into bed with you for a cuddle and you can tell me what you want next. Sound good?"

She squeezed him tightly around the middle. "I love you," she mumbled into his jumper.

He huffed a short breath then pressed his cheek against her curls. "I love you, too."

He held her for another minute, hands making a slow circuit up and down her spine, his touch softening as he reached her shoulders and intensifying at her lower back. She melted into his hold, wishing the laws of physics would allow it for her to simply float up, weightless in his arms. And then she remembered that she was a literal fucking witch and could *levitate things* and barked a laugh.

"What?" He had a smile in his voice, amused at her. Perpetually.

She loved him so much.

"I think I'm delirious from the blood loss," she joked.

He chuckled. "Better get you into bed then. C'mon. Want to change first?"

"I can manage." She leaned back in his arms and tilted her face up. "Kiss for the road?"

A little divot of confusion formed between his brows. "What? What road?"

“Your imminent trip to the hospital wing and the kitchens, obviously.” She puckered dramatically.

“Ah. Naturally.” He closed the distance, his kiss uninhibited but short and sweet. “You better be in bed when I get back. *Without* schoolwork.”

“Yes, Draco.” She rolled her eyes but she was grinning. She’d never been in such a goofy mood while her body was trying to strangle her ovaries.

He left her to it and she obeyed his instructions, putting on her pajamas even though it was only half-seven and then climbing into bed. She almost pushed her luck by bringing her History of Magic textbook with her but the thought of lying back while he fed her chocolate was too enticing to risk. And anyway, she’d never eat around such precious tomes and *certainly* not something as staining as chocolate.

She entertained herself by rubbing soothing figure-eights on her achy pelvis and was half asleep from the comfort of it by the time he let himself back into her room. He made a sound of satisfaction to see her lying in bed and the deep register of it tingled along her like the brush of a warm hand.

And then his warm hand *was* there, stroking down her temple and making her eyes flutter open.

“Look at you being so good,” he told her, smiling fondly down at her.

Despite the dull throb of pain, her arousal surged. Scratch emotional vulnerability making her want to shag him into the next week – it was his emotional *availability* that was going to get him laid. So often, and *so* thoroughly.

She leaned into his touch and he pet her once more before dropping a knee to the mattress beside her and holding up his other hand. In it he held a small vial and a bar of chocolate. She made grabby hands for them and he chuckled, letting her take them.

“Thank you,” she said, going up to her elbows so that she could knock back the pain potion, grimacing at the bitter aftertaste. He took the empty vial from her, setting it on the bedside table while she collapsed back, working the wrapping off the chocolate. She bit a piece off, right from the bar, and he tutted.

“Such manners,” he sighed in mock-disappointment and she took another bite just to taunt him.

He snorted then twisted to sit on the edge of the bed, leaning down to untie his shoes. She admired the slope of his spine and the way she could see the movement of his shoulder blades through the material of his jumper and shirt. The way his hair fell over his brow as he bent over, obscuring his eyes and highlighting his cheekbones. The way his face relaxed when he thought he wasn’t being observed. The way he sent a quick glance to the drinking glass on her bedside table, checking that there was water in it before he turned to get under the covers with her.

What had she been saying? About him getting laid over this in the *future*? She very much wanted him to get laid for it now.

She welcomed him down beside her, shifting slightly even though there was plenty of space. He tucked himself next to her on his side, one arm curled behind his head and the other sliding under the covers to locate hers. She'd gone back to idly massaging her pelvis and his hand found it, covering her hand with his. She stilled at his touch but he murmured, "Show me?" so she resumed the slow figure-eights.

After a few circuits he nudged her hand out of the way and took over for her, snuggling a little closer and pressing his lips to her temple. The tenderness made her nose burn, tears pricking anew. She fought it, firming her mouth and then, as covertly as possible, sniffing.

"It's okay if you cry," he said softly. "It won't freak me out."

She resisted for another few seconds until the pressure made her head ache, and then she huffed a watery, "*Damnit, Draco*," and gave in, letting out a little sob.

He hummed a sympathetic sound and she cried a little more, because it felt good even as it didn't, and because she could feel the way her letting down a wall was making him curl further around her. Like she'd opened a door to herself and he was tentatively letting himself inside.

Thankfully the emotions faded as quickly as they'd come on given that there was no real stimulus for them beyond her own endocrine system and she heaved in a big breath, wiping at her eyes. As he'd curled around her a bit more, it was the top of her curls he kissed.

"Feeling any better?" he asked.

"Yes." She sniffed again and then sighed. "You might be the most perfect person I know."

He snorted at that. "That's ridiculous." She opened her mouth to insist that he *was* but he carried on, tone faux-accusatory. "I *might* be? Who am I competing against?"

She barked a laugh. "Oh my god. *Nevermind*, I take it back."

"You can't." He shifted so that he was up on his elbow again, grinning down at her rather proudly. "Remember? No take-backs."

"Idiot."

"Mmm." He brought his lips to hers in a soft kiss. "You're perfect to me, too," he murmured.

She wrapped her hands around his neck to hold him close, kissing him again and again. They were so used to kisses turning into more that it wasn't until he pulled back, breathless and with a thigh between hers, that she realized they'd escalated it so far. He shifted his weight back onto his hip beside her, hand stroking at her waist.

"Got carried away," he said contritely, "Sorry."

“No, it’s fine.” She pulled him back down over her, tucking his hips between her thighs. “It feels good.”

He made a little sound of disagreement. “You’re hurting, though.”

“The pain potion helped. And anyway, there’s actually a theory that orgasms help with menstrual cramping. I’ve always sort of thought it was just another example of men manipulating women but...in the name of discovery...” She gave him a little coy smile.

“Is that so?” He smirked down at her. “And how would you like to test this theory?”

She considered keeping things simple with a little over-the-knickers grinding but there was something about the emotional intimacy that crying in his arms had woven which made her want to be close to him. As close as possible.

“We can have sex.” She bit her lip, suddenly unsure. “Unless you don’t want to?”

He scoffed at that but she wanted to make sure he understood the inevitable ramifications of doing this while she was literally bleeding.

“It’s bound to be...messy.”

He dipped down to nose up her jaw. “So what? You make a mess of me every time.”

She groaned. “How do you make everything so *sexy*?”

“You give me a lot to work with. Now c’mon, can I fuck the pain away?”

She laughed but nodded and pulled his face up for a kiss. He deepened it gradually, working them back up to the feverish pace they’d found minutes earlier until she was winding her legs around his hips, desperate for more.

“Tell me if you want to stop,” he mumbled against her lips, giving her what she wanted and grinding his erection against her.

“Okay.” She tightened her legs and canted her hips up to increase the friction.

He grunted and supported himself on a forearm, the other hand slipping under her pajama top to stroke a thumb over her tummy. It was a tender, careful gesture and it shot her lust to untenable levels.

“Oh god, *please* take your clothes off,” she groaned.

He laughed but obediently sat back and tugged his jumper over his head, emerging with blonde hair askew. He fixed it with a quick shake of his head, the strands flicking back before falling forward again as he dipped his chin to start on his shirt buttons. It was such an unfair thing for him to do while she was already reduced to a puddle that she just stared, mesmerized, until he pulled his shirt off.

“Do I have to undress you, too?” he asked, catching her watching him as he set the garment aside.

She took the hint, wriggling her top off while still lying down and then pushing her pajama bottoms over her hips and halfway down her thighs. He took over from there, scooting back so that he could work her pajamas over her knees and off, and then doing the same with the rest of his own clothes. He settled back between her thighs, naked and hard.

“Still alri—” he began, tone soft, but she tugged him down rather fiercely and licked the words out of his mouth. He, smartly, didn’t hold back after that.

He kept close to her, his face never too far to kiss even as he worked her knickers off. When he ran the head of his cock through her, she flushed at the extra slickness but he was undeterred, groaning with a restrained sort of urgency.

“So *wet*.” He pressed forward until the tip slipped inside. “So *hot*.”

He pressed forward and she bit her lip over the very slight twinge of discomfort as his cock prodded her sensitive walls. He caught it and instantly stilled.

“Are you—”

“It was just a tiny ache. Don’t stop, I want to feel you.”

He looked dubious so she hooked her legs around his hips and pulled him closer. He sank in a few more inches and they shared a breathy sound. The discomfort faded quickly as her body accommodated him, the pressure of him inside her soothing in a way she hadn’t expected, like pressing a careful thumb against a knot of muscle. She let out a slow exhale and nodded up at him.

He drew out slowly and then pushed back inside, the glide already easier. She ran her hands over his shoulders and along the muscles of his back, tracing the line of them down his spine. She could sense him watching her face for any new signs of pain so exaggerated her pleasure just a tiny bit so that he’d relax, gasping out a little sound each time he slid home.

“Feels good,” she moaned and he grunted, the next thrust a little more insistent. “*Oh*, just like that.”

He kept the pace and force the same for several beats and then pulled out halfway, gaze dropping between her legs.

“Fuck, why is that so—” He made an inarticulate sound, like a whine smothered by a growl, evidently unable to find the words.

“You’re such an animal,” she gasped as he thrust back inside with a groan from low in his chest. She squeaked as he rocked upward on the next press, a new intensity behind it.

“I like seeing how you coat me. It’s one thing to feel it but to see it? *God*.”

She whimpered, clinging to him. Draco always managed to make her feel like the sexiest woman alive and she couldn't help the flare of emotion as he validated her in even this, a time when even the most progressive society still often turned up their nose.

"You feel amazing," he continued, voice dipping toward reverent. "Is it okay for you? Feel alright?"

She gripped his shoulder, fingers digging in. "It's good. It's...it's *so* good."

He shifted his weight to press a warm hand low on her belly. "And how's that? That feel good?"

She didn't have the words, nodding and closing her eyes as the sensation of it melted through her. It felt like he was teasing out the knot of pain right from the source, stroking and massaging and soothing it until the pressure of pain was shifting to pleasure, overloading her system and rebooting it. Her head sank into the pillow with a contented sigh.

"Fuck." He sucked in a breath. "Fuck, you're...being so good, baby. Look at you. Letting me...make it better...fuck. *Fuck.*"

She wanted to laugh at his swift deterioration but didn't have the coherence for it so bleated out a little sound of agreement, basking in the warmth of him over her and the pressure and weight of him inside her as he rubbed away all her tension. He mastered himself enough to slip a hand between them to swirl competently over her clit, the direction and pace just *so... exactly...right*. She moaned as her orgasm swelled.

"Gonna come," she murmured, reaching up to grip handfuls of his hair. "You're gonna... gonna make me come, baby."

"Yes." He pressed his forehead to hers, bumping his hips against hers but staying deep so that he could focus on her clit. "Come for me. Show me how—*oh fuck.*"

The premonitory clutch of her orgasm felt tighter than usual, her body overworked and fatigued from what it had been passively inflicting on her for days. It made her orgasm feel stronger, the pleasure such a relief that she leaned into it, reaching where she sometimes shied away from the intensity. It crashed over her, hard enough to leave her gasping.

He wasn't faring much better, his chest heaving with labored breaths.

"Oh *shit*. Oh fuck. Fuck, fuck...can I...are you—"

"Yes," she panted. "Yes. You can come."

He lapsed into a groan, head dropping as he watched himself thrust into her twice more before holding deep. She admired his face as he finished; the way the tension melted into pleasure and gentled his features. His eyes were still downcast as he slowly extricated himself and when he made a noise so similar to the ones that escaped him right before orgasm, she looked down as well.

"God you're..." His voice was plaintive. Almost whiny.

She grimaced. “I told you it’d be messy.”

“No, it’s just...you didn’t bleed when I first...when we...”

He was barely coherent but she caught the gist of it. “When you took my virginity?” she asked, bemused.

“*God.*”

She laughed an incredulous puff of air. “Are you freaking out right now?”

He levered off of her and collapsed onto the bed beside her, face-down.

“My head’s spinning.” He said, muffled by the mattress. “Holy fuck. That’s a whole new level to...”

She bit her lip, feeling cheeky and, frankly, over the moon at his reaction. “Your possessive little come kink?”

He whimpered. “Not fair.”

She hummed contentedly, basking in the lethargy of her comedown and the way her body felt soft and lax for the first time in days. “So, you like knowing that you were the first. Is that it?”

“Granger.”

She hummed a contemplative sound. “I see. And even though you might let someone *watch*, no one else will ever feel what you have, will they?”

“*Granger.*”

He rolled halfway over to glare at her, the effect of it only enhanced by how pink his cheeks were from the pressure of having crushed them into the bed and, she liked to imagine, her words.

“Yes, *Malfoy?*”

He snorted a puff of air, shaking his head at her. “You’re in for it now,” he said, tone resigned. “I’ll be intolerable.”

She raised both brows at him then swept her gaze idly to the ceiling. “You already are.”

She bit her lip to quell her grin when he scoffed and rolled back over her.



The catharsis of writing this fic reached new heights today 🙌 There is so much stigma about menstruation and our boy Draco is here to shut it down!! If this wasn't your thing, sorry but thanks for reading it anyway! 🙄

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 35: “I still hate fire.” Greg poured their tea.

### Chapter Notes

Has it really been almost a month since I updated?? Oh my word. Sorry friends!!

I got completely side-tracked by writing a [Pierced Draco](#) series, a lap-sitting smutty rom-com ([A Good Landing](#)), a riff on a/b/o dynamics ([Ancient Animal Awareness](#)), and assembling a collection of my [drabbles](#).

But we are back!! ...with a rather moody chapter (sorry) and then some more fun and games in the next (woo!)

Thanks for being here 🧡

Enjoy!

tw: brief discussions of grief, regret, and shame

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The second of May was a difficult day.

Draco held Hermione a little tighter than usual when he woke, feeling indescribably lucky. He hadn't fully expected he'd live to see the third of May the previous year, so to be waking up a year later, wrapped around the love of his life, made him a little emotional. He breathed her in for a moment, focusing on each place he was touching her: his knee against her calf; his hip against her bum; his arm around her waist, fingers tucked under her ribs; his face half-smothered in her curls.

It seemed surreal to think that only a year ago, they'd been on other sides of a war. He didn't usually like thinking about it – not when there was nothing he could *actually* do to right all the wrongs of the past — but he'd decided that today would be a day of contemplation and of facing the past. He closed his eyes and nuzzled closer, surrounding himself with the soft scent of her, and let himself remember what it had been like to wake up alone in his dorm a year ago, not knowing what horrors he'd see that day. Knowing that the year prior, he'd woken up with one objective: go to the Room of Hidden Things and open the Cabinet to let killers into the school.

Shame curled, sour and sickly, in his gut.

He exhaled slowly through his nose and it must have tickled her, because she shifted in her sleep, snuggling back against his chest and bringing him back to the present moment. He tightened his arm around her, knee shifting up to slot behind hers more completely and let himself melt into her warmth.

“Thank you,” he whispered into her hair. And then added, “I’m sorry.”

She barely stirred but that was alright; he’d make sure she knew how strongly he meant each of those sentiments for the rest of his life.

A little later, they went out to the courtyard to say goodbye. Draco planned to Apparate from Hogsmeade to Greg’s flat, the two of them having decided to keep the day subdued and private. Blaise had offered that they all congregate at his house but he and Theo had been outside of it all and, despite their best intentions, they didn’t fully understand the guilt and shame that the day bore for those in the thick of it.

The twisted, messed up parts inside Draco needed a day of reckoning, a little pressure and weight to tamp them down so he could begin the laborious job of untangling them; of sorting out who he’d been and who he was becoming; of properly moving past it.

He hugged Hermione to him, cherishing the feel of her hands slipping under his cloak to press against his jumper, seeking to be nearer to him, and the way that she smelled comfortingly of herself and their bed and coffee. He didn’t want to step away.

She drew back, tilting her face up to his, her expression painfully earnest. He knew the day would be hard for her too – she’d lost so many loved ones and had done things that he knew still haunted her – and so he cupped her cheek and tried to communicate the soul-deep amount of love he felt for her. She seemed to understand, leaning into his hand, eyes fixed on his.

“I love you, Draco,” she whispered. “And I see you. Please remember that I’ve forgiven you, and that you deserve it.”

He clenched his jaw but nodded, accepting her words.

“I love you,” he murmured, then leaned down to kiss her softly. “I’ll be back tonight.”

She squeezed him once more and then, after a breath, let him go.

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Greg lived in a small wizarding village just outside of Birmingham where he rented a room in the house of an elderly couple. At first, Draco hadn’t understood why he’d chosen to cohabitate with strangers but after meeting Duncan and Mary, he’d understood it right away. They were the doting, gentle parents that Greg should’ve had, his own having been no better than bullies to him and his siblings.

Watching the way that Greg worked in quiet concert with Mary, passing her the tea pot before she’d fully reached for it, sent a secondary wave of emotion through Draco. It was unproductive, and usually unhealthy, to fixate on how things *could* have been but seeing Greg so comfortable taking up space made him a little bitter and a lot angry at the Goyles.

“Righto,” chirped Mary, twisting the teapot lid to secure it and then replacing the kettle on the stove. “Would you boys like biscuits or cake with your tea?”

“D?” Greg looked over at him.

“Biscuits, thanks.” Draco knew he wouldn’t manage to eat any but saying no thank you simply wasn’t an option, especially not with the way both Mary and Greg were looking at him.

“I bought some of those chocolate ones you like, Greggy,” Mary said, ambling to a cupboard. “And another packet of HobNobs.”

“Ta, Mary.” Greg got down a tray and held it out so she could add the biscuits and a little pitcher of milk. She eyed Draco over her spectacles as she did so and he nodded, confirming he liked it for his tea. She gave him a smile that crinkled her eyes, cheeks turning almost cherubic, and then patted Greg’s hand where it curled around the tray handle.

“I’ll be in the garden so shout if you need anything else,” she told him, and then potted off to look for her shoes.

Greg led Draco through the kitchen and to the staircase, going up to the attic room he rented. There was an external entrance accessible by a set of back stairs which Draco knew Greg hadn’t used it in ages. It had taken Greg a little while to feel truly welcome but Mary and Duncan had been only too pleased to have him in their home. They’d raised two boys of their own and missed having young ones around - something Draco had learned on his first visit when Mary had walked him through to the front room and given him a complete family history by way of several well-filled photo albums.

Greg shouldered the door open and set the tray on his desk, staring down at it for a moment. “Thanks for being here,” he said softly.

Draco shut the door with a quiet click and leaned back against it. “Thanks for letting me.”

Greg nodded, back still to him. And then his broad shoulders sank, head bowing. “It’s worse than I thought it would be.”

Draco exhaled slowly, looking out the window across the room. He could see the back gardens of the Muggle houses just the other side of the magical barrier, several with washing hung up in the unseasonably sunny midmorning. He wondered if Greg spent time looking out the window, watching the other world.

“Yeah. It is.”

“I still hate fire.” Greg poured their tea, the steam curling in the patch of sun and sparkling. Draco fixed his attention on it.

“Me too.” He pulled his mouth to the side, then bit his lip and exhaled hard. “Had a hard time getting on a broom for a bit, too.”

Greg turned, mug held out. Draco took it. The mug was obviously from a Muggle shop, the side reading 'Love from Cornwall!' under a faded picture of a castle, so unlike any of the china cups which were common place in their childhood homes.

"But you did, yeah?" Greg's voice was unsure, but hopeful.

Draco nodded. "Yeah. I did."

They sat side by side on the edge of Greg's bed and for a while, the only sound was the crinkle of the biscuit packets. Draco accepted a HobNob but didn't have the stomach for it; Greg ate three in quick succession.

He wanted to say something to express how sorry he was for the sort of friend and person he'd been; for the way he'd contributed to the sort of adolescence that they'd had; for the fact that his actions had led to the accidental death of Vince. But he couldn't find the words to say even half of it.

Greg didn't say anything either, sitting beside him - even after it all - methodically drinking his tea. His mug was decorated with a print of garish flowers, the words 'Birmingham Botanical Gardens' printed in a stylized script around the middle. Draco wondered if it was one of Mary's or if Greg had bought it himself.

After a while, Greg got up for another pour of tea, checking the level of Draco's mug as he stood. Draco took a sip to be polite – his tea was stone cold.

Greg's mouth twitched to the side in a small almost-smile and he held out a hand for the mug. Draco passed it up, chagrined, and Greg went to his en-suite to pour it down the sink then got him a fresh, hot cup with exactly the right amount of milk.

It made pressure build in Draco's sinuses but he sniffed it away, nodding his thanks instead. Greg sat back down beside him and they were quiet again, simply existing together in a way they hadn't often had the chance to.

He could hear off-key singing from the garden below and it made his heart ache with relief that, despite all the shit they'd lived through, Greg had found a sliver of peace.

It seemed that Greg's thoughts were similarly focused because he glanced sidelong at Draco, expression curious and shy and sincere.

"D, can I ask you something?"

"Yeah." Draco cleared his throat, voice cracking from disuse. "Yeah, anything you want."

Greg looked at him for a moment. "Are you happy now?" he asked.

The question gutted him, both because it acknowledged how unhappy he – they, all of them – had been for so long, and because of the hopeful tone in which Greg had asked it, like he wanted the answer to be yes.

That Draco didn't even have to think about his answer made it all the more potent. He pressed his lips together over the rise of emotion and nodded.

Greg looked down at his mug, face softening. He stoked his thumb absently over the handle. "Good. I think I am, too."

~~~~

Draco stayed at Greg's until just before dinner, thanking Mary for the invitation to join them for the meal but wanting to get back to the castle. He was in need of a hug and although Greg was a bit of a teddy bear in that regard, he needed someone slightly smaller and more bushy of hair in his arms.

He found her in the library, searching the stacks. He watched her for a moment, hands in his pockets and heart so full of yearning that it physically ached. She caught sight of him in her periphery a moment later, eyes widening at having caught an observer and then softening when she registered that it was him.

"Hi," she called softly in her patented Library Voice.

"Hi," he returned, giving her a half smile.

She was so damned pretty, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt as was typical for the weekend, hair up in a loose bun with her wand sticking out of it in the sort of devil-may-care manner which would've sent his mother into a veritable tizzy over the improper use of such a sacred magical implement.

His perfect little Muggleborn.

She came over, inspecting him with careful eyes to assess his mood, arms full of books. He checked the titles to guess what she was studying.

"How was it?" she asked, drawing his eyes back to hers.

He shrugged a shoulder. "It was good. Hard. I'm glad I went but..." Unbidden, he thought about the look on Greg's face when they'd finally dared to talk about Vince; about the anguish and disappointment and untended anger they had for their fallen friend and their fathers and the choices they'd all made. "Merlin, it was hard."

"I'm sorry." Her expression was sincere and understanding.

He wanted to tell her not to be, that he deserved a little hardness after it all, but wasn't in the mood for a lecture about his worth quite yet. Knowing she'd give him one was comfort enough so he just nodded.

She picked up on it, clever thing that she was, giving him a little smile. “Do you want to talk about something else for a little bit?” she offered.

“Please.” He’d had enough of emotionally fraught interactions to last him through to next year. “Distract me? Talk about schoolwork or what you had for lunch, or anything really.”

She bent to carefully set her books on the floor then leaned her hip against the bookshelf. “Hmm. Well, I’ve decided what to do for your birthday,” she said, with the beginnings of a coy smile.

“Oh?”

She nodded. “Yes. I’m going to fuck you.”

He raised an eyebrow. *Distraction indeed.* “Not that I’m complaining, but...don’t we have sex almost every day?”

She shook her head. “*I’m* going to fuck you,” she emphasized. “On your four-poster, if you like.”

He blinked, processing her emphasis, and then realization dawned.

“*Oh.*” He smirked. “Oh yeah? You’re going to fuck me on my Slytherin dorm bed for my birthday? My my, Granger. What would Salazar think?”

She gave him an impish look. “If you’re claiming that Salazar Slytherin never dabbled in a little arseplay then you haven’t been paying attention. He *buried a snake within the bowels of the castle*, for goodness sake. I mean—?” She yelped when he swatted at her and she danced out of reach when his hand reached for her again.

“Insolent little Gryffindor,” he scolded with mock severity, coming after her.

She skittered away on surprisingly nimble feet but her agility was no match for his single-minded focus to catch her. He had her against the bookcase before she’d even properly stopped giggling.

“Oh dear,” she teased, eyes glittering. “Am I in trouble?”

“You *are* trouble,” he corrected, nudging her feet apart with the side of his shoe and then slotting his leg firmly between hers. Maybe it wasn’t a *hug* he wanted from his witch, after all.

He used his leg to hold her in place and moved his hands from her shoulders to her breasts, brushing his thumbs lightly over the front of her shirt. He knew he’d done well when her hips twitched against his thigh.

“That feel good?” he cooed, pressing closer.

“Draco.” Her voice was breathy. “We’re in the library.”

He clucked his tongue. “It’s *my* fault you picked such a public place to talk about fucking me?”

“No, but—” He stroked over her shirt again and she bit her lip. “But if Pince catches us—”

He grinned down at her. “Don’t think you can stay quiet, hmm?”

She scoffed, her hands curling up over his shoulders, one carrying on up into his hair. “You know I can’t.”

He did. He loved her for it.

“Grind on me.” He rubbed his thigh between her legs to indicate what he meant, letting her tug his head down with her grip in his hair in response. She rocked her hips lightly and then again with more pressure. He hummed his pleasure at her acquiescence, dropping a soft kiss to her cheek.

“So your problem is Pince?” he asked, adjusting his hands to grip her a little better. “In that case, shall we find a classroom instead?”

She laughed. “What, *now*? You’ve already got me doing what you want.” She emphasized it with another fervent grind on him.

“I told you to grind on me,” he agreed, then smirked. “I didn’t tell you that you could come.”

“*Draco*.” His name was petulant now. He bit his lip, loving it.

“Yes?” He skimmed his nose along her cheek toward her ear. She huffed and pulled his hair, hard. The sensation sparked through him, zinging right to his cock. “*Fuck*, Hermione—”

“If you’re going edge me in the library, then I’m going to fucking *ruin* you on the Quidditch pitch,” she whispered, tone mildly threatening. “Do you understand what I mean?”

He groaned. “Yes.”

He couldn’t help a little grind of his own, the fabric of his trousers suddenly quite restrictive. There was something inexplicably appealing about the idea of Hermione denying him a properly satisfying orgasm out where he’d so often been a hands-breadth away from satisfaction for other reasons.

It was possible that he was a tiny bit of a masochist.

She seemed a little surprised at his response. “You want that?”

He laughed, strained. “There’s probably something wrong with me but...yeah, I sort of really do.”

She inspected him with interest, hips still moving but with less focus. “Hmm. As a punishment?” Her tone was careful, not wanting to push him back into the memories of the full sorts of punishment she knew he thought he was owed.



He played along, grateful for it. “Planning on laying down the law again?”

“Just collecting data,” she grinned and he chuckled.

Her levity was such a stark contrast to the bulk of the day and he wanted to disappear inside her, where he knew it was safe. He pressed his face to her neck and she stroked her fingers down the knobs of his vertebrae down to the collar of his shirt then back up to his crown, fingers twining in his hair gently. It was almost hypnotizing but it wasn't quite what he needed. He needed a sense of action, of *doing something good*, to let out the pressure he'd put on himself.

She likely sensed his tension because she stilled her hand.

“What do you need right now?” she murmured. “Me to show you how much I love you? How much I trust you?”

He heaved in a breath. “Yes.”

“Okay.” Her touch was steady on him, hands unflinching even as he curled further into her. “Come on, Draco. Let's go to our room.”

*Our.*

He turned his head so he could nose at her neck, flicking his tongue to taste her and then dotting it with nipping little kisses, suddenly ravenous for her. She laughed softly, head tilting to give him room.

“If you do that, we won't make it anywhere decent.”

He muffled his groan against the crook of her neck, hands sliding up to cup her breasts. She trapped her own moan with teeth on her lip.

“Draco,” she breathed. “Merlin, please.”

He sucked a mark to her collarbones then pressed his lips to it for a few chaste pecks, gathering himself. “Know any shortcuts?”

He could hear her smile. “Actually, I do.”

She pushed him back enough to regain her footing — he'd inadvertently lifted her up onto her toes in his fervor — and then pulled her wand from her hair to cast a quick levitation charm on her books. Without the wand holding it up, her hair spilled down around her shoulders and he had to forcibly restrain the sound that clawed at his chest at the sight.

“Come on.” She grabbed his hand and tugged him down the aisle behind her, the floating books leading the way.

He let her lead him through two hidden passageways, marking the tapestries that concealed their entrances. He intended to make full use of those dark passageways next time he got her riled up in the library. But in the current moment, he wanted nothing more than to be

somewhere private, to cast a metaphorical *protego* around them and will the rest of the world away.

As soon as her bedroom door closed behind them, she sent the books to her desk and then tossed her wand aside.

“Have me any way you like,” she told him, eyes holding his. “I’m yours.”

“*Fuck.*” He wanted to crush her to him. “God, you...”

But words had been escaping him all day and were insufficient to convey what he felt for her, anyway, so he didn’t bother with them.

Instead, he pulled her to him with hands on her waist and kissed her. She opened to him immediately, tongue meeting his and hands resuming their rightful place in his hair.

He got her to the bed (barely) and undressed her (partly) before pushing her thighs open and sinking his tongue into her. She whimpered, hands still in his hair, and let him prove his own love and devotion to her. When she came for him, it was with his name on her breath, groaned to the room with a reverence that strengthened him. She welcomed him up into her arms and he kissed her softly then, tenderly and slowly. She was trembling under him so he ran his hands over every inch of her that he could reach, just as slowly and tenderly, until she was steady again.

“I meant what I said,” she murmured and he knew immediately that she was referring to their parting words that morning.

He pressed his lips to her cheek then rolled them to their sides, pulling her thigh over his hip. “I know you do.”

She wiggled her hips, rubbing against his cock where it was trapped between them in his trousers, but her eyes were fixed on his. “Nothing will change it.”

He muffled the broken sound that escaped him with his lips on skin and then sought the solace of her body once more, hands fumbling with his fly and then angling his hips and tilting hers until he was aligned. She welcomed him in, pulling him closer with her knee around his waist until he was buried.

It was almost too much but he savored the intensity it, giving in to the heady rush of chemicals her words and her body were summoning.

He slid his arm under her, reaching down to palm her arse and then mirroring the placement with his top hand, using his grip to work her back and forth on him as he thrust into her. She tightened her top leg around him, helping him set a hard, tight pace.

“You’re so good,” she whispered and he clenched his jaw at the dual intention behind her words.

She was slippery and swollen around him, plush from the attention of his mouth, and he lost himself in the multidimensional experience of her: her little panting gasps and her fingers

flexing in his hair; the way she was giving herself to him as much as he was demanding it from her. She was a pinprick in the universe but to him, she was everything.

He didn't realize he had tears on his face until he noticed that she did too, and that added element of closeness had him rolling her over, forehead pressed to hers and words hissed between his teeth until she was whimpering, his strokes hard and fast and unrelenting. She arched under him as she came again, so much so that he slipped from her. His cock throbbed against her thigh, his orgasm *right there*, and he almost didn't let himself enjoy it, but he'd gotten too close and he needed, in a visceral way, to coat her as much as she'd coated him. So he shoved a hand between them, pumping himself with his fist until he was coming with a cut-off groan, streaking her hip and torso.

He held himself up on one arm over her, panting and then laughing brokenly. "Fuck. Sorry."

"It's okay." She was flushed and smiling, lying under him in just her t-shirt, her jeans and knickers in a crumpled pile beside the bed in his haste to get his mouth on her.

He rolled to his back, tucking himself away but leaving his trousers undone. He could feel the tackiness of half-dried tears on his cheeks so used his sleeve to scrub at his eyes.

"Jesus. I'm a mess."

"*You* are," she laughed incredulously. "*I'm* a mess. Absolutely soaked *everywhere*."

He tilted his head, grinning. She smirked back then shimmied out of her shirt to wipe under her eyes and then dab her nose.

He leaned over to kiss the revealed swells of her breasts, licking at the faintest hint of salt and soap from her skin and then carried on lower, maneuvering himself back between her legs and letting his tongue guide him to the mess he'd left on her. She ran her fingers through his hair softly, watching him clean her with pink cheeks and occasional, reflexive shivers.

He collected the last of it on his tongue and then held her cunt open with his thumbs so he could press his tongue inside her, humming contentedly when her thighs twitched.

"It's unbearably sexy that you do that," she told him. "I hope you know."

He flicked a brow at her, amused and adoring. She was looking at him like he was something remarkable and it was healing him in a place he'd never known he was wounded.

"Want another?" he asked, swirling his tongue lazily around her clit again, feeling indulgent and half-drunk on her.

"God, no. I'm jelly already." She tugged at his hair. "Come hold me."

He dropped a little parting kiss to her clit then reared back, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand as he shuffled over on his knees then collapsed back down beside her. She jostled with the impact, giggling, then fumbled with the covers until she could slide underneath. He joined her then pulled her close, nestling her against his chest and tucking her head under his chin. He felt like himself again — the new, better version he was slowly learning to be.

He savored the weight of her, the warmth and vitality and the fact that, despite the way he'd dreaded the day, he'd ended up right back where he started. He was so, so lucky.

"How was your speech?" he asked, after a moment of quiet wonderment.

She hummed a wry sound. "A bit...abrupt, I think. Unapologetic. A lot of Ministry officials were there so I didn't hold back on the whole 'you let literal children fight your war for you' aspect. I think my closing remarks were '*you're welcome*' but I saw red halfway through so I'm not entirely sure. McGonagall gave me *a look* afterward though, so I think she approved."

She smiled up at him, a little proudly, and he fell in love with her all over again.



You guys??? @AprilShowersMayFlowers made this incredible piece of art inspired by this chapter and I'm just...never going to look away. 😭😭😭

## Chapter End Notes

Okay, I know that chapter was a little emotional but we had to get through the anniversary of the war so that we can get to Draco's birthday. It's all brighter skies going forward (though we love the emotional intimacy 😊)

Thanks for reading!

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙋

## Chapter 36: “My mother wrote back to me,” he said, clearing his throat.

### Chapter Notes

Hi friends!

My posting "schedule" has gotten all out of wack recently due to life and also extreme distraction by several other works ([Self-Control](#), a few more [ficlets](#), and some unposted stuff) *however* I have the next three chapters for this planned out and partially written, so hopefully there won't be too long of a break for the next. We have lots of fun stuff coming up that I am stoked for 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The next two weeks were intense, the professors having pulled out all the stops when it came to preparing them for their upcoming exams. Between the utter farce of their Seventh year and the supreme distraction of their Sixth, Hermione knew that Draco had had a lot to catch up on. It was rather fortunate for him, then, that his girlfriend was equipped with rigorous academic focus – at least, Hermione liked to remind him as much.

Not that he wasn't independently motivated, of course. He'd returned to Hogwarts with a dedication to prove himself — in as many facets as he could — and she was quite proud of him. And she was proud of herself, too — she'd managed to stay the course and hadn't yet dropped out of a single NEWT. There had certainly been times when she'd seriously considered throwing in the towel but then Draco would touch his knee to hers under the library table, or press a warm hand to her back when they studied in bed, or send her that special, private smile across the classroom, and she'd exhale. It was almost uncanny, the way he could sense when she'd almost reached her limit.

In more ways than one.

She was used to distractions during her schooling — an understatement if ever there was one — but in those moments of his almost-preternatural awareness, she found herself barely able to resist tossing aside whichever assignment had been challenging her and snogging the life out of him. Although to be fair, sometimes she didn't resist.

She was currently just-barely-resisting as they sat at the breakfast table on a Thursday morning, Draco having just discretely squeezed her knee to still its bouncing, when the morning post arrived and with it, a letter for her. She plucked it up from her plate and peered at the handwriting, then made an involuntary sound of excitement. Draco's attention slid to

her from where he sat to her left, sipping his tea as if he didn't currently have his hand on her leg under the table.

She tore into the letter and sped-read it, then went back to the beginning to read it again.

“Harry’s invited us to Grimmauld this Saturday,” she told him as she read.

“Yeah? Brilliant.” Draco sounded genuinely pleased, though she suspected it was mostly because it meant at least one evening without her pushing them to study. She *had* been a bit of a nuisance about it but exams only came once and she was determined to do her very best.

She reached the end of Harry’s letter again and sat tall, searching around. “He said to tell Ginny, Nev, and Luna...ah! Back in a ‘mo.”

She swung a leg over the bench and then used his shoulder as a support to stand before trotting off to the trio where they sat a few paces down. Ginny clocked her approach first, eyes landing on her and expression warming instantly.

“Well, hello Hermione!” she greeted. “Fancy seeing you out and about on your own.”

Hermione rolled her eyes and Ginny grinned. Neville and Luna peered up to see her, Neville giving her a little nod hello.

“Harry’s written to invite us to his house on Saturday,” she told the less cheeky of her friends, eyes going from Neville to Luna. “He said we can come by anytime that suits us, so I wondered if we all wanted to go over before dinner?”

“Lovely,” Neville agreed.

Luna made a little noise of regret. “I have firm plans to observe the penumbral lunar eclipse with Professor Sinistra on Saturday. It’s the Flower Moon this month, as you know.”

Neville nodded as if he actually did know; Hermione finally deigned to meet Ginny’s gaze to exchange a fondly-amused glance. Ginny took the opening.

“I’ll be there,” she announced, “as I presume *Draco* will be in attendance, meaning his little friends may also tag along.” She waggled her brows and Hermione heard the unspoken ‘*or not so little*’.

“Harry did say he was extending the invitation broadly,” Hermione informed her sweetly. “Would you like me to write back to confirm who he’s invited?”

Ginny waved a hand. “No, no. If Draco’s going, then I’m sure Harry will have invited Theo for himself, and my man doesn’t seem the type to sit out even without a direct invitation.”

Hermione tried to control her grin. “Your man, hmm?”

Ginny narrowed her eyes but then widened them, looking across to Neville. “Poor Nev! I’ve just realized you’re the only one without a Slytherin. Shall we find you one?”

Neville chuckled, shaking his head as he cut into his eggs. “Ta, Ginny, but I do alright on my own.”

“Oh?” Ginny raised a brow. “Hmm. I bet you do, actually.”

Task complete, Hermione raised her hand in farewell, wanting to get a few more bites of breakfast in her before class. “Bye now,” she told them. “Be good. Go to class and whatnot.”

“You’re such a good Head Girl,” Ginny deadpanned. “I honest-to-Merlin hadn’t considered attending lessons until you mentioned it.”

“You are worse than all your brothers combined,” Hermione told her primly.

Ginny opened her arms wide, face the picture of rapture. “Oh, Hermione. I love you endlessly.”

“Bye,” Hermione laughed.

As she made her way back to Draco, she saw that he was reading a letter of his own. She glanced at it as she regained her seat beside him and he caught her eye from the corner of his. The edge of his mouth lifted in an attempt at a smile but there was a new tension through him which disquieted her.

“Alright?” she asked, her humor fading in an instant.

“My mother wrote back to me,” he said, clearing his throat.

She let the implication of those words wash over her. She’d written *back*, meaning that Draco had already written *to* her. Presumably, about their relationship. She scanned his body language for additional clues about how the letter had been received but he foiled her by tossing his arm over her shoulders and tugging her close, pressing a kiss to her temple and effectively hiding his face from her.

“Everything’s fine.” He sighed against her hair. “I’ll tell you more later but for now, we should get to class.”

“Draco,” she said, tone soft. “I can see it’s bothering you. We have a little time still – want to go somewhere? Tell me about it now?”

He gave her shoulder a little squeeze then drew his arm back, folding the letter and sliding it into his bag. “I’m really alright. And I’d like to...process it, before we talk.”

It worried her that there was anything to *process* in a missive from his mother, but she knew that his family was as dissimilar to hers as was possible, so she just nodded. “Of course.”

“So, are we all set?” he asked, voice lightening. He cocked his head down the table to their friends.

“Oh — yes. Luna has a moon thing but Ginny and Neville will come. We can side-along from Hogsmeade; Ginny’s been to Harry’s house so she can bring Nev.”



He raised his brow. "I'd ask what that means but as Luna *is* a moon thing, I'm going to hold my question. Harry's house, hmm? It's strange that he lives there."

*There.* It had somehow slipped her mind that he might have been to Grimmauld Place before too, although before it had fallen into Harry's hands.

"Have you been there?" she asked interestedly.

He shook his head. "No, but I know of it. I think my mother went there as a child a few times, before...things devolved."

"You mean, before Sirius was sorted into Gryffindor?" She grinned when he chuckled.

"I'm sure that didn't help the situation." He eyed her affectionately. "Pesky Gryffindors."

"Indeed." She kissed his cheek and then wolfed down the rest of her breakfast before quickly collecting her things. He did the same and stood, offering her a hand to stand. She took it and then interlaced their fingers, not letting him go.

They weren't exceptionally public with their relationship but the mention of his mother had made her want to assure him that she was more than happy to let the world know.

He squeezed her hand, possibly letting her know the same.

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They reconvened in the library after dinner and managed to get about an hour's worth of studying in before Draco heaved in a breath and turned to her. Despite it having been hours since the letter, she knew instantly what that breath had been for and so turned to him expectantly, even going so far as to put down her quill to show him that he had her full attention.

"So. My mother." He exhaled. "She wants to have lunch with you."

Hermione blinked. She'd expected vitriol, not an invitation to a meal.

"Lunch?" she repeated.

He located the letter from his pocket and unfolded it, although she was fairly certain he didn't need it to know what it had said. "Lunch. '...at your earliest convenience'," he read.

She searched his face but he was staring at his mother's handwriting, expression unreadable. "That's...unexpected. Does she sound cross?"

"She's not pleased, exactly, but she's being polite about it. And she did refer to you as 'a war hero' so...that's something." He twisted his mouth to the side and then snorted a soft laugh.

“Merlin. How pathetic am I to be relieved by this dreadful thing?” He waved the parchment, glancing at her for a moment and then down at the words again.

“You’re not pathetic,” she said firmly. “You just love them and want them to be excited for you.”

He nodded, lips pressed together and the edges turning down into a begrudging frown. Despite claiming he was relieved with how his parents — or at least, his mother — had received the news of their only son and heir dating a Muggleborn, he looked exceptionally despondent. It was in her nature to pry but beyond that, he was her boyfriend, so she felt she had some leeway when it came to searching for a way to cheer him up.

“Is there anyone that they *would’ve* been excited by?” she asked him carefully. “Or is your mother fairly formal in this way?”

He finally looked at her, expression shifting from morose to contemplative. “She’s normally more candid with me but...no, I can’t think of anyone she’d have shown *actual* excitement for. She’s...” He hesitated, evidently looking for the words to describe it. In the end, he just gave her a half-smile. “Well, I suppose you’ve met her.”

She had. Narcissa Malfoy, poised and polished and beautiful even when looking down her nose at her, that time in Diagon all those years ago.

And of course, Hermione would never forget the look on Narcissa’s face from where she’d lain on Narcissa’s drawing room floor writhing and screaming, the older woman’s expression stiff and cool, like ice incarnate.

But she wasn’t inhuman. Because Hermione would also never forget the look on Narcissa’s face when she’d finally spotted Draco in the crowd of students across the makeshift battlefield that Hogwarts had become. Raw, unmitigated relief. She knew what Narcissa had done, too, all in the name of love for her son.

“I have,” she replied. “Although in a more real sense, I haven’t.”

He pressed his lips together, a tiny smile. “And she’s never met you. Not in any real way.”

That was certainly a fact. Hermione nodded. “So, lunch then. Just me, or will you be there too?”

“I’ll be there. She didn’t specify but...I’ll definitely be there.” There was a tightness in his answer which made her reach for him, her hand soft on his. He looked down at it then up to her.

“Good.” She held his eye for a moment. “This is *good*, Draco. Meeting your parents is important. But it won’t change anything for me. You know that.” She didn’t phrase it as a question so that he wouldn’t take it as one.

“I know that,” he agreed, and then extricated his hand to cup her jaw. “Of course I know that.”

She tilted her face to kiss the side of his thumb. “Good. So, when does she want to meet?”

His expression softened at the touch of her lips and further still when she turned her cheek back in his palm. “She said to let her know when, and she’d have food prepared.”

The full ramifications of the invitation hit her. Why had she assumed Narcissa would want to dine with her in public?

“*Oh.*”

She performed a rapid self-assessment on how she felt about the prospect of returning to Malfoy Manor and found the idea less repugnant than she’d expected. It was just a house, after all, if not quite a large one. And as she’d had the pleasure of watching most of the devils who’d cavorted there die, there would be nothing but the lingering stain of bad memories without any of the bad actors. Well, apart from Draco’s parents. Although, she’d never quite managed to properly fear Lucius. Perhaps it was the hair...?

But she saw that Draco was looking at her with fresh unease and so tabled her contemplation for later. “Oh, of course. Well, this weekend we have plans but perhaps the next?”

He inspected her for moment, eyes shrewd. “Are you sure? I would understand if you never wanted to set foot there again.”

“I appreciate that. It’s fine.”

“It would mean food cooked by House-elves,” he cautioned, “and as far as I’m aware, they haven’t been freed.”

It grated at her but she couldn’t win the battle unless she stepped onto the field.

She tried to stop visualizing the upcoming meeting as part of a war but...wasn’t it? She wouldn’t draw her wand (probably) but she’d certainly be arming herself in other ways, and although the ideal turnout would be the disbanding of ‘sides’, she wouldn’t be ceding much ground on hers.

“I’m sure,” she assured him. “Your mother requested it and hopefully that means she’ll be amenable when we accept. On the other hand, if its a ploy to get me somewhere I might find frightening, then she’ll be quite disappointed to learn that I wasn’t sorted into Gryffindor only for my recklessness.” She smirked at him, pleased when he snorted. “Really, Draco. You’re sweet to worry but I’ve thought about it and I think it’s the best venue.”

He raised a brow, the edge of his mouth lifting in amusement. “You’ve thought about it? I’ve only just told you about it.”

“I think rather quickly,” she quipped and his smile grew.

“Mother won’t know what to do with you,” he told her fondly. “I’m probably a bad son for this, but I can’t wait to see you fluster her.”

“A bad son,” she agreed, with another light kiss to his thumb so he knew she didn’t mean it. “But an exceptionally good boyfriend.”

He pulled her to him at that and gave her a proper kiss, lips lingering and then touching again for another soft press.

“We’ll have to come up with a reward,” he murmured. “Something to look forward to, for when we get back. Anything you want.”

She bit her lip, an idea having already formed. “About that...do you think we could find a way to nip up to your bedroom when we’re there?”

He gusted a little laugh against her cheek. “Oh? Whatever for?”

She tilted her face to brush their lips, a tiny touch. “I want to defile you in your Pureblood manor,” she whispered.

“Jesus.” He laughed again; kissed her again. “And what will that entail?”

She hummed contemplatively. “Probably some combination of you naked and me on my knees.”

He nipped at her bottom lip, his hand sliding from her cheek to cup the back of her head, fingers tangling in her curls in a way that sent a flash of heat zipping through her.

“Why do you always get me so riled up in the library?” His voice still held amusement but it was tinged with a few delicious notes of despair.

“So you’re amenable to it?” she asked, letting him tilt her head away so he could drop his face to her neck. He hummed his agreement to her skin, nipping again. She smiled. “Excellent.”

He nosed his way to her favorite spot, sucking on it and stealing her next breath.

“Draco,” she chastised, even though it had been her to set him off. He sucked harder and her hand flew up to grab his hair. “Oh, *Merlin*.”

He released her, kissing what was certainly a red mark. “Can we go somewhere?” he asked hopefully.

“We still have so much work to finish,” she reminded him with regret. He groaned forlornly. “But later. You can absolutely have me later.”

“I absolutely will.” He sighed and sat back, massaging her scalp with a few soft caresses before withdrawing his hand. He looked contemplative again. “You said ‘defile’. There’s some sort of symbolism in wanting to do it there, I’m guessing?”

At first, the idea had simply risen up as yet another place they could claim – or reclaim – as theirs, but as she considered it again, she nodded.

“It’s the representation of the obelisk between us, right? Your family expectations, their and your current or former beliefs, what happened to me there during the war...all of it. So, being with you there, making *love*, so to speak, feels like it’d chip a good chunk of it away. Sort of...cleansing.” She tilted her head. “Or something akin to it.”

He raised a brow. “So it’s more than just an unsubtle *fuck you* to my parents and their ideology?”

She grinned. “Yes. Although it’s not *not* that.”

He laughed. “Well, whatever the reason, I’ll support you.” He pressed a hand to his heart with excessive earnestness. “Even at such great personal sacrifice.”

“Uh-huh.” She shoved him lightly, rolling her eyes. “Idiot.”

He let her jostle him, smirking at her, but then flicked his brows. “Study up now, Granger. You get one more hour and then I’ll carry you back to the room if I have to. Or—” He lowered his voice. “I happen to know of some very conveniently located hidden passageways. Perhaps we won’t get much further than those.”

She squeezed her thighs, unable to stop herself from visualizing it: him pressing her against the stone wall, crowding her in, lifting her up—

His groan brought her back to the library, where he was giving her a rather pitiful look. “Why must you always imagine it so aggressively? I can practically see your thoughts and now I won’t be able to focus on anything else but finding out exactly what you pictured and then doing it to you.”

She turned to face the table, picking up her quill. “You’ll have me against the wall,” she told him, inking the tip and then flicking through her book. “It’ll be fast and hard and you’ll make me come rather quickly, I think.”

“*Fucking—*” He bit off his swear, huffing. “Absolute menace,” he accused under his breath, getting his own assignments back in front of him and shifting in his seat. “Absolute fucking menace.”

She grinned and got to work.

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As promised, he fulfilled her imagination – and then some.

They’d hardly disappeared behind the tapestry that concealed the passageway shortcut when he was crowding her against the wall, one hand tugging her bag off her shoulder to thud to the floor and the other reaching for her thigh. He got her up around his hips with a fluid movement, his second hand joining the first in gripping her legs.

The suddenness of it had taken her breath away and then he was stealing it more actively, slanting his mouth over hers and sliding his tongue inside. She clung to his shoulders, squeezing her legs around him and moaning.

“Like this?” he murmured, breaking away only enough to form the words before diving back in.

She nodded against him eagerly, meeting the strokes of his tongue and feeling herself absolutely liquifying between her legs. He shifted closer, using the wall to hold her up so that he could work his forearm under a knee. Her skirt slid up around her hip, exposing her knickers to the front of his trousers and the hard ridge of him.

“You’d better be planning to have me here,” she cautioned with as much sternness as she could manage, “because if this is just payback for the library then—”

“I’m going to have you here,” he interrupted, voice low and sure. He canted his hips forward insistently. “Feel that? That’ll be inside you soon.”

She made a little sound. “How soon?”

“Why?” He dipped his head to neck, using his nose to tilt her head to give himself more access. “You think you’re ready for it?”

She’d been ready for it almost as soon as she’d pictured the event an hour ago, and nothing he was doing now was making her any less eager for it.

“Yes,” she said. She tried to grind back against him again but he eased his hips back.

“Already? But I’ve barely done anything.” He dragged the tip of his tongue lightly up her neck, skimming over the mark he’d left. She throbbed between her legs. “What have you been thinking about, Granger?”

The teasing note in his voice, murmured practically in her ear, made her whine under her breath.

“You know what.” She tried to get a little friction but his hold on her had her immobilized, the arm under her knee reaching around to hold her tight around her waist, the other pinning her thigh to his hip.

He chuckled at her attempt to move and her head thunked back against the wall. He kissed the line of her jaw and then loomed over her, mouth almost touching hers and teasing her all over again by that fact that it just barely *wasn’t*.

“Oh? And what’s that?” he goaded.

She considered not giving in to what he was obviously aiming for but couldn’t find a reason to. She inhaled a short breath through her nose and gave in to him.

“Your cock,” she begged. “Please. Your cock, yo—”

He silenced her with his mouth, diverting a hand to hastily work his trousers open. It was gratifying to know he was just as eager as her — not that she'd really doubted it.

"Such a dirty mouth," he chided, but he was panting. "Pull your knickers aside."

She fumbled with her skirt, getting it properly out of the way and then hooked a finger under the gusset, holding it to the side as best she could. He ran the head of his cock through her center, gliding upward to coat himself in her. He hissed a breath through his teeth, eyes touching hers for a heady moment before dropping between them.

"Look at that," he murmured. "So fucking wet for me."

"God," she gasped. "That's..."

He was rubbing his cock right against her clit, every grind tightening the cog of arousal inside her until she felt pulled taut. When he slipped down to align himself at her entrance, she moaned rather wantonly.

He hushed her. "Gotta be quiet, Granger. We didn't cast any privacy charms."

"I can be quiet," she whispered, although the final word rose half an octave as he took the opportunity to press himself inside her. "*Oh* my god."

"Shh." He kissed her and then pressed his forehead to hers. "Quiet now. Just for me, hmm?"

She whimpered as he drew out and then eased back in, testing the way. She could feel how wet she'd gotten with how easily he glided in and out. It made her delirious with lust for him, at how much her body liked his; her brain and her heart and her cunt.

"Just for you," she whispered and he groaned, picking up the pace.

"I'm going to take you *so slowly* next time," he swore. "An hour. Two. I'm going to drag it out as long as I can, make you come until you can't anymore."

Her responding whine was hard to muffle without the use of her hands, one holding on for dear life to his shoulder, the other pinned between them. Her breath was reduced to harsh little pants, warming the space between their mouths. She was so ridiculously turned on, it almost hurt when her walls squeezed around him. He chuckled.

"You *are* going to come quickly, aren't you?"

"Yes," she bleated. "God, you feel so good like this."

"Yeah?" He patted the outside of the thigh she had wrapped around his waist. "Hold on to me."

She squeezed it tightly and he let her go, snaking his hand between them to undo the buttons of her shirt. The prospect of him getting his hands on her breasts always made her hot with desire but watching him deftly undoing the buttons one-handed while actively fucking her against a wall rocketed her right to the edge.

She moaned, louder than she meant to, as everything pulled tight.

“Quietly, Granger,” he reminded her and then dipped his hand into her bra.

The first soft stroke to her nipple brought her to the crest, the fullness of her orgasm hot inside her, but it wasn't quite enough to topple her over. She bit her lip against another petulant moan and let her eyes drift shut, savoring the sensation of him squeezing her breast then plucking repetitively at her nipple, doing what she could to work her hips against his considering she still had almost no leverage.

“Love these,” he told her reverently. “So soft and pretty.”

He switched to her other breast and her thigh began to shake, slipping slightly from where she'd wrapped it as the crest lengthened, pulling tighter and tighter inside her. It was almost unbearable, to be so close to release.

“Fuck,” she finally wailed, as quietly as she could, “fuck, I need to come. Please. Please make me come.”

He dipped his head instantly and sucked on the mark he'd made, and the shock of sensation overloaded her system, finally, *finally*, pushing her off the edge. She moaned loudly to the air over his shoulder, not caring one whit who heard her.

He let go of her breast to cover her mouth with his palm.

“*Hermione*,” he chided with faux-severity.

She moaned behind his hand, blinking her eyes open. He was pink-cheeked and breathing hard, eyes dark and intent on hers. She didn't look away, staring back at him and watching as his face slowly transformed as his pleasure mounted. She moaned again into the privacy of his palm when his strokes turned hard and urgent, his mouth parting on a breath as he hit his peak.

He dropped his hand to replace it with his lips, his kiss slow and claiming as his motions quieted and then stilled, his hips flush with hers. She kissed him back, wrapping her arms tighter around his shoulders before combing both into the soft hair at the back of his head.

He drew back to catch his breath, his temple pressed to hers as he tilted his head to inspect the tapestry.

“Think we got away with it?” he asked, raising his head to grin a bit guiltily down at her.

“This might be the recent orgasm talking,” she mused, “but I think even if we get called into McGonagall's office for improper acts in public, I'd still do it again.”

He snorted. “You think that's saying something, but it's really not.”

She gasped with faux-affront.



He pulled out of her, wincing at the sensitivity, and then tucked himself away with one hand before levering her legs carefully to the floor. She fixed her knickers and then got to work on her shirt buttons, glaring at him for daring to question the veracity of her statement.

“You’re going to stand there and deny the fact that you’re a rule-breaker? *And* that McGonagall would dare actually punish you for anything?” he asked as he did up his trousers and then tucked in his shirt.

Ah. He had her there.

“Well,” she began and he chuckled at her obvious lack of retort. “Oh stop it.” She whacked his arm and he pouted. “You don’t know anything.”

“I know quite a lot, actually.” He used his fingers to push her hair off her shoulders, careful not to muss the curls. “For one, I know that you’re rule-breaker, and I love you for it. I know that you have the entire Wizarding world wrapped around your finger, and I love you for it. I know that you’re possibly the most cunning and ambitious Gryffindor to walk these halls, and I love you for it.” He faked a look of contemplation. “Actually, you can probably say anything about yourself and I’ll append the ‘and I love you for it’ to it, so feel free to use your imagination on the rest.”

“Draco Malfoy.” She watched his expression go delightfully cheeky at her use of his full name and her heart squeezed in her chest. “You intolerable romantic.”

“Mmhmm.” He bit the edge of his lip to staunch his grin. “But you love me for it?”

“Yes.” She sighed, looking up at him with unmitigated fondness. “I love you for it.”

## Chapter End Notes

A trip to the manor is in our future but first! Grimmauld Place 🏠

Thanks for reading!

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 37: “We shared a dorm,” Harry said succinctly.

### Chapter Notes

Hi friends!

You may have noticed, but I decided to add titles to the chapters! It was a fun little exercise and I did it mostly so I can remember when/where stuff happens if I need to refer back to something but I hope they're fun for you, too 🧡

This chapter is inspired by a comment I got back on Ch 30 from @TheWritingRavenclaw, who suggested: “Never Have I Ever and the statement is ‘Never have I ever seen Draco come’ and the entire group is in utter shock when Neville has to take a drink and Theo feels completely betrayed.”

Obviously that brilliance had to be put into the story. Thank you for the inspiration, TWR!

Without further ado, (part 1 of) Grimmauld Place! 🎉

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The next two days flew by in a whirlwind of classes, homework, studying, and meals. By the time Saturday afternoon rolled around, Hermione and Draco were both more than ready for a little fun.

Ginny and Neville were already waiting for them in the courtyard when they arrived, Neville leaned back against a stone pillar holding a small potted plant and watching as Ginny tossed an inert Snitch into the air, bounced it off her elbow, and then snatched it out of the air with the same hand. Beside Hermione, Draco scoffed under his breath.

“It’s okay to be impressed,” Hermione whispered. “I won’t tell her.”

He made a dismissive sound but then huffed. “It’s just...she’s already a phenomenal Chaser. She can’t leave one thing for me?”

“I thought *you* were a phenomenal Chaser?” Hermione teased. “Or did Ginny get it wrong?”

He shoulder-checked her gently for the sass, but timed it badly, knocking Hermione off the flow of her next step and sending her staggering diagonally into Ginny.

“Shit—” he began but Ginny had shot her other hand out reflexively, steadying her with a firm grip around Hermione’s bicep.

“Unbe-*lievable* behavior, Mr. Malfoy!” Ginny scolded, in a fair impersonation of McGonagall. “Utterly *disgraceful* manners. To shove a *lady*—”

Hermione pantomimed pinching Ginny’s lips shut and Ginny faked a snap of teeth at her fingertips, laughing.

“You’re feistier than usual.” Hermione raised a brow meaningfully. “Excited about some... *thing*?”

“Yes.” Ginny bounced her brows. “Some *thing* is exciting me quite a bit.”

“Gross.” Draco slung his arm over Hermione’s shoulders, giving her a little squeeze of apology for his accidental shove. “I know what you’re referring to.”

“I didn’t think that you didn’t,” Ginny told him sweetly.

Neville pushed off the wall and mimicked Draco in slinging his arm over Ginny’s shoulders. “Not sure Ginny knows the meaning of subtly, anyway.”

She scoffed, craning her neck up at him. “Excuse you, I can be subtle when I want to be. Or have you forgotten?”

Neville raised his brows. “If you’re referring to what you did to the Carrows, I’m not sure I’d call that *subtle*.”

“Merlin, nor would I.” Draco shuddered. “And if you do, then I definitely don’t want to see whatever you consider overt.”

Ginny grinned at both of them. “Aw. Ta, lads.”

Hermione found that she genuinely didn’t want to know.

“Come on,” she said, jerking her chin in the direction of Hogsmeade. “We can chat on the way.”

They materialized in front of Harry’s house thirty minutes later, Hermione holding onto Draco and Ginny with her arm through Neville’s. Draco looked around, taking in the townhouses lining each side of the road.

“Been in Muggle London much?” Hermione asked him.

“A bit.” He turned to look behind them to the tall stone wall that ran along the other side of the street, acting as a back garden fence for the row of townhouses the next street over. “Obviously not much but we’d come into town once in a while. It was hard to avoid, sometimes.”

“Hmm.” She wondered what had unavoidably taken the Malfoys into Muggle London but shelved the question for now, tugging him after Ginny, who had taken the lead in approaching numbers 11 and 13.

It amused her that Draco showed no interest nor surprise when number 12 began to slowly appear out of nowhere. After a cursory glance at the magically revealed dwelling, his attention flicked back to the Muggle homes either side, craning his neck a bit to see what one bloke was watching on the telly.

They went up the steps and Ginny rapped smartly on the door. It opened a moment later, Harry's face breaking into a smile when he saw it was them.

"Hi, come in, come in." He stepped aside and they formed an orderly queue to walk inside.

The foyer was about the same as Hermione remembered, although Harry had done something to make it feel a bit more welcoming than it had during the war. She couldn't put her finger on what exactly felt different but she didn't have time to take a good look around before he was leading them down the hallway toward the main sitting room.

"We can hang in the lounge," he said and then drew up short. "Ah."

Hermione saw what he'd nearly run into a moment later, or rather *who*.

Kreacher stood just outside the door to the lounge, eyes fixed on a point just behind Hermione. His ears, normally folded back like an angry cat's, had perked up, making him look suddenly ten years younger and a third less grumpy. Hermione had never seen him look so pleasant and couldn't fathom the reason for it until Kreacher spoke.

"Master Black." Kreacher wrung his hands, looking between Harry and Draco with a tremulous expression. "It is a pleasure to—"

"C'mon," Harry implored, interrupting him. "Please don't be weird about this."

Kreacher narrowed his eyes at Harry but nodded obediently, gaze drifting furtively back to Draco. His ears lifted again.

"I did prep him that you'd be here," Harry said, looking over at Draco with an apologetic expression. "But obviously he's his own person so I can't exactly command him not to bother you with all that."

Draco dispelled the concern with a wave of his hand, looking amused at Harry's discomfort. "It's fine, really." He fixed Kreacher with a straight forward look. "Hello," he told the elf. "I'm Draco."

Kreacher glanced askance at Harry, like he was waiting to be told off. Harry snorted and gestured at Draco with an open palm. "Don't look at me, Kreach."

Kreacher's beady eyes slid back to Draco. "Hello Master Draco," he said reverently.

Draco inclined his head politely and then tugged Hermione half a step forward. "You know Hermione, I expect?"

Kreacher grumbled something under his breath, eyes tracking the way Draco's fingers were interlaced with hers. "Kreacher does."

“Hello, Kreacher.” Hermione offered him a little wave. “How are you?”

Kreacher grumbled again, ears flattening, and ambled off. Hermione breathed a soft laugh as Harry rolled his eyes long-sufferingly.

“Believe it or not, but that’s progress,” she told Draco. The edge of his mouth went down at the implication of how she might have been greeted in the past and she smirked. “You should hear what your Aunt Walburga says to me.”

“Not anymore!” said Harry proudly. “Permanently covered and silenced.”

She raised her fist in a small showing of victory and he grinned. Draco still looked perturbed so she tugged him along after her as they followed Harry into the lounge.

They mingled for a bit, snacking on the sandwiches and crisps Harry had (rather adorably) set out, watching as Neville moseyed through the room and then down the kitchen stairs, looking for an optimal place for the small potted plant he’d brought Harry. Harry had accepted the gift with a furrowed brow, evidently less familiar with good Pureblood manners than Blaise had been, though seemingly just as happy to let Neville take the lead in homing it.

Given all that life had thrown at him, it felt like a gift to be in Harry’s company; to be seeing him so comfortable in a home of his own, laughing at something Ginny was teasing Neville about, the three of them spread between a sofa and an armchair. He’d always been an unwavering point of support and comfort to her, so watching him having a *life* filled her with a pervasive sense of bonhomie.

Theo and Blaise arrived an hour later. Harry collected them from the vestibule and Hermione made sure she was oriented to see Ginny’s face when she first caught sight of Blaise. As expected, her capricious friend was anything but subtle. She stalked over to Blaise with long-limbed confidence and wagged her empty glass at him. He raised a brow and then trailed after her to the makeshift bar at the back of the room. Hermione wondered how long it would be until they found an excuse to sneak away.

Looking over at Harry and Theo, she wondered the same.

Harry had greeted Theo with a jovial raised hand and now the two dark-haired men were chuckling together, all dimpled smiles and quirked brows and shameless flirtation.

Draco and Neville were engaged in a conversation of their own, so Hermione wandered over to the drinks cart for a top-up and to impose her company on Ginny and Blaise.

“Hi Hermione,” Blaise greeted, leaned back against the wall.

Ginny, standing between Blaise’s spread feet, looked over her shoulder to observe Hermione’s approach. Hermione raised a brow at her, smothering a teasing smirk at the way Ginny looked slightly put out by the interruption.

“Just getting a drink and then you can continue your little game,” she told her sweetly.

Ginny snorted and leaned forward, bracing her shoulder against Blaise's chest. Blaise slid a hand around her waist instantly, keeping her there.

"It's not a *game*," Ginny informed her.

"Game?" Theo repeated, coming up behind Hermione. "Are we playing a game?"

Blaise tilted his glass toward Theo. "Now *that's* a superb idea."

"I do love a good game," Ginny agreed. "Hermione?"

"Sure." Hermione unstopped a bottle of dark liquid and sniffed it, recoiling instantly. "Oh Merlin. Harry, what on earth is this?"

"Scotch." Harry sounded amused, coming up to her other side. "A rather nice bottle of it, actually."

"Smells like vomit." She shoved the cork back in and replaced it. "Draco?" she called over her shoulder.

He looked up from his conversation with Neville, eyes finding her instantly.

"Will you make me a drink?" She gave him a little smile of apology for interrupting his chat. He stood without complaint, coming over and sliding a hand to the crook of her neck, squeezing the muscle of her shoulder as he peered over to see what was on offer.

"What're you in the mood for?" he asked.

That had rapidly shifted with the way his firm touch had sent a ripple of pleasure through her, but she made herself focus. "Something...clean tasting? A little sweet but not sickly?" She laughed at herself. "Not sure if that helps at all."

"Yep." He squeezed her again and then shifted her out of his way. "Go sit, I'll bring you something."

She retreated to the sofa and took up his vacated seat beside Neville. Harry joined them a moment later, Ginny trailing after him. A little Gryffindor reunion, she thought with amusement.

"No Ron tonight?" Hermione inquired as Ginny plopped down on the floor at her feet, criss-crossing her legs and leaning back on her hands.

"Nah, he said he had plans tonight already." Harry ruffled a hand through his hair and then pushed his glasses up. Hermione saw Theo's gaze snag on the motion from across the room before flicking back to whatever Blaise was saying. She grinned to herself.

"Merlin, who would have predicted so many Gryffindor-Slytherin relationships," she remarked, Theo's attention on Harry having sparked the thought. And then she remembered that she wasn't supposed to know who Ron was very possibly secretly conducting his evening plans with.

Ginny caught it and gasped, eyes going wide. “You know?” she accused.

Hermione winced. “Oh. Erm...yes.”

“Oh thank Merlin. I’ve been absolutely buzzing with the need to talk to someone about it. Can you *believe it?*” Ginny half-yelled the last. “I mean...! Good for him, obviously, she’s a stunner but *Ronald?*”

“Ron is objectively handsome,” Hermione defended. “*And* he’s extremely affectionate.”

Ginny fake-gagged. “Please, Hermione. That’s my brother.”

Hermione rolled her eyes at the melodrama. She could see why Ginny and Draco got on so well. “Oh stop it. I think it’s lovely.”

“You’re useless. How’d you find out, anyway?”

“I guessed.” Hermione could feel Harry and Neville’s confusion on either side of her but was determined to not spill Ron’s secret if she could help it. “And Draco confirmed that I was correct.”

“Draco knows?” Ginny perked up, turning around to seek out the blonde. “Oh good. He’s a much better gossip than you. We can scream about it together later.”

“You do that.” Ginny gave her a sarcastic thumbs-up and Hermione laughed.

The Slytherins joined them a moment later, Harry dutifully standing to let Draco sit beside Hermione and relocating himself to the adjacent sofa. Theo claimed the cushion next to him without hesitation, Blaise and Ginny joining them after Blaise offered Ginny a hand to pull her to her feet.

“Right Zabs,” Theo said, “give us a game, then.”

Blaise sipped his drink thoughtfully. “How about a classic? Never Have I Ever.” He looked side-long at Ginny expectantly. “Gonna scoff at me, babe?”

Ginny smirked at his reference to her reaction for his Truth or Dare suggestion at their last gathering. “Nope. You’ve shown me the error of a closed mind.”

Blaise bounced his brows salaciously. “Have I? Hmm, lovely.”

“Focus,” Theo chided. “You can be disgusting together later.”

“Yeah, yeah. Right, everyone know the rules?” Blaise looked around at them, receiving unanimous agreement. “Brilliant. Hermione, want to go first?”

She blinked. “Oh! Sure. Let’s see...” She looked around at them, sipping the (absolutely delicious) drink Draco had handed her while she pondered. And then the obvious statement arose. “Never have I ever kissed a girl.”

Theo raised his glass to her. “Damn, I almost made it through. Cheers for foiling me on that one.” He sipped his drink – as did literally everyone else – as they each put a finger down.

“Playing to win, I see,” Draco murmured.

She gave him her most innocent expression. “Isn’t that the point?”

“Who’d you kiss?” Harry asked Ginny incredulously, sitting forward to see her around Theo.

Ginny raised a brow at him from the other end of the couch, leaning forward around Blaise. “Don’t sound so scandalized, Harry. I know what you’ve gotten up to with your dormmates, after all.”

Harry made a sound of understanding. “Ohh, a dorm-kiss. Those are fun.”

“Yeah, they are,” agreed Blaise, grinning at Draco, who sighed into his drink. “Your turn, Draco.”

“Never have I ever driven a car,” said Draco without hesitation.

Hermione elbowed him as she drank for targeting her; he smirked at her, unapologetic. Harry took a sip as well and Ginny cocked her head, looking at him.

“Does dad’s car count?” she asked.

Harry nodded. “I hope so, because that’s what I just drank for.”

“Damnit.” She took a sip then folded a finger down.

“Right, never have I ever left the UK,” said Harry.

“*Mate*,” gasped Blaise. “You’ve never been off the island?”

Harry shook his head. “Nope.”

“Unbelievable. I can’t—right, we’re rectifying that.”

“Sounds fun.” Harry bumped his shoulder against Theo. “Somewhere warm, eh?”

Theo looked pleased at the comment. “Oh? Want to see me in my swim trunks, do you?”

Harry shrugged casually. “Or out of them.”

Theo’s eyes flared but before he could derail the entire game, Neville chimed in.

“I’ve only been to Ireland,” he offered. “Not sure if that counts as elsewhere?”

“Well, was it Northern Ireland or the Republic?” Hermione asked.

“It was Dublin.”



She nodded. "Well, then it counts. It's not part of the UK."

"Ah, lovely." He sipped his drink, as had everyone else apart from Harry.

The side discussion had given Theo enough time to corral himself, though he gave Harry a weighty look before sitting back and swirling his drink, inspecting their raised hands and the number of fingers they each still held aloft. Everyone had three still up, except Ginny, who only had two. His gaze drifted to Hermione and he cocked his head, expression thoughtful. She hadn't spoken to him properly since he'd so enthusiastically corresponded by owl and she saw him realize the same. His eyes flicked to Draco next.

"Ooh, I want to know the answer to this *so badly* but I can't...oh wait, yes I can." Theo grinned impishly at Draco. "Never have I ever *not* been fucked in the arse."

"*Jesus*," Draco muttered, laughing.

"That phrasing is extremely disconcerting," Blaise interjected. "Can you please qualify it?"

Theo rolled his eyes. "Gods, you know what I meant. *Obviously* there were about seventeen years that I hadn't been."

"Cheers." Blaise raised his glass to him and then sipped it. No one else did. "Seriously?" He said, looking around at them. He sighed. "You lot are missing out."

"Not thirsty, Draco?" Theo asked sweetly. It was a testament to how much he was seeking information that he hadn't clocked Harry's lack of a sip.

"Fairly," said Draco easily, leaning back and crossing an ankle over his knee. "I'll probably have a drink in the next few weeks though."

Theo wagged his brows at Hermione, who rolled her eyes but couldn't fully quell her amusement at his blatant lack of subtlety.

"*Swoon*," said Ginny. "I want a man who's *fairly thirsty* to be arse-fucked."

"Ginny," Harry sighed but Blaise gestured to himself, brows raised incredulously, and she giggled and went up on her knees to kiss him. Blaise palmed her bum with rather more purpose than was strictly polite for a group setting.

"Alright, alright." Theo chided, as if it hadn't been his suggestive question to have led things so swiftly to the gutter. "Keep it decent you two."

He then noticed Harry's unchanged number of raised fingers.

"*Wait a fucking minute*," he choked out. "You're telling me you've never...?"

Harry looked amused at Theo's fluster. "Yep. In *that* direction, at least. Although, I'm not against trying it - if I find the right bloke, of course."

Theo slumped back against the sofa dramatically, holding his ice-filled glass up to his temple as if to cool himself down. Harry snorted at the theatrics.

“Right,” said Blaise, his arm slung around Ginny where she now sat half on his lap. “Since you’ve taken us here, never have I ever seen someone in this room wank.”

Draco and Hermione drank which earned them both *ooh’s* and gagging noises. Hermione wondered what they’d say if they knew half their drink had been because of each other and the other half because of their tryst with Neville. She was surprised that no one else took a sip until, after a moment, a rather sheepish Harry joined them.

“*Who?*” demanded Theo, sitting upright at once.

“Not you?” said Blaise, surprised.

“No.” Theo inspected Harry with narrowed eyes, assessing. “Was it Ginny?”

Harry shook his head as Ginny scoffed. “*Please,*” she said. “If someone else is there, you think I’m doing all the work?”

“It can be rather fun,” Hermione put in. “And it’s an excellent way to see what they really like.”

All eyes fixed on her, then flicked to Draco.

“Despite how that sounded,” he said, tone dry, “I don’t like anything extraordinarily odd.”

She snorted. “Oh! No, of course not.”

“That was *super* convincing,” Ginny told her. Draco tsked but grinned when Ginny smirked at him.

Theo waved his hand impatiently. “No more crosstalk! I want to hear who Harry saw wanking.”

There was silence for a moment and then Harry and Neville made eye contact and Theo gasped.

“*Longbottom?! Oh my god. Tell me everything.*”

“We shared a dorm,” Harry said succinctly, when everyone looked over expectantly.

Draco hummed a low sound of satisfaction and nudged her with his elbow, his point regarding the masturbatory habits in the dormitories having been confirmed. She gave him a flash of side-eye but otherwise ignored him. He chuckled.

“To be clear,” Neville interjected, “I wasn’t just, you know, out in the open. Harry pulled my curtains back to ask me a question at a rather inopportune moment.”

“Uh-huh.” Theo nodded, looking over at Harry with his brows raised in an expression of unmitigated disbelief. “Yes, I’m sure it was.”

Harry scoffed. “Trust me, it was.”

“Aw.” Neville stuck out his lower lip in a little pout, eyes glittering with amusement.

“Don’t act all put out.” Harry rolled his eyes. “You don’t even like men.”

“So what, he tears back the curtains and you just...carried on?” Theo asked Neville, looking just as he had when he and Hermione had sequestered themselves to dismantle Time; like he was working to untangle a complex thread.

“Yes, well, things were...er, a bit too far along, shall we say, to hold off.” Neville cleared his throat but he didn’t look particularly embarrassed, even when Ginny giggled.

“And so Harry got an eyeful,” Theo said.

“Not literally,” Harry cut in. “Just to be clear.”

Theo shushed him with a quick hand on his thigh, squeezing once. Harry’s eyes dropped to the hand but Theo was still looking at Neville with a curious expression.

“That didn’t make things weird?” he asked.

Neville shrugged indifferently. “Nah. Like he said, we shared a dorm. That sort of thing was bound to happen.”

“Huh.” Theo squeezed Harry’s thigh again, almost absently, and then leaned back against the sofa again, hand drifting up a few inches.

“I’m not sure why you’re acting as if that’s revolutionary behavior,” Blaise put in. “Need I remind you that you also grew up in a dormitory setting?”

“Ugh, don’t remind me.” Theo finally removed his hand from Harry’s leg, shifting to prop an ankle over his opposite knee. The crossed knee hovered just within Harry’s personal space and Hermione saw Harry’s thought process play out on his face as he resisted touching it. She then caught Theo’s furtive glance sideways, to assess why Harry hadn’t.

She rolled her lips in to compress her smile at how obviously into each other they were. It was really rather adorable.

“Your turn, babe.” Blaise jostled Ginny on his lap and she hummed, surveying their raised hands and noting that Harry, Hermione, and Draco were each down to one. She considered them each for a moment and then evidently decided to target Harry, turning to grin at him. He groaned, knowing the loss was imminent given how well Ginny knew him.

“Never have I ever seen Neville come,” said Ginny unapologetically.

Harry sighed and sipped his pint, taking the defeat.

Hermione shared a quick glance with Draco; he raised a brow and she shrugged a shoulder and raised her glass. He smirked and sipped his, too.

“Ex-cuse me,” Theo gasped, pointing at the two of them. “What was that?!”

“It wasn’t a big deal,” said Draco, inspecting the rim of his glass with a nonchalance Hermione knew was intended to provoke Theo.

“Oh, I don’t know,” she mused, playing along. “Some aspects of it were very...big.”

Draco snorted into his drink as Neville pressed his lips together to temper his smile.

Theo was beside himself, dropping his foot to the floor and leaning forward. “Wait, what does *that* mean? Hermione? Oh my god, someone *tell me right away*.”

Draco tilted his head at her, checking she was comfortable with divulging the details. She bit her lip, eyes glinting, and the edge of his mouth lifted in response. She could practically hear his gently chiding *oh really, Granger?*

His eyes flicked behind her to Neville, who evidently also gave his consent because on his next blink, Draco was smirking across the room at Theo.

“Granger and I asked Neville to do a spot of voyeurism. He sat in a chair and watched us go at it.”

“Her-mione,” Ginny gasped, sounding proud beyond belief. “Oh my god, *really?* ”

Hermione compressed her smile at the open-mouthed amazement on Ginny’s face. “Mm-hmm.”

She chanced a glance at Harry next, unsure how chuffed he’d be to bear witness to her sex life, but as usual, she needn’t have worried. In his typical affable manner, he simply raised his brows once and then winked at her. She laughed and rolled her eyes.

Beside him, Theo was taking the news with less reserved amusement and more outright astonishment. He stared at Draco.

“Oh my giddy aunt, you had a threesome with *Longbottom?* And *Hermione Granger?* ” He slapped a hand to his forehead. “What sodding alternate reality have I fallen into?”

“It wasn’t a *threesome*,” Hermione corrected. “Neville stayed in the chair.”

She elected not to include the non-tactile way that Neville had interacted with them.

“But — and really, no offense Neville — but *why him* when I’m right here?” Theo looked between the three of them, eyes ending on Draco and mouth downturning in a dramatic pout. “You know I love to play.”

“He *knows?*” Ginny repeated with emphasis, eyeing Theo skeptically. “Is this circling back to our dormmates conversation?”

Theo tsked, flicking his fingers at her without looking away from Draco. “I wish. But no.”

“By the way, this...?” Draco gestured to Theo’s general person with his glass. “Is exactly the sort of behavior that got you disqualified.”

Theo made a sound of affront, hand on his heart. “What, my *enthusiasm*? My—” He suddenly looked over at Harry, grabbing his thigh again. “I’m crazy about you. Like, utterly, utterly infatuated, so please don’t misconstrue—”

“It’s fine,” said Harry, laughing. “I’m not threatened by *Malfoy*.”

“Appreciate the emphasis there, *Potter*,” Draco drawled back.

“Stop flirting!” Theo bounced once on the sofa cushion, eyes back on Hermione and Draco. “But really, why not me?”

“Don’t answer right away — seriously, have a good think first.” Draco dropped his foot and leaned forward, elbows on his knees. “Would you have been a good boy and stayed in the chair?”

Theo widened his eyes meaningfully. “First of all, don’t ever call me a good boy in front of company again. *Merlin and Morgana*.” Then he pouted, looking plaintively from Draco to Hermione. “But good boys usually get to touch,” he said forlornly. “I’d wanna touch.”

Draco sat back, waving his hand in a *there you go* gesture. Theo sighed, looking resigned, then slung his arm around Harry’s shoulders.

“That’s alright. I get to be a good boy for Harry and *he’ll* reward me appropriately.”

“Or, inappropriately,” Ginny said under her breath. Harry snorted, flicking his eyes to hers.

“Personally, I can’t believe you two entertained the idea of a third and didn’t immediately think of me,” said Blaise, directing his comments to Hermione. “For one, I’d be a lot more *accommodating* than Theo – if you know what I mean, Hermione – and for two, I *know* you liked watching us kiss.” He wagged his forefinger between himself and Draco. “Imagine what else we could do.”

Draco gestured toward Blaise with an open hand, looking at Hermione. “Instant violation to criteria two, extremely likely violation to three, as well.”

Blaise’s brows dipped, looking from her to Draco. “Wait, what criteria? What’s wrong with me?”

Hermione shushed Draco, laughing. “Don’t encourage them.”

“And aren’t you with Ginny, anyway?” Draco continued, giving Blaise a disapproving shake of the head. “Rather rude to be angling for a threesome right in front of her.”

“Especially one that doesn’t include me,” Ginny put in, inspecting a fingernail and then nibbling on it theatrically. “Rather rude indeed.”

Blaise seemed stuck between which comment he wanted to respond to more and, smart man that he was, chose Ginny's. "Oh? You'd be—"

"Talk about that amongst yourselves later," Theo cut in, "I've only just processed that Neville bloody Longbottom is somehow the nexus of several sexual exploits." He tilted his head interestedly. "Aren't you a surprise."

"And those are just the tame ones," Neville said, taking a sip and then dabbing at his lip with the back of his hand. Theo choked on his laugh.

"*Gryffindors*," he said, half in awe and half like it was a swear. "Merlin's tits, you lot are something else."

"Don't sell us short," Draco drawled, leaning back and resting his hand on her back, the weight and warmth of it seeping right through her shirt. He lightened his palm and then stroked his fingers absently down her spine. "We snakes do alright, don't we?"

She sipped her drink to cover the way she wanted to squirm into that teasing touch. On her other side, Neville sat back too and for some reason, knowing that Neville could see Draco's hand on her made her even more hyper-aware of his touch. She must have tensed under his hand because Draco dragged his fingers down to the hem of her shirt and then lifted it slightly to run the pads against her lower back. She really did shiver then. He bumped his knee against hers, acknowledging it.

Theo inclined his head. "True. I *am* shagging The Chosen One, after all."

"Yeah, you very well might be," Harry murmured into his glass, tipping it back and draining it.

But Hermione could hardly focus on Theo's reaction to *that* because Draco's hand had drifted higher, pulling her shirt up with it, and when he chuckled softly again, she had a sense it wasn't directed at her. When Neville shifted, thighs spreading slightly and glass coming to rest on his lap, her heart skipped a beat.

The thought that Neville was once again watching as Draco teased her sent a heady bolt of lust through her and she couldn't help but arch her back slightly, leaning into Draco's hand. He flattened his palm against her skin and her shirt slipped down, covering his hand. When he stroked his thumb along the line of muscle that framed her spine, she couldn't help but dart a hand out to squeeze his thigh. He flexed it for her as he raised his other hand to have a slow, measured sip of his drink.

Across the room, chaos was unfurling on the other sofa; Theo and Ginny talking over one another and shrieking with laughter while Blaise and Harry alternately goaded them on or exchanged eye-rolls. Hermione tried to pay attention to the conversation but every so often, Draco would draw little patterns on her skin and she'd lose whatever thread she'd found.

When his hand slid high enough to slip a fingertip under the clasp of her bra, she gave up keeping track of it altogether, her focus zeroing in on his touch. He dragged his finger slowly back and forth under the clasp, filling her head with thoughts of him undoing it, of him

sliding his hand under, him reaching around to palm at her breasts and pinch her nipples, right there in front of everyone. Her nipples tingled at the memory of how it felt to have his fingers around them and she shifted discreetly on the couch.

He dragged the edge of his fingernail lightly across her skin at the movement and she barely held her squeak. She looked over at him sharply, a reprimand on the tip of her tongue for the way he was tormenting her, only to find that he was already looking at her.

*Hello*, he mouthed and then smirked.

She clucked her tongue at his unapologetic acknowledgement of what he was doing to her and he grinned outright.

"...isn't it, Hermione?" The tail-end of Ginny's question pulled her attention from Draco.

"Sorry," she said, facing forward and finding four pairs of eyes on her. "What?"

Ginny raised a brow at Hermione's distraction but didn't comment. "I was just saying that it's been really nice having a general common room this year," she repeated.

Very slowly, Draco dragged his hand back down her spine then out from under her shirt, and Hermione found she had to actively and quite intentionally keep herself focused on Ginny's words.

"Oh!" Hermione cleared her throat as they finally registered. "Yes! It's brought us together in a way that class and free-time could never really accomplish. And we've been sitting at whichever tables we like in the Great Hall, too, although that aspect wasn't exactly sanctioned by McGonagall."

"Not my table, yet," Draco muttered and she pinched his leg in a double-reprimand.

"It's quite novel to be mixing with other houses for reasons other than learning defensive magic," Ginny agreed.

"That's brilliant." Harry looked genuinely enthused by the concept. "Don't get me wrong, I loved the competitive aspect of other houses but it was a bit unnecessarily divisive, wasn't it?"

Theo snorted. "That's an understatement."

"Yes, well, you lot didn't exactly make a massive effort to *not* live up to the precedent set by your house's founder," said Ginny dryly. Blaise clucked his tongue imperiously and she raised her brows, leaning back to look at him properly. "Oh, *I'm* sorry Zabini. Do you disagree?"

He smirked at her, their faces almost level with her across his lap. "Wouldn't dream of it."

"Wouldn't it have been interesting if I'd listened to the hat," Harry mused, leaning against the arm of the sofa. "Merlin, *everything* might have gone differently."

“What hat?” asked Theo, peering over at him.

“Harry was a hatstall,” Hermione informed them. “Slytherin-Gryffindor.”

“We almost got The Chosen One?” lamented Theo. “Oh Merlin, the coup that would have been!”

“You might have actually accepted my handshake,” Draco added, smirking at Harry.

Harry rolled his eyes. “Doubtful. And anyway, I’m sorry to say it but I’d make the same choice every time. You lot are great but Ron and Hermione and Ginny are family.”

“We could have been family,” Theo insisted, but his tone was soft. He’d heard what Harry had said and Hermione suspected that Theo was in a position to understand, quite personally, the sentiment behind wanting to find a family of one’s own.

“Yeah, well...it turned out alright in the end.” Harry smiled at Theo, then glanced across the way to Hermione and Draco, and then Ginny sitting astride Blaise, then back to Theo. Theo beamed.

Sitting between a boy she’d (sort of) bullied and the boy who’d (very overtly) bullied her, Hermione had to agree.

It had turned out quite well indeed.

## Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is still at Grimmauld and is almost done, so should be up in a day or two (assuming I focus on it and not the 4-5 other things I’m currently writing in tandem - - someone save me from myself).

Thanks for reading!

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## Chapter 38: “Or,” he said, “we could stay the night.”

### Chapter Notes

Hi friends!! I've been having fun writing whatever I want, as is my way, and for some reason these babies slipped by for a bit there. But we are back in the headspace and things. are. happening. 🍌🍌🍌

Also everyone say thank you to [April](#) for betaing this and the next chapter for me because for some reason, my brain was not brainin with this one and as usual, she saved the day by pointing out exactly the places that were tripping me up. THANK YOU APRIL!!!! 🍌

The next chapter is basically done now, too, which is good for reasons you will soon find out...

And with that, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The party began to break up just before eleven, the exodus instigated by Ginny and Blaise, exactly as Hermione predicted.

“Right,” Ginny announced, hands wrapping around Blaise’s waist from behind so she could grope at his pecs. “It’s *well* past my bedtime.”

“*Bedding* time,” Theo corrected under a cough. Blaise waggled his brows at him.

“Ha. Precisely.” Ginny began tugging Blaise backward from the room, peering around his broad shoulder. “This has been a laugh, absolutely lovely evening. Love you all desperately.”

“Night, Gin,” said Harry fondly. “Love you.”

“Oi,” protested Blaise.

“Night, Blaise,” Harry added, grinning when Blaise rolled his eyes at the obvious misinterpretation.

Ginny pinched Blaise in the vicinity of his nipple, feet stumbling slightly as she tried to navigate the door frame while hauling a bulky man along with her. He captured her hand, turning and sheepdogging her down the hall and out of view.

“Merlin,” remarked Neville.

“Indeed,” agreed Harry.

Hermione extricated herself from Draco's lap; he helped her up with a hand on her bum, giving her a little squeeze for the effort. She clicked her tongue at him over her shoulder but knew he'd be the furthest thing from apologetic.

She made her way across the room to the other door, slipping through and then over to the kitchen stairs. She'd stopped drinking about an hour ago and felt comfortably tipsy, but she was desperate for a glass of water.

The kitchen was quiet and dim, and she liked the reprieve from the bright and rowdy room she'd left so didn't bother flicking the lights on. She got herself a glass of water and gulped it down, taking in a heaving breath once she'd finished. She filled it again, just for good measure, and was halfway through it when she heard someone coming down the stairs.

"Hi love," Draco murmured, coming over.

She held out the glass to him and he smiled in thanks, taking it.

"Ready to go soon?" she asked, wrapping her arms around his waist. They'd mocked Ginny and Blaise for it but Hermione was right in line with them — it felt well past her bedding time, too, especially with how touchy Draco had been all evening.

He hummed his agreement, tipping the glass up. She watched his throat bob on several swallows, the cords of his neck pulling taut. They looked extremely biteable and she saw no reason to resist, so raised up on her toes to give him a kittenish lick along one and then framed it with her teeth in a suggestion of a bite. He grunted into the glass but finished it with a final swallow before tilting his face down to look at her. She dragged her teeth off him and leaned back so she could meet his eyes.

"Or," he said, "we could stay the night."

Going back to their room at Hogwarts wouldn't take longer than half an hour — surely not an unbearable amount of time — and so she eyed him suspiciously. "Why?"

He shrugged a lazy shoulder as he leaned to the side to upend the empty glass on the drying rack. "Well, two reasons. One, this house is technically part of my *Pureblood legacy* and you've already expressed your depraved desires regarding that." He smirked when she rolled her eyes.

"And two?" she prompted.

"*Well...*" He drew out the word. "It sort of feels like being at a parent's house, like I'm not allowed to fuck you here."

"Harry is *not* a father figure to me," she deadpanned.

"No," he agreed slowly.

"And you and Harry are good now, I thought?"

"Yes. But it would still be..." He tilted his head, smile almost predatory, "...satisfying."

She scoffed, amused. "You're a brute."

His eyes glinted, mouth curling into a smirk. "Mmhmm." He leaned in, crowding her against the counter. "He's The Chosen One but he's never been *your* 'chosen one', has he? But I am."

She laughed. "Is *that* what this is about? Merlin. Are you going to say Ron's name in bed next? Krum's?"

"Better me than you." He dragged his nose lightly along her jaw.

She laughed. "I'm not sure *that's* true."

He nipped at her neck, tongue flicking out to soothe it. "Let's agree to not say anyone's name but each other's."

"Okay Draco," she murmured, a little breathily just to tease him.

It worked better than she'd expected, or else he'd already been more turned on than she'd thought, because suddenly he was pressing her back against the counter with more intention.

"Oh really, Granger?" he purred. "You want to play like that?"

"Like what?" she asked innocently.

"Like you think I won't lift you up onto the counter and make you take my cock right here. I would, you know." He shifted his hips until his erection was pressed against her belly. "And feel that? I'm all ready for you."

She tsked but with no strength behind it. "Someone could walk in."

He hummed against her ear and she felt the vibrations across her nerves, raising all the fine hairs on her body. "Yeah. Someone could."

She almost lifted herself onto the counter at that, even going so far as to reach back and curl her fingers around the edge. He chuckled, hands closing around her wrists to stop her.

"Naughty girl," he praised quietly. "So, can we stay?"

"I'll ask Harry," she breathed, "but yes, I'm sure we can."

He tightened his hold on her wrists and then tilted his face to run his lips down the column of her throat. He'd just closed his teeth softly around the base of her neck in a mimicry of what she'd done to him when a broad figure filled the doorway and then walked in. In the moonlight coming in through the window, she saw it was Neville.

"Oh!" he said, pulling up short when he spotted them. "Sorry."

Draco lifted his head, turning toward the voice. "It's fine," he said easily, but he didn't move away from her or release her wrists; in fact, he pressed his cock more firmly against her. Her

arousal flared again but she didn't want to spring an unplanned voyeurism session on Neville so controlled herself.

"Did you need something?" she asked, looking over to where Neville was still just hovering just inside the room.

Neville cleared his throat. "Just a glass of water."

She glanced to her right at the sink half a foot from them. "Oh. Go ahead."

Neville hesitated for half a breath and then stepped toward them, pulling the glass they'd used from the drying rack and filling it under the tap. He glanced sideways at them as he reached to turn the tap off, spilling water over his knuckles as his gaze snagged on the hold Draco had her in. The tap squeaked with how tightly he turned it.

Neville leaned his hip against the counter and had a small sip, eyeing them. "You two heading back to the castle soon?"

She wasn't sure if it was in reference to the way things had obviously begun to get heated between them or if he was simply asking.

"We were thinking of staying the night, actually," she told him. "If Harry's amenable."

Neville had another drink. "Well, he's just taken Theo upstairs to 'show him his sword collection', so I don't think you'll be getting an answer from him any time soon."

"Bugger." Hermione twisted her mouth to the side.

"His *sword collection*?" Draco scoffed, finally releasing her wrists and straightening fully. "That's so cliché."

"He found one here, actually," Hermione said absently, pulling her hands off the counter while considering how put out Harry might be to wake up in the morning to find them in one of his guest rooms. Not very. There were quite a few rooms, anyway, and she could find the linens herself...she clicked her tongue as the easiest solution suddenly struck.

"Draco," she said. "Would you summon Kreacher, please?"

"Kreacher?" he repeated and then rolled his eyes at himself when the elf instantly appeared with a crack at the sound of his name.

"Yes, Master Draco?" Kreacher simpered. "What is you needing of Kreacher, sir?"

Draco jerked his chin toward Hermione and Kreacher's demeanor soured.

"What is Miss Granger needing?" he asked with much less enthusiasm.

"Could you please inform Harry that we'll be staying in a guest room tonight and, if it's not too much trouble, would you mind telling us which room would be best?"

“Kreacher will inform Harry Potter.” He looked resigned. “You can be using the blue bedroom on the second floor.”

“Thank yo—” Hermione began but with another crack, Kreacher vanished. She sighed at the empty air.

“I can’t believe you just sent that poor elf into Potter’s bedroom,” remarked Draco. “As if he hasn’t been through enough after living in this house for decades.”

“Neville said they’ve only just gone up,” Hermione reasoned. “They can’t have gotten too scandalous in, what, five minutes?”

The deeply incredulous look Draco gave her reminded her of all the times they’d disproven that statement. She huffed a laugh, shaking her head at him and he smirked.

“I’m not sure they even fully waited until getting up the stairs,” Neville put in.

Hermione sighed. “Well, I’ll apologize to Kreacher in the morning.”

“Probably ought to,” Draco agreed, tone faux-serious.

Neville tipped back the glass, finishing it, and then replaced it on the drying rack. He crossed his arms over his chest, inspecting them. “Earlier, you were mentioning criteria. Am I allowed to know why I made the cut?”

Hermione felt her brows lift in surprise at the ease with which Neville referred back to that night, but then again his ability to be cool about the entire thing *had* been a major reason he’d been invited in. It seemed that Draco’s thoughts were similarly aligned.

“The fact that you just *asked* that, rather than *demanding* to know, is the first point in your favor,” Draco said.

Hermione nodded, her surprise fading. “That’s very true. The official criteria was someone we trusted who wouldn’t be put out being on the sidelines and who wouldn’t make things weird afterward. So far you’ve ticked them all.”

“Ah.” Neville smiled, pleased. “Well, that’s lovely to hear.”

She returned his smile and then bit the corner of her lip, thinking.

“You were teasing him earlier,” she said, looking up at Draco and narrowing her eyes with playful suspicion. His glinted back at her, looking intrigued but not exactly surprised that she was bringing it up.

In her periphery, Neville moved his head in a *so-so* gesture. “More like enticing me,” he corrected, offering her a lopsided smile of his own when she turned to look at him.

Draco’s eyes slid from Neville back to her, tongue poking the inside of his cheek as he raised a brow. The combination made him look cheeky and boyish and absolutely up to no good. She loved it.

“He was looking,” Draco explained, “so I showed you off. Just a little bit.”

His eyes were mischievous and heated, body language indicating a very clear direction to his thoughts. She was well aware that Draco liked to flaunt his things, a habit he’d never quite been able to shake, and though it probably should have upset her to be something he felt he could wave around at others, it didn’t. Instead, it sparked her hot. She wondered what it would be like to be properly shown off.

“Is that so,” she mused, tone speculative. “Well that wasn’t very nice of you, was it?”

“To you?” he asked, voice still playful even as his eyes searched hers carefully for any discomfort.

“To Neville,” she corrected, lifting a brow.

Draco’s expression relaxed and he flicked his eyes to Neville. “I don’t think he minded.”

“Definitely didn’t mind,” Neville agreed.

Draco turned his gaze back on her, the edge of his mouth lifting in a satisfied smirk. “See?”

She hummed a soft sound of understanding. “I do.”

They exchanged a heated look, her mind racing with possibilities. His was evidently following a similar thread because when he wet his bottom lip with a slow glide of his tongue, it was pure sex.

Neville cleared his throat. “Well, I’ll leave you to it,” he said, pushing off the counter to stand straight. “See you back at the castle tomorrow.”

But now that she’d had the glimmer of a repeat tryst with Neville, she found she wanted it, and she was quite certain Draco would be more than willing to play again.

“Or,” she said, turning her head to Neville, “you could stay.”

His expression gave her all the answer she needed, but he confirmed it nonetheless. “I wouldn’t mind that, either.”

“I’m sure you wouldn’t,” Draco drawled, eyes still on her. “Give us a minute?”

“Sure.” Neville stepped back. “No worries.”

Draco didn’t wait until they were properly alone before he reached down and hoisted her onto the counter, pushing her thighs apart to fit himself between them. She coiled her arms around his shoulders, keeping him close as she watched Neville glance back before ascending the stairs.

“Tell me what you want,” Draco murmured, hands coasting down her sides, slow and evocative. She hooked her legs around him, tugging him closer until their bodies were flush.

“I want you to show me off,” she whispered. She wasn’t ashamed of her desire but even so, speaking the words made her cheeks heat. “Again. Properly.”

His hands dropped to her bum, pressing her tighter to him, letting her feel what her words were doing to him.

“Yeah?” He ground his erection between her legs in an intentionally evocative motion that had her hips reflexively pressing forward. “And how should I do that?”

Knowing he was aroused by the idea made her bold. “I want him to watch you fuck me.”

“Jesus.” Draco leaned his forehead against hers, hands squeezing as he rocked against her again. “You liked how much he wanted you, didn’t you?”

“Yes.” She wanted to reverse their positions, to get Draco sitting so she could straddle him and find more friction. The measured pace he’d set was making her squirm, seeking *more*, but he was holding back.

“I liked it, too,” Draco murmured. “Liked being able to do whatever I wanted to you, while all he could do was take what we gave him.”

“Yes.” She arched her spine, hands sliding up into his hair, trying to get him riled up enough to stop restraining himself. “God, it was so hot.”

He held strong against her temptation. “Did you like denying him?”

“Yes. I liked seeing his self-control and watching it slowly wear down.”

Draco hummed a little noise of agreement, tilting his face to nose along her neck and up to her ear.

“And you liked his cock, too, didn’t you?” he whispered in her ear.

Unbidden, her body tightened. He hissed in a low sound of pleasure and she loosened her fist where it had unintentionally gripped his hair.

“Not as much as yours,” she breathed.

Draco chuckled. “You’re sweet. But it’s okay, you can be honest. I know you *love* mine.” He pressed said cock harder against her and she rocked her hips against it.

“I do love it,” she agreed. “I want it inside me.”

“Here?” He was rubbing himself against her with more force behind it and the friction was delicious. She felt hot all over and knew - without having to check - that she was soaked.

“Yes. God, anywhere you want.”

He nipped at her earlobe and she shivered, goosebumps pricking all along her body. He trailed kisses across her cheek.

“You liked his cock,” he continued, no longer making it a question, because it wasn’t. “And you liked that he was impressed with how you handled mine.”

He knew her too well. She keened and he hummed in response, pressing a lingering kiss to her lips. He drew back, staying close.

“So what if I was *here...*” *In her cunt*, his next grind indicated. “And he was here?” He traced the tip of his tongue lightly across her bottom lip. She opened her mouth on a soft gasp and when he slid his tongue inside, she instinctively sucked on it. He made a low sound in his chest, aroused and pleased.

She released his tongue and slid hers against it, pulling him close and kissing him until they were properly breathless.

She broke off, panting in the small space between their mouths. “Really?” she whispered. “You’d let him?”

“Only if you want to,” he assured her. “And there’d still be limits to what he could do but...” He paused, licking his lips. “But I want to see if you can take him.”

The suggestion burned through her, wildly aroused by both the idea of showing her newly honed skill set to someone else and impressing Draco. She’d be lying to herself if she hadn’t considered how far she could get on Neville; he’d said no one had ever taken him all the way to the base and knowing there was a gold star still out there to earn had lingered in the back of her mind.

She wondered how possessive Draco might get while watching her touching someone else. The thought thrilled her and she made a cut off little sound of interest.

He smiled, kissing her again. “Yeah? You want to show him what a lovely mouth you have? How fucking incredible you are at sucking cock?”

“Fuck.” She tangled her fingers in his hair again and he grunted, loving it. “Yes, I do.”

He exhaled, slow and controlled, crowding her until her head bumped the cabinet behind her. “You drive me wild,” he swore. “He’s gonna lose his damn mind.”

“Draco.” She was so turned on, she was aching. “Make me come.”

He bit off a groan, sinking his fingers into her hair and holding tight at the base of her skull. “Trust me, I will.”

“No, now,” she begged.

He lifted a brow. “Right here? You can’t wait?”

She was suddenly worried he’d make her wait just for the pleasure of it. “Please,” she whined. “You’ve gotten me so worked up.”

“And I’m not?” He chuckled, dark and bemused. “Pretty sure I’m leaking already.”



She flushed white-hot. “Oh god, *please*.”

“If you can be a good girl and wait until we get upstairs, then I’ll make you come as many times as you want,” he bargained. “All you need to do is ask.”

“I’m asking now,” she complained.

“Yeah, you are. But you can have one now or many later. What’ll it be?”

“One now *and* many later?” she tried and he grinned.

“Don’t be greedy. Choose.”

She considered making herself come secretly because honestly she probably could, but the denial was exciting. “Later. Many later.”

“Mm. What a good choice.” He kissed her again, deep and slow, his hips matching the cadence of his tongue. She moaned into his mouth and whimpered when he drew away. His eyes were intense, the striking grey a thin ring around blown pupils. When he smirked at her, eyes trailing over her face, she was sure she looked just as aroused as him.

He helped her off the counter, hands greedy for her arse.

“It’s taking all my restraint not to fuck you right here,” he murmured. “I can practically feel my cock inside you, I want it so badly.”

She worked a hand between them to squeeze him over his trousers, delighting in the way his nostrils flared and his jaw clenched.

“You could’ve,” she whispered, taking back a bit of the upper hand. “I’d let you fuck me anywhere.”

“Except the library,” he whispered back and she laughed softly.

“Mm. Well, come on. Let’s go find Nev and you can show him how hard I come for you.”

He followed her out of the kitchen, keeping close and then finding her hand at the top of the stairs, interlacing his fingers with hers.

Neville was sitting on the sofa in the lounge, an ankle propped on his knee and a book open in his hand. He snapped it shut when they entered, setting it on the cushion beside him as his gaze dropped first to the obscene bulge in Draco's trousers before rising to meet hers, expression open and curious.

Draco squeezed her hand, a silent indication for her to take the lead as she had the last time they’d invited Neville in. She squeezed back and smiled at Neville.

“We’ve been talking and...well, technically, criteria number two is not being *upset* about being on the sidelines, not that you have to...*remain* there.”

Neville absorbed that with a slow nod, eyes flicking to where Draco had leaned down to suck a soft mark onto the side of her neck. She felt her nipples tighten, along with everything else inside her.

Neville's eyes slid back to hers. "I see. And...what would *not* remaining on the sidelines look like?"

She paused, wondering how much to divulge right away. Draco, perhaps interpreting her hesitation as nerves, lifted his lips to her ear, teeth closing around the lobe in a gentle suggestion of a bite.

"Go on," he encouraged softly. "Be a Gryffindor about it."

She slid her hand into his hair, holding him against her neck as he bit at her with a little less restraint, the intensity of it turning her on even further. She tilted her head to the side, meeting Neville's gaze as Draco's teeth scraped at her.

"Would you like to come upstairs and find out?" she offered.

Neville smiled.

## Chapter End Notes

OOP 🙄

I shall endeavor to have the next chapter up by Friday 😊

Thanks, as always, for reading!! It really means so much to me that you guys keep coming back for more of these two 🥺💖

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 39: They found the bedroom Kreacher had indicated.

### Chapter Notes

As promised, more on Friday 🤖 and hopefully you will see why this had to be split into two chapters 🙄

Quick housekeeping: I added a few tags but nothing unexpected. Check ‘em if you need. And thanks again to April for betaing it 😊😊😊

And with that, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

They found the bedroom Kreacher had indicated, assuming that the house didn’t have more than one decked out fully in blue. Multi-hued damask wallpaper covered the walls, the blue theme accentuated further by a similarly-patterned duvet draped over the four-poster bed and twin blue lamps on either side.

The paintings all depicted various seascapes and were, thankfully, free from any portraits. She wasn’t sure she wanted to hear the vulgar comments the various Black family members would have while watching a Muggleborn be taken by two Purebloods.

While Neville and Hermione watched, Draco withdrew his wand then waved it across the door and floorboards, the gesture unfamiliar and the incantation mumbled so quietly she couldn’t make it out.

“What was that?” she asked, curiosity piqued.

“Just a gentle deterrent for Kreacher,” he said, and then hummed with satisfaction when the elf didn’t immediately appear at the sound of his name. “I thought it best we not be interrupted, should Potter choose to pay us back for your little stunt sending Kreacher in on him and Theo.”

“Deterrent?” she repeated. “What, like an Anti-Apparition Charm?”

“Sort of. Don’t tell Potter but this house likes me. It responds to my family magic.”

She opened her mouth to immediately inquire what the hell *family magic* meant – damned Purebloods and their hidden wells of magical knowledge – but he stopped her with a laugh and shake of his head.

“I’ll tell you all about it later, I promise. If I start now, I don’t think you’ll come up for air for an hour and I’d rather spend the next hour doing *other* things with you.”

She closed her mouth, for once more intrigued by a physical lesson than a theoretical one.

“Don’t forget,” she warned and he flicked his eyes up in a lazy eye roll.

“As if you won’t remind me.” He stowed his wand and then tugged her to him, walking them back until she was beside the bed.

Over Draco’s shoulder, Neville shoved his hands into his pockets, watching them from the edge of the room. She caught his eye and he smiled, a soft little thing devoid of any expectation or entitlement. It made her more eager to offer him even more than he was anticipating.

When they reached the side of the bed, Draco turned them both and then rotated her in his arms, tugging her back against his chest so she faced Neville.

Neville’s eyes flicked down her body once then went off to the side, looking around for a chair. “Same limits?” he asked, taking a step towards the accent chair beside the bureau.

“No,” Draco said, and Neville stopped. Draco slid his hands down to find the hem of her shirt and then slipped under. Neville’s eyes followed the movement as Draco continued with his explanation. “And yes. You’re still not allowed to touch her with your hands but...you *are* allowed to touch her with your cock.”

Neville’s eyes finally lifted, expression surprised. “Oh?”

“Only where I say. You’re *not* allowed inside her.” Draco paused for emphasis then carried on, voice warm with his anticipation of Neville’s reaction. “Well, not inside her cunt, anyway.”

Neville’s eyes immediately slid to hers, the heat in them making her thrum with awareness. Draco slid his hands higher, finding her breasts and giving them a few squeezes over the thin lace of her bra. She leaned back against his chest, bending her spine to arch up into his hands and pressed her bum against his trousers. He was still exceptionally hard, and the reminder of what had gotten him that way made her brazen.

“I want to suck your cock,” she told Neville.

It felt good to say; felt good to see the way such simple words affected both of the boys around her. She just felt...*good*.

He stared for a moment then swallowed thickly. “You do?”

“Yes,” she confirmed. Draco brushed his fingers feather-soft over her nipples and she squirmed. “I...I want to see how much of you I can take.”

Neville blew out a soft breath, raking a hand through his hair. “Fuck me.”

Draco pinched her nipples and even though it hadn’t been her to say it — and Neville hadn’t meant it like *that*, anyway — she accepted the reprimand with a gasp.

“No,” she told Neville breathily. “No, you can’t.”

He groaned, scrubbing his hand in his hair once more and then dropping it to his side. “Why is it so sexy to be told no?”

“It’s only sexy because you take it seriously,” Draco told him, voice firm. “If you ignored it, you’d be on your back. And *not* in a sexy way.”

Neville nodded easily. “Nah, I’ll listen. Of course I’ll listen.”

Draco hummed, satisfied. “Good boy.”

Neville snorted and rolled his eyes. “Nice try, Malfoy,” he said, and while he seemed entirely unaffected, Hermione found herself suddenly a little loose-limbed. She leaned back against Draco’s chest for support and he chuckled against her neck, knowing what his genuinely-given praise had done to her.

“Just trying to be a team player,” he told Neville, the words against her skin.

“I appreciate the effort. Really, I do.” Neville’s hands shifted in his trouser pockets, head tilting as he watched Draco playing with her under her shirt. “Can I see her tits?” His eyes flicked over to Draco’s. “In the interest of being a team player.”

“What do you say, Granger?” Draco murmured. “Can he see you?”

She nodded. “Yes. Show him.”

He nipped at her again, the sharpness of his teeth absolutely electric, then gave her breasts a final squeeze before sliding a hand around her back to flick her bra clasp open. He pulled her shirt and her bra up in one go and she lifted her arms so he could tug the garments off, tossing them aside.

But before she could lower her arms, he captured her wrists and guided them behind his head, putting her on display. She cupped one hand around the back of his neck and raked the other into his hair, giving him an affectionate scratch to his scalp before getting a good fistful. His hips bobbed against her arse at her firm tug.

Neville’s eyes trailed over her torso, his appreciation evident in his gaze. He licked his lips, inhaling slowly, and when his attention lingered on her breasts, she was gratified to see pink dusting the tops of his cheekbones and, even more satisfying, the unsubtle tightening of his trousers.

Draco slid his hands up her sides then around the swells of her breasts, the grazing touch so evocative she couldn’t help but let out a little sound of pleasure. Neville’s eyes slid from her tits to her face.

“He knows how to touch you, doesn’t he?” he murmured and she breathed a louder moan in the affirmative.

His eyes heated at the agreement but softened slightly as they glanced sideways to Draco. “D’you know what you do to him, Hermione?” Neville asked, eyes finding hers again. There was something tender in them. “The hold you have on him?”

“It’s mutual,” she whispered and Draco kissed her cheek, plucking at her nipples in a way that had her head dropping back against his shoulder, bum grinding back against him.

“It is, yeah,” agreed Neville, watching them. And then his gaze went playful. “Aren’t I lucky to be allowed in.”

“Yes,” said Draco firmly, but she could hear the undertone of warmth. “And speaking of, here’s another rule: you’re not allowed to come...” Draco paused and she practically felt his responding smirk to the look Neville sent him. “...not by her actions, at least. You can let her get you close but you have to finish yourself off.”

Neville huffed a laugh. “Getting me back for making her edge you last time, huh?”

“Something like that.” Draco cupped her breasts, lifting and pressing them together, his hair brushing her temple as he looked over her shoulder to appreciate the effect. Neville’s hands shifted in his pockets again, dragging her gaze down to the very prominent bulge there. She shifted back against Draco again, antsy. He gave her breasts a good, firm squeeze then stroked his index fingers over her nipples, and she whined.

“Needy,” he accused softly.

“I’m asking,” she breathed, hoping he understood, and he chuckled, acknowledging that he did.

“Mm. Okay baby. But that reminds me...” He looked up at Neville. “Last rule. You’re not allowed to get any cum on her. I mean it – not a single fucking drop.”

Neville nodded. “Fair enough. I can control myself. Anything else?”

“Anything else for you?” Draco asked her, nose skimming along her cheek.

Hermione appreciated the inclusion but *honestly*, they were taking entirely too long talking about it and not *doing it*. She’d never been particularly patient once she’d made her mind up about a course of action, and she certainly wasn’t going to work hard to exercise any now, not while she was practically shaking with arousal.

“Just that you take your clothes off,” she told Neville. “I want to see you, too.”

Neville glanced automatically at Draco, looking for permission. Draco hummed a little sound. “Don’t look at me, Longbottom. She’s the one in charge here.”

Neville breathed a laugh. “Of course she is.”

He licked his lips and nodded, reaching behind his neck to tug his shirt off. His chest was broad and covered with a light smattering of hair, which she tracked down to where it reappeared just below his navel. She kept her eyes there as his hands began undoing his fly.

“What about me?” Draco murmured in her ear. “How do you want me?”

She tightened her fist in his hair again and he dropped his hand to her stomach, holding her tight against him. “Naked,” she told him, “and on your back.”

After his little game in the kitchen, there was no way she was letting him set the pace for her first orgasm. She wanted to come – *needed* to – and once she’d taken the edge off, she’d be able to properly focus on the rest of it.

He inhaled slowly, keeping close to her for another moment as he correctly intuited her instruction for what it was. “I’m going to make you come so hard you black out,” he promised softly then kissed her cheek and drew back.

She felt quite wobbly without him to lean against and sent what she hoped was a stern look at him over her shoulder for making her that way. He stared back at her, his gaze hot and his hands working his own trousers open, ready to give her everything she wanted. It melted her into something purely lustful, a shift he noted with a flick of his brow.

“Gonna strip for us, too?” he asked, eyes tracking down to her jeans.

She opened them obligingly, fingers steady but urgent. He tugged his shirt off, eyes not leaving her hands as she pushed her jeans down, revealing her plain black knickers.

He reached for her instantly, pulling her to stand between his knees as he sat on the edge of the bed in just his boxer-briefs. His hands mapped the curve of her waist, then hips, then bum. He got two good handfuls and squeezed, the touch possessive and, she realized, when Neville made a low sound behind her, not only for their enjoyment.

Draco groped her again, face tilted up to hers. “Can I spank you?” he asked.

He was so unfairly handsome, she thought, and entirely too innocent-looking for that sort of question, all grey eyes and pink cheeks and tousled blonde.

She bit her lip, carding a hand back through his hair to get a grip. She watched his chest expand in preparation and so gave him what he wanted: a good, hard pull.

“Yes,” she breathed and he spanked her, a muscle flexing in his jaw as he watched her reaction to it. It zinged through her, sharp and surprising more than painful, and warmth filled her at the feel of it.

Behind her, Neville swore.

Draco’s expression was pleased and knowing. “That feel good?”

She nodded and he exhaled through his nose, admiring her with a reverence that had her heartbeat thudding through her.

“You’re so sexy,” he breathed. “You’re so perfect.”

She quickly recalibrated her plans, climbing onto his lap and scrabbling for his free hand, circling the wrist and tugging it between them.

“Make me come,” she told him, distinctly *not* asking anymore, and tugged her knickers to the side.

He slid his hand between her legs, jaw feathering when he discovered how wet she was.

“Fuck,” he hissed, then slid his two middle fingers inside her. “*Fuck.*”

Neville blew out a soft whistle at the unmistakable sounds that Draco’s fingers were making as he worked them in and out. “Damn,” he murmured. “What’d he do to you in the kitchen?”

She laughed a high, bright sound, feeling a little feral with how much she wanted the man below her; how badly she needed to come for him. She didn’t even try to stop herself from bouncing on his lap, fucking herself on his fingers, striking her clit against the heel of his hand on each downstroke. She raked a hand through his hair, tilting his face up to hers, the other supported on his shoulder for balance. She felt halfway there already, and seeing the way her shameless pursuit of pleasure was affecting him dragged her right to the edge.

“Spank me again,” she gasped and he swore.

“Goddamnit.” The next spank was harder than the first and she clenched around his fingers at the impact of it. “God, I need to fuck you.”

“Soon,” she panted.

Her orgasm had her in its clutches but she resisted for a tiny, scant moment, savoring the crest and the way that Draco had picked up the motion for her, his fingers rubbing exactly right. Her mouth dropped open when the pleasure surged.

“Oh fuck. Can I come?” She hadn’t consciously meant to ask for permission but was immediately grateful that she had when he made a sound suspiciously close to a cut-off whimper.

“Yes,” he groaned. “Fuck, what a good girl for asking. Come, baby. You can come.”

She dropped her forehead against his, moaning as she let go. He worked her through it, swearing under his breath as she rocked against his hand, her fist tight in his hair. Her orgasm seared through her, quick and scalding, leaving her panting in its wake.

Draco tilted his chin, finding her mouth and kissing her with a desperation she adored. “Kill me,” he muttered against her lips. “You fucking kill me.”

She hummed happily, hands soft and sweet on him now that some of her pent-up energy had been expelled. Draco slid his fingers from her, sucking them into his mouth as she fixed her knickers.

“Lie back now,” she told him, starting the motion with a gentle push to his shoulder.



He obliged her, reclining back on his elbows, and she looked over her shoulder to Neville. He was standing a few feet away, clad only in tight-fitting boxer briefs, and he raised his brows at her when he felt her attention on him.

She grinned, impish. "Come here," she said, making it an offer and not a command.

He stepped forward without hesitation and she turned back to Draco, pushing him flat with a hand on his shoulder. He helped her up over his chest, licking his lips at the prospect of what she wanted from him next.

She directed Neville up onto the bed beside them with a tilt of her head, then pointed to a spot a few feet above Draco's head. He situated himself in it on his knees, putting himself within reach when she leaned forward on her hands, something she did without hesitation. The position had the additional benefit of bringing her knickers down to Draco's face, something he took advantage of at once, raising his head to mouth hotly over her covered center.

His touch stabilized her even as it melted her, and she gave him a little more of her weight, grinding lightly over his lips and chin as she supported herself with a single hand on the mattress and used the other to run boldly over the bulge in Neville's briefs. His cock jumped at the touch and she looked up to meet his eye.

"Okay?" she checked.

He nodded, mouth slightly ajar and eyes riveted on her hand. She stroked him again and then curled her fingers under his waistband. He helped her tug them down, his cock springing free with flattering enthusiasm.

Draco ran his hands up the backs of her thighs, cupping her arse and then giving her a pat to raise up. She did and felt his fingers a moment later as they brushed against the gusset of her knickers from behind, the touch light and teasing. He pulled her knickers aside and groaned softly at the sight of her, lifting his face to rub his nose against her mound and then tilted his chin up, giving her the barest tip of his tongue.

It made her hot all over, the touch so glancing that it pulled all her awareness to it, body already primed and ready for more. When it didn't come, she dropped her head to look down at him between her thighs.

"I will when you do," he told her, eyes glinting. "Go on now. Show him how good you are."

It was the note of pride in his voice that did it for her.

Without any further hesitation, she supported herself on an arm and used the other hand to curl around Neville's shaft, giving him an exploratory stroke. She could just barely touch her thumb and index finger, and so squeezed until she could. Neville swore.

"Like it tight like that?" she asked, looking up at him. Neville groaned and below her, Draco chuckled.

“*Merlin*, Hermione,” Neville breathed but then nodded. “Yeah, I like it tight. And...and wet.”

Draco took that as his cue to slide his tongue inside her, humming to himself at how very wet she was. Her hips twitched forward at the feeling, wanting to hold him to her and grind, but she held off, letting him move how he liked for now, and worked her jaw to collect saliva on her tongue. With her eyes still fixed on Neville’s, she brought her mouth toward her fist and tapped the underside of his cock against her tongue.

“*God*,” Neville muttered. “Yeah, just like that. Wet just like that.”

She closed her lips around the tip, giving him a tiny suck and saw his hand twitch at his side, wanting to touch her. She licked around the ridge and then her own lips before letting saliva pool again and taking him into her mouth properly. She explored him with her tongue, the half of her brain she could never fully silence working to catalog the minute differences between him and Draco.

Thinking about Draco’s cock – in her mouth, in her cunt, fucking her so well the way he always did – made her a little lightheaded, and the way he was swirling his tongue around her clit wasn’t helping her mental stability, either.

She dragged her tongue across the underside of Neville’s cock up to the crown, searching until she found the place right below the ridge that made him flex in her mouth. She tilted her head to the side and sucked on it, eyes sliding shut at the way Draco was copying the act on her clit.

“Oh fuck,” Neville groaned. “That’s so good.”

She broke away to catch her breath, head dropping to look down at Draco. Leaned forward like she was meant that she could only see the top of his head, the pale strands damningly mussed, and the bridge of his nose. She could feel the tip of it bumping the swollen ridge of her clit as he worked his jaw between her thighs and so took a moment to appreciate watching him, the visual making the touch of it all the more evocative.

She pulled in an inhale then lifted her head, rededicating herself to the task in front of her. With another quick lick of her lips to rewet them, she took Neville back into her mouth as far as she could manage, and then another inch. She extended her tongue long both to make space in her mouth and to estimate how much more she had to go. When she ran her tongue side to side, she found she was still too far away for the tip of it to reach his base. Determined, she slid him deeper but then had to draw back to gasp for air.

“Fuck, you’re amazing,” Neville murmured. “Doing okay?”

Draco was fluttering his tongue against her clit in a way that reminded her of the buzzing knickers and she’d just had her mouth wonderfully full; her oral fixation had never been so well tended to. She was doing more than just *okay*.

She nodded enthusiastically, still working to catch her breath. “Yes,” she managed. “Yes. God, you have such a nice cock.”

Draco grazed her clit with his teeth at that and she moaned, her hips bobbing at the sharp sensation.

“What’s he doing to you?” Neville had wrapped a hand around himself and she watched it glide up his length, coating himself in her spit all the way to his balls. It only increased her determination to do it herself.

“B-biting my clit.” She squeaked when Draco did it again a little harder.

Neville’s hand tightened, stroking himself with a bit more intention. “Yeah? You like that?”

Draco kissed at her softly and then started sucking, and for a moment she couldn’t keep her eyes open let alone answer the question.

Neville chuckled to himself. “Mm. Looks like you do.”

He shifted on the bed and then she felt the warm head of his cock brush against her lips, a gentle offering. She opened immediately, not bothering to open her eyes as she took him back inside her mouth. He felt heavy on her tongue and she hummed a hungry little sound before beginning to work her way back down his length.

After a few passes, she had to draw back again for a breath. She opened her eyes and saw the muscles of his stomach flex, so glanced up to see how he was doing. He had his hands interlaced behind his neck, like he was physically restraining himself from reaching for her and when he met her gaze, he shook his head at her like he was stunned. It made her feel unbearably sexy.

She enveloped him again, working him deep with little pulsing bobs of her head. Her curls were steadily becoming unmanageable and when she let go of his cock to bat them off her cheek a second time, Neville made a little sound of understanding.

“Her hair’s in her face,” Neville said, the words for Draco. “Do I have permission to move it back for her? With my hands, I mean?”

Draco hummed an affirmative but then gentled his mouth on her enough to offer a clear, “*You may*,” before licking back through her to reaffix his lips to her clit.

Neville combed his fingers through her hair, his touch careful but not timid as he collected wayward curls into his hands. She appreciated the gesture and lifted her eyes to him, mouth rather too full to even smile. His eyelids were half-mast, looking down at her with admiration.

“You’re doing so well,” he told her. “Can you take a little more?”

She drew back for a quick breath and then nodded, licking her lips once before sliding him back inside, stretching her tongue long to make space for him. He bumped against the back of her throat and she coughed once, resisting the gag, and managed an inch further.

“*Fuck*.” Neville’s hand flexed in her hair, not controlling her movements but showing his pleasure for them all the same. “Oh, Merlin. No one’s ever gotten that far.”

Below her, Draco hummed his approval. She ground down toward the tingle of vibrations, his praise at her abilities sparking almost as hotly as the touch itself.

He landed a sharp swat to her arse, and though he likely hadn't intended it to, the impact of it propelled her the last inch forward until her lips brushed the groomed hair at the base of Neville's cock, her throat relaxed from her surprised gasp at the strike. For a moment, she didn't realize what she'd managed but then Neville swore inarticulately above her, hips shuddering in his restraint, and she realized.

"Damn," he breathed, voice strained. "Look at you. You took it all."

She moaned around him, the sound muffled and whiny, and Draco tightened his hands, gripping and kneading her arse, not unaffected by her success either.

"You like that?" Neville eased his hips back and she drew off all the way, gasping for breath. "Like knowing you're the best? Or did you like being spanked onto me?"

"Both," Draco mumbled.

"Yeah?" Neville secured her hair in a single fist then pushed forward again, slowly sinking to the comfortable depth she'd found before Draco had gotten her all the way. "Want another?"

She moaned an affirmative, the sound going squeaky when Draco's palm came down sharply on the other cheek. With Neville's cock deep in her mouth, she couldn't do anything but whimper and lift her hips, hoping for another but unable to properly ask for it. Luckily for her, Draco knew her inside and out.

"Go ahead, Longbottom," he said, hands curling around her thighs to hold her still, his breath hot and gusting against her cunt. "You're allowed to spank her. Give her a good one."

Neville's fingers flexed in her hair, his hips twitching forward although he restrained himself from a proper thrust. "You're sure?"

She performed the held-off thrust for him in answer, bobbing her head several times until he groaned and leaned over to palm a cheek. The angle sank him deep again, but she'd been expecting it and so did her best to relax her throat while he gave her bum a good squeeze, hand almost spanning her cheek entirely. He drew back, hand and cock both, and she had just enough time to drag in a full breath before his hand came down in a sharp, short smack.

The sensation of it radiated through her, tingling and warming from her head to her toes. She bleated a helpless noise, impossibly aroused, and he spanked her again, a glancing blow that had her cheek wobbling. And though the ripples of it tightened everything inside her, it was really the act itself — that she was being spanked for being a little slut — that made her cunt contract hard.

Draco laughed, the sound low and strained. "You're making her drip on me. Fuck."

"Hear that?" Neville squeezed her reddened cheek then gave her a little pat, soft and pleased. "You're getting Malfoy's face all wet, Hermione." He straightened then aligned his cock to

slowly fuck into her mouth again. “But I bet he likes it.”

“Fucking love it,” Draco mumbled, tongue sliding through her again and pushing inside.

She slid her knees wider, sinking down onto him, desperate to feel him inside her. He smoothed his hands up the backs of her thighs, fingers edging closer to her cunt from behind until he was brushing his fingertips against her folds. She wanted to beg but she didn’t have her voice; could only moan and bob her head with greater enthusiasm in the hopes that it would please Neville and he’d tell Draco to reward her.

She held Neville deep for a moment and then chanced a swallow. His responding groan was chest deep, rumbling and raw. She swallowed again and then he was finally using his grip on her hair, pulling her all the way off him. She panted, her vision whiting out at the sudden surge of oxygen.

“Almost got me,” he chuckled, amazed. “Shit, Hermione.”

She sat back on Draco’s chest and he raised his head, craning his neck to follow her cunt with his tongue until she pressed her palm to his forehead, stopping him. His eyes slid up to meet hers, pupils blown.

“*Fuck me*,” she begged. “I just need to be fucked.”

She watched them expand just a little bit more.

A moment later she was on her back, a very naked and very erect blonde kneeling between her thighs. He tugged her hand to his cock and she bit off a moan at the way he’d streaked precome halfway down his shaft.

“Oh, *Draco*,” she gasped, stroking him and feeling her cunt flutter at the heat and hardness of him.

“See what you do to me?” he breathed. “Fuck, you took him so well.”

She squeezed her fist around him, stroking him until he wrenched her hand away, pressing it to the bed beside her head.

“I’d ask you how you want it,” he murmured, eyes glinting down at her, “but I know, don’t I?”

She panted, breathless, and nodded. Of course he did.

“Hold onto me then,” he told her and gave her only a moment before notching himself and pushing inside.

She was so wet, her cunt so hungry for something to fill it, that it only took two quick presses for him to be fully inside her. They moaned together and he bumped his hips against her a few times to let her feel how deep he’d gone.

“You do need it, don’t you?” He drew back all the way, hand dropping to steady his cock. He tapped the head of it against her clit and she sucked in a breath at the way it made her pulse. He slicked himself back down and slid home again, picking up a fast pace.

“Too bad I won’t let Longbottom fuck you. I bet you’d go wild for his big cock, wouldn’t you? D’you think your little cunt could even take it all?”

She keened. Behind her, Neville made a cut-off sound of arousal and she tilted her head back to see him, feeling her next orgasm coiling deep inside her at the fervent way he was stroking his cock, watching as Draco fucked her. Her heart was pounding and she could feel the way she’d begun to perspire, Draco’s low musings and Neville’s unmistakable want sending her lust into the stratosphere.

“I bet you could,” Draco continued, drawing her gaze back up to his. “I bet you’d blow his fucking mind.”

“She already is.” Neville’s voice was deep, vocal cords tense.

“Good,” Draco purred, eyes intent on hers. “That’s good, Longbottom. Tell him why, Granger.”

She couldn’t think, not with the way he was looking at her, fucking her, murmuring to her. She panted, shaking her head, and he smirked.

“You don’t know the answer?” he teased. “Well, fuck. Not sure I’ve ever been so proud of myself before.”

She choked out a laugh and he bit his lip, looking inordinately pleased. He slowed his pace slightly, lowering down to kiss her softly.

“It’s *good*,” he murmured, “because this cunt is *mine*, isn’t it?”

She nodded against his lips, kissing him again. He slid his tongue into her mouth, and she felt herself flutter at the taste of herself on him. She curled her tongue around his, luring it into her mouth and then sucking on it again. He fucked her hard for it and she broke off, gasping.

He snaked a hand under her, palm gripping a handful of her spanked-tender arse before running down between her cheeks to rub a firm circle over her pucker. She was slick there already, his spit and the arousal he’d wrought from her having slid down so far it had dampened the bedding under her. His eyes flared as she clenched around him at the touch.

“And maybe it’s *just* your cunt that’s mine,” he mused lowly, grey eyes fixed on hers. She understood his meaning when he pressed his finger more insistently and it slid past her rim. She came without warning, the added fullness and the mere suggestion that he’d let Neville do *that* to her entirely too much stimulus. Her orgasm wracked through her and she lost herself to it, her body twitching and eyes rolling shut.

Draco groaned out his pleasure as she squeezed around him, his thrusts slowing but staying deep, letting her feel every single aftershock. He pumped his finger in her arse as she

shuddered under him, and she blinked her eyes open to find his eating up every ounce of her pleasure as it blossomed across her face. She savored it, the pleasure and his attentiveness, not rushing herself despite the fact that she could feel Draco still solid inside her, and knew Neville was probably aching too.

That thought had her turning her head to search for him and found him kneeling on the bed just above where she lay, hand around his cock. He gave himself a slow stroke at her attention and she watched a bead of precome form and then glide down the underside of his shaft. She wanted to lick it up, especially because she knew she wasn't allowed to.

Draco began a steady rock inside her again and she clenched involuntarily around him, her walls quivery and swollen. He groaned appreciatively, dropping down to mouth at her neck, tuning every single nerve ending to him. She watched Neville's hand repeat the slow stroke and then dragged her gaze up to his. He flicked at brow when their eyes touched, his cheeks flushed with arousal but his expression almost amused.

"You really are a cock-hungry little thing, aren't you?" he mused, the edge of his mouth lifting when she wet her lips. "You want it, huh?" He gave himself another stroke, as if his meaning hadn't already been clear.

There was no point in hiding it; especially not when she was allowed to have it.

"Yes," she told him and then sucked in a breath when Draco gave her a sharp, hard thrust. "*Oh god.*"

"Such a greedy girl," Draco purred in her ear, working his finger asynchronously with his cock to keep her constantly full.

Neville shuffled closer, the mattress dipping under his weight as he positioned himself on his knees beside her head. Draco glanced sidelong, catching sight of Neville's erection inches from where he was sucking a mark onto her neck. He snorted a soft laugh against her skin then slid his finger from her arse so he could sit back, making space for Neville.

"As much as I admire it, I don't want that near me," he said dryly.

Neville chuckled. "Sure you don't."

Draco arranged her thighs up and over his, hauling her over his lap as he spread his knees wide, getting the leverage he needed. His next thrust had her breasts bouncing and she mewled pathetically at how deeply he struck.

Neville dragged his cock over her chest, leaving a trail of precome. The air cooled it and the contrast of sensation against her heated skin had her nipples furling into aching buds in response. "Does he feel good inside you, Hermione?"

She nodded and then squeaked when Neville tapped the shiny head of his cock over a nipple, wetting it. She tilted her head to the side and licked a broad strip across Neville's thigh, whining under her breath at the intense need for something in her mouth.

“Jesus Christ, Hermione,” Draco swore, his hands closing around her waist and his pace quickening. There was a desperation in his hips that she recognized as him nearing the end and knowing that soon he’d be coming inside her had her panting hotly against Neville’s leg.

“Ask for what you want,” Neville said, dragging his cock back and forth over her nipple almost lazily.

Draco lowered a hand down her torso, pressing the heel of his hand just above her clit and rocking upward into her, the other hand gripping her waist tightly. She was so wet she could hear it and whatever he was pressing against now had made her almost doubly-so.

“I want your cock,” she begged.

“Mmm.” Neville held it down against her breast as her body jostled with Draco’s thrusts. “Here?”

Yes, she thought. She wanted to see him come, wanted to feel it on her tits.

But feeling the weight of him sliding across her skin had her mouth watering and she practically moaned, “In my mouth. *Please.*”

“Again?” He slid forward, pantomiming sex in the open air with just her breast below him as any source of friction. It seemed like it almost might be enough, judging by the way she felt his cock flex. “Didn’t get enough the first time?”

“She likes something in her mouth,” Draco said, eyes heavy on her. “Don’t you, baby?”

She let her jaw fall open, sliding her tongue out past the edge of her lower lip, not breaking her eye contact with Draco as she nodded. He bit his lip, head twitching to the side in a half-shake at the sight of her, eyes riveted.

Neville tapped the head of his cock against her tongue in a mirror of how she’d first teased him, the act now turned against her. She tried to close her lips around him but he pulled back and she lost her mind a little at the knowledge that she was being teased – extremely effectively – with being allowed to suck on him. But before she could beg again, he was back, pressing into her mouth with a confidence that had her clenching around Draco.

“Oh fuck,” Draco grit out. “Fuck, so—” He cut himself off with a sharp exhale.

“He likes watching you,” Neville murmured, working himself carefully in and out of her mouth, eyes flicking from her to Draco and then back. “Likes seeing you being such a good girl. That’s what he called you, isn’t it?”

She nodded and he hummed.

“But that’s not all you are, is it?” Neville’s voice was low and resonant, the tone inquisitive but leading. When she didn’t answer, he dragged his cock out, tapping it against her mouth. “Is it?” he repeated, tone expectant now.



She wasn't sure if he was suggesting she was *bad* or a *slut* or some other delightful thing, but the effect was the same. The orgasm snuck up on her, a quick, hot flash of blinding pleasure.

"She's squeezing me," Draco panted, "so tightly. Oh Jesus. Oh *fuck*." He whimpered when she bore down again, on purpose this time, encouraging the aftershocks of her sudden, secret orgasm. "Oh *fucking*—"

"Don't come yet," she told him and he swore, pulling out and dropping a hand to squeeze the base of his cock so hard the veins of his forearms stood out.

She wanted to tackle him to the bed but her interest had been piqued, so she turned her gaze up to Neville, licking her lips and basking in the heat of his gaze.

"No," she breathed. "That's not all I am."

"That's right," he muttered, and offered her his cock again.

She went up on an elbow to take it gladly, using her thighs to squeeze around Draco's hips for stability. He wrapped his hands around her waist, supporting her while his cock rested heavily against her mons, hot and sticky.

"Take him all the way," Draco told her, the command in his tone fueling her almost as much as his low hum of satisfaction when her lips kissed Neville's pelvis, the swallow almost easy now that she knew she could do it.

She felt Draco's cock bob between them and so undulated her hips up against it. He squeezed her hips, his grip firm as he pushed her back down to the mattress, not letting her work him up more than he'd allow.

"Tell me how it feels," he said, this time turning the tone on Neville.

Neville palmed the back of her head, fucking her mouth just once before dropping his hand, almost apologetic. But she'd loved it, so stretched her tongue long, stroking the tip of it against his balls in the way he'd admired when she'd done it to Draco the last time. It seemed that was his final straw.

"*Fuck*. She feels so good. So fucking hot and soft, I—I can feel her throat. Oh Circe, I'm gonna come." Neville began to pull his hips back and Hermione instinctively pressed him deeper, swallowing thickly around him at the first hint of salt on her tongue, forgetting for a moment that he wasn't allowed to come in her mouth.

Neville made an urgent sound of concern. "Oh shit— Oh fuck, Malfoy, I'm gonna— but she's—"

"*Granger*," Draco barked. She gasped at the hard authority in his tone, mouth popping open.

Neville grunted in relief, falling back to his heels and stroking himself with a quick, firm fist. He came after only a few pumps, spilling over his hand and streaking his abdomen, his pleasure groaned to the ceiling.

“What a bad girl,” Draco scolded, eyes glinting as he crowded down over her now that Neville was out of the way. He pushed back inside her, his hips finding the same hard, relentless rhythm he’d set before but with a new determination in his eyes. “So eager to make him come, you nearly broke the rule. You just love knowing how good you feel, don’t you?”

She was panting and moaning, mouth ajar. His chest was heaving with his effort and she could see the way the muscles of his shoulders bunched as he tightened his fingers in the bedding beside her. He was so, so close.

“Need your cum,” she whined. “Just yours. Need it.”

“How many orgasms have you had?” he asked.

“T-three,” she breathed and watched his eyes darken at her having admitted the secret third.

“Three isn’t many,” he murmured. “And I told you you’d get many, didn’t I? Give me one more and then you can have my cum.”

He pulled out and arranged her legs around his waist, a hand supporting her lower back and lifting her up against him. He used his thumb to press the underside of his cock against her, holding himself there as he slid between her folds, bumping against her clit with every thrust against her.

The glide of it was exquisite but she wasn’t convinced she’d be able to come again. She was already over her previous record and although the feel of his cock against her was delicious in its own right, she suspected she needed a little more.

“Inside. Please,” she begged him. “I need you inside me.”

He laughed, breathless. “I can’t,” he admitted. “I’m only human, Granger. I won’t last.”

The acknowledgement of how on edge he was had the first ripples of orgasm tingling through her. She rocked her hips in cadence with his, chasing the feeling.

“What do you need?” he asked and she could tell by his voice that even this would soon be more than he could bear.

She didn’t know, couldn’t think about anything concrete while steadily becoming both unbearably tight and increasingly melted, the juxtaposition robbing her of her faculties.

“Granger,” Draco whined, when she hadn’t answered, “baby, what do you need? Please—”

“Look at him, Hermione,” Neville said and her eyes automatically obeyed the soft command in his voice, not having even noticed she’d closed them. “He’s breathless for you. He needs to come so badly, but he’s being so good and waiting for you.”

“*Fuck you—*” Draco grit out but Hermione could feel the beginning of her orgasm and shushed him, wanting more concrete direction on where to focus her attention.

“Hear him?” Neville continued. His voice was honeyed, warm and sweet and amused. “So tense. It’s torture to hold off, Hermione. Especially knowing how much you’ll love it when he finally lets himself go.” She whimpered in agreement and Draco’s jaw tightened so hard the tendons of his neck flared. “So show him. Show him what just the thought of him coming for you does.”

And just like that, the dam broke, the pleasure of it sudden and warm and wonderful. She moaned, low and long, and Draco groaned, his relief plain.

“Fuck, thank you,” he mumbled and Hermione wasn’t entirely sure who the gratitude was directed at.

He let his head hang, watching as she tensed and relaxed under him, his eyes tracking down to where he was rubbing himself against her. He exhaled, long and a little shakily, before raising his head and meeting her eyes.

“Where.” The word was curt, his control almost gone.

She opened her mouth, letting her tongue peek out and he nearly bit right through his lip. He nodded once, a curt, sharp gesture of agreement, before taking himself in hand and slicking through her center, finding her entrance and pressing inside all the way to the hilt.

She’d never get tired of the feel of him inside her, she thought, not if she came fifty times. A hundred. A lifetime’s worth.

He only lasted three hard, fast thrusts before he was pulling out again, pushing her thigh out of the way so he could plant a knee beside her ribs, and then the other on her other side, hand reaching for her as he straddled her ribs.

She lifted her head, opening her mouth and humming when he pushed his cock inside, only an inch or two before he was pulsing in her mouth, coating her tongue and groaning in an anguished sort of pleasure. She wrapped an arm around his hip, gripping his arse to force him further in and closing her lips to suck, finding his balls with her other hand. She cupped them, squeezing gently then tugging, and his cock jerked on another pulse.

He drew back, sitting heavily on her pelvis then leaned down, raising her face to his with a hand at the base of her skull, and kissed her deeply. She hadn’t swallowed all his cum yet and whimpered as he stroked his tongue along hers with purpose, tasting himself before drawing back and sliding his two middle fingers into his own mouth. She watched as he dragged them over his tongue and then squeaked when he reached back and slid them into her cunt, pressing whatever remained of his cum deep inside her.

His chest was heaving, flushed pink and damp with perspiration, abs flexing on every inhale, but the depth of passion in his eyes had barely flickered out.

“Merlin, you two are...” Neville trailed off. “Just...*Merlin*.”

“Says you,” Hermione breathed, biting her lip in an attempt to corral her grin. “I mean, *lord*. That was...” She broke off, giggling. The orgasms – Merlin, so many orgasms – had made

her giddy.

Draco smirked down at her, amused at her amusement. “Nice to see both of you so speechless,” he teased.

Neville laughed. “Awestruck, more like.”

“Mm.” Draco tilted his head, his eyes softening as he studied her. “Yeah. Me too.”

## Chapter End Notes

Look...this is a Dramione story, so as much as I love him, I'm 99% sure this will be the last little fun-time with Neville.

And even beyond wanting to focus on the main pairing, I have *so many* other scenes written that I need to figure out how to work in and then finish (and I need to get us to Draco's birthday ASAP bc it's going to be so fun!!! eeeeeee!) and so I can't let myself get distracted with more Nev 😊

That said, my love for Neville/DHr is never-ending so I'm sure there'll be a drabble or one shot with them again at some point 📖

Anyway, thank you for reading!

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 40: “Indiana Jones,” Theo and Draco said simultaneously.

### Chapter Notes

Hello friends!

Today’s chapter is pure fluff and friendship, and setting the stage for some fun stuff to come. I hope it helps end (or begin) your year on a light note 😊

And I promise to not get too sappy, but wanted to take this chance to thank you for being here and spending even a few minutes of your year reading words I wrote 😊 It’s the most generous thing and I just really, really appreciate it. OKAY I’M DONE! I PROMISE! (but really, you guys have helped make this space so fun and rewarding, and I can never thank you enough — okay NOW I’m done).

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

It was a little bizarre to wake up in Grimmauld Place lying in bed next to Draco Malfoy.

She’d never slept in this particular room before – she, Harry, Ron, and Ginny had always been sent to the third floor, leaving this level for Ron’s parents and the rest of the official Order members – but even so, lying beside him in a house she’d frequently visited in what now felt like another life was decidedly...odd.

But, *good* odd. Lovely odd.

She lay quietly, letting the shroud of sleep slowly slip off her as she listened to the sound of his measured breaths, slow and deep, indicating he was still asleep behind her, then opened her eyes slowly, reacquainting herself to the blue damask wallpaper on the wall several feet in front of her.

She hadn’t spent much time looking at it the night before, quite busy as she’d been, and so let her eyes trail lazily across the pattern. It looked rather new, which was puzzling – she hadn’t thought that wallpaper would be Harry’s style, nor that he’d willingly spend a singular brain cell on interior design. She put the quandary away for now, shifting slowly onto her back and then tilting her head toward Draco.

He was curled up on his side facing her, as usual, his pillow tucked down into a little nest around his face and the covers up to his shoulders. She sometimes woke up with him wrapped around her, or her him, but more often than not, they drifted to their own areas with

only a foot or a knee touching. It was lovely to cuddle but lovelier still to be relaxed and comfortable enough together they slept however their bodies liked.

She always slept well with Draco beside her but after the previous evening's activities, her mind had been as tired as her body usually was, and she'd slept deeply, dreamlessly, because of it. The drinking beforehand had certainly helped in that regard, too, though she was relieved to discover she didn't have so much as a headache from it. That was the benefit of staying awake until she was completely sober, she thought wryly.

Remembering the activities which had led her to stay up so late made her tug the duvet up to her cheeks, hiding her cheeky grin behind the covers even though there were no conscious witnesses to her glee. Grinning so widely made her jaw ache, a sensation she noted with a light flush of something like embarrassment but without the associated regret or shame. She had *earned* that ache but oh Merlin...she felt a little giddy thinking about it now.

Neville had stayed to chat for a few minutes after the grand finale the evening before, tugging his trousers back on sans briefs and then collapsing into the accent chair, content to watch as Draco had lowered himself over her, kissing down her torso until he was between her thighs, his tongue soothing and sweet on her. She absolutely couldn't have come again even if she'd wanted to but had enjoyed the simple pleasure of his kisses all over her nonetheless.

After Neville had excused himself to find another room to crash in, she and Draco had crawled under the covers and promptly fallen asleep. And given that he was still out to the world after only *one* orgasm, Hermione gave herself a little mental pat on the head for tiring him out so thoroughly too.

He stirred a moment later and she watched with her face still half covered as he underwent the gradual transformation from inert being to roused male. He saw her watching him and sent her a lazy smile, eyes heavy-lidded. She felt his hand a moment later, searching for her under the duvet, and let herself be snagged and then dragged closer, the movement uncovering her face in the process.

"Why do you already look cheeky?" he murmured, voice gruff with residual sleepiness, sliding his arm around her waist, thumb tracing the dip. She looped her top arm over his shoulders, pressing herself against his warm body and gave him her most cheshire-cat grin.

"My jaw is sore," she whispered conspiratorially.

Draco chuckled softly, amused. "Oh really?"

"Mmm. Just here." She opened her mouth, rubbing at the tight muscles above the hinge of her jaw. He brought his hand up, applying gentle pressure with his thumb.

"Poor Granger," he said, voice rich with faux-sympathy. "It's so hard being such a cock-hungry little thing, isn't it?"

She nodded seriously. "Yes, it is. I'd like to have seen *you* try."

He raised a brow meaningfully. "I'm sure you would have."

He earned himself a softly-bitten lip for the comment, something he bore with another chuckle and then worked to his advantage, pressing forward and shifting it into a proper kiss. He broke it after a moment, peering down at her and stroking his fingers along her jaw in an idle caress.

“Speaking of last night...” he began and she rolled her lips in to contain her smirk. He rolled his eyes then carried on. “Did you feel anything different during your last one?”

“Different?” She frowned at the question, thinking. “I don’t think so. I was pretty floaty by then, sort of...happy-zoned-out?” She laughed at her inability to describe it. “I mean, it was my *fourth*. I just felt warm and happy.”

He hummed, low and pleased, dropping his face to nuzzle against the side of her head. “I love hearing that.”

She let him breathe against her for a moment and then nuzzled back, encouraging his face back to hers and then finding his mouth to press a slow, lingering kiss to it. He made the sound again, hand sliding from her jaw back under the covers, curling over her ribs then stroking along the ridges of her spine. She melted against him, feeling languid and cozy. They kissed for a while, slowly waking each other up while simultaneously relaxing back down into the bed.

After a few moments she drew to a gradual halt, her curiosity still distantly piqued.

“Why’d you ask?” she murmured, pressing a kiss to the corner of his mouth but retreating just out of reach when he tried to capture her lips again. He huffed a soft sound of amusement through his nose at her attempt to keep him back, using his weight to roll her half onto her back and kissing her again.

She let him – of course she did – but was still determined to get her question answered.

“Draco,” she mumbled, and he nipped at her bottom lip at the sound of his name. She laughed, pressing her head back into the pillow so she could look at him.

His eyes were half-lidded with sleep and lust, the grey a thin ring around wide, black pupils.

“Why’d you ask?” she repeated.

He licked his lips, slowly reeling himself back in. “You came on me,” he murmured.

She blinked, brows twitching with amused confusion at his nonsensical answer. “What?”

He lifted off of her, dropping back down beside her and propping his head up on a bent arm, his other hand running softly over her collarbones and down her chest. “You came on me, so I just wondered if it felt different.”

She rolled to face him, further confused by his repetition of the phrase. “I come on you all the time.”

“Ah.” He smirked, a brow flicking up. “You do. Sorry, what I mean is that you squirted on me.”

She blinked. “I... *what?*” She felt her cheeks heat, more from not knowing something about herself than anything, but also because it sounded...messy.

He licked his lips, his gaze warming her further. “Mmhm. Squirted, gushed — whatever you want to call it. Just a little bit, but you got me wet.”

“Draco.” She was embarrassed fully now, complete with the hint of shame. “I...god, I...”

He waited for her to find the words but when she couldn’t put syllables behind the nameless feeling surging inside her, his expression went kind.

“Don’t feel embarrassed, love. It was so sexy. Fuck, when I saw— Admittedly, I was already barely holding on, but *Christ*...it made me come pretty fucking hard.”

She wanted to believe him and so forced herself to, at least for the moment. She could still feel herself blushing furiously but kept her tone light in an attempt to offset it.

“Really?” she said skeptically. “The thought of you making me come so many times I fully lost control turns you on?”

He grinned. “Shocking, I know.”

“Hmm. Well, I’m glad you enjoyed yourself then.”

He observed her for a moment. “You say that like it’ll never happen again.”

She snorted. “I’m sure it won’t.” She reached to kiss him but his expression had gone thoughtful, almost calculating, and he leaned back slightly, keeping his eyes on her.

“You don’t think I could make you squirt again?”

“No offense, Draco,” she said, marveling at the fact he seemed to actually be taking offense at it, “but you’ve never managed to before — and before you get offended by *that*, let me assure you that you’ve broken my brain, made me come so hard I leave my body, sent me into another plane of existence, et cetera, et cetera, so that’s not a comment on your skills.”

“I haven’t made you squirt because I wasn’t trying to,” he said simply, ignoring her argument completely.

She raised her brows, surprised. “Have you made other girls do it?”

She’d already decided not to hold his past against him in any regard, and that included feeling jealous of things that had happened before her, but even so she felt the twinge of it in her gut.

But he shook his head easily. “No, never. But now that I know you *can*, I’m going to do it again.”



“Oh really.” She compressed her smile but the edges flicked up all the same. “Just like that?”

“Mm,” he agreed, leaning so close that she felt the gentle vibration of his hum against her lips. “I’ll read up on it and then I’ll practice on you. I can’t wait to find out if you can do it without several orgasms first but I’m willing to give you as many as it takes until I see it again.”

She believed him a little more now, without having to force herself. “You really liked it?”

He tugged her close, hand sliding over her chest around to the base of her spine, and she felt the hard line of his cock against her belly in answer.

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They finally extricated themselves from bed and trekked downstairs an hour and a shower later. There was noise coming from the lounge and so they went there first, hopeful to see friends and perhaps a pot of tea. They found both, and then some.

Theo, Harry, and Neville were sitting on the larger sofa, watching a film on the adorable little television Harry kept in the corner. All three sets of eyes lifted to greet them before training back on the screen. Hermione tried to figure out what they were watching but her exposure to films was fairly poor.

Growing up at Hogwarts and spending most of her summers in the Wizarding world had hindered some of her Muggle heritage from really flourishing, though even when she *was* at home with her parents, she was more likely to curl up with a book than sit in front of the television. She’d seen various films with her parents and primary school friends, of course, but not whatever the boys currently had on.

“What’s this?” she asked, watching a rugged-looking man focusing quite intently as he held his hand out toward a dragon-egg-sized, shiny golden idol on a stone plinth.

“Indiana Jones,” Theo and Draco said simultaneously.

She looked over at Draco, surprised, and found his eyes trained on the screen. His face shifted into a satisfied expression and she looked back at the screen to see that the protagonist had swapped the statue for a heavy sack of sand.

“Right,” she said, already bored, and abandoned him for tea.

She drew up short when she saw Ginny and Blaise cuddled together on the smaller sofa by the back of the room.

“Hello” she said, eyeing Ginny as she walked over. “I thought you’d gone back to Blaise’s.”

Ginny had her head rested against Blaise's arm where it lay along the back of the sofa, and she smirked up at Hermione. "Why Apparate all the way to Dribden when there are perfectly good walls upstairs?" she said cheerily.

Hermione clucked her tongue at the image. "Charming."

"Sure, Hermione," Ginny drawled. "Pretend you've no idea what it's like."

Blaise chuckled and Hermione rolled her eyes at them both. "Well, good morning, then. Is there tea?"

"Mm." Ginny used her sock-covered foot to point at the sideboard, getting right into Hermione's personal space in the process. Hermione swatted playfully at the intruding foot then turned and went to sort out cups for herself and Draco.

Tea made, she went back across the room to deliver his cup. He was leaning on the back of the couch, his forearms overlapping along the backrest and his chin propped on top of Theo's head in front of him, utterly engrossed in the film. She bumped him with her hip, rather regretting she was holding a mug in each hand and therefore couldn't grope his arse, nicely on display as it was. He glanced sideways at her then saw the tea and straightened, taking it gratefully.

"Thanks." He drank half of it down in a few gulps then looped an arm around her back, squeezing her hip. "Want to sit? I love this one."

Things were not going well for the man on the screen. He was now running at full tilt down a cave passageway, clutching the stolen idol as he tried to outrun a massive stone sphere.

"Pass," she said, but went up on her toes to kiss his cheek. "I'm going to find a book."

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Once *Raiders of the Lost Ark* ended, Draco went to find Hermione. She hadn't gone far, curled up in one of the armchairs by the windows, a book propped against her knees and a finger poised to turn the page.

He approached quietly and leaned over to see what she was reading then pitched his voice low. "...*her skin tingled for his touch, her perfect, round-*"

She jumped, squeaking in surprise and turning to look up at him hovering silently behind her. She laughed when she saw his grin.

"That's not what it says," she scolded, narrowing her eyes playfully.

He dropped a kiss to the top of her head then rested his chin on her curls, sliding his arm down across her torso for a little squeeze at the waist. "But it's much more interesting than

whatever it is.”

“What could be more interesting than a thorough look at the way hereditary land-ownership has shifted during the 17th and 18th centuries?” she asked, tone faux-scandalized.

He snorted. “My mistake. Where in Merlin’s name did you even find that?”

“Harry reads,” she defended but then tilted her head back to grin at him upside down. “But probably not this particular book. I found it at the back of the bookcase over there.”

“You’re reading a book on antiquated Magical Law that you found at the back of a bookcase inside of a notoriously deranged Pureblood family home?” He raised his brows. “My little risk-taker.”

“You love it,” she teased and he hummed a note of agreement.

“I absolutely do.” He kissed her upside down, but she broke it almost instantly with a wide grin against his lips.

“This feels weird,” she mumbled. “Where’s your nose? I miss your nose.”

He tapped it on the underside of her chin and she giggled, squirming away.

“You two are *embarrassing*,” Theo called from across the room and they both turned their heads to look at him. “Stop *flirting*.”

Draco looked down at Hermione again. “Do you think he’s cross because you interrupted him mid-coitus last night?”

She rolled her eyes. “*I* didn’t. It’s hardly *my* fault Harry doesn’t do that fancy little magic you did to block Kreacher out.”

“*Harry* can’t,” Draco reminded her smugly.

“Ohh, of course.” She hummed knowingly. “You’re *special*. How could I forget?”

He nipped at her jaw then the underside of her chin, banding his arm tighter around her so she couldn’t get away as she squirmed again, muffling her little shriek of laughter against his throat. He felt a sharp jab in his ribs and shifted out of the way of another attack, but then looked over to see that it hadn’t been Hermione’s pointy fingers but one of Theo’s.

“Tut tut,” Theo was beside them now, fists on his hips like a disapproving matron. “Fooling around in the lounge. I mean, *really*.”

“Sorry to shock you,” Draco drawled, dragging his arm slowly across Hermione’s torso as he released her. Theo rolled his eyes.

“You know me – innocent as they come.” He peered down at them owlishly. “What were you whispering about? I heard Harry’s name.”

“Just talking about his sword collection,” Hermione quipped, blinking up at Theo innocently. “Anything to contribute to the discussion, Nott?”

Theo’s lips twitched but he maintained his disapproving expression a breath longer. “It’s remarkably vast.”

Draco snorted as Hermione screwed up her nose. “*Vast?* Is that meant to be a good thing?”

Theo finally broke, offering her a curling, wicked smile. “It certainly is. Did you want me to be more explicitly positive about it, Hermione? In front of Draco?”

She smiled pleasantly. “No thank you. But I’m happy for you.”

“I’m sure the feeling’s mutual.” He looked meaningfully over at Draco, who waggled his eyebrows back at his friend. Theo clicked his tongue.

“Malfoy!”

Draco straightened fully, looking over his shoulder as Ginny approached their little group.

“Ginevra!” he returned, matching her tone, and she pouted.

“What, can’t even bother with my last name?”

“Weasley is your brother, obviously.”

She made a show of looking offended, hand on her chest. “*I’m* a Weasley too! He’s not more worthy of our family name than me.”

He smirked. “Trust me, this is a compliment. What d’you want?”

“I want to talk to you.”

He leaned against the side of Hermione’s armchair. “Uh oh. Am I in trouble?”

“Undoubtedly, though not with me. No, this will be *fun*.”

He raised a skeptical brow – not that he doubted almost anything alongside Ginny *wouldn’t* be fun, but perhaps slightly wary of how broadly that term seemed to apply for her.

He recalled the hours she’d spent half-killing him on the broom while running Chaser drills, her grin only faltering to bark orders at him, and then sighing happily when they were finally trudging back up to the castle, her only apology for what she’d done to him a pleased, “*Ahh. That was fun.*”

“Fun,” he repeated dubiously. “What manner of fun?”

“Chatty fun,” said Ginny impatiently, bouncing on the balls of her feet.

He was a little curious but not enough to wander away from Hermione just yet, especially not while she was in such a giggly, wonderful mood.

“I’m a little busy?” He ran a hand meaningfully over Hermione’s shoulder. Ginny watched the movement with an unimpressed lift of her brow.

“Yeah, she looks riveted. Come on, you’ll enjoy this more.”

Hermione made a sound of affront but it was so unconvincing that Draco turned his attention to her, frowning.

“Oh? You’re *not* enjoying this?” He slid his hand further, ticklishly-light, until she slapped hers over it, flattening his palm to her chest.

“Stop it,” she laughed, prying him off her. “Go on. I know what this is about and to be honest, you probably *will* enjoy it more.”

That fully piqued his interest.

He raised his brows and turned back to Ginny. “Alright, I’m intrigued.”

“Come *on* then, you’re taking an utter *age*.” She made a grabby hand in his direction.

Hermione closed her book and levered herself out of the chair. “You two can chat here,” she said, indicating the matching chair on the other side of the little accent table. “Theo and I will go make some food.”

“Will we,” said Theo, sounding unimpressed by the chore.

Hermione ignored him for a moment, rising up on her toes to peck a soft kiss to the corner of Draco’s mouth. But that wouldn’t do at all, and so Draco leaned forward, sliding his free hand into the soft curls at the base of her skull and pulling her toward him for a proper kiss.

He made sure it was a good one and was rewarded with slightly pinker cheeks when he pulled back. When she flicked her tongue out to taste his kiss from her lips, he had half a mind to sod the whole thing and drag her back upstairs, but he was curious now, so released her. She stepped back, looping her arm through Theo’s and dragging him off.

Ginny gave him a look of amusement barely concealed under a mask of impatience. “Done?” she quipped.

He gestured her toward the empty chair, sliding down into the one Hermione had just vacated. It was warm from her body, a luxury. He leaned back to savor it, crossing his ankle over his knee and waiting for Ginny to get comfortable as she tucked her feet under her bum and then leaned forward conspiratorially.

“So,” she said, in an excited undertone. “Daphne. And. Ron.”

Delight sparked in his chest. “Oh Merlin. *Yes*. What the hell!”

“What the hell!” she agreed animatedly. “I’ve been holding it to myself for *weeks* and so I can’t even express how excited I am to have someone to talk to about it. I tried with Hermione but she was useless.”

“Too fond of Weasley?” Draco guessed.

Ginny nodded. “Precisely. So tell me, how did you find out? Don’t tell me they actually admitted it to you?”

“Ha. Yeah, Daph did.” He twisted his mouth to the side. “You know, I didn’t actually think about it like this at the time, but she pretty much broke up with me for Weasley.”

Ginny’s eyes flared with interest. “Wait, you were dating Daphne?”

He wagged his hand in a *not really* gesture. “Friends with benefits, more like.”

“*Draco.*” Ginny shook her head with mock-disappointment. “Unbelievable.” And then she laughed. “Oh Merlin, that means you and Ron swapped!”

He lowered his brows, confused. “Come again?”

“Well, if you were the last person Daphne was with before Ron, and obviously Ron was Hermione’s last before you...” She held her hands up, index fingers raised, and then crossed her wrists. “You swapped.”

He snorted. “That’s not a very feminist way to look at it.”

She cocked a brow. “Oh? Draco Malfoy’s going to tell me how to refer to people?”

He rolled his eyes, smirking. “Touché.”

“Uh-huh.” Ginny wiggled further down into the chair, getting comfortable. “Right. So, Daphne and Ron. Tell me everything you know.”

Draco hummed. “You first.”

She clucked her tongue. “*Fine.* Bloody snake. I – very innocently, mind you – Floo’d over to Ron’s one afternoon only to find them *in flagrante delicto* right there on the bloody sofa, as if his Floo wasn’t open to admit anyone. I mean, the idiot might have been caught by *mum.*”

She widened her eyes meaningfully and while Draco was begrudgingly impressed with her casual inclusion of Latin, he couldn’t help but laugh at both the scenario she was describing and the animated way she was delivering it. His amusement seemed to only egg her on.

“And if he had, he’d be married now. But Godric above, I have seen *entirely* too much pale, horribly-freckled arse in my life – mine notwithstanding, of course; it’s lush – so I *might* have shattered his pot of Floo powder while scrabbling around to find it with my eyes closed. Ron yelled at me to wait and as I’m not interested in that level of brother-sister bonding, I threatened to hex him while I tried to get a handful of powder off the floor. In the end, it was Daphne who got me to pause when she begged me not to tell anyone because they wanted to keep it a secret. So...obviously I was happy to stay and hear *why.*” She leaned forward, eyes on him. “I *love* secrets.”

Draco managed to contain his laughter enough to match her pose, leaning in to agree, “I do too.”

“*Epecially* a secret I can share.” She winked and he smirked. “In the end, their request was all very logical – not wanting to tempt the parents into marrying them off, not wanting it radicalized in the papers to see a formerly-poor Weasley marrying a still-just-as-wealthy Greengrass, so on and so forth.”

She paused to inhale and then hummed a little sound of satisfaction to herself. “Right, that’s plenty from me. Your go. Tell me what you know.”

Draco leaned back. “Well, I knew that Daph had met someone but didn’t know who it was until we all met up on Blaise’s boat. I wrote her a very nosy letter about it afterward and she gave me some crumbs. She said they met at the joke shop where he wowed her with his ability to merchandise or something equally insipid. Apparently his ability to know his own stock was enough for her because it only took a few visits while sourcing products until she was committed to trying it on with him.”

Ginny tutted sympathetically. “Poor Draco. Passed over for a shop boy.”

He snorted. “We were never serious like that. But them keeping it a secret...I know Daph’s parents would jump on the good publicity of her marrying a literal war hero. Do you really think your mum would push them to marry too?”

Ginny scoffed. “What, like your mum is any different?”

Draco inclined his head. “Well, no. But there’s only one person I’ll marry so her input is irrelevant.”

Her expression sobered. “Ah, that’s shit. Sorry.”

“What for?” Draco dragged his eyes back to her from where they’d inadvertently sought out Hermione where she was sitting on the couch next to Potter and Theo, evidently distracted on their route to the kitchen. He frowned at the almost pitying look on Ginny’s face.

“I assumed that comment meant you’d been betrothed to some unfortunate woman from an acceptable family, one that would make good political and dynastic sense. Is that not the case?”

“*Dynastic*. Now that’s a sexy word.” He bounced his brows.

She gave him a flat look. “Shut up. Answer my question.”

Her shift in tone puzzled him slightly so he gave her a genuine answer. “No, that’s not the case. I can marry who I want. I just meant that even if my mum was adamant I marry next week, I wouldn’t do it. Not until it was right. Because who I marry matters — to *me*, I mean.”

Ginny looked at him speculatively for a moment, all humor and seriousness washing away until her face was an unreadable page; not blank but not clearly writ upon either.

“That’s good,” she said at last, giving him a little nod of approval. “It matters to me, too.”

“It should,” Draco said adamantly. “Marriage is important, if you choose to enter into one.”

“Who *you* marry, I mean.” Ginny gave him a tiny smile, just the corner of her mouth. “I think who you’ll marry matters quite a lot to me, actually.”

He couldn’t help it; he looked at Hermione again.

## Chapter End Notes

WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SO MUCH FUN IN 2024!!! 🥳🥳🥳

Thank you, as always, for reading 🍷

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌



# Chapter 41: She stepped closer, stooping to pick up a stone.

## Chapter Notes

Hi I'm back!! Thanks ever so much for your patience.

January was a month of commitments and chaos rearing their heads in unison. Between fun stuff (a few fest pieces being due, a new [hyper-fixation series](#), some birthday fics to write/prep, twelve (jesus lol) new [drabbles](#)) and life stuff (new deadlines at work, my youngest starting preschool, and the minor incident of a tree falling on my house forcing us to move in with my parents until we get the roof and floors repaired (😁)), it's been a wild month!

Suffice to say, my WIPs were the first to suffer, but sometimes (always) I just need to go where the words take me, and in the midst of stress, it's always to new PWP's and low-pressure drabbles. Sowwy. Anyway, thanks again for holding out. I know it's not even close to how long some of my other WIPs have been left to languish but still, feels weird to be so long between chapters with these two.

Today's chapter is a double serving of smut and some bonding bc it's my comfort zone and I just wanted them to love on each other for a bit, okay? 🥺🥺🥺

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

There was an unstudied but undeniably existent feature to Time that made it slow down when there was something to look forward to, and speed up when there was something dreadful looming.

It was due to this unfortunate phenomenon that the week felt like a steep downward slide, its rapidly-approaching destination their Saturday lunch with Narcissa Malfoy. It seemed that Hermione had hardly gotten out of bed on Monday morning before she was falling back into it on Friday evening, exhausted from the week but scarcely able to remember anything about it.

Classes were rigorous. Exams were *so* soon. And yet the only thing Hermione could fixate on was what might happen the following day.

She wasn't scared of Narcissa – not in a physical, personal safety sense, at least – but she was almost twitchy with nerves about the ramifications of the visit if it didn't go well. She refused to be another reason Draco felt estranged from his family, certain as she was that their relationship was already fraught in the aftermath of the war and what they'd seen and done or been forced into doing. She only wanted to lighten his load and the thought that an

inadvertent (or, much more likely, *intentional*) comment from her might cause additional strife made her fizzle with anxiety.

He was a source of comfort for her; she only wanted to be the same for him.

She felt the steadiness of his comfort now, in the slow stroke of his hand down her back, the soft press of his lips to her temple, the little nuzzle into her curls. He'd followed her under the covers as soon as they'd gotten to her room, pausing only to pull on pajamas and peck a goodnight kiss on her lips before exhaling deeply and settling heavily beside her.

They'd gone to the library right after dinner, working on various assignments and passing books between them as they shifted topics but scarcely speaking a word aloud. The academic load was heavier than ever this close to graduation, and Hermione knew she should be as exhausted as Draco evidently was, but her brain wouldn't settle.

Beside her, Draco's breathing evened out and his arm slid off her as he relaxed into sleep. She rolled carefully onto her back, not wanting to disturb him.

It was almost midnight but she was wide awake.

She tried lying still, listening to his measured breaths and reciting runes in her head but it did nothing to ease her system down. As they had whenever she'd had an idle moment, her thoughts drifted to the upcoming trip to Malfoy Manor, scheduled for the following afternoon.

How would Narcissa react once she saw her son with Hermione, standing bold as brass in her own home? What would she *say*?

Hermione wasn't an optimist as much as she was a realist without pessimistic tendencies, but even her most level-headed assessment of what might reasonably occur upon re-meeting Draco's mother skewed toward the negative. The war had changed a great many things but it hadn't washed the world clean; foul beliefs and deep-seeded perspectives lingered behind closed doors and within closed minds. She wanted to give Narcissa the benefit of a fresh slate but until she saw evidence of a changed woman, Hermione would be on her guard.

It was imperative, however, that she not project her skepticism. Partly because it wouldn't be the most effective way to ingratiate herself to Narcissa but mostly for Draco's sake. He loved his mother – had done things to protect her that she knew still weighed heavily on him – and the last thing Hermione wanted to do was become a wedge between them. She knew that Draco loved her, too, but though the cords that bound them together were many-stranded and ever-multiplying, she also knew that there was nothing quite like the love between a child and parent. She didn't doubt him – not ever – but still...

She stared at the ceiling, so awake that even blinking felt like too long a time to have her lids closed.

Beside her, Draco twitched in his sleep. It broke her gaze from the ceiling, attention sliding to what she could see of him in the darkened room. She rolled onto her side to see him better, trying to calm herself down enough to find sleep by remembering the feel of his hair between

her fingers, soft and surprisingly thick for such a fine blonde. She thought about the way his eyes shifted when she did it; the way they darkened when she tugged. He liked it when she pulled on it, especially when he was between her legs, licking and sucking and watching her with those knowing, glinting eyes.

The covers were suddenly unbearably hot and there was a distinct throbbing between her legs. He was right there, warm and solid beside her, but even so, a pang of longing shot through her. She pressed her toes to his shin but the feeling didn't dissipate. Was it odd to miss someone who she was literally touching? Being awake while he was asleep made her strangely nostalgic for him.

She endeavored not to put any significance behind it, as if her subconscious somehow knew that the morning would threaten her hold on him. She knew it wouldn't. She *knew* it.

But even so, she woke him up.

"Draco," she whispered, lifting a hand to stroke his cheekbone with her thumb.

He leaned into her touch, humming sleepily, eyes still closed.

"Draco," she murmured again, a little louder. "Wake up."

He grunted, cracking an eye open. "What is it?" he mumbled blearily.

She bit her lip, feeling a little badly for having woken him, but not enough to let him fall back asleep. She stroked his cheek again, sliding down to thumb at his full bottom lip. "Are you too tired to...?" She let the question linger, tone hopeful.

The edge of his mouth curled, even as he shut his eye again. "Granger," he grumbled, but he sounded amused, "I was asleep."

"I'll be quick," she promised. "I just...can't fall asleep."

He muffled a sleepy laugh into his pillow, hand sliding over her waist to rub her back absently. "M'barely awake."

She dropped a hand between them to the hem of his t-shirt, slipping her fingers under. His skin was warm and he sighed softly as she traced the contours of his abdomen, gliding upward to his chest. She flicked her finger over a nipple and his eye cracked open again.

"How quick?" he mumbled.

The shape of his body under her hand had readied her for him even further; she felt flushed and hyper-aware of the various places she could feel her heartbeat, her entire being focused on him in the way only he'd ever been able to cultivate. It had been days since she'd had him; she felt halfway there just from touching him.

"Very," she promised. She skimmed her hand down his torso to his pajama bottoms, finding him well on his way to ready for her, too. She bit her lip, squeezing his growing length, the feel of his cock making her throb between her legs.

“Needy little thing,” he mumbled, but tugged her closer, tilting his face to kiss her.

She kissed him back gratefully, pushing her hand into his pajamas and curling it around his cock to give him several slow strokes, feeling him harden fully in her grip. He hummed into her mouth, the tip of his tongue flicking out to greet hers. His hand slid from her back down to her arse, squeezing and then venturing further to press between her legs from behind. She broke the kiss with a whimper, hips rocking into his touch, hooking her leg over his hip to give him more room.

He rumbled a knowing sound from the back of his throat, fingers finding her clit and rubbing. Her fist flexed around the tip of his cock in cadence, reflexively at first and then with purpose when she felt dampness under her palm.

“That feels so good,” she breathed, eyes sliding shut. “Gods, you always make me feel so good.”

“You *are* good,” he reminded her, voice low in the scant space between their mouths. “Even when you wake me up, you’re still so good, baby.”

His fingers drew back from her clit, massaging against her entrance with firm pressure, his palm snug between her cheeks. She groaned a soft sound of satisfaction at the pressure, grinding against his hand and pumping her fist over his cock, the evidence of his arousal for her driving hers higher and higher.

She thought for a moment that it might be enough – that he’d make her come by rubbing her cunt through her clothes like the wanton creature she’d become and then she’d finally fall asleep – but then his hips bucked to slide his cock more urgently into her fist and her lust skyrocketed.

“*Fuck*,” she gasped, stroking him once more then letting go to tug at his pajamas. “Can we–? I know you’re sleepy but–”

He pushed her onto her back, rolling on top of her and grinding his cock against her in precise, firm strokes. She moaned, everything inside her going tight with a sudden, strong contraction at his weight over her, surrounding her.

“I’m wide awake now, Granger,” he chuckled, bemused. “Wide fucking awake. How do you want me?”

She fumbled to get her shirt off, wanting to be naked under him – needing to feel close. “Like this,” she said, tossing the fabric aside and then reaching for his. She rumbled the material up his torso as best she could until he sat back to tug it off before falling back down over her to immediately lick at a nipple.

She moaned at the touch, his mouth warm and wet as it swirled, then sucked, then kissed over her breast. He slid his hands under her, one to the nape of her neck and the other down her spine, holding her close as he ground his erection against her and mouthed his way over to her other breast. She raked her fingers through his hair, keening, desperate to feel him all the way. She used her feet to push down his pajama bottoms as best she could, the waistband

catching on his cock until he retrieved a hand from under her to free himself. He rid her of pajamas with a sharp tug, flinging them aside and pressing her legs open.

“Like this?” he asked, swirling his tip against her clit then aligning himself at her entrance. She nodded, reaching for him. He lowered to his elbows, kissing her as he pushed inside. Her mouth went lax against his at the pressure as he sank in slowly, not stopping until she felt the tap of his balls against her arse.

“There.” His tone was soft and indulgent. “This what you needed?”

She pecked light kisses over his lips and chin as he slowly slid out and then pushed back inside, working himself in and out at a glacial pace.

“Ought to make you do all the work,” he murmured, picking up the pace from the languid glide to a moderate beat, “for waking me up right when I’d just fallen asleep.”

She tried to work her hips with his but he was pressing her against the mattress, their bodies flush to their chests, and she had no leverage.

“I could,” she offered, even as she melted into the bed at how good it felt to be covered by him. “Roll us over. I’ll...I’ll ride you.”

“No, Granger.” He tilted his face into the crook of her neck, kissing his way up to her jaw. “You wanted to be fucked...so you’re going to get fucked.”

His thrusts were fast and deep, his pelvis dragging against the front of her cunt with every stroke, indirectly stimulating her clit and bringing her staggeringly close to the edge in short order. She wound her arms around his shoulders, hands holding his head against neck as the tension coiled tight, the way he was rutting against her arousing in its own right and further compounded by the low sounds of pleasure he was making, as if *he’d* been the one to wake *her* up, desperate for a shag.

He was always so into it. Always gave her exactly what she needed. It made her clench around him, hard enough that she moaned.

“Close already?” he groaned, brushing his lips over her jaw and neck in evocative little strokes. “You really did need it, didn’t you? What would you have done if I hadn’t woken up, hmm? Stay up all night? Or just rub your wet little cunt on my thigh while I’m none the wiser?”

“*Shut—*” she began, distraught at how much she liked the idea, but then he was sucking on the sensitive spot on her neck and she lost her train of thought, pleasure zipping down her spine and detonating the tension coiled hotly inside her. She came with a whimper that extended into a plaintive moan, gripping him everywhere she held him.

He hissed as her nails dug into his scalp and shoulders, and then pounded into her, the slap of skin obscene with how wet she was and how hard his hips were striking hers. It didn’t take long until he shuddered out a few, hard thrusts before pushing deep and holding. With him

pressed against her so closely, she could feel the rhythmic flexing of his abs and thighs as he came, a wrecked sound muffled against her neck.

She wrapped her arms around his ribs, keeping him flush with her as he worked himself through it, savoring his pleasure and the way it always amplified hers. He understood her so well – was always so patient and giving.

He was so, so precious to her.

“Thank you,” she whispered, tightening her arms around him. He pressed a kiss to her neck in response before lifting up enough to slide out then onto his back next to her, catching his breath.

She stretched, luxuriating in the measured cadence of her heart and the bliss of quiet stillness in her mind. He could fix anything, she thought absently. Together, they could fix anything.

“Of course, love,” he panted. “Feel better now?”

But she was already asleep.

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Hermione woke up naked.

It took her a moment to remember why. Despite frequently fooling around before bed, they always tugged their pajamas back on, but when she rolled onto her back and felt the sticky wetness between her thighs, their midnight romp came back to her.

She slid a hand down, sliding a finger in the mess then curling it inside herself. She was slippery and hot, his come still warm and coating her. She blamed him for it fully, for transferring his little kink to her, but the feel of him still inside her made her burn hot with lust. She pumped her finger a few times then dragged it out to circle over her clit, feeling how swollen she’d already gotten. Or, perhaps, still was.

She rolled to her side, finding the cause of her state still asleep beside her, curled up on his side facing her, face mostly buried in his pillow, as always. It wasn’t so much a conscious choice as it was an instinctive action, her hand guided by a force greater than consideration for his sleep needs, but suddenly she was applying force to his shoulder, rolling him onto his back, following him over.

He roused slightly as she straddled his thighs, his cock resting on his hip and making her mouth water even in its flaccid state. She leaned down to press kisses to his chest, working her way down.

“Again?” he mumbled groggily. “Fucking Christ, Granger.”

“Just lie back.” She kissed down his abs, stealing a downward glance to check the status of his cock. Filling nicely. She flicked her tongue hungrily over his navel and he huffed.

“Succubus,” he sighed, rubbing the heel of a hand against a closed eye. “Fucking sex demon.”

She rolled her lips in, charmed by his babbling. “Shh, Draco,” she cooed, lips curving as she sat tall, using her fingertips to trace gentle patterns on his chest and circling his tight, pink nipples. “Go back to sleep if you like.”

“While you fuck me?” He cracked an eye open to peer up at her incredulously, then closed it again. “Not likely.”

“So wake up then.” She reached down to stroke his cock, humming a contented sound at the stiffness. She raised up onto her knees to slide him to her entrance and through their joint arousal gathered there.

He made a guttural sound, brows knitting. “Oh, Jesus. So fucking wet already, baby.”

“That’s you,” she murmured, pressing down over his tip and taking the first few inches of him inside her without resistance. “I kept your come inside me all night but it’s starting to drip.”

His hips rocked up as he swore, burying himself fully. She echoed his sound of pleasure, the fullness sparking sensation all the way to the top of her head. She leaned forward, bracing her hands on his chest, and slid up then back down on him again.

“God.” His voice was ragged, chin lifted to expose the line of his throat to her greedy eyes. “You’re a dream. Fucking me with my own come. *Christ.*”

“Mm.” She put more weight behind her arms, keeping him down as she adjusted her position, tucking her feet over his thighs and spreading her knees so that she could ride him with the aid of gravity, rather than fighting it. His mouth fell open when she started bouncing, the pace and the angle keeping him tight against her front wall.

His body radiated heat and with the covers pushed back to his knees, the cool air around her provided a contrast that had her nipples tight and tingling. Her breasts were squashed together between her arms, jiggling with every motion of her hips in a way she found deeply arousing. When he finally opened his eyes, the naked desire in his gaze sent a flutter through her.

“Oh, look at you,” he whined. “Goddamnit, you’re so—*nngh*. I’m weak in the morning, baby. S’gonna make me come already.”

“Now who’s quick,” she teased, bouncing faster. It felt impossibly good and seeing the way he was losing it made her head a little fuzzy.

“Fuck,” he groaned, eyes rolling shut. “*Fuck*...you’ll...God, at this rate, you’ll be so full of me the...the Manor will...will recognize you as a Malfoy.”

The mention of his home – of their imminent destination – should have killed her arousal. But instead, his comment made her come. Her mouth dropped open, thighs quivering and shifting as she clenched around him, the groomed hair at the base of his cock brushing against her clit in a way that made her shudder over him. He swore, fucking up into her then holding deep as he came with her.

“We...we’re going to talk about that,” he panted, chest flushed and heaving. He pushed his hands into his hair then fixed her with a pleased, if not calculating, smirk. “You practically just came on command.”

She lifted off him until his cock slid free then lowered back down to grind lightly over it, slick and hot from her body and still half-hard. “Maybe I was already close,” she teased.

“I know what it feels like when you’re close, Granger.” He dragged a heavy hand up her thigh to hold her hip, fingers twitching as she rubbed herself on him still. “But you just went from fifty to a hundred. And I’m going to find out why.”

“Mm.” She coasted to a stop, reaching to pat his cockhead where it peeked out from between her legs. He hissed, sensitive, but didn’t shy away. “I’m sure you will. But first, we need to shower. As much as I like being full of you, I think smelling of sex might start us off on the wrong foot with your mother.”

He snorted, brow lifting. “You have a point.”

“I often do.” She slid off him and then got to her feet, steadying herself with a hand on the edge of the mattress as her body reoriented itself to gravity and then cupping a hand between her legs when his come really did begin to drip. She felt hot and swollen against her fingers, and so very wet.

She glanced up, finding his eyes riveted on her hand. They flicked up to hers, flaring for a moment as he licked his lips.

“Put it back inside you, baby,” he encouraged softly. “Or else I will.”

She exhaled in a rush, fingers swirling and then curling up to press it back inside. His nostrils flared on his controlled exhale, looking like he was about to pull her straight back to bed. She tempted fate by slipping her fingers from her cunt to her mouth, her own burgeoning enjoyment of tasting him on her tongue rearing its head. She sucked her fingers, humming with satisfaction and he shook his head once, like she was killing him, then pressed his face to the pillow and groaned.

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After a shower and a very late breakfast, she finally felt composed, the frenetic thrum beneath her skin settled to a gentle buzz. They weren’t due at the manor until four o’clock but neither



of them had the head for schoolwork so they took advantage of the clear weather and wandered down to the lake.

Hermione hadn't spent much time considering the second nerves-inducing element of their lunch with Narcissa - namely: the venue - but as they ambled down the lawn and to the rocky beach, she pondered it. Malfoy Manor loomed in her memory as a place best forgotten, a place she'd thought she might never walk out of and therefore, when she had, a place she didn't dwell on. The concept that she was about to walk back in, *willingly* and for *love*, filled her with an unexpected sense of power. She'd never been one to let the past tarnish her future, and the prospect of making new memories about the house both terrified her and filled her with a tiny ball of hope.

She looked over to where Draco was skipping stones, the light touches sending ripples across the glassy surface of the water. She wondered what it was like for him to go home to a place that had functioned as Voldemort's headquarters. Had the good memories of his childhood been sufficient to override that period of darkness? She didn't know what else he'd witnessed there beyond her torture but she doubted if any of it had been pleasant.

It felt like the wrong time to dredge it all up but she suspected his thoughts were already there. The force behind each stone throw certainly didn't speak to an unagitated mind.

She stepped closer, stooping to pick up a stone, not caring about the shape so much as wanting him to be aware of her presence. They'd had success not beating around the proverbial bush and so she cut right to it.

"What was it like growing up with Bellatrix as an aunt?" she asked, idly turning the stone over in her palm, the craggy shape of it tactile in a way she enjoyed. He glanced over at her, the breeze picking up the ends of his hair and flirting with them. He flicked them back, eyes dropping to the motion of her hand.

"I didn't, actually." He stepped closer, plucking the rough stone from her and replacing it with a flat, smooth one from the few he had. "She was in Azkaban until I was sixteen, so I didn't meet her until then."

The stone was warm from his palm. She closed her hand around it.

"Oh," she said, surprised, then shook her head. "Merlin, what an unfortunate first meeting."

Draco shrugged. "Not sure she was any saner before Azkaban." He tossed the rough stone she'd picked up into the air, catching it absently. "One day I'd like to meet my other aunt. Just to see what getting away from it all did for her."

"Andromeda's wonderful," Hermione said, watching him toss her stone again. "I'm sure she'd love to meet you, too."

He caught it, turning to her with interest. "You've met her?"

"Mm-hmm. Harry is Teddy's godfather, so I've spoken to her a few times."

He processed it with a slow nod of his head then breathed a soft laugh. “It’s funny how interconnected Potter is with the Black family line. Living in Sirius’ house, godfathering Edward...it’s like he’s one of them.”

She shrugged. “He is, in a way. Families are supposed to expand.” She pocketed the smooth stone he'd given her, then shot an impish smirk up at him. “At least, that’s what *I*’ve always been taught. If *you* want to marry your first cousin, then—” She shrieked as he grabbed for her, squeezing her sides where she was ticklish.

“Cheeky thing,” he chided, not relenting even as she squealed and squirmed.

She managed to get a hand between them, digging it into his side and then his armpit in retaliation. He clamped his arm down over her fingers, yelping a laugh, and finally yielded, banding his arms around her and burying his nose in her curls. She hugged him back, a little breathless from laughing and playing.

They held each other for a moment, the stones shifting beneath their feet with the gentle sway of their bodies, almost a slow dance if one could dance without moving one’s feet.

“Are you nervous?” he asked after a moment, the words spoken against her hair.

At present, she was nothing but content. But she knew what he was asking about.

“No,” she assured him. “Just curious. Like always.”

He drew in a deep breath then exhaled slowly, squeezing her tighter before finally releasing her. “Say the word, and we’ll leave,” he promised, brushing her hair off her face, eyes serious and loving. “Or just give me a look. I’ll know.”

The edge of her mouth twitched upward in a fond smile. “I’ll be okay. But, ditto, for what it’s worth.”

He nodded once, then bent and kissed her. It lingered, his hands framing her face and thumbs stroking softly over her cheeks, and then deepened. She melted into it, sighing into his mouth when he opened hers with his tongue.

Meeting his mother would change only what she’d let it, she decided. And she would not let it change a thing about their love.

## Chapter End Notes

Thanks, as always, for reading!! 😊

Next chapter will be - dun dun dun! - lunch with Narcissa.

Find me on [Twitter](#) and [Tumblr](#) 🙋

## Chapter 42: “Lucius,” Narcissa said coolly, “drink your tea before it gets cold.”

### Chapter Notes

Hi friends!! I'm not even going to look at how long it's been since I updated this but please know that I write for it all the time and think about it twice as often. But for some reason I decided to sign up for six (6) fests that are all due by mid-June?? And obviously also writing random one-shots and little drabbles here and there bc it's fun. So...I've been a busy gal.

I'm also very behind on replying to comments (see above for where my free time has been allotted) but I read (and sometimes re-read, for motivation) your sweet, enthusiastic words all the time.

All that's to say, thank you for sticking around! We're getting closer to where I have a ton of scenes (read: smut) pre-written so I'm getting stoked 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Malfoy Manor looked lighter than she remembered it.

Although, in fairness, she hadn't exactly taken the time to appraise the architecture or note the sheer number of blossoming bushes when being dragged in by her hair. And beyond her own personal danger, she'd also been trying to keep track of both Harry and Ron, as well as sorting out what in Merlin's name to do should they be brought before Voldemort. She hadn't feared Lucius Malfoy – not once in her life – but she wasn't so naïve as to ignore the power he held in his left arm nor the lengths he might go to please his master.

But now, standing outside the wrought iron gates that separated the country lane they'd Apparated to from the pebbled drive that led up to the front steps, Hermione took a moment to inspect her surroundings.

The manor was as tall and dark as she remembered, but there was a brightness to it now, the stone a deep onyx that glinted under the sun and contrasted brilliantly with the colors of the surrounding gardens and the blue of the sky. It was a bright day, though breezy, and the countryside was dressed in their finest spring things.

It was an impressive facade. But as she stood there, taking it all in, it wasn't the grandeur that she fixated on, but the solitude.

She'd grown up in a suburb of London, with neighbors on every side bringing in the associated hubbub of humankind: car doors and barking dogs, squabbles and laughter, and, most subtle but most pervasive, the ever-present buzz of electricity, heard through the wires overhead and in the things it powered: music, televisions, hair dryers.

By contrast Malfoy Manor was silent. She could hear the way the wind was brushing through the tall hedges lining the drive, and in the distance a murder of crows was having a laugh, but beyond the sounds of nature, there was nothing.

No neighbors. No cars. No electricity.

She hadn't thought much about the ramifications of being a Pureblood until now. She presumed Draco been homeschooled here until Hogwarts, but had it been solitary? Ron and Ginny had had the blessing of older siblings during their own homeschooling, as well as a father who was deeply curious about the world outside, but contrasted with Hermione and Harry, who'd had the misfortune of attending primary school, they'd been isolated.

Hermione knew what it was like to be an only child, but she didn't know what it was like to be properly alone. She hadn't been the most popular at primary school but friends didn't matter as much as learning how to navigate the world of peers. She recalled Theo saying that they'd known *of* Draco but hadn't met him properly until Fifth year. Had Draco grown up with Crabbe and Goyle? Pansy? Anyone?

The sheer number of questions piling themselves into her brain suddenly felt unending.

She turned to pose one to him but stopped when she saw his expression, eyes fixed straight ahead on his home. He sniffed once, almost with disgust, and then exhaled deeply. He'd been back before, she knew, so wondered what he was thinking to have such a response now.

He felt her gaze and turned to her, mouth flickering in a small smile before he tugged her to him to drop a kiss to her curls.

"Feels different to be standing here with you," he murmured, thoughts always so in sync with hers. "And it's been ages since I've looked at it from the outside. I usually Apparate straight to my room."

She leaned into his hold. "Why didn't we do that then?"

"Thought it might be better manners to not be sneaking downstairs first thing," he replied, a note of warm amusement in his voice. "*Second* thing, perhaps, but I want to give mum a chance to form the right opinion of you first."

She laughed then inhaled his scent, nose pressed to his chest. "Kind of you."

"Mm." He squeezed her once more. "Ready?"

Against all odds, she was.

"Ready," she confirmed.

He kept one arm around her and raised his wand to the gates, flicking it in a lazy, outward motion. The gates clinked and slowly began to open. The act reminded her suddenly of the wandwork he'd performed at Grimmauld Place to prevent Kreacher from Apparating into the room.

"Family magic," she blurted, craning her neck to look up at him. "You never told me about it."

He made a soft sound of acknowledgement. "Ah, I didn't. The short of it is, there are things I can do as a Malfoy – and a Black – when on family property or interacting with heirlooms. It essentially boils down to blood magic, though the hereditary sort rather than the more... nefarious sort."

She took his proffered hand, beginning to walk beside him up the drive. "Is it all protective? Locking doors and warding against intruders and such?"

"Mostly," he agreed, as the gates closed behind them. With her hand in his, she didn't feel an ounce of trepidation at being enclosed on Malfoy property. "There's more to it if you're the Lord or Lady of a family home, but all blood-members of the family have some particular abilities which non-blood family members – or other people entirely – don't have. They don't transfer by marriage so, for instance, my mother would be able to do things at Grimmauld Place that my father can't, and he can do things here at the manor which she can't." He grinned down at her, suddenly smug. "I, of course, can do things at both."

She rolled her eyes. "So special."

He hummed agreeably as he adjusted their hands, intertwining their fingers more tightly. "That said, since my father is the current Lord of the Manor, he can do things even I can't. There's still a hierarchy, even with blood."

"Is that part of the reason he's so staunch about Purebloods?" she asked. "So that the family property is...maintained?"

"That's a generous perspective." Draco squeezed her hand, sighing. "And probably partly true. I'm sure the entirety of his justification for it is selfish in one way or another."

She didn't doubt it.

"So what happens when you have a daughter?" she asked.

Draco raised a brow, mouth twitching upwards. "*Am* I having a daughter?"

She rolled her eyes but couldn't stop her own mouth from curving up either. "No, idiot. I'm just *speculating* – if you have a daughter, and she marries into another family, like your mother did, she'll bear the blood magic of the Malfoy line, but won't her children be under her husband's family? So what happens to the familial magic in the next generation?"

Draco pulled them up short. They were only a few meters from the sweeping front steps and Hermione wondered suddenly if Narcissa was the sort to peer out of windows. Draco

captured her attention before she could begin to search the panes.

“Hermione,” he said, voice deeply affectionate. “You don’t need to worry what will happen with our family magic because at my earliest convenience, I will be burning the manor to the ground. Any potential advantage our children might have had over it will be irrelevant, nor will it matter for any generation thereafter. Alright?”

He had said *our* so easily and so many times that her heart was suddenly pounding. She swallowed, eyes fixed on his. “Alright.”

“Good.”

He leaned down to dot a kiss at the corner of her mouth but she turned into it, sending a hand up to hold his jaw to press her lips properly against his. He hummed, low and content, and she had to remind herself quite sternly at the sheer number of windows to her left. She kept the kiss brief but took a moment to center herself before fully drawing away. He pressed his forehead to hers in a light touch, perhaps doing the same.

They carried on down the drive and up the broad front steps, but his hand paused over the ornate door knob.

“Quick reminder,” he said, looking over at her. “My parents have House-elves. And they aren’t freed.”

She hadn’t forgotten. “As long as they aren’t being obviously badly mistreated, I’ll...try to behave myself.”

“They’re treated well now,” he assured her. “Father learned his lesson a few years back – several times over, actually.”

She wanted to ask how – and if it had come from the hands of his unfreed servants, if Draco could explain it in extremely vivid detail, please and thank you – but before she could pry, Draco gave her a final searching look, then pulled the large door open.

She vaguely remembered the entrance hall from her previous time being there but it felt different to be walking over the threshold as a guest rather than a captive. The dark floors caught the late afternoon sun that streamed in behind him, gleaming under her feet as she walked several steps in. Dark wood paneling was barely visible between the sheer number of portraits and landscapes hung on the walls, several depicting grounds that looked quite similar to those just outside the doors.

It was a proud house. Stately and ancient. She could respect the idea of not wanting the mantle of its care to be dropped while on one’s watch, but her sympathy for Lucius extended only so far. Some things were meant to end, so that new things could begin.

And some things were just meant to end.

Still, it felt a shame to lose it all to fire, if Draco was serious about his plans for arson. Though would he really, after the Room of Requirement?

“Still alright?” His voice interrupted her thoughts, tone cautious and understanding.

She nodded instantly, squeezing his hand. It was just a house. So far.

“Of course.” She drew in a subtle inhale, and then half-choked on it as a sudden pop of Apparition startled her.

The diminutive figure of a house-elf materialized in front of them, dressed in a swath of fine black fabric tied around the waist with a silken black cord.

“Master Draco.” The elf bowed until his ears brushed the polished floors. “Wonderful to be seeing you.”

“Hello, Hispy,” Draco replied, tone informal and far friendlier than Hermione had expected.

The elf completed his bow and turned toward Hermione to offer her a greeting next. A delicate line formed amid all the other wrinkles, confusion plain on the house-elf’s face. “Hello, Miss...tress?”

Beside her, Draco coughed into his fist, the sound suspiciously close to a concealed laugh.

Hermione frowned at him, feeling as confused as the elf looked, then turned back to the creature with a kind smile.

“I’m Hermione,” she said. “It’s lovely to meet you, Hispy.”

“The pleasure is being all mine,” the elf said politely, though his eyes were still fixed on Draco.

Draco cleared his throat, the edges of his mouth twitching upward. “Where’s mother?”

“Mistress is in the drawing room,” Hispy replied, then tilted his head. “The *west* drawing room, Hispy means.”

“Of course.” Draco’s mouth twitched again, something both Hispy and Hermione observed narrowed eyes. “Thank you, Hispy. I know the way.”

“Yes, Master Draco,” the elf intoned. His eyes flicked to Hermione once more, that same curiosity creasing its brow, then harrumphed in Draco’s direction and Disapparated with a pop.

As soon as they were alone, Draco burst out laughing.

Hermione jumped, turning to him in shock. The sound felt inappropriate in the cavernous hall, the sound echoing off the high ceilings. He fully lost it for a handful of moments but collected himself behind a hand, shoulders shaking once more before he scrubbed over his face and then lowered his hand.

“Holy fuck.” His eyes were bright, amusement and disbelief mixing in the grey.



“What’s wrong with you?” Hermione asked in an undertone, seriously concerned for his mental state.

Draco looked at her, his laughter only barely restrained. “It’s just...I was kidding, you know? About...about the manor recognizing you as a Malfoy. But...” He raised a pointed brow, the edges of his mouth fighting gravity and breaking open into another unrestrained grin. “But house-elves are keyed into family magic. They’re uniquely... *perceptive*, to always know who they serve.”

She stared at him, not understanding. And then the coin dropped.

Heat flared in her cheeks at the realization. *Miss...tress.*

She gasped, thwacking Draco on the shoulder. “I can’t believe you!” she hissed, her own laughter barely contained. “Oh my god. He knew you’d...? That I’m...”

The warmth of Draco’s amusement had slowly shifted into heat as she stammered. He stepped into her space until she could feel his presence, the scant inches of space between them buzzing with awareness.

“That you’re...” he prompted, voice low.

She declined to answer, mostly because his amusement that his house-elf could sense his *presence* in her was doing reckless things to her heart, but also because she hadn’t expected laughter in this house. He’d been unrestrained with it, not at all self-conscious about the noise, and she was trying to rapidly redraw the picture of his family in her head. Trying to fit in a place for unrestrained laughter.

Draco accepted her pointed lack of response with a quirk of his brow, mouth curling up at the feigned disapproval on her face. She thought he’d refocus on the matter at hand but instead he hummed a low sound from the back of his throat and dipped his face to hers, nose skating the tip of hers before sliding to the side.

“Can you still feel me inside you?” he murmured, lips brushing along her cheek. “Does it feel any different? Being in this house, surrounded by my magic? Can you feel a pull?”

She hadn’t noticed anything different but the suggestion of it made her pulse double, warmth suffusing down to her toes.

“We’re about to have tea with your *mother*,” she reminded him, a touch desperately. “Don’t...god.”

“I’m sorry – I know. *I know.*” He kissed her cheek, and then the hinge of her jaw. “I was a little nervous about this before, you know, but now I’m not.”

She couldn’t help but hold his head to her, his hair soft between her fingers. “Why? All because your house-elf sensed you in me?”

“Yes.” He kissed her cheek, working his way back to her mouth. “Because it reminded me how deeply I’m yours. And you make me brave.”

She leaned into his kiss, unable to do anything else. He drew away slowly, lips first and then the rest of him. He sighed and she felt the same mix of satisfaction and yearning.

“Let’s go find mum,” he said. “And then I’ll show you the rest of the manor.”

She flicked her brows once suggestively and he snorted delicately, smirking at her antics and walking her through the entrance hall and down the length of the corridor beyond, straight through the heart of the house.

The west drawing room was not, she surmised, the one she’d been brought to by the Snatchers and as Draco opened the door and pressed a light hand to her lower back, encouraging her inside, she saw she was correct. This drawing room was situated at the back corner of the manor, with two walls composed entirely of tall, paned windows which showcased a massive rose garden just down the sloping lawn.

Above the shoulder-high dark wood paneling, wallpaper in a pale floral pattern was hung. The white and yellow of the blossoms was pretty against the pale green background. They were daffodils, Hermione thought. Ah. *Narcissus*.

Movement in her periphery caught her eye and Hermione watched as the flower incarnate stood from where she’d been seated beside a tea table, her elegant robes a near match for the pale green of what was obviously *her* drawing room.

“Draco.” Her voice was warm. “Hello, my darling.”

Draco squeezed Hermione’s hand in a quick gesture of encouragement then slipped his free, going over to peck a kiss on his mother’s cheek. “Hi mum.”

Narcissa rested her hands lightly on his forearms, a semblance of a hug, as she turned to present her other cheek. He kissed the second as well, then looked back to Hermione.

“You remember Hermione.”

Narcissa’s eyes were friendlier than Hermione had ever felt on her, though they still held a certain reservation in them. “I do, of course. Welcome to our home, Miss Granger.”

“It’s nice to be back,” Hermione said, her manners automatic, and then winced internally at the phrasing.

Narcissa’s expression didn’t falter though her left eye twitched almost imperceptibly. “How gracious of you.” She squeezed Draco’s forearm and then let go to gesture toward the tea table. “Shall we sit?”

Draco caught Hermione’s eye as he escorted his mother back to her seat, amusement glinting in the grey.

*Bad son*, she thought, and had to press her lips together to conceal her smile.

She followed them to the table, seating herself to Draco’s left, across from Narcissa. Narcissa clicked her fingers and the table filled with tea things: a tiered stand with cakes and small

sandwiches, small ceramic dishes of clotted cream and a rose-hued jam, and three settings. The subtle indication that Lucius wouldn't be joining them gave Hermione a small burst of relief. Having a civil conversation seemed much more likely with Narcissa alone.

The teapot materialized to the right of Narcissa, perfectly positioned for her to pour, steam rising delicately through the spout and fragranting the room with bergamot.

Knowing that their house-elves had prepared the food was slightly easier to bear when it was presented to her Hogwarts-style rather than being served by them, though Hermione immediately felt guilty for being more comfortable not seeing the creatures that had put it together.

"Tea?" Narcissa offered, tone pleasantly mild. A polished hostess, no matter the guest.

"Yes, please." Hermione considered lifting her cup but thought better of it, something she was glad of when Narcissa raised her wand and used it to direct the teapot over Hermione's cup, filling it precisely three-fourths of the way to the brim. Of course. This was a Wizarding home.

"I hope you don't mind," Narcissa continued, directing the teapot to Draco's cup next, "but we always take Earl Grey in the afternoon."

The exact variety of tea was the least of Hermione's concerns when it came to the gathering but she was determined for things to go as smoothly as was reasonably possible, so she simply made a soft sound of agreement. "Earl Grey is one of my favorites."

"Is it?" Narcissa filled her own mug without looking, eyes on Hermione. "How fortunate."

There was something brittle in her tone though Hermione couldn't see any obvious animosity in her expression. Then again, Narcissa must have had plenty of practice concealing her thoughts over the past few years. It made Hermione vaguely itchy, to not know where she stood. To not know if she was passing Narcissa's metric of appropriate partner for her son or not.

Not, Hermione reminded herself, that Narcissa's opinion *really* mattered either way.

Except that Hermione wanted to be approved of. For Draco's sake, if not her own intrinsic desire to be accepted; found worthy.

"Yes," Hermione said, watching Narcissa send the teapot back to hover in mid-air beside her. "There's a tea shop near where I grew up that has all sorts of blends. My mum and I would walk there most Sundays and share a pot."

The story had arisen without intentional thought, and it wasn't until she felt Draco's attention slide to her that she realized talking about her parents wasn't something she often did. Or really, *ever* did. She'd still never shared with him the current status of her relationship with the people formerly known as Jean and Roger Granger.

Narcissa missed the significance of the reference, lifting her cup and saucer in an elegant motion. “And where is it that you grew up?”

Under the table, Draco’s foot found hers. She pressed her shoe back against his, grateful for the reminder of his support.

“London,” she answered.

“London,” Narcissa repeated. “It must be strange to see all the greenery here, then.”

“London is plenty green, mum,” Draco reminded her, mildly exasperated. “And anyway, Hermione grew up at Hogwarts. Same as me.”

“And I did have a back garden,” Hermione added, unsure why she was even bothering. “There was a large park quite close as well. I wasn’t in the middle of the city center or anything like that.”

“Even so.” Narcissa sipped, eyes on Hermione, and then replaced her teacup soundlessly on her saucer. “It must have been quite different.”

Hermione couldn’t figure out what Narcissa’s angle was, but before she could begin to form a response, Draco sighed gustily, drawing both women’s attention.

“There’s no need to highlight the differences between our childhoods, mum. Keep in mind, you’re the one who invited us here.” He sat back, stretching his leg out so his shin rested fully behind her ankles. “I’d have been quite happy keeping Hermione from this place for the rest of her life.”

The comment had Narcissa’s already-perfect posture straightening even further. “Draco,” she admonished. “This is your *home*.”

“Respectfully, it’s the house I was raised in,” he said, but softened the comment with a half-smile at his mother. “I only come back because you’re here. That’s it.”

Narcissa’s lips compressed into a thin line but her eyes searched her son with a hint of desperation.

“Draco,” she said again, tone imploring, but before she could continue, there was a singular rap on the door before it was pushed open, admitting Lucius Malfoy to the room.

Draco’s eyes flicked to Hermione before he turned in his chair to watch his father’s approach.

There was a shift in the air – a tangible change in the energy of the room – as Lucius strode across it. Was it just in her head, or was it the magic in the house responding to his presence? His eyes found his wife’s first as he rested a hand lightly on her shoulder, and then slid to Hermione.

“Miss Granger,” he said coolly.

A snide *Lucius* was on the tip of her tongue, but she behaved herself with a neutral, “Mr. Malfoy.”

Lucius’s fingers twitched on his wife’s shoulder, something Narcissa marked with a subtle glance before clearing her throat and gesturing to the fourth chair. “Sit with us, Lucius?”

His dark robes swirled around the legs of Narcissa’s chair as he rounded it, settling himself into the seat directly to Hermione’s left with a fluid grace.

She’d never been in pleasant company with Lucius before, so had never given a moment’s thought to the subtle similarities in mannerism between him and Draco. The way Draco reclined in his chair was an exact mirror to the way Lucius now leaned back, his left foot extending just slightly into Narcissa’s space, a more restrained version of what Draco was doing in hers. The idea that Draco may have picked up any of his wildly romantic tendencies from observing his *parents* briefly boggled her mind.

“Isn’t this lovely,” Lucius mused, accepting the newly-conjured teacup from Narcissa. “Afternoon tea with my family. How long’s it been, Draco? Since we last sat together?”

Draco sipped his tea as if he hadn’t heard his father, but the line of tension in his jaw belied the truth of his non-reaction. He didn’t rush to answer, something Hermione found admirable given the way a retort would have been hot on her tongue in his place. Draco replaced his teacup on the saucer with an unbothered sniff.

“Christmas?” he ventured, finally looking up to meet his father’s eye, his expression steely. “Not sure I can remember many meals with just the three of us before that, what with Voldemort always filling the head seat.”

Lucius’s expression hardened. “Draco,” he said, tone warning. “I’ve told you not to use that name in this house.”

“*Anymore*, at least,” Draco clarified with a sharp smile at his father, then shot an apologetic glance to Hermione for having tossed her straight into the middle of their family dynamics.

She raised her brows and her teacup in unison, taking an unbothered sip to indicate she was perfectly happy witnessing him standing up to his father.

Draco’s body language softened instantly at her expression, mouth shifting into a gentle, downturned smile, which she returned as she lowered her cup.

Hermione caught Narcissa’s intrigued glance between the two of them before she cleared her throat delicately, dabbing at her lips with her napkin. At the sound, Lucius glanced askance at his wife, hackles similarly relaxing under her pointed gaze.

“Lucius,” Narcissa said coolly, “drink your tea before it gets cold.”

Lucius flexed his jaw once before picking up his cup.

“You’ll have to excuse them,” Narcissa said, fixing Hermione with a resigned expression. “They’ve been at each other’s throats of late.”

Draco scoffed but it died in his throat as his mother shot him a pointed look next. Lucius quietly sipped his tea.

Hermione tried not to let her temper rise at the reminder of why he might have antagonism toward his father, a man he'd idolized for as long as she'd known him; looked up to and, as any child instinctively did, for better or worse, trusted.

She watched Narcissa pick a raspberry off one of the fruit tarts, placing it delicately between her lips, and shifted her frustration. Narcissa had allowed it to happen. She'd allowed her son to be made an example of; to bear the sins of his father.

Hermione had a slow sip of tea, not wanting to make things awkward or exacerbate the well-established tension already lingering across the table, but the insistent urge to speak her mind was hard to tamp down. She'd almost bested it when Draco rotated his left forearm down, an unconscious gesture of shame, and then she couldn't hold her tongue.

"Understandably," she said, "considering what you let happen to him."

Lucius's eyes cut to hers at the informal address and Narcissa's flared, but Hermione wasn't finished.

"Harry suspected it, you know. That Draco had been..." Inexplicably, she found she couldn't say it; not in this house, the very place it might have been done. She swallowed, refocusing. "And I *laughed* at Harry. At the thought of a child being marked."

In her periphery, Draco shifted, his left hand antsy on his thigh. It made Hermione's anger grow tenfold. She stared straight at Narcissa.

"But you let it happen." Her heart was throbbing painfully in her chest. "Did you watch while they did it to him?"

It was Narcissa's turn to bristle, but the distinct wobble in her voice crashed through Hermione's anger like a shock of cold water. "You don't need to sit there and tell me that I let him down. I *know that I did*. But you don't know what I did for him, the lengths I went to insure his safety after it was too late to spare him."

At his mother's emotional outburst, Draco had frozen, face turned toward her, but Narcissa and Hermione hadn't blinked.

This was the battlefield, then. Their love for Draco.

Hermione so badly wanted to be allies with this woman, this person who loved him so deeply; who, in the end, *had* risked it all for only the barest scrap of hope. It made Hermione's heart ache, to consider it. She'd done selfless things for her own family's safety in the name of that same, soul-deep love. She knew the burden of it.

Maybe it shouldn't have, but the reminder of their commonality softened her toward Narcissa. Enough that her next words were spoken quietly, and sincerely.

"I do, actually."

All three Malfoys looked at her but she still only had eyes for Narcissa.

“I do know what you did for him, I mean. In the end.”

Narcissa blinked. “You couldn’t possibly.”

“I do,” Hermione insisted gently. “Harry is my best friend.”

Narcissa inhaled slowly. “I see. So, Mr. Potter...?”

“Yes.” Hermione set down her cup, not minding that it clinked on the saucer. She was beyond the facade of decorousness, not if they were going to share actual, honest truths. But Narcissa’s continued subterfuge gave her pause. “I take it that your family doesn’t know?”

Narcissa stared at her for another beat and then slowly shook her head. “It’s not the sort of thing—” She pressed her lips together, collecting her features back into a controlled expression, eyes twitching as if she was tempted to look sidelong at Lucius. “There’s never been an occasion to discuss it.”

Hermione wasn’t in a position to judge when it came to family dynamics but still, it was amazing to her that Narcissa had never revealed the impact she’d made in the outcome of so many facets of the war. That she’d never confided it to Draco, who she plainly adored, nor to Lucius, with whom Hermione could tell there was a strong cord of mutual respect.

Her actions in the forest had never been publicized. Hermione knew about it from Harry directly, of course, but the greater Wizarding world had been mostly kept in the dark about what had occurred to finally bring Voldemort down. Harry would have been lauded as the hero no matter what, and she suspected Kingsley had wanted to keep a tight leash on the details of how very close to disaster the world had come.

But the fact remained: Narcissa defied the Dark Lord at the very moment of his potential victory — had swung the pendulum back into the light when hope had almost been lost. And her Unbreakable Vow to Snape, which Harry had learned of while pouring through Snape’s memories, had further shaped the outcome for the way it had guided the possession of the Elder Wand into a pathway that meant only Harry had been able to wield it.

Two relatively tiny acts of love, made monumental by the circumstances.

Narcissa cleared her throat, glancing at Lucius. He met her gaze with a coolly inquisitive expression, a single brow lifting, inviting her to share. Narcissa firmed her lips, blinking twice in rapid succession until her eyes were clear again, and then looked at Draco, mouth opening but then...her lips pressed together again as she swallowed visibly.

Narcissa was a strong woman, proud and entitled and refined. But the confession seemed more than she could bear.

“Would you like me to tell them?” Hermione offered softly.

She felt Draco’s attention fall to her and though she wanted to hold his hand so badly she almost raised hers to reach for him, she didn’t want to disturb the tentative truce built

between them all. So she kept herself still, and didn't look away from his mother's shining eyes. Narcissa was motionless for a moment, and then nodded.

It wasn't easy for Hermione to voice, either, but she'd had plenty of practice speaking about hard things – about things that *mattered* – and so forced the explanation out as steadily and evenly as she could.

“When Harry fell,” she began, then had to pause as a shot of emotion tingled painfully behind her eyes and nose. She sniffed hard, dispelling it. *Harry is alive*, she reminded herself fiercely. *He is alive*.

“When Harry fell,” she said, steadier this time, “and was presumed dead, your mother was sent to confirm it. It was clear that Harry was still alive but rather than call out the truth and sentence him to another Avada or, really, anything that Volde—” She remembered Lucius's request of Draco and corrected herself. “That You-Know-Who wanted, she instead asked if Harry had seen you.” Emotion swelled again but Hermione forced it to a simmer. “To know if you were still alive.”

Narcissa had silent tears making tracks down her face but her expression was still controlled, accepting Hermione's retelling of the events. Hermione finally let herself look at Draco.

“When Harry indicated that you were alright, your mother told You-Know-Who that Harry was dead to spare him another killing curse. That meant he got brought back to the castle which, ultimately, resulted in the defeat of You-Know-Who once and for all. It could have been over, there in the forest. But instead, your mother risked her life, and chose to betray You-Know-Who, just to know if you were alright.”

There was a slight furrow between Draco's brows as he absorbed her words. His eyes held hers for another moment and then slid to his mother, taking in her rigid posture and the tear tracks drying on her cheeks; the well of emotions barely held below the surface. At his eye contact, Narcissa pressed her lips together, another tear foraging a path down her cheek. At the sight, Draco's shoulders dropped.

“Mum?” His voice cracked on the word, and at the sound, Narcissa heaved a shuddering breath, her veneer finally breaking on a singular, broken sob.

Draco stood up immediately, striding around the table's corner to lay a hand on her shoulder, squeezing. Narcissa covered his hand with hers, leaning her cheek against his wrist.

“Draco,” she tried, but her voice was too tearful to enunciate clearly and so she simply pressed a kiss to his skin.

“You lied to him?” Draco dropped down to level his gaze with hers. “You lied to his face, just to know if I was alright?” His expression was both amazed and distraught. “*Mum*, he would have killed you if he knew.”

“You're my heart, Draco,” she murmured, stroking her hand over his cheek. “I had to know.”



"I was just at the castle." Draco's words were plaintive, worried for her even a year after the event had transpired. "You would have found me soon."

Beside Hermione, Lucius shifted in his chair. She subtly cut her eyes to him, curious of his reaction to his wife having deceived his former master and allowed the other side to win. He was looking at Narcissa like he'd never seen her before, expression open and awed, and as Hermione watched, he sat forward in his chair, holding his palm out to his wife.

"Darling," he murmured, low and earnest, and Narcissa sniffed wetly, raising her head from Draco's wrist to reach for Lucius, clutching his proffered hand fiercely in her own.

"I had to know," she insisted and Lucius nodded understandingly.

"I know." His hand tightened, thumb stroking the back of her hand. "I know, darling."

It was a sight Hermione had borne witness to more times than felt fair: a family, clinging to one another over the wreckage of the past, made stronger by facing it together.

She was happy for them – for Draco, especially – but it still stung slightly, knowing it wasn't a reality she'd found for herself yet.

Draco's gaze slid to her from where he was still squatted down beside Narcissa's chair. She offered him a small smile, which he returned before pressing a kiss to his mother's cheek before rising. His reanimation brought Narcissa's gaze from Lucius back to Hermione, and she pinked slightly at the high points of her cheeks.

"I apologize," she said, letting go of Lucius's hand to conjure a handkerchief. "I didn't intend for our first meeting to be so...emotionally charged."

Draco laughed softly as he regained his seat. "Didn't you?"

She clucked her tongue, shooting him a glance tinged with amusement. Draco smirked but when his hand found Hermione's knee under the table, it was trembling. She closed her fingers around his, squeezing softly, and watched his throat bob as he cast his eyes down, pretending to check the level of his tea.

"Please don't apologize," she told Narcissa, stroking her thumb over Draco's knuckles. He seemed determined to hold it together in front of his parents, and so she hoped her touch was grounding. "To be honest, this is the most I've ever empathized with you. It's probably the best first meeting we could've hoped for."

Lucius cleared his throat but simply sipped his tea, something Narcissa marked with a downward flick of her lashes.

"I suppose that's true," Narcissa allowed. She shifted once on her chair, crossing her ankles and leveling her shoulders. The refined Lady of the Manor once again. "So. My son tells me he's in love with you."

"Mum," Draco sighed, though fondly. "Must you?"

Narcissa raised a groomed brow, the act directed to Draco despite her gaze not leaving Hermione's.

"He is," Hermione agreed easily. "And I love him. *Very* much."

Lucius made a low sound and Draco's fingers twitched under hers. But when the cool grey eyes slid from his son to her, Hermione didn't see any of the usual malice in them.

"It's not the first time a Malfoy has dipped his toes outside the Pureblood pool," he said, voice mild. "The Black family was much more regimented about what it meant to be a Pureblood, but their ways are constrained and often short-sighted. Draco knows his family history, but I suspect you're unfamiliar with our genealogy...?"

It seemed strange to be feigning ignorance in order for Lucius Malfoy to explain something to her, but then again she was sitting in Malfoy Manor having *tea*.

And even *that* was hardly the strangest thing she'd ever done.

So she shook her head politely, even as she pictured the Black Family Tapestry in vivid detail. It was true she knew nothing of the Malfoy line, and though she'd thought she'd live her whole life quite happy of her ignorance, she now found herself begrudgingly interested.

As Lucius leaned back, beginning his recounting of the earliest Malfoys and their machinations amid the Muggle Royal families, Hermione worked her fingers between Draco's. He tucked his foot back behind her ankle, thumb stroking her knuckles in a lazy back-and-forth, seemingly content to be sitting beside her while his ex-Death Eater father made a case for why their love wasn't, perhaps, the worst fucking thing in the world.

## Chapter End Notes

Draco's bedroom debauchery coming up next 🍷

In the meantime, if you're interested in a further peek at Lucius and Narcissa in this universe, I have a one-shot set in Draco's second year: [Darling](#).

Thanks for reading! I appreciate every single one of you 🥺💖

Find me on [Twitter](#) (where I'm most active) and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

## Chapter 43: “You want to defile me,” he murmured, and she couldn’t help but grin.

### Chapter Notes

Another chapter, another set of new tags. For those keeping score at home, we are about two(?) chapters away from Draco's birthday so, you know, gotta work him up to his pegging debut 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

They were excused an hour later when, as Lucius paused to take a sip of tea between the 19th and 20th centuries, Narcissa interjected smoothly to inquire whether Draco had shown Hermione the rose garden yet.

They took the opening, Draco standing to press a kiss to Narcissa’s cheek and give his father a singular - though amicable - nod.

The rose garden was easily accessible through a glass-paned door at the edge of the room, but Draco made no attempt to conceal the direction he led her, fingers entwined with hers as he took her back into the house. It was only half past five, but neither of his parents made any comment about seeing them at dinner. It might have embarrassed her had she cared, but her focus was wholly on getting Draco alone. To debrief, or decompress, or just simply not be under scrutiny.

Despite their mutual wariness over meeting with his parents, the conversation had stayed civil, albeit focused on a level of detail surrounding the Malfoy family that even Hermione found excessive. She was cognizant, however, that Lucius's monologue implied a degree of acceptance that she hadn't anticipated: if she was being taught Malfoy history, it seemed she was being subtly included under the banner of 'people who should care about Malfoy family history'. She didn't take it lightly.

There was a lingering tension in Draco as they climbed the broad staircase and as soon as they were alone in the upstairs hallway, he pulled them to a stop, tugged her to his chest, and dropped his face to the crook of her neck.

“Thank you,” he sighed, arms winding around her waist.

She wrapped hers around his shoulders, reflexively palming the back of his neck to keep him close. “For what?”

“It’s been awful here. Tip-toeing around my anger at him. Feeling guilt from her. We don’t talk about it all, not properly, and you just...” He hugged her closer. “Helped. You defended me, and exalted mum, and managed dad so well. They’re not even your family, but you cared enough to help.”

He had made plenty of overt references to their future today alone, and she wanted to reciprocate. To let him know that she was in it with him, fully.

“One day they might be,” she whispered.

Draco made a sound halfway between a scoff and a sob, muffled against her skin.

“Don’t deserve you,” he mumbled.

“Untrue.” She stroked her fingers down the back of his neck in a gentle caress, endeavoring not to catch the eye of any of the portraits silently observing them. They looked placid enough at the moment but she wasn’t keen to provoke them, not while Draco needed a moment to himself.

He took a few shuddery breaths in the safety of her shoulder, working through what she suspected was a combination of lingering fear and the bittersweet agony of years-late relief, knowing his mother had put her life on the line for him; knowing that she was alright. Her heart ached for him and though her skin felt humid from his breaths, it didn’t seem damp from tears. Even so, she didn’t rush him.

After a moment, he exhaled more steadily and turned his face into her neck, lips brushing her skin, soft and reverent.

“I didn’t get a chance to say it myself downstairs but...I’m so deeply in love with you. Just so you know.”

It dragged a little sound of raw emotion from her and she tugged him up so she could press it to his mouth, sharing it with him.

“Me too,” she told him between slow, lingering kisses. “So much.”

“Oh, I know.” Her lips met his teeth on her next press, his smile was so broad. “You said it to my parents. Clear as day and unashamed.”

She clicked her tongue, drawing back enough to eye him. “Of course I did. There’s no place for shame between us, Draco. And anyone who thinks otherwise is close-minded and incorrect.”

He raised a brow, his grin slipping up into a smirk at her little speech. “I love it when you’re protective.”

She thought of the way he’d kept his body close to hers, even while seated. “Ditto.”

“Oh yeah?” He watched the shift in her body language as it slid from one sort of affectionate to another. “Excellent. Because to be honest, I wouldn’t stop even if you hated it.”

She gave him a flat look and he capitulated with a lazy eye roll. “Fine. Of course I’d stop if you didn’t like it. But I’d sulk about it, and still keep an eye on you *covertly*.”

“Incorrigible,” she accused.

“In *love*,” he countered.

“Mm.” She inhaled slowly, raking her fingers through his hair in a slow glide. “So do you have a massive, fancy bathtub or what?”

He snorted at the non-sequitur. “As a matter of fact, I do. Why? Want to have a bath?”

“As a matter of fact, I do,” she parroted.

He wound his arms about her lower back, tugging her to him and peering down at her. “You’re playful this evening.”

“I am,” she agreed. “And I’m relieved about how that went, which I think is just feeding into my inherent joy of succeeding.”

He smiled down at her. “I’m relieved too. Though I could have done without a thorough recounting of my entire family line.”

She clicked her tongue. “Now, now, Draco,” she reprimanded with a faux-stern expression. “That’s your *legacy*. You should be *proud* to—*eeek!*”

He swept her legs out from under her, hauling her up into his arms and turning her words into a little shriek.

“Hush,” he told her, walking them down the hall and to a door on the left. “I don’t want to hear another word about it for...at least a week. Maybe two.”

“Fine with me,” she agreed, then gasped as he opened the door with a bump of his hip and she took in their surroundings. “This is your *bedroom*? My entire *house* could fit in here!”

He set her down with a dry laugh. “Don’t say that around mum. She’ll be seriously concerned that you were neglected as a child.”

She ignored him, walking to the center of the massive room and turning in a circle, taking in the huge four-poster bed, the enormous fireplace, the full-sized sofa and coordinating arm chairs. The styling was more-or-less what she’d expected – dark woods, luxe bedding, heavy damask drapes – but she could see little pockets of Draco’s influence here and there. He let her wander around his space without comment, though she could feel his eyes trailing her as she inspected the framed pictures on a low table beside the windows, and as she smoothed a hand over the back of the velveteen sofa.

A half-open door beside the fireplace drew her eye, so she rounded the back of the sofa to snoop. She’d only just peeked into the room, barely catching a glimpse of what was inside, before she jerked her head back, looking around to find Draco and then pointing behind her.

“What’s this?” she demanded.

He grinned from where he was leaned against a bedpost, arms and ankles crossed in a pose that suggested he’d been waiting for her to discover his secret.

“Oh that?” he said casually, and then laughed at her open-mouthed affront.

“You have a *library* attached to your—*Draco*, why didn’t you—” She turned back to the private library, at all the spines begging to be stroked and tugged out and read, and muffled a high-pitched sound of pure want behind her lips.

She sensed his approach a moment before she felt it, his arms wrapping around her to pull her back against his chest.

“Maybe you’d let me fuck you in *this* library, hmm?” he mused.

“God.” She reached overhead, searching for his hair, her favorite anchor. “Absolutely. I’m seething with envy.”

“Bodes well for me.” He leaned down to kiss her cheek. “Now come on. Have a bath with me first.”

She let him walk her backwards, finally dragging her eyes away from the glinting gold of the embossed spines to turn in his arms. The books would be there when they were done, she reminded herself. And she had *plans* for him.

His en-suite was through a door to the right of his bed, the floors the same onyx tile that decorated so much of the manor, broken up by a massive sunken tub that dominated the entire back corner. It was a large bathroom, as she’d expected, but didn’t feel cavernous or cold. The picture window above the bath showcased the sweeping grounds and let in enough natural light to set the silver fixtures gleaming, the mirrors and fully-glass shower breaking up the dark green of the walls.

The bath was already half-filled with steaming, sweetly-scented water. She turned to him, brows raised in surprise.

“I told it to start filling right after you mentioned it,” he told her smugly, intuiting her question.

Her brows knit. “When? I didn’t see you draw your wand, and your hands were on me.”

He trilled his fingers in the air. “Did I not mention? Here, in my god-awful birthright, I can do family magic *wandlessly*.”

She tried to hide her reaction but he was looking for it and therefore saw the flash of raw desire across her features. He hummed a knowing sound and then began unbuttoning his shirt.

“Damnit,” she sighed, watching his hands steadily descend down the placket. “I thought I’d be able to hold off until we got in bed.”

He laughed, eyes flicking up to hers from where they'd dropped to untuck the tails of his shirt. "Baby, you can have me anytime you want. In the bath. After. Whenever."

"I would, except that I shagged you this morning," she reminded him pointedly. "And I'm going to make you come all over that big bed out there. Could you really manage *two* more?"

It was his turn to feign affront. "Slander! In my own home. Wait 'til my—"

"*Don't* you dare," she laughed, closing the distance between them to clap her palm over his mouth. He grinned under her hand, eyes crinkling with amusement, then kissed her palm. She lowered it, eyes narrowed, but he just smirked at her and began to work his trousers open.

"Fine, Granger. It's your show. Do what you want with me."

"Oh, I plan to." She wagged her brows at him playfully as she got to work stripping her clothes off. She was down to her knickers, bra in the middle of being unclasped, when a thought occurred to her.

"Your house-elves won't pop in, will they? While I'm naked?"

He shook his head. "I've sealed the room. It's just us." And then his mouth quirked up. "Your exhibitionist streak doesn't extend to being caught in the act?"

She rolled her eyes. "Not by unsuspecting, innocent creatures."

He chuckled then stepped forward to palm her bum, hands sliding under her knickers for a squeeze before he pushed the material down her thighs. "Subtle qualifier there, Granger. That's very interesting."

She tsked but as always, his proximity had sent a rush of heat through her, warmth pooling between her legs and her nipples tightening when they brushed just-barely against his bare chest. He looked so good, standing in the diffuse light, his pale features contrasting brilliantly with the dark walls and floors, his hair already a bit mussed from her repeated tugging at it.

The circumstances suddenly reminded her of the first time they'd shared such a massive tub, all those months ago in the Prefect's bathroom, when he'd edged her half to death. Her plan, partly formed, finally solidified. She smiled to herself, leaning up to peck a single kiss to his lips before pulling back and stepping out of her knickers.

He offered her a hand as she stepped over the rim and down into the water then followed her in, settling himself against the side and making space for her to lean back against him, her body tucked between his legs. He wrapped his arms around her again and she leaned her head back against his shoulder, eyes sliding to the window and first hints of the sun making its descent.

"It must have been quite a transition, to go from all this opulence to sharing a room underground at Hogwarts," she remarked.

Draco made a dry sound of amusement. "You should have seen the letters I wrote to mum about it in First year."

“Ah, of course. How typical of you.”

“Mm.” His hands stoked idly over her torso, cheek leaning against her temple. “It’s a good thing I finally grew out of my dramatic side.”

She snorted. “Ummm…”

“Further slander,” he tutted. “What’ll I do with you, hmm?”

“I’d ask myself the same thing, but I already know.”

“Oh?” His touch shifted from idle to purposeful, trailing up to find her breasts. “And what’ll you do with me?”

“You said I could have you in the bath and after.” She pressed into his palms as he cupped her, squeezing gently and stroking his thumbs down the plush swells of her tits. “But I don’t want you to come until after.”

He sighed, like he’d half expected it, and plucked at her nipples. “Do you get to come at least?”

“Nope.” She wiggled, feeling the solid length of his cock pressed against her back. He tilted his hips forward, head falling back against the edge of the tub.

“So sexy,” he groaned softly, cupping her tits again.

She undulated her body languidly, barely disturbing the surface of the water, and relished the way she could feel his cock thickening further against her spine. She lifted her hips a few moments later, arching slightly to make her request clear. He made a sound of despair in his throat but obliged her, sliding down further under her and wedging a hand between them to align his cock.

*"Lubricus,"* he murmured and she felt the tell-tale wetness inside herself.

"Should I be concerned that lubrication spells fall under the category of family magic?" she said wryly, sinking down on him slowly.

He grunted a sound of amusement, hands finding her hips to help her settle on him. "It doesn't. I've just been practicing that one."

"Have you indeed," she mused, rocking once to confirm he was deep and then leaning back against his chest, luxuriating in being so closely connected to him. By contrast, he seemed less emotionally affected and more physically charged, hips rocking up hopefully when all she did was rest against him.

“Don’t torture yourself,” she advised mildly.

His hand slid down to find her clit, rubbing once and then applying firm pressure. She squeezed her walls around him as tightly as she could in rebuttal and he grunted.



“Fuck.”

“Not yet. Wait for bed.” She rocked over him once and he banded his arm around her middle, holding her still and dipping his face toward her.

“Want me to wash your hair?” he murmured, lips brushing her ear. Goosebumps prickled, even under the hot water.

“Not this time,” she managed. She didn’t want her hair to be damp for what she had planned, nor waste the time drying it.

“Okay.” He kissed the shell of her ear. “Then bath time is over.”

She squeaked as he lifted her off him, only the buoyancy of the water stopping her from falling forward onto her knees. He stood, water sluicing and getting all over the place, then reached down to haul her up.

“*Draco*,” she laughed, clinging to him as he stepped over the rim and then set her down on the plush mat.

“Take me to bed,” he told her, crowding her space. “If that’s where I’m allowed to make you come, then take me to bed.”

She reached for his cock but he swatted her hand away, forehead dropping to hover just above hers, eyes fixed on her. It made her wild, his denying her attempt to touch him, and so she raised up to close the distance between them, foreheads first and then noses, and then mouths. He deepened the kiss instantly, tongue demanding entry and then gliding against hers. He always seemed especially desperate for her after an emotional purging, the timbre of his groans lower and the grip of his hands firmer.

She pictured what she had in store for him — the intimacy of it, the newness for them both — and felt her pulse spike, a flare of desire tingling down her spine to throb urgently between her legs.

With a firm push against his chest, she began walking him backward toward his bedroom. He understood immediately, reaching down to heave her up around his hips, palms squeezing under the tops of her thighs. She coiled her legs around his waist and her arms around his shoulders, working kisses down his cheek to the hinge of his jaw while he carried her to his bed.

She didn’t loosen her hold when he leaned to set her down and so he collapsed down with her, catching himself on his hands.

“Oh your back,” she panted, finally pulling her lips off his skin.

He rolled onto his back beside her without fuss, cock swaying with the motion and hands reaching to help her over him. It was her turn to swat at him, evading his hands to settle between his thighs instead, palms gliding up to press on his pelvis, bracketing his cock.

She collected saliva on her tongue then lowered down to drag it slowly up the underside. It jerked against her mouth and he swore brokenly. She peered up at him, suddenly curious.

“How many girls have you slept with here?”

His hands were tangled in his hair, eyes on her mouth where it hovered just above his cock. “What? I...I don’t know.”

“You don’t know?” She feigned a pout. “Were they not very memorable?”

“No, I—” He began, then groaned when she sucked the tip into her mouth. She let him go with a pop, hand wrapping around his shaft before it thwacked against his abdomen.

“Hm?”

Draco groaned. “I don’t want to talk about them right now. I just want you. So, so badly.”

“I know.” She gave him a languid stroke. “You’re so, *so* hard.”

His hips bucked up into her hand but she loosened her grip, fingertips running up the length of his shaft instead of her tight fist. He groaned again, more plaintively.

“Do you remember what I wanted to do to you here?” she asked, gradually tightening her grip around him again. He kept his hips still, though she could feel the tension in him at the restraint.

His eyes slid from her hand to her face.

“You want to defile me,” he murmured, and she couldn’t help but grin.

“That’s right.” She licked another soft line up the underside, reveling in the way the vein throbbed under her tongue. “Does that still sound nice?”

“*Yes.*”

She laughed against his cock. “Yeah? You want my mouth on you?”

“That’s never not the case.”

She kissed the tip of his cock, grinning up at him. “I know. Now, is there anywhere you *don’t* want my mouth?”

“No,” he answered without hesitation. “I want it everywhere.”

“Greedy.” She swirled her tongue around the ridge, flicking it over his slit.

“Not denying it.” His hips lifted to chase her tongue, groaning when she sat tall. “Fuck, baby. You gonna tease me more?”

“No,” she said, smirking down at him. “I’m going to lick you all over. That sounds like a proper defiling, doesn’t it?”

“Sounds like a proper teasing,” he corrected.

“Mm.” She patted the side of his hip in a gesture to flip over. “That’s because you haven’t considered where I’m going to lick you.”

His cheeks flushed pink in an instant. “*Granger.*”

“Roll over,” she encouraged, patting him again and pinning her tongue between her teeth at his slightly scandalized expression. “Then up onto your knees.”

“Jesus Christ,” he mumbled, but he rolled onto his front.

She took a moment to admire the flexing of his arse as he got himself comfortable, a hand darting down to adjust himself before stacking under the other where it supported his cheek. She could still see his blush from the way his head was turned, a sight that never failed to fill her with a heady sort of arousal.

His arse was firm under her hands as she squeezed, watching with satisfaction at the way her touch left a lingering red mark against his pale skin, the blood close to the surface from the bath and his arousal.

“Up now,” she reminded him and slid her hands under his hips to encourage them up.

He complied, shifting onto his knees and pressing his bum against her stomach in the process. She ran a hand over his back, tracing the dip of his spine where it was bordered by two ridges of muscle before sweeping outward just below his shoulder blades and then making the gradual journey down, keeping her body flush against him as her fingers trailed over the sides of his arse and down the backs of his thighs. She knew the position was probably the most vulnerable one he’d ever put himself in so wanted to ease him into it before lowering down. As her fingers skimmed back up, he exhaled an almost-plaintive sound.

“Feeling teased still?” she asked through a smile.

“You’re so sexy when you take the lead,” he complained, side-eyeing her from where he still had his cheek resting on his overlapped hands. “So fucking hot.”

“Why do you sound frustrated by that?” she asked, amused.

“Because I want to throw you down and have *my* way with you. But I know whatever you’re about to do to me is going to be…” He licked his lips, darting another glance back at her. “I wanna feel it.”

“Yeah?” She trailed her fingers up the inside of his thighs, eyes on face. “You want to feel my tongue here?” She grazed her fingertips over his sac, and then higher to the soft swell of skin above them.

“Mhm.” His reply was a low, strained hum.

She carried on upward, stroking her forefinger lightly around his rim. “And here?”

He turned his face into the bedding, mumbling something incoherent. She rolled her lips in to try and control the absolutely manic grin she had on her face, her heart pounding with excitement at the sight of him already losing his mind. At the trust he had in her.

She hummed with acknowledgement. "Okay, Draco. Stay just like this." She lowered herself down onto her stomach behind him, propped up on her forearms.

In this position, she could see where his cock hung heavily between his legs, the tip flushed pink and trying to defy gravity. As much as her mouth watered at the sight, she was determined to put her tongue to better use first, so started him off easy with a few open-mouthed kisses to the back of his thigh, the faint blonde hair soft under her lips and tongue. With a leisurely pace, her tongue ascended, following the line of his thigh up and in. He shifted his weight on his knees, leaning into her touch, and she rewarded him with a slow lick across his perineum.

He groaned into the bedding again, and so she repeated it, tongue pressing and gliding side to side before drifting down to pay attention to his sac, wetting it with long licks before sucking one of his balls into her mouth.

"*Fuuuck*," he groaned.

"Feel good?" She flicked her tongue over to the other, giving it an open-mouthed, sucking kiss.

"Yeah." His voice was hoarse, muffled.

She hummed, pleased, and worked her kisses up to suck another wet mark just above his balls before diverting to kiss over the muscle of his arse, avoiding his tight pink pucker for now. He huffed a low sound when she bit his bum, just hard enough to leave a faint imprint of her teeth.

"Hermione," he groaned, face still buried in the bedding.

"You have such a nice arse," she told him, kissing her bite. "I've wanted to do that for ages."

The muscle flexed under her lips as his hips twitched. She wanted to tease him for being impatient but instead dragged her tongue slowly to the cleft of his arse, letting saliva pool on her tongue and begin to drip down.

"Still good?" she inquired softly, leaning back to watch her spit turn him glossy, feeling more gathering on her tongue at the sight.

He hummed a low sound of confirmation, shifting on the bed again. She brought her hand up to cup his balls, giving him a little squeeze and relishing the way it turned his hum deeper and slightly strained.

She let go, leaning back in to run her tongue down the path she'd made, drawing off just barely when she reached his rim, the tip of her tongue just barely brushing it.

"You want my tongue here?" she murmured, flicking a broad circle around him.

“Mm,” he hummed, pushing back on her. She leaned back, not letting him direct her.

“Yes? You want me to?”

He made a sound somewhere between a whine and a scoff. “D’you want me to beg for it?”

It sent a thrill through her, electric and heady. She nipped at the firm muscle of his cheek again and he grunted in surprise.

“Yes,” she decided. “Beg me for it, Draco.”

He huffed a laugh. “God, you kill me,” he mumbled. “Can’t believe you.”

She hummed sympathetically, swirling her tongue slowly over his perineum, content to wait him out. He only lasted a few rotations before he swore under his breath.

“Fuck, *please*. Please, baby.”

She grinned, pressing a smiling kiss to his skin before pointing her tongue and dragging it up, pausing just below his rim. He was holding his breath, she could tell, and when she kept her tongue just south of where he wanted it, he let it out in a shaky exhale.

“Fucking Christ, I need to say it?”

“Mhm.” She was having altogether too much fun teasing him, and was making herself drip with arousal in the process.

He heaved an inhale and she dropped her head to peek between his legs, looking up the length of his body in time to see him send both hands over the back of his head into his hair. “Lick my arse, baby,” he mumbled. “Wanna feel your tongue on me.”

“Okay, Draco,” she purred.

She took the scenic route, just for fun, dragging her tongue wetly up his sac, over the swell of soft skin, and then across his rim, adding pressure as she went. He groaned a pathetic sound and she felt the ring of muscle pulse under her tongue. It made her arousal almost unbearable, and so she did it again and again, tonguing at him like he did at her cunt.

He was groaning into the bedding, muttering words that didn’t sound entirely English. There was nothing like the sound of his pleasure, she thought dazedly. Nothing got her hotter.

The ache between her legs was insistent, bordering on painful, and so she recalibrated her plans. With a final lick over his rim and brief suckling-kiss just below, she sat back, inspecting her work. His arse was glossy with her spit, his cock almost purple at the tip, a string of pre-cum dripping nearly to the bedding.

“Could you come from that?” she asked, eyeing his cock. Draco was panting; she could see his torso flexing with each circuit of his breath.

“Felt like it,” he breathed. “I fucking need to. God, you’re so sexy. You just—” He shoved his face into the sheets.

She considered touching his cock, purely to see if he’d come from a single stroke, but stuck to her plan, scooting up on her knees to come beside him.

“Up for a moment,” she said, stroking a hand down his back.

He pushed himself up, face as flushed as his cock, and she bit her lip at the sight of him looking so thoroughly debauched. His eyes raked over her body, his cock bobbing on a hard flex as his eyes skimmed all the bare skin on display.

She wanted him inside her – was aching for it – but didn’t want to lose the momentum she’d found, so contented herself with a slow stroke of her hand down his heaving abdomen but lifting it away before she encountered his cock. He groaned, head tilting back to the ceiling, and she pressed a sloppy kiss to his throat before laying on her back, head between his legs. He widened his stance for her, face dropping to watch, eyes hungry on her naked body under him.

“Keep your tongue on my clit,” she told him and delighted in the sight of his balls lifting right above her eyes.

He dropped down over her onto his forearms, hands curling under her thighs to haul them wide as he licked through her center with feral eagerness. Her walls fluttered hard at the pleasure of his broad tongue, and when he followed her instructions to swirl around and around and around her clit, she couldn’t hold her moan. Above her, his cock flexed again, reminding her of her mission.

His shaft was solid in her hand, and when she angled him down to lick over the tip, he caught up with her intention instantly, hips lowering so that she could take him into her mouth. The first suck around his cock had salt bursting over her tongue, his groan rumbling against her clit, and the second had his hips bucking forward, revealing his primal need to fuck into something.

She moaned, stretching her tongue long and working her hand up between his legs, massaging his balls and pressing her fingers just above, encouraging him onward. He didn’t hesitate, drawing his cock out only to slide himself back into her mouth, holding the depth she’d found and picking up the pace as he alternately sucked and panted on her clit.

She kept firm pressure over his taint, rubbing her fingertips and cupping his balls in her palm, feeling the way they were already tight and ready to flood his cock with cum. She slid her fingers higher so her middle could press on his rim, and his thighs clenched, pushing back into the touch. He was still slick from her saliva and so it only took a bit of pressure for her finger to slide inside him. The tight muscle contracted around her, something she counteracted with an insistent wiggle of her finger.

He moaned into her cunt, breaking off to pant against her inner thigh.

“Gonna come,” he warned, voice strained. “Fuck, that’s gonna make me come.”

She hummed around his cock, sucking languidly as she worked her finger deeper, crooking it just so. His fingers dug into her thighs, the barely-there stubble on his jaw scraping along the sensitive skin as he turned his face back to bury his tongue inside her.

He was going to smother himself in her cunt while he came on her finger and down her throat. The thought had her hips arching up against his face, her throat contracting around the tip of his cock when it slid past her gag. His orgasm hit a moment later, cock pulsing in her mouth as he spilled down her throat, arse bearing down hard around her finger, balls tightening under her hand. He moaned brokenly between her legs and she shuddered under him, her own pleasure building hotly but not quite enough to break.

He gave her another few rocks of his hips then stilled, sliding himself free and rolling to the side, then onto his back, head to toe with her. He tossed his hands over head, catching his breath for a moment, and then brought one arm down to drape warmly up the length of her thigh, hand resting over her mound.

“Jesus fucking Christ, Hermione,” he panted, sounding dazed. “I think I nearly blacked out.”

She grinned, catching her own breath and using the side of her thumb to wipe her chin clean of saliva. “Good.”

He eyed her for a moment then exhaled, deep and long, lips curving into a satisfied smile. “So good. How on earth did you come up with that?”

She nudged her foot against his shoulder, stroking him with the top of her toes and tilting her hips up under his hand. “I spend quite a bit of time thinking about things I want to do to you...turns out, I have a good imagination.”

She decided not to mention the influence of her hedonistic little penpal, though she’d happily divulge Theo’s advice after they’d completely finished.

He smirked. “I’ll say.” His fingers traced lazy patterns right above her clit, the pressure satisfying and teasing all at once. “Did you come?”

She squirmed under his hand. “Not yet.”

He hummed, stretching his thumb down to rub through her center, pinning her clit between his two middle fingers in a light pinch that had pleasure sparking through her, then rotating his wrist so he could drag his thumb over her clit and slide his fingers inside her. He buried them easily, her body desperate to be filled.

His eyes rose to meet hers, the grey a thin ring. “Fuck. Wish I was here.”

She made a soft sound of agreement, rocking down on his fingers. “As soon as you can – yes, please.”

He rolled up onto his side, working his lower arm under her leg and holding her thigh to his chest with his top hand. She could feel his bicep flexing under her leg as his fingers

continued pumping into her, the pads curled up to rub her front wall, not breaking his gaze from hers.

“So sexy, baby,” he murmured, brushing his lips over her knee and circling his thumb softly over her clit in cadence with his thrusts. “You really want me inside you?”

Her eyes drifted closed, leaning into the warmth of his body and the confident way he was touching her, the pleasure coiling more and more with every stroke. He hummed a contented sound, lips grazing her leg again, not needing a verbal answer to his question when her body was confessing everything, just like it always did.

“Want to come like this?” he asked, dotting kisses down to her shin as his other hand stroked warmly up and down her inner thigh, fingers languid but intentional inside her. “Or can I finish what you started?”

If that meant his tongue back on her, then she was all too keen. “Tongue,” she said. “Yes.”

He chuckled, sharing his smile with her knee before slowly withdrawing his fingers, rubbing the wet pads over her clit before moving away. “Roll over then, baby.”

She opened her eyes, finding him sitting up beside her, expression a mix of hungry and playful that sent a rush of affection through her. The more she learned about him, the more she realized that the person she'd thought she'd known was only a thin slice of his personality. She knew now that Draco Malfoy came from a family who cherished him; that he actually did know how to respect people; that he was intelligent and thoughtful and playful and loving and quite steadily becoming her favorite person in the entire world.

It was like tilting a prism into a sunbeam and finally finding the angle that made rainbows refract. Now that she'd seen this side of him, he was full-color.

He clucked his tongue, pulling her from her musings. “Do I need to flip you myself?”

The warm affection melted swiftly back to heated arousal. She bit her lip and he hummed once, then reached for her, hands strong and confident, one curling around her thigh and the other sinking into her hair, instantly making a fist. She gasped, goosebumps pricking, and then muffled a little shriek when he used his grip to deftly flip her onto her stomach, following her over.

“Up on your knees now,” he murmured into her neck, then nipped gently at the sensitive spot before drawing back and helping her hips up.

*Oh.* Finish what she'd started indeed.

She arched her back, breasts pressed into his bedspread and hips lifting to put herself at his disposal. He gave her an abbreviated swat for it, palm rubbing a warm circle over her cheek immediately after.

“God,” he groaned, squeezing her in a way she could feel was putting her on display.

“There's something about seeing you like this that just...” He trailed off, inhaling deeply. “I



want to lick you until I'm hard again. Keep you riding the edge until I can feel you squeeze on me."

The prospect had her clenching around nothing, and she couldn't hold the desperate little sound that fought its way up her throat.

He breathed a laugh. "Thought you'd like that. Want to see if you can last? I'm sure it won't take me long."

It sounded doable, until he let a warm string of spit glide down the cleft of her arse, and she knew, with startling acuity, that it would be impossible to keep herself from coming. Her core throbbed as his saliva slid over her clit, hyper-sensitive from how close he'd gotten only minutes before and desperately aroused by the knowledge that he had his eyes on her.

When he chased the drip with the tip of his tongue, lingering to swirl languidly over her rim, she pulled in a quick inhale through her teeth. She was sure he'd licked over her arse before in passing – the passionate way he always ate at her didn't exactly facilitate him staying to a designated area – but knowing his intention now sent a shudder through her.

His tongue stroked lower, the pad of muscle flattening so it spanned her entrance, the tip just barely grazing her clit. She moaned, pressing back into the touch, rocking herself on him. He leaned into it, sweeping his tongue in a slow side-to-side that had her eyes fluttering shut.

"Oh god," she moaned, pressing her forehead to the bed. "Fuck, that's so good."

He made an affirmative sound, rubbing over her once more before licking back up to her arse. He braced one hand on a cheek, holding her open to his mouth while the other hand trailed up her inner thigh. She squirmed reflexively at the light tickle, and when the shifting caused his tongue to glide over all the heightened nerves, the tip just barely slipping inside her, she lost her battle.

"Fuck," she panted. "I can't– *Draco*–"

The next second, she had two thick fingers to clench on, his tongue insistent over her rim. Her orgasm throbbed through her, a deep ocean of pleasure he so easily tossed her into.

She sank down onto her belly, his fingers twisting inside her as his wrist rotated with the sudden drop. He leaned over her, kissing the swell of her bum then working his lips up the length of her back. He pressed his forehead to the top of her spine and exhaled slowly.

"I'm hard again, sweetheart," he murmured softly, voice low. "Need a break, or d'you still want me?"

A laugh bubbled up her chest, feeling so full of love and joy she thought she might actually cry over it if she wasn't careful. "What, already?" she teased, humor rich in her tone. "You mean you made me come on your fingers when I could've had cock?"

He nipped at her shoulder, sliding his hand out from between her legs to give her a proper, stinging spank. She choked on an inhale, arousal spiking.

“Don’t act like you didn’t enjoy yourself, baby,” he drawled. “It was those tight little squeezes around my fingers that got me hard again in the first place.”

He emphasized his point by reaching down to slap his cock lightly over her arse, the rippling sensation radiating heat through her. She lifted her bum into the weight of his erection, grinding upward.

“Now,” she answered. “I still want you now. Always.”

He hummed, using his knee to push her legs apart so he could straddle a thigh and position himself at her entrance.

“Then you’ll have me,” he murmured, and pushed forward until he was buried deep. “Always.”

## Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading! I know keeping up with WIPs takes a different sort of attention/energy, and so I'm beyond honored that so many folks come back each time 😊 Your comments and encouragement help keep the mental lights on, so to speak, so thank you again! 🍷

Find me on [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

# Chapter 44: “Relax, Draco,” she soothed, stroking in and out slowly.

## Chapter Notes

Hi friends!!!! I have missed this story SO MUCH but I'm all done with my fest pieces and am enthusiastically rededicated to these two.

I occasionally hear from readers that this is a comfort fic of theirs (the single greatest compliment, by the way - my heart swells every time I hear it 🥰💞) and I can relate! Stepping back into the universe is such a delight, and getting to write about their unhinged, easy love is such a joy. I really, really appreciate everyone who's stuck along for the ride, and for all the times you've shared with story with others. I don't have much free time in my life right now so it's incredibly motivating and validating to know that what I spend it on is enjoyable to other people, too.

IN. OTHER. NEWS.

This is it.

This is the chapter many of you have been (im)patiently begging for.

So let's all sing Draco a quick round of happy birthday and get right into it. 😊

(Obligatory: tags have been updated, check 'em if you like)

And oh yeah, obviously The Scene is Draco POV because I love you all very much 🥰

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

May turned over into June, the only fanfare the constant sounds of quills scratching and parchment unspooling and books being rapidly paged through. Exams were less than two weeks away, and those who were sitting O.W.L.s and N.E.W.T.s were focused on nothing else but making it through.

But even amid the pre-exam craze, Hermione found time for a little personal research and a few covert owls. Keeping her purchases out of Draco's notice was tricky, given that the Venn diagram of their days almost wholly overlapped. In the scant space she occupied outside his circle, she conducted her secret business.

He'd been on house arrest for his eighteenth birthday and though she rather wished she could keep him confined to her room for the entirety of his nineteenth, they had a full day of responsibilities to attend to. So, she'd decided to make every moment she could special for him, which meant a few mail orders and a bit of spellwork while he was sitting through Muggle Studies without her.

On the morning of his birthday, she woke Draco up with her mouth.

It was early still, not quite seven, but she'd wanted to pack as much celebration into the day as she could and, with a busy day ahead of them, every moment counted.

He was curled on his side facing her, face half smothered in his pillow as usual and blonde hair spilling messily across his forehead. His breathing was deep and even. Sound asleep.

Even if he woke, she knew he'd let her carry on. But she *also* knew he'd try to insert her pleasure into the equation and she wanted him to have something just for him, given to him just by her.

And so she took her time. Under the guise of snuggling against him, she carefully maneuvered him onto his back, gingerly repositioning herself between his splayed legs.

Keeping her touch on him constant so he didn't startle awake, she slipped her hands under his shirt to trace the shape of him, gradually working her hands over him in slow, soft motions, rucking up his undershirt and then working his boxer briefs down. Halfway over his foot, the material caught and he shifted with a soft grunt.

She froze.

After a few seconds of continued steady breathing, she judged him still asleep. With light hands, she ascended slowly up his legs, narrowing in on his cock where it rested, still mostly soft, against the cradle of his hips.

There was something decidedly sexy about watching and feeling his body respond to her while his mind was still quiet. The way her fingers over his pecs made him sigh, and around his nipples made him squirm. How her tongue across his navel made him shift and a squeeze around his strong thighs made him spread them.

She kissed down the soft skin of his abdomen, nuzzling at the pale golden hair that showed her the way to where he was steadily lengthening and stiffening.

Though tempted, she avoided his cock in favor of dotting kisses over his hips and thighs, casting her eyes up to watch his breathing. It caught in his chest as she mouthed over his balls, and when she sucked one into her mouth, his eyelids fluttered open.

He huffed a soft breath then lifted his head to peer down at her, eyes half-lidded with sleep and lips parted. She held his gaze as she finally gave the base of his cock a slow, wet lick.

"Happy birthday, Draco," she whispered, then dragged her tongue up his shaft.

*"Fuck."*

He stared down at her for a beat then drew in a soft breath and animated, hands sweeping her hair up into a messy handful at her crown. She hummed her thanks as she took him into her mouth, sucking languidly on the tip, undulating her tongue and savoring the way she could feel him hardening even further.

His grip was loose, purely helpful and not at all guiding, so she took her tongue on a journey down his cock and along to the join of his thigh. At her upward glance, he shifted his legs wider, huffing a soft sound of incredulity at her pleased little smile, gaze unfaltering as she flattened to her belly between his legs.

“Fuck,” he croaked again, voice still gravely from sleep. “Aren’t you lovely.”

She squeezed at the muscles of his legs then slipped her hands down to support her torso as she fulfilled her desire to nuzzle into the soft blonde hair at the base of his cock, this time with her mouth full. She sucked as best she could then pulled off to swirl her tongue around and around and around.

“You’re going to have a very good birthday,” she informed him, tone low but playful, kissing over the slit and then tracing the thick vein down. “I’m going to make sure of it.”

He licked his bottom lip into his mouth, nostrils flaring as she lifted his sac out of the way for her tongue to drift lower, teasing the sensitive, soft skin behind.

He watched her for as long as he could but eventually collapsed back, one hand still holding her hair back and the other rising to card through his own. She employed all the things she knew he loved, licking and sucking and stroking over every sensitive part of him she could reach as he groaned and twitched and flexed.

She’d made him come so many times that it was pure instinct to draw back right when he was close. And she knew she was wet — without needing to check — so didn’t waste a moment, simply rising up to straddle him, swiping at her mouth with the back of a wrist as she lined him up with her other hand and sank down in a single, smooth motion.

“Right here, Draco,” she told him, rising up only to drop straight back down. “Come right here, baby.”

The juddering flex of his hips indicated he wouldn’t be fighting her instruction, as did the way he gripped her hips, working her over his cock more urgently.

“Perfect,” he swore. “You’re so perfect.”

She ran her hands up his abs and over to his chest, eyes warm and fixed on his as his mouth parted on a breathy groan, brows knitting as he hit his crest.

“So are you.”

---

A flurry of owls greeted them at the breakfast table, tawny and regal slate grey and mossy, speckled brown, all bearing little wrapped parcels and neatly folded parchment. Hermione had observed his prior birthdays from across the Great Hall and knew that Draco was

accustomed to a full table of presents and cards, though in the former years, those from his friends had been delivered by hand rather than strigidae.

Another notable difference was that this year, the gifts from his closest friends trended toward understated intimacy rather than flashy displays of inherited wealth.

The (definitely Muggle) ceramic mug gifted by Greg had her brows furrowing, though if the way Draco received it was any indication, it held more meaning than she could derive. After unwrapping it, he cradled the vessel in both hands for a quiet moment, lips pressed into a flat smile as he stared down at the simple floral design. She almost asked what was special about it but the careful way he set it aside stayed her tongue for the time being.

The silver watch from Theo was a bit more moneyed, but again Hermione could tell there was more than met the eye to the gift. As Draco slipped it onto his wrist, fastening the metal clasp with a satisfying click, the hands whirled madly before settling in place. The accompanying letter was brief and after reading it, Draco hummed interestedly.

“He charmed it,” he told her, turning his wrist so she could see the three smaller dials set into the dark grey face. “Along with always showing the accurate Time, this dial tracks the solar and lunar phases, and this one charts the course of the Draco constellation, which, beyond being aggressively sentimental of him, I can use it to calculate the location of the associated constellations as well.”

Both things, she knew, were extremely useful for Potions and Arithmancy, Draco’s two favorite subjects.

He tapped the final dial. “And this one informs me of Theo’s whereabouts.”

The dial was ringed with little symbols which evidently meant something between the two men – a house, a tree, a squiggle of water, a heart, and worryingly, a skull amongst them.

He chuckled softly, peering down at it. “Look, he’s at home. What a surprise.”

It was an amazing gift, personal and functional, and frustratingly sexy on his wrist.

Hermione sighed dramatically. “He’s making me look bad. I’ll never be able to get you anything half as good as that.”

Draco’s smile was indulgent as he looked sidelong at her. “You’ve already given me everything I’ve ever wanted. Anything else is just a bonus.”

She clucked her tongue at his sentimentality and he smirked, folding Theo’s letter and opening the one from Blaise. His expression went quietly delighted as he read and though Hermione was, again, bubbling with curiosity, she restrained herself from asking what Blaise had written.

As she handed him an oblong parcel from Pansy, she caught sight of another letter below it. The script was immaculate, the ink a deep emerald, and so she hardly needed the Malfoy family wax seal on the back to intuit the sender.

“Here, this is from your mother.”

He’d been somewhat private with his previous letters so she was surprised when he gestured to her with his chin, tearing into Pansy’s gift.

“Go ahead, open it. I’m sure it’s the usual birthday message: that she loves me and is proud to be my mother, and so on.”

It warmed her to know that hearing he was loved and a source of pride was, at the very least, a yearly occurrence. Although after tea with his parents, she now expected it was quite a bit more regular than that. She snapped the wax seal with her thumbs then slid out the sheaf of thick, high quality parchment, unfolding it and skimming over the tiny, neat cursive.

“Mm, you’re right. You’re the light of her life, her greatest pride and joy...oh, and she’s included a letter of permission to get you into the family vault.”

She pinned the loose slip of parchment under her thumb as she carried on reading down, but before she’d gotten even two words further, the parchment was being hastily – though gently – snatched from her. She looked over, surprised, and saw his mouth had pressed into a self-conscious line as he read his mother’s letter. Her interest piqued, beyond her ability to hold back.

“Is free reign over your family vaults not a typical birthday event for you then?” she asked.

Draco cleared his throat, glancing at her before going back to the letter. “Not free reign, no. Not with what they used to safekeep there, before the Ministry inventoried...” He trailed off, eyes jumping from the closing lines back up to read the letter from the top. Inexplicably, his cheeks had flushed a light pink.

She desperately wanted to pry further, but when he cleared his throat again and tucked the letter and permission slip into the inner pocket of his robes, she let it go for now. Perhaps at the breakfast table was not the time nor place for her nosying about in all his personal relationships. And at any rate, it was nearly time for her first class – one of the few they didn’t share – and she had a bit of a walk to get across the castle for it.

“Well,” she said, throwing back the dregs of her tea and leaning in to dot a kiss to his cheek. “I’ve got to head off. I hope you have an excellent morning, and I’ll see you in Potions.”

He tugging her to him before she could slip away, curling around to press a slanting kiss to her lips. “Bye, love. See you in Potions.”

They didn’t have another spare moment alone until dinner, the entirety of their joint classes requiring enough academic focus that they couldn’t so much as pass glances, let alone notes or hold a conversation. By the time she made it down to dinner, Draco was already seated at the Ravenclaw table, laughing at something Luna was saying from across the table, Neville on one side of her and Ginny at her other. The vacant space beside Draco was perfectly Hermione-plus-teeming-bookbag sized and she was quick to fill it, dumping her bag on the bench and then sliding her arms around his middle in a tight side-hug the moment she was seated.

With anyone else, the amount of public affection she now displayed for Draco would have been unconscionable. Entirely too embarrassing – too overtly needy – to ever be something she'd have entertained. But Draco melted into it every time and it made giving it to him – giving it to *herself* – as easy as breathing.

He dropped a hand to squeeze the arm over his ribs, throwing his other arm over her head so he could wrap it around her back. The vestiges of his laughter rumbled between her arms and the scent of him had her eyes slipping shut. He'd showered recently, perhaps right before dinner during the thirty minutes he had free while she slogged through a double period. His hair was dry but the fragrance of his soap clung to him strongly, fresh and woodsy. Knicker-ruining. She inhaled greedily.

"Hi, Granger," he said a moment later, twisting slightly in her hold to peer down at her.

She raised her head, propping her chin on the side of his chest. "Hi, Malfoy."

The edge of his lip lifted, eyes glinting. He looked boyishly happy and it made her heart so full, her chest ached. She gave him a long, tight squeeze and then finally released him, her stomach eager for dinner and her libido eager for dinner to be over.

Across the table, Ginny eyed her. "So, Hermione, any *special* plans for the birthday boy later?"

"Ginny," Hermione chided as Draco and Neville snorted twin sounds of male amusement.

Ginny gave her an excessively innocent look. "What? I thought maybe you'd gotten him a first edition of *Hogwarts: A History*, which I know is your idea of an unbeatable gift."

"I already have a first edition of *Hogwarts: A History*." Draco forked a coin of roasted carrot, his other arm still around her back. "And anyway, I don't need a present from Hermione, she's–"

"If you say *she's a gift*, I'm going to hurl." Ginny pantomimed a gag.

Draco tsked. "I don't need physical things from her," he said instead, which wasn't exactly a denial.

The looks their three friends sent across the table indicated exactly how little they believed his phrasing. Hermione pressed her lips together, somewhat agreeing with them.

He sighed, like they were being egregiously pedantic. "Obviously you know that's not how I meant it."

"Mm. Some of us know that better than others," Ginny mumbled into her juice. Neville cut into his chicken with purposeful care.

Luna dispelled Ginny's comment with a trill of her fingers. "Physical gifts or not, this is going to be a good year for you, Draco," she told him sagely. "Your brightest yet."

His thumb stroked softly over Hermione's shoulder. "I think you're right, Luna."



It would be a year of new opportunities, set loose into the world to do whatever they wanted. The knowledge that she'd be by his side, their life together just beginning, had a potent cocktail of love and pride and excitement surging in her chest. She couldn't wait to watch as he grew into the man she knew he'd become; to have his help and support as she did the same.

They'd only just finished pudding — a gorgeous raspberry and cream cake Hermione had politely requested from the kitchens on her way between classes, a whimsical, jam-breathing dragon adorning the top — when Hermione slid her hand up Draco's thigh. He looked at her askance as he ate his final bite of cake, expression inquisitive.

"Meet me in your room," she told him in a low whisper, not that she needed to be especially covert.

Their friends across the table were engaged in a spirited debate over which variety of Butterbeer was superior, Neville adamantly championing Madame Rosmerta's, an opinion Ginny was poo-pooing so passionately that it was sending Luna into snorting fits. It was an altogether pointless discussion because Hermione knew no variety beat the warmed sort served at the Leaky Cauldron.

Draco raised a skeptical brow, replacing his fork on his plate. "You know the Slytherin password?"

She tapped the shiny badge pinned to her robes. "Head Girl, remember?"

"Ah." He flicked his gaze down to the badge then back up. "But you don't know where my bed is."

"Draco." She sighed like he was being unbearably thick. "I know where the Slytherin common room is. I know where your dorm is. I know where your bed is."

He hummed an impressed sound. "You know everything, do you?"

She nodded as bossily as she could. "I do."

Under the table, his knee pressed against her thigh as he turned on the bench to face her, resting his forearm along the table edge and sliding the other low around her back, caging her in.

"And have you ever abused your knowledge, Granger?" he inquired, voice low. "Have you been to my dorm before? Touched my bed?"

The coaxing lilt to his voice made her cheeks heat, like she'd been caught doing something she shouldn't have. Which was silly, because she *hadn't*, and even if she had, he'd hardly get her into trouble for it.

The edge of his mouth twitched upward.

Well. He wouldn't get her into trouble with McGonagall, at least. But she'd be in some sort of trouble, absolutely.

“No,” she said primly.

“What’s the point of knowledge if you don’t use it, right?” he drawled, quoting back her words from Blaise’s kitchen table, then closed the distance between them, voice dropping to a deep whisper. “Excited to use your knowledge, Granger?”

She wanted to nip at his full bottom lip. Wanted to suck on it; to kiss him until he remembered the power she had over him. She leaned in until the tip of her nose just barely brushed his.

“Meet me in your room,” she repeated softly, “in ten minutes.”

The gust of his soft chuckle brushed over her chin, teasing the skin of her jaw.

“Yes, Granger.”

---

Draco was well acquainted with the subtle signs of a Muffliato. And he was extremely versed in how it made the hangings around a Hogwarts four-poster almost eerily still, giving the air a leaden, stagnant quality to it. So he wasn’t surprised to draw back the silent curtains and find an impish little creature kneeling in the center of his bed, the sound of her spell-casting now filling the space around him.

She looked up as he pulled back the curtain, pausing with her wand hovering over something that made his mouth momentarily dry. He closed the curtain behind him, cocooning them in a world of noise all their own, and eyed the object on the bedding. The purpose of it was obvious – he knew a silicone cock when he saw one, and knew exactly what she intended to do with it – but what she was doing *to* it was less clear. He flicked his gaze to her, a question in his expression.

She bit the edge of her lip to temper her grin, then turned back to her wandwork, murmuring incantations under her breath until the dildo had been fully transfigured into something extremely lifelike.

In fact it looked...*extremely* familiar.

He felt his eyebrows knit, taking in the curve of the ridge and noting the little freckle just below it, there on the left.

“Hermione, is that...?”

He hesitated but, no...no, that was *definitely*...

“Is that *my* cock?”

She raised it to eye-level, expression fond as she inspected it more closely. “Yes. Quite a good likeness, isn’t it?”

It was. It was uncanny.

He was going to give himself premature wrinkles if he furrowed his brows any deeper.

“But...*why* does it look like my cock?”

The edge of her mouth lifted in a coy smirk. “Oh? Was there someone else’s you wanted instead?”

He gave her a look. “*No*. But why does it have to be anyone’s? The original way it was is fine, wasn’t it?”

She crinkled her nose. “But that’s so impersonal.”

He had to laugh at that. “Nothing more personal than getting fucked by your own cock I suppose.”

“Would you prefer I use my imagination instead?”

He loved the implication that she didn’t have enough experience with many other real-life cocks to model it after (and there was categorically no way he could handle the only other one she had somewhat familiarized herself with). His choice was either his or whatever her brain could come up with, and while he was morbidly curious what *that* might be, he couldn’t deny that seeing her toying with such a familiar appendage was doing unholy things to him.

“No, no, you’ve done it already. I wouldn’t want you to go to any trouble.”

She raised a knowing brow, lips rolled in as she fought a smile. “Only fair that you get to experience the best as well.”

Pride flushed through him, and then arousal as he watched her give the toy an appraising stroke, squeezing as she went. He swore he felt the ghosting touch of her hand over the cock attached to his body, which summarily responded as if she had. After another pass, held it out to him.

“I think I got the rigidity and heft right, but here. Feel. Tell me if I should change anything?”

She’d managed to make it not look like a dismembered cock — something that would definitely have pushed him beyond his limit — so he accepted it from her. It was...surreal. He had to give credit where credit was due, her attention to detail was on another level, even with it still mostly feeling like silicone.

“Shall I submit it for extra credit?” she quipped.

He met her eye, smirking. “Always after the gold star, aren’t you?”

“And this would certainly earn me one.”

“Mm. You’ve done very well.”

Holding a twin version of his cock was filling his head with all sorts of depraved ideas, and he wondered how many had occurred to her while she’d been abusing magic to craft it. He ran his gaze along the length of it then slid his eyes to hers.

“I’ll use it on you later, shall I? I’d like to see just how much of me you can take at once.”

She squirmed, making a little squeaking sound in the back of her throat that sent lust racing through him. The flare of her eyes suggested she, somehow, hadn’t considered the door of possibilities she’d opened with her ingenuity.

“Yeah?” His voice had dropped half a register, the cock in his trousers seriously testing the stretch of his briefs at her reaction. “You’d like to be completely full of me?”

“Yes,” she gasped. “Oh Merlin, I hadn’t even considered... *Godric*, I love magic.”

He had to agree.

“Oh, that’s given me *so* many ideas. I wonder if a linking charm could—” She pressed her lips together. “One thing at a time, Hermione,” she reprimanded herself.

“You’re a fantastic multitasker,” he drawled. “I think you can handle more than one.”

She tsked, cheeks pink and eyes glittering, and he watched with curling delight as she regathered her intentions for the here and now. With deft fingers, she began unbuttoning her blouse.

“Here’s what’s going to happen,” she began, and his stomach swooped with anticipation at her instructional tone. “First, I’m going to ride you for a little bit because Theo said that’ll relax you—”

*Relax* him? He silently cursed Theo, the absolute bastard, for finding a way to torment him even from a distance.

“—and then I’ll get you ready with my fingers again. After that, assuming you still want it, I’ll use the toy.”

“Assuming I last that long, you mean,” he said wryly.

She brightened at that. “Actually, Theo said that you might like it even more if you’ve already come once. He said this is actually a good way to work up toward multiple orgasms since stimulating the prostate—”

Draco zoned out slightly, mostly out of self-preservation because listening to her talk in her swotty little voice about *working him up* was doing exactly that. He nodded, licking his lips as the descent down the placket of buttons concluded and she pulled her shirt off, still nattering away about all the various techniques she could apply to absolutely ruin him.

The breathy sound he made when he got a good look at what she was wearing paused her monologue, teeth finding her plush bottom lip for another amused bite. Her tits, always gorgeous, looked absolutely phenomenal encased in a snug-fitting, sheer bra. He could see her nipples, the hard points visible through the pale pink lace. Rounded swells spilled out of the cups, begging to be licked and bitten. The straps looked like ribbons of silk.

As he stared, she ran her hands lightly over the lace cups, brushing her nipples and dragging another compulsive, needy sound from him when she squirmed on her knees. He dropped a hand to his lap, squeezing his cock to stem the ache she always managed to inspire.

“Eager?” she teased, eyes on his hand as she ran her fingers over her breasts again.

“Can I touch you?” he breathed.

She grinned. “Of course. It’s your birthday, Draco, and as you so cheekily implied at dinner...” She gestured to herself with a lazy hand, “...this is your gift.”

He didn’t delay, surging forward and pushing her flat under him, grinding his cock between her legs as he licked into her mouth, swallowing her surprised, pleased gasp. She let him devour her, moaning into his mouth as he rutted against her as if she was the first witch he’d ever gotten into bed.

He’d felt particularly worked up all day, her good-morning blowjob having set the day off on certain note, and if he wasn’t careful, he was going to embarrass himself. Though he suspected that him coming in his pants would only delight her.

Her knees came up to pin his hips a moment later and he stilled, panting against her throat, grateful for the pause.

“Roll us over,” she told him, and he knew his reign of power was over.

He slid an arm under her shoulders and gripped the back of her thigh with the other hand, rolling onto his back and bringing her with him. The soft swells of her breasts jostled above the cups of her bra with the motion; he swallowed the flood of saliva the sight elicited. She scooted back on his thighs to unfasten his trousers, knuckles brushing his erection as she unzipped before diverting up to undo his shirt buttons, eyes on her task.

She was always so intentional; so methodical and thoughtful and exacting. He raked a hand through his hair, heart hammering as he ate up every detail of her. The wayward cascade of curls and random scatter of freckles; the sharp eyes and symmetrically curved lips. Chaos and order, in perfect balance. Beautiful.

“Sit up,” she murmured, and he curled up into her space at once, breath shallowing as their noses brushed, his lips buzzing at the proximity of hers.

Her hands were confident as she slid his shirt off his shoulders, palm dropping to his chest to push him back flat. She stripped off his trousers and briefs with equal efficiency, fingers light and surprisingly evocative as she pulled off his socks.

And then he was naked, hard and already panting for her, the bedding soft under him and the curtains confining his world to just here; just her.

She wet her lips with a distracted tongue, eyes trailing over him appreciatively as she reached for the zip at her hip, removing her skirt to reveal a pair of tiny pink lace knickers. It was a special sort of torture to see hard nipples and the puffy lips of a cunt through lace. It made him mindless.

“Come sit on me,” he begged, eyes locked between her legs, tongue already tracing patterns over the roof of his mouth.

“I’ll have to remember how much you like lace,” she remarked lightly, voice pleased, and scooted up until she was hovering over his cock.

He hadn’t meant she sit *there* but he absolutely wasn’t going to complain, especially not when she tugged the tiny scrap of lace to the side and slid herself up the underside of his cock. He hissed in a harsh breath at the way she was already soaked, her cunt sliding along his cock with ease. But this was just the prelude, he reminded himself, and so as she rose up to sink onto him, he exhaled slowly, preparing himself for it to only be enough to make him crazy before she moved on to *actually* driving him mad.

“God,” she murmured, her folds kissing his pelvis in a quick touch before she was rising again, so wet that there was no resistance as she slid straight back down. “You always feel *so* bloody good.”

He wanted to buck up into her, or pull her down over him and plant his feet and fuck her until she was shaking and squeezing and coming hard just for him - only ever for him. But before he could completely derail her plans, she leaned to the side and plucked up the dildo. His stomach swooped again but his cock flexed damningly, psyche extremely interested in what she was going to do with every version of his cock that she owned.

She brought the tip to her lips and kissed it. The sound he made was utterly stupid, and so she grinned and kissed it again, tongue darting out for a flirty, kittenish lick. After a second of consideration, she held it out to him. He shook his head; he was adventurous, yes, but sucking his own cock held very little appeal.

With an impish grin, she opened her mouth and bounced the tip off the flat pad of her tongue before closing her lips around it and sucking lightly. When her cheeks hollowed in conjunction with a slow figure-eight that had his cock rubbing on every hot, slick bit of her, his hands jumped to squeeze her thighs. He was going to die, he thought desperately. He’d never last if she was going to play like that.

She drew off, running her tongue down the shaft and then holding it up to inspect contemplatively.

“I can’t tell you how many times I’ve wished I could suck your cock while I fuck you,” she said, voice husky with desire. “And god, I actually *could* feel your cock inside me while you lick my clit.”

“*Jesus.*” Her words curled up his spine, brain buzzing with static.

She rose and sank on him again, trailing her fingertips over his stomach in a lazy exploration. Goosebumps flared, pulling his nipples tight, and when she reached up to stroke over one, the light touch made him suck in his next breath.

“God,” he groaned, petulant. “Fuck, you’re...going to destroy me.”

“Too much?” She drew her hand away, drawing a soothing pattern on his sternum instead.

He shook his head. “No...no, it’s just...it’s *so*...”

She bit her lip, pleased.

“Now you know how I feel whenever you touch me.” She leaned down to dot kisses up the midline of his abdomen until she reached his sternum. “You’re so sexy,” she told him, eyes lifting to meet his as she dragged the wet tip of her tongue in a slow circle around a nipple. “I can’t wait to fuck you.”

“Fucking Christ,” he breathed. “I’m going to get you back so good for this.”

She grinned, showing him her sharp, white teeth and then letting him feel them. His cock throbbed inside her helplessly and he dug his fingers into the softness of her thighs with another plaintive groan.

“You’re very responsive tonight,” she mused as she sat up and lifted off his cock, not bothering to stop it from bouncing up to stamp a damp mark over his pelvis. “Been thinking naughty things, Draco?”

His hand twitched, wanting to stroke himself. He shoved both up under the pillow instead, attention rapt on where she was resetting her knickers and locating her wand in the sheets.

“About you?” he replied distractedly. “Constantly.”

She sent him a cheeky grin before refocusing on adhering the dildo to the front of her knickers with a deft sticking charm.

“You’re not the only one who’s clever with knicker-based charms,” she told him smugly, raising a teasing brow.

He smirked at that. “One day we’ll have to combine them, hmm?”

“Now *that* is a truly excellent idea,” she agreed, and then she cocked her head as another thought struck her. “Oh...my god. I hadn’t considered layering charms on *this*...”

She absently stroked her hand around the cock fixed to her knickers, eyes distant for a moment before she blinked and looked down at him, brows raised.

“Draco, it’s entirely likely that our combined knowledge will be a detriment to society.”

He laughed. "To society? That seems dramatic."

She clucked her tongue, patting the side of his hip to indicate he roll over. The heat in his cheeks was suddenly overwhelming but he did as she bid, rolling onto his stomach and resting his cheek on the pillow over his stacked hands, staring at the swath of emerald fabric hanging a few feet from his face.

"If we charm a replica of your cock to vibrate, I'm afraid all my social justice initiatives will be woefully neglected," she explained, settling between his thighs. "Because while there are quite a few improvements I intend to make in a variety of fields, having unfettered access to that might make it rather hard to prioritize anything else."

He shifted a leg out a few inches to give her more room, something she rewarded with a little squeeze to his bum.

"Right," he mumbled. "Of course."

Her other hand had joined the first, both kneading his arse with an eagerness that had his cock throbbing where it was wedged between his stomach and the mattress.

"Well, that's..."

Keeping up a conversation while her hands ran up his back, rubbing and kneading his muscles as they went, was swiftly becoming impossible. She was building his arousal up with every brush of her skin over his, the press of her knees at his inner thighs keeping him actively aware of what was likely resting just below his arse.

"Granger," he finally groaned, and she took pity on him, leaning forward to press a soft, open-mouthed kiss between his shoulder blades before stroking both hands down to grope his arse again.

"How're you feeling?" she asked softly, hands sliding down around his hips.

He lifted halfway up, deliriously hopeful she was going to pump his cock, but her fingers danced up his waist instead. He groaned and dropped back down.

"Ridiculously fucking turned on. Antsy. I need to fuck you."

Her soft laugh drove him wild. "I'm doing the fucking tonight, Draco."

"Doesn't feel like it," he complained.

"Spanking is on our list," she informed him mildly. "Just in case you forgot."

"Granger." Under the pillow, his hands tightened into fists.

"It's really such a lovely bum," she carried on, palms settling over it again. "So. Fuckable."

He wanted to buck her off him, to show him who was the fuckable one between them, but when his body performed the first half of the act, the bolt of pleasure that shot down his cock



as the sheets rubbed against it stalled any other thoughts. The intrigued little sound she made had sweat pricking at his chest and temples. He rutted forward again, because he needed friction more than air, and because she let him.

“Look at you,” she hummed. “Needy boy.”

He made himself stop, balls already feeling heavy and full. Despite all evidence to the contrary, he didn’t want to come yet.

“So fuck me,” he ground out. “It’s my birthday after all.”

She laughed. “So it is. You alright like this?”

“I’m dying like this.”

She laughed again. “Okay, baby. I won’t drag it out any longer, even though it feels so *good* to wait.”

“You’re a menace.”

She used her knees to push his thighs wider. He went to lift up, to get into the position she’d had him take on his bed at the Manor, but she held him down with the flat of her hand on his back.

“Unless you want me to lick you first?” she offered, gentling her touch.

“No, I just thought...” He shifted with pent up energy. “No. That would definitely count as dragging it out longer.”

“Perhaps. Or it would make you come.” Her voice was entirely too controlled for how utterly out of control he felt. “Which would be extremely hot.”

He swallowed, and then exhaled when he felt the soft touch of her finger sliding between his cheeks, stroking over his rim. He barely resisting another grind forward against the bed.

“I’m going to take you like this,” she said, voice pitched low. “But if you want to get up on your knees for me, just let me know.”

“Yeah.” He was fully sweating. “Right. Got it.”

The brush of her finger was making pleasure pool in his gut. It wouldn’t be long until his cock was leaking with it. The tension of an orgasm was already gathering in the muscles of his thighs and stomach and when her finger finally pressed inside him, everything pulled even tighter.

“Relax, Draco,” she soothed, stroking in and out slowly. “You need to take at least three before you get my cock.”

He panted out a broken sound, the bolt of arousal sparking hotly in the base of his skull all the way down to his toes. He forced himself to relax, and then again when she aligned a

second finger with the first. He could feel himself opening up to her, welcoming her deeper until she was brushing against the cluster of nerves inside him. He turned his face into the pillow, groaning as the pressure built with every stroke.

“How does that feel?” she murmured.

“Good.” It was an enormous understatement but his brain wasn’t interested in utilizing his extensive vocabulary at present.

“Yeah?” She pumped her fingers again and then scissored them. Draco grunted, the sound a little whiny. “You’re doing so well, baby. Here’s three.”

There was a distinctly non-zero chance that he was going to come just from her fingering his arse. The prospect of it wasn’t helping him avoid it but he was almost too far gone to care. He pressed back into her next stroke and nearly choked as the motion dragged his – definitely leaking – cock across the sheets. The end loomed, delicious and tempting.

But no.

Fuck.

*Fuck*, he couldn’t come yet.

A hand jumped out from under the pillow to reach back for her, finding the jut of her hip and squeezing urgently. She stilled, fingers buried.

“You alright?” she checked.

“I’m...” His traitorous hips rocked forward again, dragging her fingers exactly right as the smooth material under him caught on the flared ridge of his cock, rubbing right along his frenulum. The garbled sound he made wasn’t English, or French, or any of the languages he knew.

“Ready to come?” she purred.

Was he? Yes. So fucking ready.

But would he let himself?

He let go of her hip in order to lift up onto his elbows to look over his shoulder at her. She eased her fingers out, eyes glued to his back and the muscles he intentionally flexed for her, her obvious ogling a welcome distraction from the ache that had spread throughout his entire pelvis. She unstuck her eyes with effort a moment later, meeting his gaze.

“Not yet,” he told her. “But it won’t be long until I can’t stop it, so...” He dropped his eyes to the cock affixed to her knickers.

She recovered her coy expression. “Want it, hmm?” she teased, giving the toy a languid stroke.

The look he gave her might have been flat and unimpressed, if it weren't for the deep rose of his cheeks and the way he was obviously and painfully hard over it.

"I can fuck you like this," she said. "Or you can get on your back and I'll touch your cock. Or I can just...look at it...if you prefer."

He could picture it perfectly. Her, looking at his cock while it throbbed and leaked and spurted come all over his chest while she did nothing but bury herself in his bum.

He thought, very hard, about Arithmancy for a full five seconds before rolling onto his back.

"Not sure if that's a comment on your abilities or on my lack of self-control," he drawled, proud of the control in his voice. "I would love for you to touch my cock, baby. But...but not too much. Not yet."

"Okay." She watched as he resettled under her, a thigh on either side of her and his cock heavy against a hip. "And just so you know, I'm...exceptionally turned on, too."

She ran her hands up his legs to frame his cock, not touching but close enough that he could feel the heat of her proximity.

"Feeling you inside me was such a tease. I'm still so wet over it. I'm going to come really, really quickly as soon as this is over."

He covered his face with his hands. "*Hermione*. Fucking Christ. Please. You can't-*fuck*."

"It might take me half a minute," she carried on, unapologetic. Her hands reversed their path, sweeping to his knees and putting pressure on them until he got the hint and bent them, feet planted wide. "Maybe even quicker than that."

A menace.

An impossible woman.

A cruel, calculating, bold, brave, clever, loyal, inventive, categorically *devious* woman.

She was everything.

Perfection.

He pushed his hands up through his hair, meeting her gaze as she shuffled closer on her knees, arranging his thighs over hers. "God, I love you."

She smiled, soft and sweet. "I love you, too."

And then she grabbed her wand and murmured, "*Lubricus*," and her expression was no longer sweet.

Her eyes burned into his, cheeks bright with color and nipples distractingly hard behind the lace of her bra, her breasts lifting with every inhale. She stabilized the toy with her fist at the

base then tilted her hips so that the broad tip pressed at his rim.

“Take it when you’re ready,” she murmured.

He laughed a half broken sound at the vision between his thighs, offering him untold pleasure and looking halfway to orgasm herself at the chance to give it to him.

“I’m very fucking ready for it now.”

“Go ahead then,” she encouraged with a tiny smirk, pressing harder to make the entry easier for him. “I know you can take it.”

It was both a foreign and familiar sensation. His abs tightened as he lifted his hips, pressing down toward her lap and exhaling slowly through his nose as the thick head of the cock finally slid inside.

“Oh...fuck,” he breathed. The thickness was definitely more than her three fingers and for a moment, his body fought the intrusion, nerves sending out a confused sort of chaotic pleasure, sparking under a shoulder blade and at the tip of his cock. After a moment, he took a little more and had to wet his suddenly dry lips, heart beating hard in his chest.

Oh fuck. It felt...*good*.

He wanted to keep going so with another measured exhale, worked a little more inside himself.

Christ.

He *liked* this.

“That’s it,” she whispered, holding still as he worked himself onto it, watching his face for discomfort.

He took his time, gaze fixed blindly on the green hangings above him, until he’d taken her almost to the base. He stilled for a moment, then nodded.

She hummed a little note of acknowledgement, giving him another moment to adjust as she stroked soft paths over his thighs and stomach. His cock had softened slightly at the initial burn but was now leaking happily all over his stomach again. She was obediently avoiding touching it and that made him even harder.

Her eyes found his, mouth parting as she noted whatever ludicrous expression of raw want his face was making.

“I’m going to fuck you now,” she said softly, and he bit his lip but nodded.

She kept her motions slow and small to start but as she gradually began lengthening them, he groaned, shifting his hips in time with hers as the drag made his muscles tense.

“How does it feel?” she inquired.

“Good.” It felt like the only word he could remember.

The antsy feeling was back. He ran a hand over his chest, skin sweat-dampened and hot to the touch, and when his fingers brushed idly over his nipple, his cock flexed. It was a sensation he hadn’t realized was connected to his arse until he felt himself squeeze around the toy. His vision sparked as he repeated the touch, expecting and therefore fixating on the subsequent rippling effect around the toy as his cock oozed a thick stream of precome.

His hand slid down his stomach before diverting back up to his chest, the other stretching out along the pillows. She was keeping him right at the edge, intentionally or not, and he didn’t know what to do about it. He needed to come. He didn’t want it to end.

“*Baby*,” he whimpered helplessly, then moaned as another burst of unfiltered pleasure surged.

She made a soft acknowledging sound. “Feeling good, Draco?”

She was keeping her motions steady and precise, rubbing over his prostate with every withdrawal. His hand fisted the sheets. He raked the other through his hair, getting a good grip to expel some of his restless energy there, momentarily forgetting how the sharp tug against his scalp only enhanced his pleasure.

He turned his face into his bent arm, biting into his bicep then swearing softly as even that made his cock pulse. He couldn’t escape the sensations she was sending through his entire body, couldn’t fight them.

He tried to withstand it for another moment but she was steadily driving all self-control out of reach. In the end, he gave in.

“I think...I think I need to come now,” he panted, and then everything tightened, from his jaw, down his neck, torso, all the way down to the arches of his feet. “I’m...*fuck*, I’m going to come now.”

“That’s so good.” She was breathless. “Come, baby. I want you to.”

He tried to say her name but it came out slurred, choked around an incoherent, whimpering moan as his orgasm crested hard, his eyes rolling back as his cock began spurting entirely untouched, the orgasm stretching through him more pervasively than he’d ever experienced.

She brought her hand to his cock at once, giving him long, coaxing strokes that doubled his pleasure and sent the resulting stripes up his chest with more force. He panted against his bicep, every muscle in his body quaking as he rode out the clenches that seemed to go on for ages. When he finally relaxed, he had one arm slung over his face, the other tangled forgotten in the sheets.

She’d slid out at some point, something he’d been too distracted to notice, but still had her little fist around his cock, thumb rubbing soothingly over his slit. The sensitivity hit him like a Stinging Hex and he hissed, lifting a heavy arm to pull her hand away, but she’d let go at his sound. Her hand captured his, giving it a squeeze.

"Alright, sweetheart?"

He drew in a heaving inhale then exhaled a laugh, regaining his hand to stretch both arms overhead, his entire body deliciously sore. He met her eye, grinning.

"Oh my *fucking* god."

Her expression went from carefully curious to outrageously pleased.

"Liked that, did you?" she teased, grinning down at him.

"Jesus. I might have loved it. Now I see why Theo is in such a good mood all the time."

She rolled her eyes.

"But yeah. Yes. We'll have to work that into the rota." He tilted his head, then added, "Assuming you also enjoyed it."

"I absolutely did, though not as much as you." She raised a brow and then trailed her gaze over streaks of come adorning his torso. "You're a mess."

"Absolutely debauched," he agreed.

Amber irises glinted hungrily as she continued her survey of him and he was reminded, quite acutely, of the wet cunt currently woefully unattended to. He dragged a finger through one of the streaks he'd painted across his abdomen, noting the way her attention zeroed in on the action.

"Clean me up?" he suggested innocently. "And then come let me taste what fucking me so well I nearly blacked out did to you."

His words set her free. She leaned to the side, scrabbling for her wand then unsticking the dildo from her knickers.

"You just practically came from being fucked, Draco," she whined as she tossed the toy to the side. "I don't think you understand how fucking hot that is. I'm *dying*."

He grinned, mostly at her audacity for claiming she'd found it hotter than he had but also because he loved it when she was a horny, desperate mess for him. She paused for half a second and then vanished her knickers before discarding her wand carelessly to the bed.

He pouted. "I liked those."

"You can buy me more."

Yes, he fucking would be.

She dropped over him, a hand on either side of his waist, and licked a broad stripe up his abs. Her open-mouthed moan tickled as her tongue dragged up another stripe of come. She

crawled up his body, tongue first, and as soon as he could reach her, he cupped her cunt. She whimpered against his throat, grinding down immediately.

“I’m going to fuck you so well in twenty minutes,” he promised quietly, rubbing his two middle fingers through the copious wetness dripping out of her before circling her entrance and sinking them deep. “Want to see how many times you can come for me until I’m ready to go again?”

She clenched around his fingers, hips shifting to fuck herself on them. “You’re about to get the first one,” she moaned, walls fluttering again. “Faster. Please, faster.”

He obliged her – she’d been an exceptionally good girl to him, after all - and she ground forward against the heel of his hand with a keening mewl. It only took a handful of rotations before she was coming, her walls squeezing around his fingers in a long, tight constriction before clenching in strong, rhythmic pulses.

“Fuck,” she said crisply, shuddering over his wrist. “*Fuck.*”

He hummed as he worked her through it then slid his fingers free, sucking them into his mouth as she exhaled, long and satisfied, and collapsed down at his side, her thigh draped over his and head on his chest. He dried his fingers on the sheets then ran his hand through her curls, sinking into the thick, soft locks until he could rub her scalp. She melted even further against him.

“Thank you,” she whispered.

“You’re welcome.” He sighed, feeling unbearably content. Then paused. “Wait, it should be me thanking you. What are you saying thank you for?”

“For giving me your virginity.” She kissed his chest softly, turning the sentiment sincere. “For trusting me with it.”

He smiled as her lips brushed over his skin, heart beating a hard, steady rhythm just below her hand.

“There’s no one I trust more. With it, or anything.”

Her lips dotted over his collarbone, then the crook of his neck.

“I trust you, too. Implicitly.” She breathed a soft, disbelieving laugh against his throat. “I genuinely don’t think I’ve ever trusted anyone more.”

It was a precious gift. The best he could ever be given, even including her love. Because what was love without trust? A burden. Agony.

He’d known she trusted him but hearing it again, to such a degree, broke him open. He used his grip in her hair to gently pull her off him, not stopping until her head was resting against the soft fabric of his pillow, his body covering hers.

“Hermione,” he whispered reverently, lips brushing hers, unable to find the words to express the enormity of what hers meant to him.

But her hands strong and sure as she wrapped them around his shoulders, clinging to him. And her voice was hushed, weighty and significant, when she whispered back, “*Draco.*”

## Chapter End Notes

Oh boy, I can't wait for all the DP potential Hermione's ingenuity has allowed for. We will be working that 'inappropriate use of magic' tag for sure for sure. And yes, no matter the pairing, there's no universe in my mind where Draco doesn't bottom like a pro 🍌

Also, I'm doing my best to catch up replying to comments but, as the mirror at the Leaky once told Harry, I'm fighting a losing battle, dearies. I read every single one of them (often multiple times) and cherish each one 💖 so thank you thank you thank you!

And thank you for reading!

Find me on [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🙋



# Chapter 45: His fingers dragged upward again. “Distracting you.”

## Chapter Notes

Hi friends!

We're getting close to another set of new tags, so this chapter introduces a few things to expect coming up. I'm *trying* to write shorter chapters so that I can update more frequently like I did back in the beginning, but then I wrote this and it hit close to 8k again so I fear my ability to be brief has completely expired. But who knows! Maybe I'll surprise myself. Anyway, thanks for hanging out and chilling in between! I appreciate it so very much 🥰💖😊

Also, in case you missed them, I did post three new fics since last updating this one. They are [A Book and a Broom](#) (Quidditch!Draco), [True Wild Spirit](#) (Theo/Luna lust potion), and [An Understanding Between Gentlemen](#) (a Dreomione that I'm, oops, writing a third chapter for 🙄). Check them out if you like!

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

“Draco, I can’t do this anymore.”

Hermione dropped her forehead onto the open Transfiguration textbook with a muffled wail.

To her right, she heard nothing but the unceasing scratch of a quill over rough parchment. Normally, it was a sound that sent a tingle of delight up her spine but now, as the third hour of non-stop revision and essaying loomed, it sent a pang of anxiety through her.

They had two weeks left until exams began and Transfiguration was the first. Only a scant 336 hours until the culmination of all her hard work, years of endless toiling and effort, would be assessed, graded, and ranked. A handful of letters would determine her future; she needed them all to be the same one.

And she needed her brain to be in top-form in order to achieve them, which at current it wasn’t. Instead, it was full of a low buzzing, as if the neural connections themselves were beginning to overheat and fizzle out. It wasn’t often she willingly took study breaks before midnight, but even she could sense when she was close to a full on mental overload.

How Draco was still writing was beyond her but, as she tilted her head to peek sidelong at him, he definitely still was. The tip of his quill twitched in a tight, fluttery motion within a singular square inch, his penmanship small and neat. Nothing like the large sweeping motions

her own quill made when she really got going. For a moment, she simply admired him. And then she tried to capture his attention again.

“Draco,” she whined, and he cut his eyes to her as he finished his sentence.

“What?” he asked, library-quiet, looking back at his parchment to start another line.

What was her life, that she, Hermione Jean Granger, was attempting – and...*failing?* – to distract Draco Malfoy from schoolwork? She would have laughed, had she not been feeling so woebegone.

“I can’t do this anymore,” she repeated, a little louder though just as forlornly.

He snorted, the edge of his mouth lifting, still writing. “I heard you the first time.”

She sat up straight, not wholly feigning her outrage. “And you ignored me?”

“Love.” He flicked another glance to her, then back to his work. “Of course not. I just need to—”

Possessed. She was *possessed*. Surely that was the only reason she reached over to pluck his quill from between his fingertips and hold it out of reach. He looked at his newly empty hand, then up at her.

“Seriously?” His brows went up, incredulous and bemused. “I can’t believe you just did that. I’m mid-sentence here, Granger.”

“We should take a break,” she said decisively. “Clear our heads.”

His amusement was building, something she found both intoxicating and irritating as she watched it soften the angles of his face and brighten his eyes. Stupid handsome prat, who she loved so very much but who seemed to be just as sharp as he had been when they’d set up camp in the library after an early dinner.

“My head’s fine. Full of ideas for my essay, actually.” He smirked over at her knowingly. “Unless you meant something else by that...?”

For a moment, she dithered. Press him for attention thereby earning more of that smug, amused expression? Or send him one of her patented scathing glares and go stretch her legs in the stacks, hopefully to find something that caught her eye to give herself a mental break?

It would be kinder to let him get back to his essay, she decided. Just because she felt like steam was about to pour out of her ears didn’t mean he was similarly burned out. With a defeated sigh, she shook her head and held out his quill.

“Sorry. Finish your essay. I’m going to wander for a bit.”

He accepted his quill, orienting it into proper writing position with an idle spin, eying her speculatively. “Wander where?”

She gestured broadly to the room around them. “Have a guess.”

“Ah.” The edge of his mouth twitched but he turned his attention back to his essay.

She stood and quietly tucked her chair in, drawing in a slow inhale as she contemplated where to head. *Wandering* wasn’t exactly her forte, not without some sort of destination in mind. Charms, perhaps? Charms.

As she walked behind his chair, she thought she heard him breathe a few soft words.

“Maybe I will.”

~~~~

The Charms section diverted her for half a minute before it crept too close to the realm of Transfiguration, and so she went on the hunt for something less related. Potions? No – that would only ramp her anxiety up for her third exam. Muggle Studies? Yes. There was absolutely no crossover between Muggle Studies and any of her other classes, and it wasn’t even an exam she’d be sitting.

As she made her way to the Muggle Studies section, she passed by an end cap arranged with glowing, gently humming books. It was a section she’d never really ventured into, given its total absence of utility. A subject that swept her brain completely clear of academic interest, banishing all thoughts entirely.

Oh! She cocked her head with a little interested chirp, then proceeded into the Divination section.

It worked so well that she didn’t hear Draco’s approach until he was halfway down the stack, the white-blond of his hair snagging in her periphery as if her awareness was tied to it, the brightness of it like a bell on a string.

“This is not where I thought I’d find you,” he remarked, pausing several feet away to scan the shelves. “Regretting your N.E.W.T.s selection?”

She scoffed rather louder than was library appropriate and he chuckled as she reshelfed the book on dracomancy she’d been blissfully engrossed in. The title had caught her eye, amusing her, but then the contents had turned out to be unexpectedly interesting, the prophetic abilities of dragons remarkably well researched and worryingly accurate. She added it to her mental list as a potential Christmas gift for Charlie, then glanced over at Draco.

“Have you finished your essay?”

He shrugged, hands sliding into his pockets as he tilted sideways until his shoulder caught the lip of a shelf. “You can tell me when we exchange them later.”

She nodded absently, distracted by the way she found him even more enticing than the books around him. Although given their contents, it perhaps wasn't the greatest compliment she could have paid him. But as she looked him over, she realized it wouldn't matter where in the library she stood. He would always distract her more.

The thought beget another.

"Does that mean you're ready to go back to our room?"

He cocked his head. "Are you? It's only nine."

Typically, he had to drag her back to their room – in the past week especially – and so she couldn't blame his dubiousness. She could, however, narrow her eyes at the undertone of flirtation he'd imbued the comment with.

"I told you I wanted to take a break," she reminded him, crossing her arms over her chest and mirroring his leaned pose.

He pouted sympathetically. "Divination didn't help?"

"Who could have predicted it," she said dryly, then uncrossed an arm to point a warning finger at him. "*Don't* say it."

The edge of his mouth pulled up, the rest of his body following as he straightened and took a step toward her. "As if I'd make such an obvious joke."

"You would."

"*Theo* would," he corrected. "And technically you just did."

She tsked. "If my comment counted as me making the joke, then you just did too, considering I didn't say anything out loud and yet you understood it, meaning it occurred to you as well."

"Mm," he hummed, finally entering her personal space. "I love it when you're needlessly pedantic."

She began to turn her body toward him but his hands found her hips, capturing her momentum and redirecting it so she faced the bookshelves instead. The heat of his body closed in behind her, hands sliding over her hips to pull her back against him. Hands flew to the shelf in front of her, bracing herself as her heart rate spiking at his assertiveness. He hummed a purposefully low sound against the shell of her ear, the ends of his hair tickling her temple.

"Draco," she chastised, but bumped her arse back against him all the same.

"Hermione," he echoed in a teasing sing-song.

His hands skimmed the shape of her, dipping in at her waist before reversing to stroke back down over her hips. She was so keyed into his touch that she couldn't help but rock against him.

Merlin, what was it with her and the library? The pseudo-solitude, the hush of the tall ceilings and the leather-bound audience. And the potential for a human audience. She didn't *want* to get caught – not by Madam Pince or, god forbid, younger students – but the thrill of it, the *risk*, made her blood pulse with inappropriate arousal. He'd done practically nothing to her and she was already getting turned on.

“What are you doing?” It came out more plaintively than she'd hoped.

His fingers dragged upward again. “Distracting you.”

Obviously. But *here*?

She huffed. “Don't be mean to me.”

He clucked his tongue, hands sweeping around her belly on his next downward path. “How could I possibly be mean to you, Granger?”

She rocked back against him again, uncontrollably. “You know exactly what you're doing,” she accused.

He pulled her back more firmly, holding her to him. “Mm, I do.”

Getting intentionally turned on in a place she'd forbidden him from fucking her was filling her with a recklessness burst of lust. Judging by the growing stiffness against her bum, he was enjoying the tease just as much as she was.

“Now, to distract you properly...” His lips were close to her ear, the words tickling against the shell and sending goosebumps all across her body. “Shall I tell you what I've been reading about?”

She didn't want to think about school, or revisions, or reading – not for a minute. Maybe two.

“That doesn't sound like a distraction from exams,” she complained.

He placated her with a soft kiss to the side of her neck. “It will be, I promise. I think you'll enjoy hearing about it.”

She tilted her head, giving him space and non-verbal agreement. The light touch of his lips trailed back up, gracing her jaw and then her cheek.

“I ordered a few books in the post. The Hogwarts' library is extensive but shockingly deplete of...mm, self-help books.”

He nuzzled against her temple, inhaling deeply for a moment while she puzzled out what he was going on about. What sort of self-help books would he possibly be reading?

“Self-help? For what?”

The weight of his hands on her belly intensified slightly as his fingers slid inward to meet below her navel.

“Want to guess?”

If she was being honest, which was her default state, then there were quite a few things she thought Draco ought to seek help for. Herself as well – no one was exempt from the fallout of the war and all that had come before. But it seemed unlikely that he’d be touching her with seductive intent while discussing his post-traumatic stress recovery work, or how to begin processing the tremendous amount of unlearning he’d undergone and still had ahead of him. But what other topics would he need to order in books for?

The fingers of his left hand slid lower, teasing the waistband of her knickers through her skirt before applying intentional, specific pressure. And when he worked that touch in a suggestive, tight circle, it finally clicked.

“Oh,” she blurted, “you mean..” and then faltered as her cheeks burned.

His amusement at her realization was palpable in his touch and in the muted rumble of laughter against her spine.

“Go on, Granger. You’ve got it.”

It was only fair he make her say it. She’d made him voice all sorts of wants and desires, after all.

“Making me...” It was silly, but the word made her blush hotter. “...squirt.”

“Mm-hmm.” He rubbed his fingers in another small circle. Marking his place. “I can’t wait to put my reading to practice.”

Initially, the concept that she’d made a mess all over him had been deeply mortifying but now, the revelation that he might make her body do something new, something mysterious and difficult – an *accomplishment* – was viscerally appealing. She tried to shift under his hands, to get them somewhere more actively productive, but he tightened his hold, body moving with hers.

“And the second topic?” he prompted.

If they weren’t currently in the library, she’d have barked an incredulous, half-desperate laugh.

“There’s *more*?”

He chuckled. “Yes.”

“Oh Godric.” Her mind was racing. “What?”

“Want a hint?” He slid his hands up her sides, jumping from her ribs to her upper arms, then sliding down her forearms until his fingers curled around her wrists. “It’s on our list,” he whispered.

Their list – which would soon need additional items added to it, if they carried on ticking them off at the rate they were. She ran through the ‘fun’ column in her head: spanking, breath play, being watched, anal sex...

The grip around her wrists tightened just slightly as he gave them a light squeeze.

Oh.

“You want to tie me up,” she breathed. “Like I did to you.”

Knots and positions and *possibilities* sprinted across her mind’s eye, all of her prior research flooding her with ideas upon ideas. And although she had quite a few things she wanted to try, she was mostly desperate to hear what he had in mind.

He hummed agreeably, but his jaw brushed against her cheek as she shook his head.

“Yes and no. I don’t want to tie you to anything. I want you to feel *contained*, but not restrained.”

Her brows furrowed, trying to find the differentiation between the terms. “What, like hands behind my back?”

“Mm. Can I show you?”

His hands loosened around her wrists, stroking down to her hands to overlaying his on top. She let go of the shelf at his touch, allowing him to gently maneuver their hands behind her back.

“Hold your opposite elbows,” he murmured, and then helped her do it.

The position lifted her chest, her breasts brushing book spines. He wrapped a hand around her overlapped forearms and then brought the other up to trace a line around her upper arm.

“A rope would go here.”

A touch at her side and then a line under her breasts.

“...and here...”

His finger dragged back to center, going up the buttons of her blouse and then skimmed along her collarbones, back to the side he’d started at.

“Up here...and across here. Knots at the joins here...and here....and here.”

Even imagined, the visual of it was making her heart race, heat flooding her. He would bind her forearms, wrapping ropes around her biceps, her ribs, across her collarbones, between her breasts. She’d be contained, yes, but also on display. Trussed up, beholden to his whims. And now that she knew what one of his whims was...

“What do you think?” he asked, as if he’d done nothing at all to her with his little demonstration. “Would you want to try?”

It would be incredibly vulnerable. More than she’d ever been with another person, for good or bad. Had it been anyone else asking, she’d have been panicking at the concept alone. But tucked under the inward curl of Draco’s body, her arms pinned between them and her front pressed hard against the bookshelf, she felt nothing but safety. The expansion of his chest pressed against her overlaid arms with every inhale, her own breathing instinctively falling in sync with his.

She’d never been so close to another person before; not like this.

Other people knew more about her, perhaps, but only the sorts of things that might one day appear in a history book about the war. Or the sorts of things anyone might learn if they spent years growing up with or alongside her.

But time and legacy meant nothing when compared to the way that Draco knew *her*.

There was no question; no doubt. She trusted him implicitly, and knew whatever he’d do while she was his to play with would only lead to immense pleasure, and a furthering of their love.

The path of his finger was still tingling, her nerves heightened from that alone. There was no way she’d survive it, but she wanted the promise within his touch so badly she felt like she was vibrating. The words were caught in her throat but she nodded, the crown of her head rubbing against his chest.

“Yes,” she managed, squirming against him.

“Yeah? You like the idea?” The words curled with his smile.

She could do nothing but flex her fingers around her arms, knowing he’d feel the shift of it against his stomach, and nodded again.

“Hm.” He dropped another soft kiss to her neck, the touch of his lips sending a second cascade of goosebumps through her. Tongue followed lips and then the gentle graze of his teeth, repeated until she was shuddering.

When he drew away and carefully unfolded her arms, she thought maybe his torment was over. The prospect of their bed, of him under her, getting what he deserved for all of *this*, fueled her. She made to turn around but he replaced her hands on the bookshelf instead, caging her back in, his chest a solid wall behind her.

“Not yet, love. We still have to finish up here.”

The pitch of his voice indicated he didn’t mean the books and parchment lying neglected at their table. She braced herself on the wood in front of her, anticipating she’d need the support.

“D’you know, I haven’t gotten myself off in weeks?” he began conversationally and her stomach swooped at the topic. “You keep me so well tended to, I genuinely haven’t felt the need. But reading through the books...remembering how it felt when you came so hard you couldn’t help yourself. Imagining doing it to you again...I’ve never gotten hard over a book before, Granger. But reading about it made me *ache*.”

He exhaled slowly through his nose, the sound as evocative as the gust of breath over her cheek. Her heart was pounding, blood pulsing through her, surging to the surface.

“So I couldn’t help myself.”

She drew in a shuddery gasp as the mental image of it rose to greet her, composed of all the times she’d watched him do the acts in piecemeal: him, sitting at a desk, idly turning pages. And then not-so-idly turning them, elbow coming forward to rest on the table, forehead propped on it as he became engrossed. And then, when it truly got good, sitting up straight... leaning back in the chair...dropping a hand to his lap...

He pressed his hips forward, the solid line of his cock against her joining fantasy and reality in a snap.

“Oh god,” she blurted, soft and breathy, and he rubbed himself against her again.

“Want to hear how I did it?” he whispered, low and deep, close enough to her ear that it wouldn’t carry.

She wanted to *see* how he’d done it, but she did have quite an excellent imagination. “*Obviously*.”

She thought he might tsk at her tone, but he nuzzled his hips against her arse again instead.

“This, for starters,” he murmured.

She frowned. “You...rubbed up against something?”

It seemed a curious way for a man to wank but then...oh *god*, was that why he’d given her the pillow idea? Did *he* fuck pillows? Her imagination supplied her with the proof for how well it might work: Draco, face down and needy, hips rutting forward over a pillow, supported on his forearms, every muscle tight and straining.

She was suddenly so wet, she could feel it seeping into her knickers.

He breathed a laugh, amused at her guess.

“I thought of your *arse*, love. It absolutely kills me. It’s so soft and round and...” He landed a light swat to the side of her bum, groaning quietly in her ear as it jiggled against him. “*Bouncy*.”

Her fingers flexed around the shelf, panting a gasp, a lost cause to her libido.

“And then I thought about your tits. God, I want to smother myself with them. They’re just...” He cupped them, massaging and squeezing, sharing another soft groan with her. “So fucking perfect.” He plucked at her nipples and even through her shirt and bra, the burst of pleasure triggered a flutter deep inside. “So pretty. And so sensitive, aren’t they?”

He emphasized his intimate knowledge of her body by brushing his fingers over them again, the feather-light touch making her squirm. The satisfied sound he made in the back of his throat made her want to squirm again.

“They’re going to look so *fucking* good once I have you all tied how I want. *Jesus*, I can’t wait to see it.”

It was small, just a little break in his voice and a minute stutter of his hips against her, but she knew *him* intimately, too. And so she knew that he was finally starting to lose control.

Despite the slip, his voice was steady when he spoke again. “But do you know my favorite part of you? What I love the most? The thing that gets me off so hard, for a moment I can’t breathe?”

She could guess but shook her head, an insatiable glutton for his praise and hopeful that his little game touch-and-tell would continue further south.

As usual, she was correct. He slid his left hand down to cup between her legs and she rocked against it immediately, needing friction to ease the deep throb he was steadily building within her.

But rather than extol the wonders of her cunt, he brought his other hand up from her breasts to her throat, and then further to sink into her hair, his forearm banded across her chest. It felt like he was everywhere, touching and therefore loving and lusting over every part of her body, and so it took her a moment to parse his words through the chorus of rushing blood and surging affection and heady throb of want.

He curled his finger in her hair then tugged her head to the side to drag his lips over her neck, tracing the trail of kisses until they were hovering next to her ear.

“Your brain,” he whispered. “It houses everything that I love most about you. Your empathy...intuitiveness...*cunning*...intelligence...humor.” He rubbed his fingers between her legs lazily. “...your dirty little thoughts. There’s nothing I don’t admire about you, Granger. I adore every bit you’ve honored me with. And knowing that you trust me, that you—” He exhaled a soft huff. “—that you *love* me back...god, it makes me explode.”

She sagged against him, her breath coming in quick little pants. She wanted to return the sentiments but he was nipping gently at her neck, running his hands all over her in lazy, greedy motions, and her thoughts had been reduced to white noise.

“So that’s what I thought about, after I’d gotten myself all turned on over the idea of tying you up and making you squirt. I took a shower and thought about how you’d trust me to do it; to tie you up and play with you until I got my way. How you’d *enjoy* it. It made me come all over the tiles.”

The noise she made was high and broken. He returned a low, knowing sound, left hand slipping under her skirt and directly between her legs, rubbing lightly over the damp gusset of her knickers.

“Fuck,” he groaned, hips jerking against her arse as he felt how damp she was. “You’re so wet, Granger.”

She could only nod helplessly, muffling a moan. He slipped his middle finger under the gusset, stroking over her inner folds and highlighting exactly how soaked she was.

“What would you most like to have here, I wonder?” he mused, as if to himself. “My tongue?”

He found her entrance and teased just the tip of his finger into her, brushing it around exactly how he would the tip of his tongue. Her body sagged against his, wishing she was on her back with him between her thighs, rocking up against his mouth as he showed her, yet again, all the reasons she loved his tongue so very much.

He tutted at her moan and the wanton rocking, teasing her entrance with a few rapid flicks before finding her clit and circling it with a slick fingertip. “Yeah? My tongue? Right here?”

He circled over her clit again, body strong behind her as she leaned more of her weight into his hold.

“Naughty girl.”

She panted a breath, shaking her head automatically. He pressed down on her clit like it was a little button, then gave it a tap.

“No? You’re not naughty?”

She wanted to hold his hand against her properly, to grind forward, but she needed to set the record straight. She wasn’t naughty, or bad. The things she wanted were natural - *good*.

“N-no,” she stuttered, when he tapped her clit again and then resumed his idle circling.

He hummed disbelievingly. “Do good girls like getting their cunts licked, Granger? Do they fantasize about having their clit sucked on?”

It was like he was in her head, watching as he worked his mouth over her in all the ways he’d shown her she loved. She sent her hand up into his hair, fingers tangling in the longer locks at his crown and holding on tight.

“Yes.”

“Oh?” He feigned surprise, even as his hips jolted forward when she fisted his hair harder. “And how do you know that, hmm?”

“Because...”

The length of him against her arse was killing her, and when he sent his other hand grazing over her nipples, she genuinely wanted to die.

“*Because* I want those things and I’m...”

Another brush over her nipples. She panted a breath.

“...*I’m* a good girl.”

He made a soft, pleased sound.

“Yes, you are.” He closed his hand around a breast, squeezing indulgently, and gave her a hard, firm rub between her legs with his full hand. “*My* good girl.”

She arched into his hands, helpless and wanting. He laughed a broken, breathless sound.

“Christ, I want to fuck you so badly.”

Just imagining his cock inside her, filling her so perfectly, rubbing inside her so eye-rollingly good, made her knees literally weak. So she didn’t hesitate.

“*Yes.*”

His hands paused. “Yes?”

“God, yes. Please.”

“You want me to fuck you here? In the library?”

If he didn’t do it soon, she was going to reach around and do it herself. But *Merlin*, she wanted him like this. Solid and warm behind her, covering her body, pressing her face into books as he fucked her just how she needed.

“Yes,” she said, clearly, so he didn’t question her further. “Fuck me in the library, Draco. *Please.*”

“Why the change of heart?” But even as he asked, he got to work fulfilling her request, his hands sliding off her to bump at the base of her spine as he undid his belt with hurried, efficient motions.

Why? Because she was dripping down her thighs and her clit was throbbing near painfully, and he was so hard for her, as he always, always was.

“Term ends soon,” she managed, justifying herself on the fly. “Pince can’t ban me with exams so close. McGonagall would never let her.”

He went still for a moment, and then laughed, incredulous and delighted.

“Oh my *god*. You manipulative little beauty.” He buried his face against her neck. “*Granger*. I’m gonna make you come all over these precious fucking books. Really leave your mark on

them, hm?”

She squirmed against him, whimpering when his kisses went from soft presses to sharp nips. He licked over the mark, shushing her.

“Don’t get us caught already.”

She could barely keep her voice down as it was, so leaned forward, tilting to muffle her mouth against her forearm. It pressed her arse even harder against his cock, something he noted with a cluck of his tongue and another rolling grind.

“Never thought I’d see the day,” he mused. “Head Girl Hermione Granger, needing to be fucked so badly, she’ll take a cock right here in the stacks.”

She moaned into her arm and he breathed another laugh.

“Quieter, love, or I’ll have to stop. Unlike you, McGonagall doesn’t give a shit whether I pass exams or not.”

“Of–of course she does.”

Probably, anyway. Her brain was slowly dripping down her spine, all focus and coherence pooling between her legs. It made thinking about anything or anyone else near impossible.

He made a noncommittal sound. “That’s a theory I’d rather not test. Now hush, Granger, so I can put my cock where you want it.”

The sound of his zip seemed shockingly loud in the otherwise quiet room and she had enough rational thought left to wonder if they ought to Silencio themselves, or even cast a quick notice-me-not. But as soon as his hands were back on her, the idea disappeared as if he’d brushed it away. He pushed her school skirt up over the curve of her bum just enough for him to slot his cock between her thighs. She rocked back reflexively, the heat and closeness of his skin sending a fissure of awareness right up to her scalp.

He was about to fuck her in the library.

She was about to be absolutely full of Draco Malfoy, out where anyone could come and find them.

It might have concerned her – how wet she was getting over it – except that with a little upward tilt of his hips, the broad head of his cock parted her folds, slicking her arousal over her entrance and up through the tight space between her thighs, and she stopped thinking about anything else but how wet, how hot, how *hard*.

“*Baby*,” he huffed, all breath, as if he hadn’t meant to. “Fucking Christ, you’re so ready for me.”

She shushed him, because she could, and his grip on her firmed, wrist rotating so that he could cup her arse so he could push closer and find his place.

“Last chance,” he whispered in her ear, then nipped at her lobe and sank inside.

The closed-leg position made it such a tight fit, she swore she could feel the tip of him pushing behind her navel as his hips met her bum. That alone threatened her composure, tenuous as it already was, and she couldn’t stem the moan that escaped her throat when he drew out and then pushed back deep. One of his hands left her hip but rather than go for his wand, it rose to cup her mouth.

It was so unbearably arousing, to be pressed against a bookshelf in a public library, the scent of leather and parchment inches from her nose, the surrounding warmth of him all around her, his cock gliding in and out easily despite the snugness of her body. She flicked her tongue out to taste his skin, and then again when the first hint of *Draco* had her inner walls tensing around him.

He slid his hand down just enough to curl his fingers under her chin, holding her jaw as he ran his thumb over her lips. An invitation. An offering.

She opened to him without hesitation, sucking his thumb into her mouth. He didn’t make a sound, but she could feel the restrained rumble of it against her back.

“Good girl,” he breathed. “Stay quiet now.”

She rubbed her tongue up against his thumb agreeably. It ought to be studied, how connected her mouth and cunt seemed to be. The harder she sucked correlated directly with how tightly she squeezed around his cock, and so she kept it up, sucking around the digit, letting him literally hold her tongue down to smother her moans.

He muffled whatever mumbled comments he had into the crook of her neck, hips bumping against her more and more insistently. He paused when the slap of skin became too obvious, exhaling against her as he eased in and out at a glacial pace, preserving the silence around them.

Inevitably, he sped up again, and subsequently had to pause, fingers digging into her hips, his mouth ajar and panting against her shoulder.

The tease of it, the endless reminder of how foolish they were being, was making her overheat, perspiration beading at her temples and between her breasts. The position had his cock rubbing insistently against her front wall, stimulating every nerve she possessed from the inside out. If he so much as thought about her clit, she was going to come.

No, scratch that – if *she* so much as thought about it, she was going to.

In fact – yes.

Fuck yes.

She put every available brain cell towards the visualization of it: her clit, under his tongue, getting licked and licked and licked.

The end swelled with a vengeance, the onslaught of pressure and pleasure making her eyes roll shut, and then all of a sudden her walls were bearing down around nothing in a desperate, needy clench. She choked on a distraught moan, the sound escaping her as Draco's thumb slid out of her mouth along with his cock from her cunt.

"*Shit.*"

The word was crisp and concerned, his hands smoothing her skirt down in a quick motion before he sidestepped to the right, his own hands fumbling clumsily with his trousers as he tucked himself away.

It took her a moment to parse what had happened but then the voices registered and a second later, a group of students rounded the corner to enter the stack at the far end. They chatted softly as they perused where the Sixth Year Divination books were shelved and her stomach flipped at how close they'd come to getting caught.

Beside her, Draco was breathing hard, cheeks flushed and eyes fixed forward on the books in front of him.

The students found their quarry after a moment and departed, their voices fading as they left the section. At their retreat, Draco exhaled long and low out his mouth.

"Shit. That was close."

Her heart was still pounding from near miss and when he sent a covert hand down to squeeze himself over his trousers with a pained groan, her body pulsed, the tension demanding release. She was damp all over, throbbing, panting.

"I'm..." Her voice broke on the word. Her legs were shaking. "God, I'm so..."

He huffed a strained laugh, pointedly not looking at her. "I know. Me too. *Fuck.*"

The bite of desperation in his swear made her inner walls contract hard. The burst of pleasure felt *so good*, her orgasm curling its grip around her with a welcoming lure, but it wasn't enough. She sent a covert glance in both directions then turned around, her back against the shelf and her left side pressed against his, then slid her hand across his shirt and down. Inches away from her destination, the fingers of his right curled around her wrist, halting her.

"Too risky," he whispered, voice tight. "We should go back to our room."

The hold he had on her wrist softened as she pulled against it and with a little exhale, he let her carry on to curl her palm around his cock. Feeling him under her hand, hard as steel, made her body throb. The echo of him inside her sending a full shudder through her.

His cock was *right there*. Ready for the taking, still wet from her. Godric, if she got on her knees, he'd taste like her.

Her legs shook again, this time with restraint.

"*Granger*." The sound of her name was mixed with reverence and warning. "Don't, I'm...too close. Give me a minute to calm down and then we'll go—"

"Give me your hand," she countered breathlessly.

He hesitated then slipped his left hand off the shelf, holding it out to her. She circled his wrist, shifting closer so that with a little pressure to the backs of his fingers, he got the hint and tucked them under her skirt. They coasted through her folds, friction almost non-existent with how wet she was.

He bit his lip, hard, eyes dropping to watch. "Fuck, I need to be back inside. Can we go somewhere? Please?"

Walking was an aspirational endeavor. At present, her legs felt like she'd been struck with a Jelly-Legs Curse. And anyway, *she'd* been the one to suggest they leave ages ago, so her contrarian spirit flared, wanting to give him a taste of his own medicine.

She leaned more of her weight on the shelf behind her and fixed him with her best attempt at a patient expression. At present, she was sure it had lost most of its verve but her tone held the note of playful warning she'd hoped for.

"What did I say would happen if you edged me in the library, Draco?"

Head still bowed, his gaze cut to meet hers. She knew he hadn't forgotten.

"I want that, though," he reminded her lowly, then clicked his tongue imperiously. "And anyway, it's not my fault we had to stop. I'd get you off right here if I could."

The lift of her brows was perhaps less innocent and more challenging than she'd intended but, fuck it, it *was* a challenge.

"You can't think of *any* ways to get me off right here?"

Judging by the upward twitch of his mouth, he heard it as such.

"Oh really, Granger? I think you know exactly how many ways I could get you off." His expression went wicked. "Maybe you should list them for me. I know you love lists, don't you?"

Unbidden, her brain started doing just that, but when he absently stroked over her clit, humming an intrigued sound, her thoughts stuttered to a halt. Just a little more pressure, and—

"Actually, I've just had a thought." The glint in his eye suggested it wasn't a good one — or, more accurately, that it *was*. He dragged his fingers over her with more purpose. "How many would you like, Granger?"

Clarification wasn't necessary, not when he was circling her entrance with the patience of a man who hadn't just been forcibly, unintentionally edged.

"Two," she whispered.

He huffed out a needy, envious little breath but complied, curling two fingers against the insides of her thighs and sliding the middle two inside. It wasn't his cock but it was almost as good, especially when he sank them as deeply as they could go, applying pressure to the outside of her cunt with the meat of his palm. She gave his cock a compulsive squeeze and he grunted, the hand around her wrist tightening as his hips pressed forward into her touch.

"More?" he panted, half question and half plea.

She nodded, in answer and in sympathy, squeezing him again and then rubbing her palm over the bulge of his trousers in urgent, firm motions. He matched her intensity instantly, rocking his left wrist so his fingers stayed deep, stroking against all the places that made her eyelids flutter.

It was so good. So, *so* good. She just needed—

"H-harder," she panted.

His nostrils flared as he increased the force until the sound of every thrust became evident.

"Shit," he muttered, and paused.

But her orgasm was building, ready to crash, and if she was denied it again she was going to collapse, or cry.

"Don't stop," she whimpered. "Draco, please don't stop."

He ground his palm against her instantly, curling his fingers and rubbing inside her over the spot that made her spasm, not withdrawing in order to keep the wet, slick sounds concealed. Her free hand flew down to his forearm, fingers curling so far that her nails scraped his skin, riding his wrist with open-mouthed, near-silent gasps. She could feel herself starting to come, the heat swelling hugely inside her, the pressure reaching a peak she knew would have no choice but to break.

Under her left hand, his cock flexed.

It was hard to focus on anything else when he was rubbing the pads of his fingers inside her with such precision — Godric, he made her so wonderfully mindless sometimes — but she tried her best, moving her palm and curling her grip around where he was so, so hard.

He gasped out a low, tortured sound, letting go of her wrist to press his fist to his mouth, brows knitting over eyes squeezed shut.

"Are you—?"

It was hard to articulate words but he understood her enough nod once, and then his fist thunked against the shelf, head bowing until his forehead pressed to her temple where he panted a soft affirmation before nosing down to find her mouth. She met him for an open-mouth kiss, and the moment his tongue slid into her mouth, her orgasm crashed down.

His hand cupped the back of her head, sealing their mouths together to smother the uncontrollable sound of relief that escaped her, the release so satisfying, tears welled behind her eyelids. He rocked against her hand until her palm was damp, his fingers flexing in her hair with every pulse.

After a few breathless moments, he stilled, breaking their kiss with a series of slow, soft presses before he leaned back up, gazing down at her with dark, glazed eyes as he slid his fingers from her, fixing her knickers and leaving a wet streak on her inner thigh.

“Jesus. Christ,” he enunciated crisply, then breathed a short exhale through his nose.

She quite agreed. With a little pleased pat over his damp spot, she withdrew her hand. He grimaced, letting go of her hair to adjust himself, and she snorted, feeling half giddy from what they’d just done.

He looked up at her, unimpressed, though his eyes were warm and playful. “Glad my discomfort amuses you.”

“Considering it’s your fault we’re in this situation, yes, it does.”

“*My* fault,” he scoffed, shooting her a slanting look as he reached in his pocket for his wand.

“Well what were you expecting would happen?” she asked incredulously. “Touching me like that, and telling me all those things. Merlin, Draco, you should know us well enough by now. You really didn’t think this would be the outcome?”

“I don’t know. You just seemed...stressed. I just wanted you to...not be.” He scrubbed his right hand over his face, wand hanging inertly between them at his left side. “Fuck, my brain isn’t quite...”

She reached down and took his wand from him, holding his eye as she used it to spell him clean and dry. It was a presumptuous move, to use another’s wand, and his expression went ravenous when she turned his wand on herself.

“Don’t even start,” she warned, luxuriating in the brush of magic, warm and drying, heart full at the way his wand channeled her intention almost as well as her own.

“Don’t *you* start,” he returned, eyes scanning the length of Hawthorne and then her skirt, evidently noticing the same.

She flipped it in her hand, offering him the hilt and then wrapping her hand around the back of his neck once it was empty. She kissed his cheek, and then the corner of his mouth.

“Thank you, Draco,” she whispered. “I don’t feel stressed any more.”

He sighed a soft, contented sound. “Good.”

She stepped away, fixing her uniform and glancing back over at him when he didn’t join her. He was leaned back against the shelves, hair disheveled and flushed down to his throat.

"Give me a minute," he told her, mouth twitching upward at her inspection. "Go read my essay, yeah? I'll meet you out there."

It was rather nice, she thought as she exited the aisle and made her way back to their table, to know that even after all their varied trysts, she still managed to leave him looking star-struck.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!

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Chapter 46: “Can’t I get off my broom first?”

Chapter Notes

Hi friends and happy Friday! (or whichever day you read this on).

You know the drill: new depravity, new tags.

The first scene in this chapter arose completely on accident, and then demanded the second (which is one I wrote months ago and planned to pull in a little later). It somewhat reconfigured the rough plan I have for the story, but I actually like it more now so, win-win.

Hope you enjoy it!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Ginny was staring at her.

It was late Tuesday evening, about thirty minutes before curfew, and the general common room was quiet, most students either crammed into the library or tucked up in bed. For once, Hermione was neither.

Draco was out flying – something she had disapproved of so late in the evening. He’d given her a peck on the cheek, the gust of his soft laugh tickling her skin as he’d drawn away, and told her he’d come find her after.

Sitting alone in her room hadn’t been appealing, and so after a few minutes, Hermione had trekked down to the common room, pleased to see Ginny sprawled out on one of the fireside settees, a textbook face down on her stomach and a miniaturized Quaffle being tossed idly between her upraised arms, like a kitten with a toy.

The sight of it had loosened the little knot of anxiety in Hermione’s chest, and then a little more when Ginny had spotted her and drawn her legs up to leave a singular cushion free for Hermione to join her. Settled in against the arm of the sofa, Hermione had cracked open *The Standard Book of Charms, Grade 7* and prepared for a little light revision, reading it partly to make sure she hadn’t forgotten anything (she hadn’t) but mostly because the book she *wanted* to be reading was unfit for public consumption. Draco had given her the two he’d whispered about in her ear in the library the night before and they were waiting patiently on her bedside table.

In the convening ten-or-so minutes since Hermione’s arrival, Ginny had done nothing but toss her Quaffle and pick up an absent, hummed tune in between the prods from Hermione to cut it out. When Hermione poked her toes into Ginny’s thigh for the fifth time, Ginny finally

caught her Quaffle and poked Hermione back. A brief tussle and then the Quaffle was back airborne and Hermione's eyes were back on the pages.

Except she couldn't focus because Ginny was staring.

Hermione allowed it to go on for another half minute before she gave up on the ruse of reading and stared back. True to form, Ginny was uncowed so Hermione gave her an expectant look.

"What is it? Do you need help with Charms?"

Ginny scoffed, finally looking away as she snatched the Quaffle out of mid-air and then began to toss and catch it with just her right hand. "No."

"Then why are you staring at me? I'm trying to focus."

"Please. As if you haven't read that book backwards and forwards at least ten times."

"No one reads books backwards," Hermione retorted. "That makes no sense."

"The hard bits are at the back," Ginny countered, deftly switching hands. "And I know you like a challenge. *And* to know how something ends."

Hermione harrumphed. There was nothing wrong with reading the last page of a book – how else was one to know whether reading through would lead to a worthwhile, satisfying ending? There were so many books to read and while actually reading literally all of them was a worthwhile pursuit, she could acknowledge it also was a futile one.

"Which is curious," Ginny carried on, ignoring Hermione's aside to get back to whatever point she'd been trying to make, "because I know there's a very handy charm for repairing broken capillaries at the back of that one."

She looked pointedly toward the book that lay open over Hermione's lap. As far as Hermione could tell, Ginny's skin was unblemished. Freckled, yes, and sun kissed over the bridge of her nose and the high points of her cheeks to a rosy-boarding-on-burnt hue, but nothing that warranted a magical resolution. And if she was bruised below her clothes...well, she was an adept Charmer herself.

She met Ginny's eye. "I fail to see the pertinence of a bruise healing charm."

Ginny sat up in a fluid motion, leaning forward to poke her finger at the side of Hermione's neck. It wasn't a rough touch but even so, it sent a surprisingly tender pang through Hermione. She knocked Ginny's hand away, cupping her neck.

"Ow! What was that for?"

"I didn't realize Malfoy's complexion was indicative of his creature status," Ginny remarked, then pulled her lips into a dramatic downward arch. "Give him my condolences, won't you?"

Hermione clucked her tongue. "What on earth are you on about?"

Ginny gestured. “Your neck.”

“What about it?” Beyond being unexpectedly tender, there was nothing wrong with her neck. Hermione worked it side to side to confirm but it all felt normal.

“Merlin, does he suck your brain out as well as your blood? You, Miss Granger, have the mother of all hickeys.”

The skin under her cupped palm was suddenly hot, as were her cheeks. “What? I do not!”

Ginny’s brows reached for heaven. “Have you not looked in a mirror today? Or walked by a suit of armor? Not even a polished one; you could see that sucker—” She wagged her brows at the poor pun “—on the side of a rusty helm.”

Mirrors were a waste of time, not when all Hermione did in the mornings lately was pull her hair up into a messy knot and rub a bit of face cream in, two things she could do while half asleep or, more often, already on the way to breakfast. There was a time and place for intentional self-care and the week before exams was not it.

Hermione probed at the sore spot with gentle fingertips, remembering the way he’d been all over her neck in the library the prior evening.

“Shit.”

“Looks like a good one.” Ginny cocked her head, eyeing as Hermione traced its spread from the hinge of her jaw to halfway down her neck. “What on earth got him so feral?”

Fucking her against a bookcase in the library had certainly encouraged a fair amount of feralness on both there parts. Hermione’s expression went sly, ready for Ginny to squeal over their exploits.

“*Well, we...*”

But then she broke off as another realization struck.

Draco knew about the marks.

He’d kissed her cheek not even twenty minutes ago. Had *chuckled*. At the time, she’d thought it was fond amusement over her fussing at him flying in the dark but now...

He’d seen her, *multiple times*, during the day and beyond that, he’d watched her get dressed, had watched her pull her hair up—

Oh Godric, she’d gone about all day with it on full display.

She snapped her book shut decisively, swinging her legs off the settee. “Sorry, Ginny. I have a sudden need to hunt down a certain intrepid blonde.”

Ginny snickered. “I’ll dog-ear the appropriate bruise healing charm, shall I?”

“No.” Hermione slung her bag across her chest. “In fact, tear it out and burn it. He’s not hiding a thing.”

Because *oh*, he was in *so* much trouble

The grounds were lit only by a quarter moon and the milky brushstroke of stars, but Hermione had never been afraid of the dark. She marched with purpose down to the Quidditch pitch, wand inert in her pocket, guided only by her strong eyesight and the countless times she, Harry, and Ron had snuck out to cavort around after nightfall.

The pitch was as still and quiet as the rest of the grounds. As she paused just inside the grassy enclosure, she considered the possibility that he was miles away, soaring over the lake or the tops of trees. But then the faint outline of something black and quick zipped through the sky, high above the hoops.

Larger than a bat but just as suspiciously vampiric.

“Draco Malfoy!” she hollered, and the cloaked creature pulled up, pausing in mid-air before angling down and shooting toward her. She held her ground obstinately, hands on hips.

He drew up a few feet from her then eased closer, broom moving sideways as he dropped a foot to brace himself on the ground.

“You okay?” he asked at once, eyes scanning her face and then body. “What’s going on?”

“Hi.” She was touched by his concern but chose to ignore it until she’d fulfilled her revenge.

In two quick steps, she was in his space, raising her right hand to cup the back of his neck before tugging him forward and closing her mouth over the racing pulsepoint on the right side of his neck.

“Hi,” he blurted automatically, his hand jumping to find her waist. “Hi, what are—what are you doing?”

She sucked harder in answer.

He grunted, arm tightening around her lower back, hand palming her arse. “*Fuck*, love. Been reading, hmm?”

The salt on his skin was addicting, his blood close to the surface from his efforts on the broom, and when she worked the thick strip of muscle between her teeth, it was almost impossible not to bite down. Perhaps she empathized with him after all, when it came to leaving a mark.

But his comment reminded her of exactly why she was outside, not reading any book but particularly not the ones that would get her riled up for him, and so she kept her jaw lax. Her restraint was for naught because a second later, the broom dipped, and her teeth dragged, and he groaned like it had been yanked from him.

Though it was inevitable that he would, his enjoyment somewhat defeated the purpose. She broke her suction with a pop but kept her hand around the back of his neck.

“I have been informed,” she began, tone crisp and gaze finding his, “that I have a record-sized love bite.”

Even in the dark, his delight was plain as day. The hand on her arse squeezed as his eyes dropped to her neck.

“Ah.” He bit his lip but his smile won, stretching across his face in a way that never failed to make her heart skip a beat. “By whom?”

“By *you*, you smug prat.”

He snorted, looking back up. “No, who informed you of it?”

Oh.

She gave him a flat look. “Ginny.”

Draco laughed and she smacked his arm. “Don’t you dare laugh, Draco Malfoy! I went to *class* like this. Everyone saw – McGonagall, *Flitwick*–!”

He sobered, collecting her hands to his chest as he made an apologetic sound. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry. I should have told you or charmed it for you.”

“Yes, you should have.”

His expression went sheepish. “Are you very cross?”

She wasn’t – not *cross*. “No. Just slightly mortified.”

The look he gave her was contrite. She sighed, freeing her hands gently from his to slide them back around his shoulders.

“So I’m going to return the favor,” she informed him. “Fair’s fair.”

“Have you not already?” He tilted his head, indicating the place she’d already attacked, his left hand finding the broom handle for balance as his right regained its place on her waist.

“No, not nearly enough.”

She leaned in, nose brushing his skin, but paused when his hand on her flexed, holding her off.

“Granger.”

She leaned back, peering up at him and finding his expression expectant. She returned it.

“Can’t I get off my broom first?”

“Whatever for?”

He huffed a disbelieving laugh. “Because you marking me for the whole fucking world to see is going to get me incredibly turned on for a variety of reasons, and I’d like to be in a position to do something about it.”

The words were like a lick of fire up her spine.

“Who says I’ll let you do something about it?” she demurred, putting on a dubious expression to cover the way he so easily affected her.

“Maybe you won’t,” he agreed. “But if you bite me, I’m going to make all sorts of noises, and I know how hard you find it to resist them.”

“I can resist them,” she retorted. It was a blatant lie and he snorted, knowing it. She firmed her tone in defiance. “You’re staying on that broom, Draco Malfoy, until I’m finished with you.”

“Yes, Granger.” There was still amusement in his voice, but a layer of neediness glimmered just below it. “But you’ve got to stop full-naming me.”

She tightened her hold around his shoulders, one arm banded behind and the other hand sliding up into his hair. “No, I don’t think I will. You’re in trouble, remember?”

The broom shifted closer, his thigh bumping against her pelvis as he repositioned his right foot to brace more firmly on the grass between hers.

“I thought you weren’t cross with me.”

The wind had been playing with his hair, mussing it and giving her fingers something to work through. His hand on her waist slid up until this thumb rested just below her breast, head tilting into her touch.

“You being in trouble has nothing to do with my being cross with you or not,” she said, raking her fingers through a new section, drawing his chin up slightly with the motion. “It’s just a statement of fact.”

He snorted a soft laugh, which morphed into a breathy exhalation when she leaned back in and licked over the faint pink mark she’d left on the column of his neck. His hand slid back down to her hip, pulling her directly over his thigh. She tutted against his skin at the impudence and then nipped at him, feeling the vibrations of his resulting groan under her lips.

The retaliation hadn't been intended to initiate something with him but as he emitted another low sound against the firm, sucking pressure of her mouth, she realized it had been fairly naïve of her. Standing in the darkened Quidditch pitch, alone but for the stars and whatever watchful eyes lingered just within the tree line, she saw no reason not to let it escalate.

With his leg already between hers, it took no effort to communicate her decision. Just a little more of her weight on him, a tiny roll of her hips, and he was grabbing for her eagerly, letting go of his broom altogether to hold at her ribs as the other cupped her arse.

"Fuck, this is a fantasy," he groaned, head dropping further to the side as she released his skin only to lick up another half inch and latch back on.

She sucked hard for a beat, working the tips of her teeth carefully back and forth over the taut skin inside her mouth, and then released him.

"What, getting sucked on a broom?" she teased, kissing her mark and feeling the warmth of it against her lips.

"Jesus, I wish," he muttered, hands tightening on her ribs and bum. "No, just...you...being this into me that you can't wait until we're indoors. And that...that you want to make everyone know I'm yours."

"You are mine." She kissed her mark and then moved up another half inch higher. The muscles under her hands tensed as he prepared himself for another suckling bite. "And everyone should know it."

As soon as his breath gusted out – which she knew it would – she attached her lips and sucked hard, just below the hinge of his jaw. He grunted, the sound going thick and deep as she rolled her hips over his thigh.

It would be fun to give him the same sort of torment that he'd subjected her to in her own favorite place. But it would be even more fun to fulfill the threat she'd given him about what sort of orgasm – or lack thereof – he could expect from her on the Quidditch pitch.

With a final, rolling suck, she released him, nuzzling along the line of his jaw. His face tilted toward hers instantly, nose brushing to find his place, and then he was kissing her, working her mouth open with his own, inviting himself into her mouth.

He tasted like a summer which hadn't quite forgotten the spring; warm but crisp. She chased his tongue, forcing their kiss back into his mouth and he made a soft sound, ceding territory if not control. But he had another thing coming if he thought she'd snog him on a broom *and* let him control it.

It took effort, but she pulled back.

"Would you like that?" she asked, catching her breath. "If I sucked your cock right now?"

He made a low sound of want, sliding a hand up her spine to cup the base of her skull. "Do *you* want to?"

“Mm. I’ve definitely whetted my appetite for it,” she teased, finding the hot, damp patch of skin with her thumb, and he huffed a small laugh. “But you’re still in trouble, so...maybe I shouldn’t.”

“I haven’t made up for it yet?” His voice was low, teasing her right back. His fingers scratched over her scalp, sending goosebumps down her entire body. “What else could I do, love?”

The upward curve of his mouth against hers compelled her to kiss him again, and he hummed a happy sound, opening for her. But she was having too much fun playing their little game to dissolve into softness quite yet. She nipped at his bottom lip and pulled back.

“Do you remember your safeword?” she asked, then dropped a hand to his lap, finding his cock and giving the solid length of him a squeeze.

“*Christ.*” He groaned at the contact, and perhaps his realization of what she intended to do. “I’ll need it?”

She gave him another squeeze and then a slow, upward stroke. “Do you remember?” It was a question that encompassed two queries: his word, and why she intended he recall it.

Their eyes met and held. His breath was labored, pupils blown, and when she raised her brows in a silent ask, his nostrils flared and he nodded. Twice.

“Yes. Nougat chunks.”

Anticipation burst through her at his acknowledgement and acceptance, doubling her heart rate.

“Good. Use it, because I don’t intend to obey anything else. Not until *I* want to.”

He licked his lips. “Yeah. I’ll use it if I need to.”

She leaned in to kiss him again, and then worked her lips along his jaw. The skin along his neck was radiating heat, flushed and red from her attention. She kissed it softly and felt his thick swallow, then dragged her lips down his throat to the top of his jumper, settling more of her weight on his thigh.

“This might be the best worst idea you’ve ever had,” he murmured. “I can already tell you’re going to kill me.”

She laughed, pleased and amused, and reached down to pull his jumper up. He let go to help her, tugging it off from the back of his neck and emerging even more mussed than before. She eyed his black t-shirt meaningfully and he snorted then pulled it off, too. Colors were saturated under the moonlight but even so, she could see where his skin had begun to flush down to his chest, the thin lines of his scars almost silvery.

Seeing him sitting shirtless astride his broom was something of a fantasy of her own. Her eyes ate up the topography of his torso, watching as his muscles flexed when he leaned back to plant one hand behind himself on the handle for stability.

Stability she intended to break until he was on the ground.

She worked his trousers open, wasting no time reaching into his briefs to close her fist around the solid weight of his cock, heavy in his lap.

“*Oh*,” she breathed, eyes finding his. “You’re so hard.”

He bit his lip, holding her gaze for a second before dropping to watch her stroke him. “I told you. You’re killing me.”

She ground herself over his thigh instinctively, fist sliding up to squeeze around his tip. He teetered slightly, his left hand jumping forward to hold onto the broom between his legs.

“I should mark you here too, shouldn’t I?” she mused, rubbing her thumb meaningfully over his frenulum and then down the thick vein as far as she could reach.

His hips flexed upward, eyes on fire as they met hers. “God, please.”

“Will you beg me for it?” She tried to keep her expression innocent but there was altogether too much wickedness simmering inside her to make it convincing.

Judging by the way he was hardly blinking as he stared at her, he saw it. “Undoubtedly.”

And so, because she could, she toyed with him, lightening her touch until the tips of her fingers caged his crown, giving him a few pulsing, featherlight brushes. He bore it for a minute, the muscles of his forearms rippling as he held on, but when she gave his tip a good, rolling squeeze, he panted out a breath and just barely canted up into her fist.

The steady pressure of his leg between hers was making her want to grind but dipping too far into her pleasure would distract her from her goal.

Kneeling on the grass would make her too short to reach his cock, so she relocated her hand to close around the handle of his broom, finding his eye and then pushing down. As it wasn’t under her magical control, it didn’t budge, but he caught on quickly, lowering the broom another foot, his knee bending so that she was straddling his thigh like a little seat.

She leaned up to kiss him in thanks, a soft, lingering thing that she hoped expressed how very much she appreciated him, despite what she was about to do to him. He licked his way into her mouth when she began to draw back, and it was that tiny peek at his desperation that had her flicking the tip of his tongue with her own before nipping at his bottom lip.

“*Fuck*.” The word lingered in the air between them, mostly breath.

He looked how she suspected she had in the library: flushed and turned on, his desires exposed in his expression and in the way his cock was standing stiff, jutting out between his legs like a second broom handle. The sight of him like that nearly broke her. Nearly brought her hands up to push him to the ground so she could sink down on him. The echo of him inside her was a nearly constant presence and being faced with the sight of him now, while she was quite turned on herself, made it hard to hold off.

But...just for now. She'd get him soon but...Merlin, it was hard to wait.

Instead of indulging herself, she slid off his thigh and to her knees. He breathed another soft curse, eyes tracking her every movement as she reached up to curl her fingers around his fly, pulling his trousers further open so that his cock bobbed just beyond the tip of her nose.

She looked up to hold his eye as she circled her fist around him.

"Do you need me to say it?" she asked, giving him a slow pump from tip to base.

"Yeah," he breathed. "Tell me."

She tightened her fist just slightly as she stroked back up to the tip, bringing it to her waiting tongue and tapping just once. "I'm going to ruin you."

His breath left him in a rush, forearms rippling again as he adjusted his grip on the broom. At his lack of protest, she opened her mouth again, tongue extended in a soft, flat pad. She bounced his cock over it a few more times. He watched her with lazy lust, eyes half lidded and nostrils flaring on every inhale.

Saliva was collecting, the weight of him just barely inside her mouth enticing as ever, and so she closed her lips around him and undulated her tongue over the underside of his ridge. His tongue darted out to wet his lips, hips shifting just barely forward. The broom bobbed a few inches in the air, enough that her mouth slipped lower on him, and he panted out a gasp.

How long would he be able to hold himself aloft? If he could sustain enough focus to keep his magic flowing into the broom, then she wasn't doing her job well enough. She drew back, sipped in a quick breath, and then descended.

After all her practice, it was easy enough to take him to the back of her throat, the broad tip a familiar bulk to swallow around. She managed two swallows before her head started to fuzz with the lack of oxygen, so pulled back just enough to draw in a deep inhale through her nose, then pushed him straight back in.

"Fuck," he groaned, and the broom bobbed again as one of his hands jumped to the back of her head. "Oh love, you're so good at that."

She hummed a low, appreciative sound and his fingers curled into her hair at the vibrations in her throat. Two more indulgent swallows around him and then she pushed back against his hold, popping all the way off to gasp in a lungful of air, closing her hand around his cock and pumping him hard.

"Yeah? And my little fist? Does it feel good?"

He moaned, hips defying him to cant up into her fist, broom shuddering precariously. "So good. So good, baby."

"Look at you. Losing it already, Draco?" She increased her pace, the slick sound of her fist loud in the quiet pitch.

He whined from the back of his throat, eyes downcast to watch. “Merlin, you know just how to get me off, don’t you? Fucking hell. You’re perfect.”

His praise warmed her, and encouraged her. She brought her mouth back to the tip, suckling around it with her eyes on his, fist working his shaft, fingers twisting and tightening in the ways she knew he loved.

After a few moments of perfect technique, she pulled away again. At the absence of her hand and mouth, his intention was finally severed from flying. The broom dropped out from under him almost instantly, as she’d hoped it might. A big fat tally mark in the Hermione Granger victory column. She grinned at him on his arse in the grass and he groaned out a laugh.

“Jesus. Ow.”

“Oh please. Falling off your broom in the pitch isn’t unprecedented, is it?” she teased.

He huffed, shifting sideways to lie flat in the grass, broom beside him. “That only happened once. Maybe twice.”

She settled herself on her knees beside his hip, hands stroking down his stomach and then tugging on his trousers, pulling them down enough to keep his cock exposed to her. He lifted his arse helpfully, hand finding his cock reflexively and giving himself a comforting stroke. She tsked, batting his hand away and replacing it with her own. His eyes glinted with a little victory of his own, and so she narrowed hers playfully.

“I know you said you’re not into degradation but...can I say just one thing? It’s too perfect for the occasion not to.”

He snorted, tucking one hand behind his head. “By all means.”

She gave him a little squeeze then trailed her hand down to his balls, cupping them in her palm. “You’re good on a broom,” she began, fondling him gently, “but when it came to Seeking...” She tilted her head side to side in a *so so* gesture and he feigned a sound of affront. “So, consider your orgasm the Snitch. You’re going to try and catch it, but it’s going to be always just out of reach, grasped by someone else.”

“Cheeky witch.” He rolled his eyes, but his balls shifted under her attention. “If that’s what you consider degradation, then I’m more equipped to handle it than I thought.”

She scoffed. “That was nothing.”

“Oh yeah?” He shifted again as she stroked behind his balls with her middle two fingers, just a tiny teasing touch.

“Yes.” She sent one finger back to just barely brush his rim. “I could be very degrading to you if you wanted.”

Another compulsive wetting of his lips. “I...don’t know if I want you to.”

“You don’t have to.” She gave him a proper rub over his arse and felt his muscles tighten in response. “Just letting you know your options.”

“Maybe not words,” he murmured, rocking into her touch. “But...actions?”

That got her lips curling upward, sure her expression was displaying just how wicked she felt.

“Oh, I fully intend to have my depraved way with you,” she assured him, then pulled back to give his balls another little squeeze on her way to his cock. “Ready to carry on? Back’s not too sore?”

He flicked a meaningful glance to his lap, cock as stiff as ever. “I never stopped being ready. You didn’t have to stop.”

“Ah.” She smirked. “And yet, I will.”

A huffed breath, silvery eyes nearly black. “Yeah, you will. Okay, baby. Be mean to me.”

“It’ll be my pleasure.” Her smile widened, and she leaned down to press it to his mouth, giving him a warm, slow kiss. He sighed into it, lips soft against hers, not trying to take over.

She worked her kisses over his cheek and then brushed them featherlight over the red, sensitive skin of his neck, finding his cock with her right hand and synchronizing her strokes with the soft flicks of her tongue, until his neck and her hand were damp.

“Mine,” she whispered and he groaned, hips lifting needily.

It was almost too easy to get him going. Although to be fair, he’d done almost nothing to her in the library and she’d begged him to fuck her, so perhaps they were just a perfect match. Mutually assured destruction, of the most beautiful sort.

She forged a trail with her lips down his torso, lingering on his chest for a few suckling nips, then his nipples, and then his hips, the cool night air bringing awareness to all the places she had left damp marks on his skin. By the time she got to his cock, he was panting, the slow strokes of her fist having dragged precome all down his shaft.

She hovered her mouth over his cock, eyes lifting to find his. He didn’t hesitate.

“Please,” he breathed, rapt. “Spit on my cock, baby. Suck a mark on me.”

She worked her mouth and then let a thin string of saliva drip from her tongue to slide slowly over his cockhead, mingling with his arousal. She worked it into his skin, letting him look at her tongue as she slowly brought it down to swirl softly over his slit.

“Fucking Christ,” he bit out. “So fucking wet. So *soft*.”

She sucked hard on the side of his crown, then on the underside just above his frenulum. Blood was pulsing through him perceptibly, as if frantic to get closer to her lips. He was so

hard, it was almost tricky to get enough purchase to suck, but she did her best, ensuring he felt the gentle rake of teeth along the pulsing vein.

She knew that he wanted nothing more than to slide to the back of her throat again, and so she gave him a tiny tease of it, lips closing in a brief suck around his tip before she sat up, fist finding a moderate pace.

“Such a hard cock,” she murmured, keeping her mouth ajar to tempt him. “Did that feel good?”

He panted a laugh. “You’re such a tease.”

“I learned from the best.” She flicked a brow at him and then doubled her pace. He swore, abs popping as he lost his restraint for a moment, hips bucking uncontrollably into the tightness of her hand. She thought to stop him, then reconsidered. She wanted him past the point of no return.

“Fucking my little fist so nicely.” She closed her teeth over her bottom lip then moaned breathily. “*Fuck*, Draco, I wish it was my cunt.”

“Ah— I’m close,” he grit out. “*Fuck, fuck*. If you don’t want me to—*fuck*, I want to come. Please make me come.”

“Not yet.” She pulled her hand away and he arched up, trying to find it.

She held her hand aloft as he panted for a breath, settling back on the grass. Once she was sure he wouldn’t come because of it, she lowered her hand and wrapped it back around his cock. She only made it two strokes before he was moaning again, hips trying to rise to fuck into her fist again.

“Draco,” she warned lowly and he swore.

“God,” he whined. “I’m on the fucking edge. *Please*, baby. I need—*please*.”

“You’re begging so nicely,” she murmured, closing her hand around the swollen head of his cock and giving it a languid squeeze. “But you’re not going to come.”

“I—might,” he choked out.

Two more squeezes and then she felt it – the telltale stiffening and that deep, strong throb. She let go, watching as he writhed, head pressed back into the grass and eyes screwed shut, seeking friction but finding none. A second later, come began to ooze from his slit in a series of languid, underpowered spurts, streaking down his shaft and dripping onto his stomach.

“*Fuck*,” he groaned, the anguished pitch of it highlighting exactly how unsatisfying the ejaculation was when uncoupled with orgasm, the muscles of his stomach tensing hard. “*Fuck, fuck, fuck—oh Jesus, fuuuuck.*”

She tutted soothingly, stroking her hands softly over his thighs and stomach, feeling the muscles twitching under her palms as he finally settled.

“*Goddamn it*,” he panted, slinging an arm over his eyes. “That sucked. *Fuck*.”

She hummed an understanding sound, stroking gently over his abs again. “You alright?”

“Yeah.” He laughed, broken and breathless. “Yeah, just...Salazar, that...*Jesus*.”

The sight of him under her, cock still mostly solid, balls high and flushed pink – all of him sensitive and unsated - made her a little wild. Her body was thrumming with unspent arousal of her own and though she’d gotten her way and ruined his orgasm, she didn’t want to leave him in this state.

The question was whether he was up – emotionally as well as physically – for another round.

As her hands slid back down his stomach, she let her fingers graze lightly over his cock in an exploratory touch, gauging his reaction. He lifted his arm to peek under it at her, not flinching away, and so she curled her fingers around him. He hissed in a breath, more in surprise than pain, his eyes flicking down and then back up to hers.

“What are you doing?” he croaked.

“You’re still hard,” she informed him, carefully swinging a leg over his lap to straddle him in the grass, rucking up her skirt as she did so. “It’d be a shame to waste such a nice cock, wouldn’t it?”

“Oh fuck.” He watched as she rose up enough to tug her knickers aside, sliding the tip of him through her center and alerting them both to just how turned on she’d gotten. “*Fuck*, I’m...”

“Sensitive?” Her tone indicated that she’d listen if he wasn’t enjoying it anymore, even without the safeword.

“So fucking sensitive.” He hissed in another breath when she eased his tip around her entrance, smearing her arousal. “But so turned on. Fuck, that’s...fuck, put me inside you, love.”

“Oh?” She sank down over the tip and he groaned. “You want it?”

“Fuck me.” He pressed his head back, staring up at the stars with unseeing eyes. “Please fuck me.”

“Why? Think I’ll let you come properly this time?” she teased, sinking down onto him with a slow, steady press.

“I don’t even care,” he groaned, eyelids sliding halfway closed in agonized pleasure. “Just need to be inside you.”

She rose up and then sank down in a smooth, fast stroke, rocking her hips once she was seated.

“Oh *Christ*. So wet,” he panted. “You got so wet doing that to me.”

“Uh-huh.” She bounced on him, rapidly increasing her pace as the dizzying mix of relief and bliss threatened her control. “God, it makes me *crazy* when you beg.”

He fisted handfuls of grass on either side of her knees. “If you don’t let me come this time, I think I might fucking cry.”

She panted out a harsh gasp, walls clenching involuntarily as the image of him lying under her, so desperate for orgasm that he was sobbing—

Fuck. She fluttered around him again, harder.

On his next breath, he choked out a laugh. “Oh? You want to make me cry, love?”

“N-no.”

He laughed again, more strained this time. “It’s okay if you do.”

She braced herself with a hand on his chest. “Okay. Maybe I do. You’re so sexy when you’re a mess.”

He closed his hand around her wrist and tugged it up. She caught herself with another hand on his shoulder and let him pull the first up to his throat. She closed her fingers around his neck instinctively, careful with the pressure of her thumb over the already-bruising mark she’d made.

“Go ahead, sweetheart,” he murmured, eyes meeting hers. “Use me. Make me cry.”

“God, Draco.” She bit her lip, grinding against him urgently.

She’d worked herself up almost as much as she had him and the feel of his frantic pulse against her fingers, the look of absolute arousal on his face, and the hard, unrelenting way she was letting herself fuck him took her to the edge fast. She’d found an angle which had his cock rubbing against her front wall without reprieve and the constant stimulation was making her feel swollen and full.

“You’re so tight.” He grit the words out like they hurt. “Fuck. *Fuck.* Ohh, it feels so good. Please let me come this time, baby. Please, *please.*”

“Thought you didn’t care.” She tightened her hand around his throat and he moaned.

“No, I...Oh no. *Baby*, I’m—” She lifted off him instantly and he yelled something inarticulate, hips jerking up under her, trying to push back inside. “No, no, come back, please, fuck—*fuck—*”

But she’d gotten herself close as well, and the thought of not coming together while she had him like this seemed impossible. So she let go of his throat to hastily realign his cock and sank back down, grinding over his pelvis. His hands snapped to her hips with a gasp.

“Oh fuck. Oh fuck, I don’t think I can— I’m so— m’gonna fucking come. Can I? Can I?”

She flattened herself over him, elbows digging into the grass above his shoulders, one hand clawing at the ground for support and the other curling tightly into his hair, face hovering just above his.

“Yes,” she breathed. “*Yes*. Come for me, Draco.”

His eyes screwed shut, mouth dropping open and hands unrelenting on her hips, working her down on him as he planted his feet and thrust up, hard, into her. She came right before he did and when he finally found pleasure, he really did cry, tears sliding out under tightly closed lids as he hissed in a harsh breath through his teeth and then choked out a loud, uncontrolled groan.

She thought to silence him with her hand but she was still shaking with her own pleasure and anyway, who would hear? Or more specifically, who would hear that would care? And so she worked him through it, soaking in every ounce of his release.

It took him longer than ever to recover, chest heaving for several beats while she offered him steady, light pressure over his pecs, a consistent presence. When he blinked his eyes open, another round of tears slid down to his temples.

“You alright?” she panted, bringing a hand up to brush the backs of her knuckles along his face, swiping away the damp path.

“I’m...” He squinted one eye shut, mouth pulling into a self-deprecating smile. “Dazed. Give me a minute to...” He petered off, the rest of his sentence unnecessary to voice.

She bit her lip to hide her ridiculously pleased grin, brushing all his tears away in a series of small, careful strokes. By the time his face was dry, his expression was clear and focused again.

“That was the weirdest feeling,” he mused, brows twitching together thoughtfully. “The first one, I mean.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah, I...it felt like coming but...without the pleasure. I’ve never noticed just how many muscles are involved until I can feel them tightening up like that.”

“Did it hurt?”

He made a noncommittal sound. “It wasn’t painful but...yeah, it was uncomfortable. And *deeply* frustrating.”

Her expression went sympathetic. “Poor thing. And the second one?”

He huffed a laugh, shaking his head in wonderment. “It was *insane*. To have them back to back, especially - to feel the difference? *Fucking* insane.”

“Good.” She ran her fingers carefully through his hair, the sweat at his hairline keeping it pushed back. He closed his eyes with a contented sigh.

While it was lovely to linger in the afterglow, it hadn't been forgotten that he was lying on the Quidditch pitch, practically naked and absolutely fucked, while she was perched on top of him, her clothing mostly intact if not for her skirt up over her hips.

And beyond the obviousness of their position was the fact that it was well after curfew and, even more importantly, far past their bedtime. She was going to be useless in class tomorrow unless she got under the sheets sharpish.

"Right," she said, with a rousing inhale. "Time to get up."

He groaned forlornly, eyes still closed. "Witch, you've just killed me. Give me a damn minute."

Lying there on the grass, painted in moonlight and stars, all hers.

She couldn't help but indulge him.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!

I'm doing my best (no, I won't lie to you -- I'm doing my okayest) to catch up on replying to all the comments in a timely fashion, but please know that every single one gives me a burst of excitement. It's so fun to read your reactions and recognize readers 🥹💖 I hope to get my act together but in the meantime, a generalized THANK YOU SO MUCH!!! if you take the time to leave me a reaction.

Or, if you prefer, come chat to me in one of these places! I love making friends 🍷

Find me on [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🙌

Chapter 47: And then she remembered that he didn't know.

Chapter Notes

Hi friends! I've had a busy last few weeks both personally and fandomly(?) but it's been net positive, so no complaints from me except for how long it's been since I've played in the YDIFM sandbox 😞

Here's what I've been up to, should you be inclined to check them out:

- A collab fic with ETL Echo in which I sort Draco into Hufflepuff: [Dinner, and then Bed](#)
- A fic for Dramione Month's undetectable extension charm and legilimency days, feat BDD: [Not The Standard Size](#)
- A fic for Dramione Month's forced proximity day: [Overture](#)
- A Cedric/Astoria fic for the Back to School Fest: [Harbinger](#)
- A new WIP feat investigative journalists Hermione and Draco, annoyances to lovers vibes: [Unqualified and Untested](#)
- A collab fic/art with [Sophiestreet](#) for Dramione Month's Auror day: [Bad Dog](#)

I have a few more pots on the stove to juggle until December-ish but I'm hoping to stay on top of this one amid it. Thanks for sticking around!! 💖

And with that, here's some fluff/comfort because I missed them 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

On the eve of the penultimate weekend before exams, Draco propped his elbow on the dinner table and turned to her. The bite of ginger cake held aloft on his spoon dripped custard all over his plate, but he ignored it for a moment.

“So, what’s the process for buying a Muggle house?” he asked, as if they’d been in the middle of a conversation.

As she chewed her own bite of pudding – much less drowned in custard than his - Hermione furrowed her brow. “Buying a house?” she repeated once she’d swallowed.

He nodded then ate his spoonful neatly, expression expectant. She didn’t know much about the process beyond what she could remember when her family had moved to Hampstead, and even then she’d been seven and hardly paying attention.

“I’m not sure,” she said slowly. “I suppose you first need to get an estate agent, or look up the house listings in a Muggle newspaper and then ring the listening agent to schedule a viewing.”

He hummed thoughtfully, turning back to his plate to spoon another bite. When he didn't say anything else, she set her own utensil down.

"Is this for your Muggle Studies exam?" If Hogwarts was teaching this level of Muggle life skills then she suddenly regretted dropping it.

He shot her a sidelong smile. "No. For us. School ends soon, and though you're more than welcome to move into the Manor, or we could impose ourselves – lovingly – on Blaise and Theo, I thought you might like a place of your own." He tilted his head, amending that last. "*Our* own. It seems smart to have that settled so it's not something you're worried about during exams."

She hadn't even *considered* worrying about it, but at the suggestion, instantly began to. There were so many things to sort out and organize, so many phone calls to be made – which necessitated leaving Hogwarts grounds to locate a telephone – and a new list of innumerable tasks to first think of, and then prioritize, and then painstakingly cross off.

Draco noticed his mistake instantly, putting his spoon down and angling himself toward her, his hand coming to rest on her back. "I see I've accidentally done the opposite of what I'd hoped."

She leaned into his side, encouraging his arm to curl around her shoulders.

"How have I not thought about it yet?" she asked, tone full of disbelief. "Godric, I've been so focused on exams I haven't even considered what comes after they're done."

"Will it make a difference if I ask you not to worry about it?"

She scoffed and he squeezed her.

"Thought not. How about this: I'll write to mum and have her find us an agent. She'd be happy to sort out all the administrative bits."

"Your mother doesn't know the first thing about finding a Muggle estate agent," she said dubiously.

He picked up his spoon with his right hand, keeping his left slung around her, and gave her a challenging look, affection woven through it. "Do *you*?"

He had her there.

"Well, no. But I have a better idea of where to find one than she does, I'm sure."

He waved this off with his spoon before dipping it into his cake for another bite. "Narcissa Malfoy is many things, and a resourceful woman is top of the list. With all her contacts, she'll have no problem getting referred to the best."

While it was unsurprising to hear that Narcissa was well connected, the implication that her sphere extended into the Muggle realm was laughable. But Draco seemed confident in his mother's abilities, and after the monologue from Lucius, she supposed anything was possible.

“She can’t owl them,” Hermione warned. “And she can’t meet with them wearing dress robes.”

He shot her a bemused smile. “Don’t fret, Granger. My mother is adept at blending in.”

She considered the validity of this, and found no ready evidence to prove otherwise. Fine, if Draco’s mother could lend a hand, Hermione was quite happy to accept the assistance. She wouldn’t mind living with Blaise and Theo on a temporary basis, but moving into Malfoy Manor...well, it would take a bit of convincing. Even with the lure of Draco’s private library, *and* the full library, *and* that gorgeous bath, there was something distinctly uncomfortable about the concept of living under Lucius Malfoy’s roof. That thought brought her attention back to Draco.

“And she won’t be offended? Or hurt? To know you don’t intend to live in your birthright?”

Draco considered this as he swallowed his final bite of cake. “She’ll be happy to help us find somewhere we’ll be happy,” he said, not quite a deflection but close. Hermione raised a skeptical eyebrow but didn’t push.

They traipsed to the Owlery after dinner to send off the letter Draco had written to his mother after finishing his cake, then moseyed slowly back through the courtyard, fingers tangled together.

“Library?” he confirmed.

It was their habitual next stop after dinner but her thoughts were, for once, focused beyond exams. She hummed in the negative.

“No. Bed.”

He glanced over at her. “It’s only half seven.”

“Bedroom,” she clarified with an eye roll.

“Oh?” He wiggled his fingers between hers and she clicked her tongue at his implication.

“I just don’t feel like studying in the library. You’ve thoroughly distracted me with your talk of a flat and I know I won’t be able to focus on anything else tonight until I get some thoughts jotted down.”

“Mm, nothing sexier than discussing land ownership, I quite agree.” He laughed when she playfully dug her nails into the back of his hand. “Alright, alright – *Merlin*, witch.”

She relented, squeezing his hand in a final, gentler pulse then relaxing into his grip. “Although if you want to revise more tonight, please don’t hold off on my account.”

“Nah.” His thumb stroked over the back of her hand, idly affectionate. “At this point, I’ll either know the answer or not. Further revisions will just muddy the waters.”

“What, you’re finished revising *completely*?” She sent a shocked look up at him. “But there’s still all of next week!”

He chuckled, working his fingers free of hers to sling his arm around her shoulders and tug her to his side, pressing a kiss to her curls. “I promise not to get in the way of your revisions, love.”

It wasn’t *her* revisions she was worried about – she had perfected her techniques amid war and, even more distracting, Harry and Ron’s presence – but...if he felt prepared, she’d trust that he would be. Still, she huffed a little breath through her nose at the concept.

“If you’re sure...”

“I could quiz you if you like, just to stay in the headspace,” he offered as they began to ascend the main staircase. “I could reward you for correct answers,” he added in an undertone.

She glanced over at him. “Oh? Reward me how?”

He hummed a thoughtful sound. “Perhaps put you in a certain pair of knickers, and then sit you on my lap – facing me, of course, so you don’t look at the answers and cheat – and then each time you’re *exceptionally* clever, I’d—”

She shushed him as a group of students clattered past on their way down and he snorted, sending a wolfish grin her way.

“You’re blushing. You like that idea?”

“I don’t need incentives to study,” she said primly.

“So that’s a yes.” He winked at her. “Noted. Well, just tell me which course is the most tricky and we can start there. I know how much you like to earn your gold stars.”

She wanted to smack him and snog him in equal measure, something she could tell he knew judging by his second little chuckle and the covert side-step out of her reach.

Up in her room, they pulled off their outerwear and school bags. It was quite early to get ready for bed but with no plans to leave the room again, there was no reason not to. Draco didn’t sleep in much more than his boxer-briefs or the occasional pair of pajama bottoms so by the time Hermione had pulled on her pajama shorts and t-shirt and gone to wash her face, he was already under the covers, sitting up against the headboard.

She took a moment to admire him from the bathroom doorway, taking in the dips and contours of his chest and abs, the humanizing blemishes of his scars, and the bemused expression he was sending over to her. How had she gotten so lucky?

“Coming to bed?” he inquired mildly. “Or did you want to just watch from there?”

“Watch what?” she replied, brows raising suspiciously.

He smirked. "Whatever you like, I'd imagine."

"Hm." She pushed off the doorframe and joined him on the bed, staying on top of the covers as she settled herself on his lap. "Tempting."

"Doubly so, now," he agreed, hands stroking up and down her thighs in a slow circuit. "As you well know, you can have anything you want."

Yes. She did know. And there was something distinctly comforting about the sureness in her gut when she considered the truthfulness of his words. Anything within his power, he would give her. It made reciprocation as easy as breathing.

"Well in that case..." She snagged his hands and brought them to her breasts. He took over at once, squeezing gently and then stroking his thumbs over her nipples, gaze lingering on hers before he finally had to look. With her thin sleep shirt the only barrier, the grazing touch made her hips jerk forward reflexively.

His eyes flicked up to hers. "Sensitive?"

"Mm-hmm. My period is due soon." His touch paused so she added, "Keep going. Feels good."

He hummed agreeably, brushing his thumbs back and forth until her nipples were pebbled and she was squirming. "I'll make sure we have pain potion on hand, then."

"You're so thoughtful."

She lifted up slightly and he immediately caught on, shoving the covers down so that she could settle herself directly on his lap. He tucked the duvet up around her hips, cocooning them into a little nest. Under her, she could feel how he was beginning to respond to her wriggling, so shifted slightly to the left to accommodate his location. He squeezed her breasts gently, hands warm and strong.

"I don't like seeing you hurting," he murmured. "And you know I'm at your service should you need anything else to help you through it."

She snorted. "How altruistic of you."

He smirked, biting the edge of his lip to temper what she knew would be another broad grin. "That's what people are always saying about me, yes."

"Oh, I'm sure," she said with exaggerated earnestness. "You *are* a very selfless, giving person."

"Yeah?" He sounded half distracted already, eyes downcast to watch as she rubbed herself lightly over the bulge in his pajamas. His hands slid down her sides to cup her bum, pulling her closer.

"Absolutely."

She bit the corner of her lip as he encouraged her movements over him, knees sliding outward, opening herself up so that her next grind forward was directly over her clit. He blew out a soft exhale, resting his head against the headboard and gazing up at her as she rolled her hips with slightly more intention.

“Trying to start something after all?” he murmured, hands skimming back up to her breasts to resume his light grazes over her nipples.

Doing anything beyond a little playful touching hadn’t been on her mind not even five minutes ago, but to be fair, it never took her long to want more when it came to him. Even so, she tilted her head with feigned consideration, cocking a thoughtful brow just to goad him.

“I’m not sure. This feels rather nice by itself, doesn’t it?”

He gave her a forlorn microshake of his head. “Tease.”

“It’s *your* fault. You’re the one that got me thinking about sitting on your lap, so blame yourself for the frottage.”

He raised his brows. “Oh? And when did I imply that you wouldn’t be full of cock while sitting on my lap, revising?”

Heat surged but she maintained her dubious expression. “Perhaps because you said I’d be wearing knickers?” she returned impishly.

“Ah, of course.” His eyes glittered. “Except that we both know I can fuck you with those knickers on. And, if I recall, you’re quite a fan.”

She gave him a long, rolling grind in retaliation though he didn’t appear chastised by it. “That’s true. I did rather enjoy myself with those.”

“Want to go get them? I’ll keep myself nice and warm for you.”

She tsked through a smile. “I’m sure you would. But no, I’m quite happy like this, thank you.”

He made a show of sighing disappointedly. She trailed her fingertips over his chest, finding his nipples and copying the soft brush he was still absently sending over hers.

He squirmed, huffing a laugh. “You’re feisty tonight.”

“I just feel a bit...antsy. Distracted.”

He gave her an apologetic smile. “Is that also my fault?”

“No.” She traced the silvery, faded line that bisected the bottom half of his pec then sighed. “Well. A bit.”

She could feel his attention on her, leaving space for her to continue, and so after a moment she did. “It’s silly, given that you’re right and we have several places we could go

temporarily – I mean, even beyond the Manor or Blaise and Theo's, I know Harry would be happy to have us at Grimmauld Place, if we needed. But even so..."

His hands slid from her breasts to her upper arms, and he gave her a comforting squeeze. "I understand, love. Okay, so let's talk about it."

The shift in tone had her brows knitting, her hips drifting to a stop unconsciously. "Talk about what, specifically?"

"Where we'll live after school. *Specifically*, our house."

She narrowed her eyes. "You keep saying 'house'. Just to be clear, you're not buying me a house."

His pause felt significant, particularly when his gaze dropped to her shoulder rather than meeting her eye.

"Draco..." she prompted warily. "Say you're not buying me a house."

The edge of his mouth twitched, but he looked up. "I'm not buying you a house."

It felt too easy, and he looked entirely too sincere. And then it clicked. *Ah*. Slytherins and their bloody precise language.

"You're not buying *us* a house, either," she amended.

He tsked at that. "Why not?"

"*Draco*. We don't need a *house*. All we need is a nice, small flat with one bedroom and one bathroom and a kitchen and...perhaps a little patio, or just some big windows."

He studied her for a moment, toying with the end of a curl where it hung over her shoulder. "Is this preference money-adjacent, perchance?"

She frowned. "What?"

"Because you remember what I said, don't you? I'm going to take care of that aspect."

The sincerity in his expression softened her down. She gave him a fond smile. "No, I didn't forget."

He wrapped the curl around his forefinger. "So what then? Do you *want* a small flat? Or do you think you don't deserve a house?"

She rolled her eyes. "Don't be dramatic, it's not that. I just...I mean, we're young! We're supposed to start small, aren't we?"

He raised a brow. "According to whom?"

She laughed and put on her most posh accent. “Oh pardon *me*, Lord Malfoy, for presuming you were expecting to live in anything smaller than a modest sixteen-bedroom home on the Thames.”

He gave her hair a little tug. “Cheeky. But really, who says we have to start small?”

Who indeed? Ingrained in her was the pathway of starting at the bottom and working one’s way up, but it wasn’t a *rule*. There was no one out patrolling to audit the order in which people lived their lives, and plenty of people started at the middle or even the top. Just not the people that she typically surrounded herself with.

Damnit, *was* it money-adjacent after all? Though not in the way he’d meant - that she was worried about affording it - but more in the same way she’d felt out of her depth on Blaise’s yacht. Did she *actually* think she only deserved a small house, because that was her social class’s way of doing things? How annoying.

But before she could verbalize any of this, he cocked his head and she realized he’d been studying her as she’d mulled it over.

“To be clear, if you want somewhere small because of your own personal preference, that’s completely fine with me. I don’t need space.” The implied *with you* made her heart throb. “But if it has anything to do with what you think you deserve or should be allowed to have, please consider otherwise.”

How was it that he was so adept at alleviating her concerns before she’d fully realized them? She pressed her lips together in a flat, fond smile.

“I’m going to be open minded about it,” she decided. “Small, big, townhouse, country estate – whatever we decide we like, that’s where we’ll live.”

He raised a brow at her change of tone but nodded, releasing her curl to stroke both hands over her shoulders and then up her neck, scooping her hair into both hands and beginning to craft a low ponytail. His hands in her hair both settled and electrified her nerves in the way that only he seemed able to manage. She shivered, the motion reminding her of his half-hard state below her.

“That sounds like an excellent way to approach it,” he agreed softly, then released the hair he’d gathered, fingers raising to begin taming the curls on top, bringing them together at her crown. “So what are your specific wish-list items?”

He had a look of calm focus on his face but when he let the second loose hairstyle fall free to slide his hands to the base of her skull, collecting the full mass of curls again, she finally had to ask.

“What are you doing?”

“Hm?” His eyes met hers in a quick touch before they unfocused again, as if he could see through her head, watching as he twisted her hair into something that felt like a chignon.

“Just playing. Do you mind?”

The sensation of his hands in her hair was filling her with a pervasive warmth until she felt like a cat in a puddle of sunshine, lax and content. She hummed a soft sound of pleasure and gave him a little shake of the head.

“Not a bit. Feels lovely.”

He let the coil spill loose around her shoulders, fluffing a few curls with the tips of his fingers, eyes trailing over the perimeter of her face where the shorter curls liked to go a little wild. “It’s both so willing to hold a style and *so* rebellious, isn’t it?” he remarked.

She laughed. “Yes. Quite the opposite of yours.”

“Mine holds a style beautifully, thank you.” He cut an amused look at her before refocusing on her hair. “Think I can do a plait like this?” he mused, fingers already working to divide her hair into three.

“I’m sure you could.” She shifted over his lap, getting comfortable, then ran her fingers over his shoulders and up the back of his neck, playing with the soft, shorter hairs there. It was entirely instinctual to lean closer to him, and by the time her fingers had sunk into the longer hairs at his crown, she was kissing him.

He kissed her back lazily, the motions slow and lingering, fingers only slightly clumsy as he carried on with his work. When she pulled his bottom lip between hers and sucked lightly, he chuckled, and finally the alternating tugs at her scalp ceased.

“It’s tricky enough without looking,” he muttered when she released him. “I don’t need the added challenge yet.”

She smiled into their next kiss, squeezing her knees around his hips in a little hug. “So stop braiding my hair.”

He hummed a sound of disagreement into their next kiss, then resumed the motions behind her head. “Not until I get it.”

She kissed him softly as he wound her hair over and under, fingers snagging now and then but never pulling more than she liked. When he reached the ends of her hair, he smiled triumphantly against her mouth.

“Well done,” she mumbled, amused.

“I’m sure it looks horrendous.” He held the braid secure in one fist and cupped the back of her neck with the other. “I’ll have to practice.”

And then he deepened the kiss, his mouth slanting over hers as he slid his tongue inside. The effect of his kiss, now that he was fully focused on it, had her shifting over his lap again, her arousal turning acute. It was impressive, how quickly he could go from halfway to fully hard. She broke the kiss to track her lips over his cheek, working herself over him in little forward and back figure-eights.

“What should I do, now that it’s out of my way?” she murmured, pecking a kiss just beside his ear. “Should I suck your cock?”

He huffed a laugh, the gust warm against her neck. “Yeah? I’ll practice every day then, if that’s the result.”

“As if it’s difficult to convince me,” she said dryly, and scraped her teeth lightly over the corner of his jaw.

“Mm, I usually do have to beg for it, don’t I?” he teased, then tugged her back with his hold on her braid until they were face to face again. “You can if you like, of course, but I wasn’t aiming for it.”

“I know.” She kissed him sweetly. “That’s why you get them.”

He chuckled, hands dropping to cup her arse. “Maybe in a minute then. I have questions first.”

“Oh?” She kissed the corner of his mouth.

“Mm. You never answered me about your wish list.”

She leaned back to look at him, chin tucked back in her incredulity. “You’d rather discuss our imagined future home than get a blowjob? Seriously?”

“I play the long game, Granger.” The edge of his lip twitched upward at her skeptical expression. “Meaning I’d like to sort out what will make you love a place so much, it’ll ensure I get my cock sucked for the rest of my life.”

She clucked her tongue imperiously. “Good *lord*. You express your romantic tendencies in the oddest ways sometimes.”

He smirked. “Ah, but it *is* romantic, isn’t it?” He leaned forward, brushing the tip of his nose against hers. “Help me find the house you’ll fuck me in forever, darling. Please?”

“Jesus, Draco.” She laughed, and pecked a kiss to his smiling mouth. “Fine. If you insist.”

“I do.” He leaned back expectantly. “Now, we’ve agreed the size doesn’t matter, but what are the elements that would make or break it for you?”

She sighed laboriously, half for show, but settled herself heavily over his lap as she considered it. “A bath, obviously – and the bigger the better in that category.” He nodded agreeably. “It would be lovely to have a little outdoor space, but not so much that we couldn’t nip down to a cafe or pub or little corner bookshop without needing to Apparate or Floo somewhere first.”

He nodded. “So near a village? Or would you like to be in London itself?”

“No strong preference.” She shrugged. “You?”

Draco stroked his thumbs up the sides of her bum thoughtfully. "I'd rather not live in Diagon Alley but I'd be okay with living in the city in general."

"You never have, have you?" she realized. "Just the Manor and Hogwarts. *Aw*, my little country boy."

He rolled his eyes but couldn't hold his smile. "Please. I'm hardly quaint."

A refute was on the tip of her tongue, amused delight rising along with her lips, but he spoke before she could.

"But speaking of living in London, would you want to live close to your family? They're just north of the city proper, aren't they?"

The question brought her up short.

And then she remembered that he didn't know.

Her stomach flipped at the realization that she'd accidentally kept something so monumental from him, and then again at the reality that she was about to have to discuss it openly, out loud.

She'd confided in Harry and Ron about it in the moment, of course, and had sought the parental advice of the Weasleys after the war, but none of those conversations had done anything to soothe the little hurt that panged each time she remembered her choice to erase herself from her parent's memories. It had been necessary, if not somewhat extreme, but at the time there hadn't been another obvious solution.

She didn't feel guilty about ensuring her parents protection and safety, but a part of her would always regret it. Would always grieve for what had been permanently forgotten: the people her parents had been, all the little moments that shaped the relationship they'd had, the pieces of the child that would never be recovered.

Sometimes, her grief felt thick enough to drown in. Sometimes she was at peace with it, accepting her constant companion. She knew she'd never fully heal, not while the wound was still so open, but tending to it usually hurt more than ignoring it, and so she'd gotten used to pretending that part of her heart wasn't broken.

Never, not until this very moment, had she ever thought she might find a way to patch it.

Because while Ron's family had almost always been a cohesive unit, and Harry's had almost always been a broken one, Draco was like her. He knew the reality of having a strong family break and be reformed into something else; something both fundamentally the same and worlds different. If there was anyone who would understand her choice *and* personally empathize with the fallout of it, it was him. It was yet another way that their lives had become compatible.

And anyway, she'd never been good at pretending with him. Knowledge beget intimacy, and intimacy fueled honesty, and being anything but those things with him seemed unthinkable

now.

So she sighed and shook her head ruefully. “No, that’d be quite a long way away. They live in Australia now.”

It was clear her answer surprised him, but he only hummed an interested sound. “Australia? Merlin, that *is* far. When’s the last time you saw them?”

It was June now, so...

“Almost a year.”

He made a sympathetic sound. “That’s tough. But I suppose it’s not easy getting there. Even with a Portkey, that would take at least three stops, and those are tough to do back to back.”

“I go via aeroplane,” she said, bemused despite herself. “Not *everything* has to be done magically.”

He raised a brow. “I don’t know, controlling a flying metal cylinder seems fairly magical to me.”

An eye roll seemed a fitting response and so she performed one, but then she met his eye and did what they did best: shared.

“There’s a bit more to it than just the geographical distance,” she hedged.

“Oh?” His expression was amused and then, when her face didn’t reflect it, shifted into seriousness. “Oh. That’s right – she’s not called Jean anymore.”

The fact that he’d remembered settled a tiny anxiety inside her. This man cared about her, and given all that had transpired between them, she knew that unveiling another piece of her baggage wouldn’t change that fact. Under his steady, attentive gaze, the words came easily.

“No, she’s not. She’s Monica now. Monica Wilkins.” The name did a funny thing in her gut: mum, but not mum. “And dad is Wendell.”

A pregnant pause and then his thumbs stroked her hips reassuringly.

“How did it happen?” Draco asked, expression gentle.

She focused on his eyes, the shades of grey and the tiniest hints of blue captivating as ever, a welcome grounding point. “I altered their memories. Made them forget that I existed, and planted a False Memory Charm that they wanted to move to Australia. They wouldn’t have left me otherwise and I needed to get them out of England, to keep them safe, while I helped Harry. In retrospect, it was rash, and...extreme, but there wasn’t time and given that we were sneaking off, I couldn’t get help from anyone else—” She cut herself off, taking in a slow, calming breath.

He held her gaze, unflinching, and it was a relief to tell someone who knew better than to gasp, or simper, or fuss. Draco simply inhaled slowly through his nose, a comforting, soft

sound that conveyed everything she *actually* needed: understanding, acceptance, empathy, sadness.

She sent a rueful half-smile up at him, thankful for him yet again.

“It’s not all bad,” she clarified. “I found them after everything settled down, and with the help of some really excellent Australian Healers, have been able to restore most of their memories. But it’s a tricky process – the memories didn’t *go* anywhere, not like when they’re extracted for use in a Pensieve – and so they were all jumbling up inside still. Untangling them has been...” She paused, searching for the most accurate word and finally landed on, “Imperfect.”

He waited for her to carry on, but she wasn't sure what else to say. She pressed her lips together into a *it is what it is* grimace and he stroked her hip again, expression steady.

“Do they remember that you exist now?” he asked gently.

“Yes. They remember that I’m their daughter.”

His shoulders relaxed down, a tension she hadn’t noticed in him until it was gone. It made her sinuses prick, to see reflected in someone else the hopeful relief that she'd held onto for all those Healer visits. For a moment, it felt like she was back in the room with them, that first time her mum had met her eye and *seen* her. Recognized her. She sniffed covertly, a reflex. Not crying over her parents was something she'd practiced extensively, so as not to freak them out.

Draco's voice brought her back to the present. “But they haven’t returned home?”

She shook her head. “No, Australia is their home now. And they still go by Monica and Wendell. Core identities were trickier to isolate and so it was determined that remembering who I am and the majority of my childhood was sufficient repair. Not that they’re *damaged*—” Fuck. Her voice broke on the word, eyes welling with unexpected tears. She blinked a few times to try and dispel them. “They’re just different now. It’s fine.”

He hummed a soft sound, hands sliding from her hips to rub small circles over her spine.

“Names are immaterial, anyway,” she rambled, to keep herself from crying at the care in his touch. “For instance, Roger Granger isn’t even my dad’s birth name. He was adopted and so became a Granger when he was two. He views being Wendell Wilkens is just another stage of his life; just another meaningless name.”

“It’s not meaningless,” Draco disagreed softly. “It’s the name you gave him.”

She pinned him with a warning look, tears welling higher. “Draco.”

He sent her a slanting smile of surrender. “Sorry. I’ll keep the sentimentality to myself.”

“I’d appreciate it.” The words were watery but she managed to imbue them with affection.

He slid a hand up to cup the crook of her shoulder, thumb stroking soothingly down the length of her neck as his other hand held her close at her lower back.

“The last thing I’ll say,” he said softly, “is that I reject your premise that names are meaningless or immaterial. In my experience, names mean something. The names given to us can mark heritage, or traditions, or honor someone. Yes, occasionally the burden of a name can get heavy enough to feel, but it’s not always bad.” His hand slid to cup the back of her neck, left bare by his handiwork, palm warm and stabilizing. “The name Hermione Granger *means* something, as does Draco Malfoy. It might not mean what we want it to, but that’s within our control.”

She scrunched her nose. “It doesn’t feel like it.”

He inclined his head in agreement. “No. That’s true. Sometimes it feels like our identities don’t belong to us anymore. But,” he held her gaze, “they do. The names we give – to ourselves as much as to others – are meaningful, Hermione. And so if your parents feel settled with the names you gave them, that’s just further proof of how well you really do know them.”

She glared at him, tears streaking down her face in two uncontrollable rivers. He pressed his mouth into an apologetic, fond little smile, sweeping his hand up to cup her cheek, dampening his palm.

"You're allowed to cry, Hermione," he reminded her softly. "It just shows you care, and there's nothing wrong with that."

"I know." She sniffed, wiping under her eyes with the backs of her knuckles. "It's just...habit to resist. I hate feeling overcome like this."

"Yeah." He caught a wayward tear with his thumb. "I can relate."

She knew he could.

After a few more shuddery breaths, the tears subsided enough that she heaved a sigh, sniffing once more and then giving him a grateful smile.

“That was definitely on the ‘serious’ side of the list,” he said, returning her smile. “Would something fun help?”

It would be a relief to clear her mind of it all. To sweep away the tiny, sad confetti of her shredded family and fall into him instead; to ignore the hurt and focus on the happiness.

But as she looked into Draco’s eyes, she found she didn’t want to ignore it. Not yet. Happiness meant avoiding all the places that she was broken, but those places didn’t feel quite so fragile when held together by a pair of strong, careful hands. And so, for just a moment, she wanted to linger in the bittersweetness of her regret and relief. It might not burn away the scraps until they were gone for good, but it might help toward sorting through them. It might be the first step in matching up the pieces until they resembled something whole.

It's what she wanted for him, whenever their bloodlettings reversed: to feel able to step into the mess and trust that there would be help to tidy it up.

"Actually, I think I'd just like a hug," she whispered and his expression went unbearably fond.

He pulled her to his chest and she tucked her face into the crook of his neck, inhaling his familiar scent. With a contented exhale, he settled her close, lips pressed to her temple in a steady, unbroken kiss.

"Whenever you're ready," he whispered against her hair, and she nodded at the words left unsaid. Reparo and Episkey had nothing on him.

As he held her, she ruminated on his little monologue. She knew that her name carried a myriad of associations, particularly post-war. It represented a slew of ideals that she still held to heart but in a lot of ways, it portrayed a person who didn't really exist anymore.

Hermione Granger came from a family of three, lived in London, and had attended Highgate Primary School. She was a girl who was always top of the local library's summer reading list. Who didn't like having to ride her bike to the shops.

Hermione Granger was also a woman who defied convention, someone who could create magic with nothing but her raw will and a piece of wood; a deviant from her childhood's norm.

Hermione Granger was a brainiac and a rule-breaker. A fighter for what was right and good; a survivor.

But even after everything, *Hermione Granger* was still the daughter to two lovely dentists.

The diverse totality of her legacy wasn't something she'd intended to earn and in many ways it *had* turned her identity into a burden. Being *Hermione Granger* meant something to other people, something she couldn't always reflect.

As she slowly matched her breath to his, she considered that another name might mean more to *her*.

It was symbolic, perhaps. A joint unburdening and rebranding. An expression of who she was choosing to be, should the opportunity be presented to her.

That it would ruffle a few feathers across Wizarding society was simply a bonus.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!!

Find me on [Instagram](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🙋

Chapter 48: “Mercy, love,” Draco muttered. “These robes can only conceal so much.”

Chapter Notes

Hi hello. I needed some fluffy nonsense today so here we are!

The next chapter is done as well, so once I get it tidied up, we'll see where all this sexual tension takes them 😊

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Wrapped in her post-shower towel, Hermione lingered in the doorway between the bathroom and bedroom. Across the room by the bureau, Draco was buttoning his shirt with quick, well-practiced fingers, working down the placket at a steady pace despite his gaze being directed sideways on the Arithmancy book she'd left open the previous evening.

She wanted to tease him for covertly revising and therefore *muddying the waters*, but he hadn't noticed her quiet observation yet and she was disinclined to prematurely end her chance to secretly survey him.

His hair was still damp from their shower—a shower he'd abandoned her in. Only minutes ago, he'd met her under the spray for a kiss, smiling against her lips when the water had soaked their faces, turning the kiss into a drink. And then, with a little swat to her bum, he'd stepped out and given her an eyeful as he stood by the basin, naked and dripping, toweling off his hair.

With her hair still full of conditioner, she was trapped in the shower, forced to watch through the glass door as he secured the towel low around his hips and then performed his typical morning routine. There was a casual intimacy to it. A privateness about it, like peeking in through a window. A window he'd long since opened to her.

And now, standing in the doorway while he dressed, unaware of his audience, it was so easy to imagine him doing this exact sequence in his dormitory, or in his bedroom at the Manor. Alone and unobserved, with nothing performative about it. The act of dressing had never been so casually sexy.

After reaching the end of the placket, he began to tuck the tails into his unfastened trousers, motions deft and mindless, his attention still predominantly on the book. It flared the spark of awareness in her gut, the one that always lit up when she noticed a moment to etch onto her heart. *Draco, dressing for class.*

As he flicked his hair back off his forehead, finally looking away from the book, he caught sight of her and his introspective expression brightened. He flashed her a little smile as he carried on tucking in the back of his shirt, hands sliding around to finish the final tuck at the front before pulling his fly together and slipping the button through.

He reached for his belt where it waited patiently on the bureau, and the easy way he threaded the leather around his hips had heat simmering in her core, because despite knowing that she was watching him, he hadn't gotten self-conscious. Or given her a knowing, suggestive look and turned his motions intentionally sexy. He'd just carried on, as if her watching him get dressed was completely normal.

He wasn't pretending for her. Didn't feel the need to. It made her heart ache with quiet joy.

"Going down to breakfast like that?" he inquired, giving her a significant look as he worked the leather tongue through the buckle.

Watching him finish his belt and then get to work on his tie made her want to drop the towel, just to see how quickly he could reverse his process—not as quickly as she could, of course, but he'd learned how to strip quite efficiently over the past few months—but there wasn't time.

It was the Monday of their final week of classes. One week away from when she would enter the Great Hall and sit her first N.E.W.T. Logically, she knew that at this point, there was nothing she'd learn that she hadn't already committed to memory. But *emotionally*...well, she wasn't going to miss a single class. Just in case.

"Don't like it?" she teased back, taking a step into the room and then raising up on the ball of her foot to turn a half pirouette.

He chuckled, fingers looping emerald silk and then cinching the knot tight. "No complaints from me. But McGonagall might have a word or two to say about it."

She would indeed. With a snort, Hermione crossed the room to join him by the bureau. Draco side-stepped to give her space to open the top drawer but reached in before she could, rifling through her knickers and selecting a pale grey pair.

She snatched them from his fingertip with an amused eye roll, then casually dropped her towel.

As his eyes dropped along with the terry, smirk fading into softly parted lips, she stepped into the selected knickers and slid them up, taking conscious effort not to perform for him, either. Not that he'd have noticed either way, based on the way his gaze felt like a physical touch, burning over her skin from her hips to her breasts in a slow, searing glide.

A quick moment to reconsider, and then sadly dismiss, her earlier plan of getting both of them naked again before she reached into the drawer for a bra. He sighed rather dramatically as she covered her breasts but then reached around to take the clasp from her, doing it up with his eyes downcast on the newly-created cleavage.

His fingers were warm on her skin, but when he brushed them around her ribs and then up to trace over her nipples hidden behind thin black cotton, she shivered. His eyes flicked up to hers, and he smirked again.

“Hate to cover you up,” he murmured. “But *Salazar*, you look sexy in just your bra and knickers.”

Arousal flared, pulling her nipples into tight points. She wanted his fingers over them again, brushing until she turned the gusset of her knickers a tell-tale dark grey. But damnit, there wasn't enough time to spare.

“We have class,” she blurted and his smirk widened. She tsked, mostly at herself, for so easily revealing her current neediness. “Stop it.”

“Stop what?” he teased, then slid a hand down her torso to cup between her legs. He hummed, expression knowing, and her hand jumped to his forearm, fingers curling but distinctly not tugging him away.

He stroked her with the flats of his fingers, leaning down to dot a light kiss to a breast and another to her cheek.

“Mm. I'll see to that later,” he murmured, then gave her clit a little pat.

The temptation to clamp her thighs around his wrist was nearly irresistible, but his hand was gone before she could make her body work. The look on his face hinted at how plainly her despair was showing.

“You're horrible,” she whined.

He feigned a pout as he pulled on his outer robes, but couldn't quite hide the upward twitch of his mouth. “Come on, we'll miss breakfast at this rate and I don't want you going to class hungry.”

Damn it. He was right. She was useless when she was hungry. With a final huff, she yanked open the wardrobe and grabbed a blouse.

A large eagle owl delivered Narcissa's reply during breakfast.

The scroll was small enough that Draco unrolled it between his thumb and forefinger, holding it up to read as he sipped tea with the other hand. Hermione was still a bit keyed up from his light touches and dark promise in their room, but the brevity of the note immediately replaced her anticipation with nerves.

“She's delighted to be asked,” Draco reported, sounding unsurprised as he passed her the note. “And is happy to help.”

She skimmed the short note quickly. After a warm greeting to her son, Narcissa wrote that she would secure an agent for them and could also schedule several house tours, should they provide her some basic details of what they were looking for. The closing *love, Mum* sent a mixed pang of sentimentality and grief through Hermione. It was nice having Narcissa in their corner; she missed her own mother.

As she handed the note back to Draco, who pocketed it, she reflected on the reality that she was about to move into a house of her own. Perhaps it was because she was sitting in the Great Hall in a school skirt and knee socks, but suddenly the notion of officially house-hunting felt like a very grown up activity to be partaking in. But she *was* an adult and in dire need of non-school-based housing, so with a final sip of tea, she nodded decisively to herself and flipped open the top of her bag.

“Right,” she began, retrieving a quill and a bit of parchment, mentally forming the list of their basic requirements and then murmuring each item out loud as she jotted it down. “A bit of outdoor space...not on a main road...walking distance to town.”

“Big bath,” Draco supplied, eyes downcast on the page as she wrote.

She scrunched her nose, peering up at him. “Can we really write that on a list for your *mother*?”

He raised a questioning brow. She gestured broadly with the feather tip of her quill.

“You know...because of the implication of it. I mean, why else would we specify a *big* bath unless the intention is to share it?”

He chuckled. “Granger, my mother knows we sleep together. She’s not going to be clutching at her pearls over the size of bath we want.”

It shouldn't have surprised her but for some reason, the concept that Narcissa Malfoy knew—*knew*—that Hermione was fucking her son stunned her. Her brows drew together as she fixed him with an expression of deep skepticism.

“She *knows*? How does she know we sleep together?”

Draco looked amused. “What do you mean? Of course she knows.”

“What? How?” And then another realization dawned on her. She gasped. “Oh my god, what did you say when you wrote to her about me?”

“I told her I was in love with you,” Draco said easily, looking at her like she was being daft on purpose. “And she’s aware of what people do when they’re in love.”

Even mid-spiral, hearing those words from him filled her with a bright, pervasive warmth. She inhaled deeply, nodding half to herself.

Of course. She knew that. She hadn't read the letter before he'd sent it but even so, she could imagine the contents. A greeting. A brief update about his studies or flying or whatever it was

that boys shared with their mothers, and then he'd informed her of his relationship. But how had he described how they'd gotten together? The circumstances of it?

Oh Merlin, surely there was no way that Draco had told his mother that Hermione had, essentially, solicited him for an orgasm, and then for sex, and *then*—

The soft thunk of his mug on wood heralded the warm weight of his hand over her forearm. “I mean this in the most affectionate way possible, but Hermione. Love. Be sensible. What do you think she thought we were doing in my bedroom when you spent the night?”

Her cheeks heated. Obviously, she wasn't ignorant to the fact that going upstairs with Draco—and not coming back down until after breakfast—had given his parents a rather clear picture of their activities. But it felt different to acknowledge it than it had to live it.

To know that the next time she saw his parents—because there would be a next time—they'd be aware that she'd slept with their son gave her a little burst of nerves. Were they really okay with it? *Really?* Lucius's monologue about the varied history of their Pureblood status had insinuated a degree of acceptance toward potential Half-blood heirs, but that was just the recitation of family history. What about in practice? What about when it was *his* son?

And then her thoughts doubled back on her, breath hitching in her chest.

Oh fuck. *Half-blood heirs.*

Her stomach flipped, and then again when Draco smirked at her, as if her momentary silence suggested her thoughts had gone back to that night in his Manor bedroom and not to where they actually had: to his parents, and their acknowledgement that she might be actively and vigorously helping their son break—*expand*—the bloodline and graft yet another branch onto their family tree.

But perhaps it was a realization the Malfoys had had before? After all, Hermione wasn't the first person Draco had brought home to shag. Although that was an unanswered question, wasn't it? How many witches *had* he rolled around with up on that big bed, while Narcissa sipped tea in her pretty green drawing room and Lucius pondered genealogies?

Hermione penciled it in to pester Draco about later, but the reminder of what they'd gotten up to in his suite had brought a sly smile to her mouth, and she leaned into the levity of it.

“Hopefully not what *actually* happened in it,” she teased, arching a brow at him.

He snorted, smiling. “Well, no – that's fair. But she's aware of what you mean to me, and despite how she and father present to the world, they're secretly quite affectionate too. She knows a big bath might mean we share it, but she won't care. She might even *approve*. She likes you; she knows you're good for me.”

Good for him. She pressed her lips into a flat smile, strangely moved by the phrase. He was good for her, too. Immeasurably good.

When she was still just gazing up at him, Draco plucked the quill from her fingers and slid the parchment toward himself, writing down *big bath* and then adding a few others below it. It snapped her back to her senses.

“Four bedrooms!” she protested. “We don’t need *four* bedrooms. That’s excessive.”

“It’s not. One would be for us, one for guests—actually, maybe we ought to have two for guests...” He scribbled a quick note. “And then we’ll need a study for each of us. Or maybe a shared study, and a library.”

Oh. Well...that made sense.

“Alright. But why not just put down that we want a study and or a library? Surely that’s more to the point.”

He looked up at her from under his fringe, head still bent as he finished writing *large windows / good natural light*, then straightened to level a look at her.

“If I write those down, she’s going to find us a proper house. One with a library *and* a study, and more rooms than we could ever hope to fill. Which, again, *I* have no issue with but...” He let the implication hang. *Would she ever consider living somewhere like that?*

He raised his brows just a tiny bit, leaving space for her to take back her decision to be open-minded about their housing. She chewed the edge of her lip then shrugged. If he had no issue with it, then nor would she.

“If we like it, we like it,” she said firmly and his mouth twitched in a quick smile before he controlled it, writing down *library* and *study*, then picking up his mug. He raised both it and a brow at her before sipping. Cheers indeed.

“Speaking of libraries and studying...” She tugged his sleeve back to check the time on his watch. “We ought to relocate ourselves. Class starts in ten minutes, and then I want to spend my free period revising in the library afterward.”

“Right.” Draco downed his tea then swung a leg over the bench, facing her. “I’ll come sit with you. Unless you’d find it too distracting?”

He sounded to sincerely be asking, but with her mind still stuck in the proverbial gutter, couldn’t help but flush, remembering the last time he’d joined her in the stacks. Evidently, the direction of her thoughts was plainly written on her face because his mouth twitched in a restrained smile before he breathed a laugh and stood.

“On second thought, maybe I’ll go flying for a bit after class. I’m sure Ginny isn’t revising midday so she should be free.”

“I’m sure she will be,” Hermione agreed dryly, then joined him on her feet.

He eyed her heavy bag as she slung it across her chest but knew better than to take it from her, not this close to exams. A witch ought not to be parted from her books.

They walked up the main staircase and then into the main gallery, ascending the moving staircase that would take them to the second floor corridor. Hermione stepped off but turned to receive the goodbye kiss she knew was waiting for her. Indeed, as soon as she'd half rotated, Draco's palm was cupping her jaw to pull her to him, pressing his lips to hers in a slanting, purposeful kiss.

She leaned into it, her hand jumping reflexively to find his arm, fingers curling around his bicep to hold him close, even as the stairs began to grate and shift. He kissed her for as long as he could, and then shot her that private little smile as he was pulled away.

It was a good thing that Hermione was already on top of her lessons, and revisions of said lessons, because she had a near-impossible time focusing on anything that wasn't Draco-adjacent. For the rest of the day, she was plagued with a constant thrumming in her core, an undeniable need pulsing through her when she shifted just-so on her chair, or thought about him for too long, or, most disastrously, sat beside him in the classes they shared.

Perhaps it was just the stress of waiting for the exams to start, and her brain was therefore determined to distract itself with only things that brought it pleasure. Though inconvenient, she could appreciate that survival instinct.

It wasn't healthy to fixate only on the things that would bring her anxiety—and *that* was a lesson she'd learned at twelve. It was important to find joy wherever possible, and to cultivate it as much as one was able.

And in recent months, she'd grown quite adept at cultivating it.

At the current moment, the most potent source of joy was seated beside her, listening to Slughorn ramble on about the nuances between the terms *draught* and *brew* as if it wasn't a concept they'd covered extensively all the way back in First Year.

Not that Hermione particularly minded. It made it easier to let her hands wander without fear of missing any vital note-taking. It had been strategic to take the workstation at the back half of the classroom, partly for inappropriate reasons but also because it had the best ventilation—even when unbearably horny, Hermione knew how to choose a good desk—and so she worked their location to her advantage.

At the first touch of her fingers on his thigh, Draco flicked a sidelong look at her but only smirked then faced front again. Amused approval. Excellent.

She traced an idle design over his leg, the texture of his trousers an interesting sensory distraction. Soft, but substantial, the weave barely perceptible under her fingers with how fine the threads were. They were school uniform compliant, but certainly not school issue. A pressed black trouser that probably cost the same as every skirt in her wardrobe.

There was definitely something wrong with her if even *that* was enough to get her squirming slightly on the high stool. And wouldn't he love that, to know that even his clothing turned her on.

The muscle under her hand twitched as he shifted slightly on his seat, and she glanced over to see him casting another surreptitious look down at her. Ah. Her fingers had gone slightly astray.

She smiled pleasantly at him, then let her fingers slide further over his thigh with intention this time. The inner seam first halted and then inspired her. She began to trace the line of it upward.

He licked his lips, huffing a short exhale through his nose as he eyed her. She propped her chin on her fist, elbow on the table, and held his gaze as the seam began to curve up toward his fly. The heat of him lured her, so she flattened her palm over where she knew his cock would be resting. He always dressed to the left.

It was deeply satisfying to watch the way his fingers flexed around his quill, throat bobbing as he swallowed. But he didn't look away from her. Just held her gaze as she gently rubbed her palm over his cock.

An interrogative lift of his brow. *Are you serious?*

An innocent lift of hers. *Who, me?*

His head twitched in a little half-shake, like she was being ridiculous or adorable, and so she felt for the soft give of his balls. His amusement shifted, and then darkened further when she drew little circles over them with her fingertips while brushing the heel of her hand up and down his shaft.

He bore it for a few seconds then he narrowed his eyes at her.

"You're making me get hard," he warned, the words barely audible.

She wanted to roll her eyes or snort in amusement because, *duh*, that was the whole point, except that a second later, the reality of it slammed through her, knocking loose a needy whimper that she only barely managed to muffle.

Oh.

Draco, hard in class.

It was pathetic, probably, but if she felt him thick and ready under her hand, it would take all her willpower not to crawl under the desk to nuzzle along the length of it, getting those expensive trousers damp with saliva and precome.

Merlin, it had only been a day and a half since she'd had him, but...*ugh*. She needed it.

"I'm two seconds away from telling Slughorn you need to go see Pomfrey," Draco told her quietly. "And then insisting that, as a gentleman, I'll escort you."

He was starting to properly stiffen under her hand. She couldn't stop petting him, chasing her need to see him flushed and panting, eyes glassy with arousal. Godric, her hormones were out of control.

“Should I do that, Granger?” he continued, tone bridging the gap between amused and warning. “Do you need to be excused from class so I can fuck you?”

Her cunt fluttered, cheeks flaring with heat. *Yes. Yes, please.*

“No,” she shot back petulantly. “I’m just being affectionate. Isn’t that allowed?”

He snorted. “To this degree? In class? Probably not.”

The filthy little exhibitionist within her shuddered deliciously, and she couldn’t help but give him a good, proper stroke along the full length of his cock.

The legs of his stool screeched over the stones as his hips jerked, a motion he swiftly covered with another intentional adjustment, eyes fixed forward. Slughorn, ever self-indulgent in his pontificating, merely glanced over before continuing his measured pacing at the lectern.

Hermione traced the ridge of his crown, tongue pressing hard up against her palate for how badly she wanted to be performing the motion with her mouth. It finally broke him enough that his hand found hers, his grip like iron around her fingers.

“Mercy, love,” Draco muttered. “These robes can only conceal so much.”

There was still half an hour until the lesson was over, and then she had a double period of Advanced Herbology straight after while he toiled away in Muggle Studies. As much as she wanted to say fuck it and work him straight to orgasm under the desk, the sensible part of her acknowledged that it was a categorically bad idea.

“Alright. Fine,” she whispered, giving him a sympathetic look. And then, because the thought delighted her, she gave his stiff cock a little pat before finally withdrawing her hand. “I’ll see to that later.”

His nostrils flared. She grinned.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!

And a quick note: I'm finding it next to impossible to stay on top of replying to comments, which is both an unbelievable honor and so flattering, and also making the words of affirmation Hufflepuff in me whimper feebly and have big feelings about it. So, for anyone who cares, please know that I appreciate each and every one of you, and frequently reread your comments whenever I need a boost. You guys are truly the best and whenever I can, I'm still trying to reply and let you each know it 🥺

In the meantime, I offer you virtual hugs and kisses, and encourage you to have an extra cup of whatever beverage makes you happy 🍷

Find me on [Instagram](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🙋

Chapter 49: “Always with the dramatic flair,” Seamus griped, eyes back on the cards.

Chapter Notes

Hello friends! I hope everyone had a great end of the year and a wonderful start of the new one 🥰

This chapter got LONG so it has been split into two (I'm sure you can guess what the second half will contain 😊). I'll get the next one edited and posted shortly, though I'm also working to complete U&U so we'll see how the combined posting schedule staggers itself out.

I was in the mood for some friend group shenans and a little extra shot of competency kink, so that's what we've got today. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

As promised, Hermione only revised in the library for two hours after dinner. Draco had walked her to their preferred table then fiddled with his watch, spinning a little dial on the side before unfastening it and setting it with a delicate thunk down beside her books. With one hand planted on the table and the other tilting her chin, he'd dipped down and kissed her slow and soft.

“I’ll be in the common room,” he’d told her. “When this chirps, return it to me, hm?”

She’d rolled her eyes at his performance but promised “*Yes, sir*,” with mock-seriousness. He’d arched a brow at the sass but made no further comment.

It was kind of him to worry about her overexerting herself, and kinder too for him to leave her in solitude so that she could best utilize her allotted time. Given the way that she’d been unable to look away from his retreating form until he was completely out of sight, his presence would have been highly distracting, and knowing there was a time limit did wonders for her focus. She made the two hours count.

She was in the middle of a combinatorics exercise when soft but proximal birdsong brought her attention up from the page. As far as Hermione was aware, none of the tall paned windows in the library opened—nor, if they could, would they have been permitted to—so she was momentarily confused as to how a bird had managed to breach Madam Pince’s fortress. When the chirping restarted at the exact same pattern and pitch, her eyes fell to the table and Draco’s watch.

“Oh!” she blurted, then picked it up to quickly silence the alarm so as not to disturb anyone around her. Leave it to Theo to charm the watch to *literally* chirp.

For a moment, she considered extending her time—and given that she held his watch, unless Draco thought to check the time with magic, he'd hardly know the difference if she toiled for another half hour—but then dismissed it. At present, she felt academically rejuvenated, freshly confident, *and* hadn't given herself a headache in the process. Perhaps microdosing her revisions was the optimal way, after all.

Decided, she packed up the books, quills, parchment, and charts that had somehow stretched to cover the entire surface of the table, slid his watch up her wrist, then hoisted her bag and made her way out.

The common room was stowed out, so it took a bit of maneuvering to get around the packed tables and their occupants, but Hermione made it through to the mixed family of sofas and armchairs that her friends had adopted as their own. She suspected that when the new gathering place had been formed, it had been furnished with items requisitioned from the four House common rooms, to give the students a sense of the familiar.

Surely that was the only explanation for why the sunny-colored brocade sofa that Ginny was perched on existed directly across from the deep navy, rollback style upon which Draco was reclined. Seeing him never failed to flick on the little light in her chest, and watching him so at ease, expression amused and body language relaxed, flicked it on quite brightly.

As she approached, Draco cast a glance toward her, pairing it with a flash of a smile before refocusing on whatever Ginny was saying. It appeared they were in the middle of a debate over something and, given the way that Ginny was leant forward, stabbing the coffee table between them with a determined forefinger while Draco clucked his tongue impertinently, Hermione suspected it was Quidditch-based.

As she dropped down beside Draco and tuned into the conversation, she caught the tail end of what in fact sounded like a highly esoteric explanation on a gameplay variation for Exploding Snap.

Ah. Even less interesting than Quidditch. How did one even begin to strategize about a chance-based card game? It was a point that she had butted heads with both Ginny and Ron enough times that she didn't bother inserting herself again, contenting herself to lean back against the cushion and cross her legs at the knee, pushing back her sleeve enough to find Draco's watch where it had slid halfway up her forearm.

“—which makes it practically a guarantee that—oh, don't you roll your eyes at me!” Ginny leaned across the low table between the sofas to threaten Draco with a swat but he tsked, shifting his knee out of her reach. She sat back with narrowed eyes, then tossed her hair over her shoulder to express her vexation at him. “It's unbeatable. You'll see.”

“Pft.” Draco shook his head, bemused. “It's idiotic.”

“You are such a miserable little brat,” Ginny chided. “Always challenging me, and for what! You know I'm right.”

“As you said, we'll see.” Draco arched a challenging brow at her. “Quick game?”

An evening in the common room was the last thing Hermione had been hoping for. Now that she'd completed her revisions, all she wanted to do was take Draco to bed. Or a chair. Or a wall. Really anywhere halfway private would be acceptable—and given the various locations around the castle that he'd already fucked her in, it didn't seem like he'd be anything but extremely enthusiastic to whenever they ended up.

But seeing him light up with competitive spirit had her resigning herself to a brief delay in her more libidinous plans. She sighed to herself, though a bit more noisily than she'd intended. It garnered Draco's attention, his expression first questioning and then hopeful. He didn't need her permission to play a game, but she liked his thoughtfulness in checking in with her.

"If you must," she said, letting a hint of petulance into her voice as she unfastened his watch and slipped it from her wrist. It would be nice to see him relaxing—as much as one could relax while playing Exploding Snap. "Here."

The edge of his mouth twitched, eyes glinting with acknowledgement of what had caused her tone, as he took his watch back from her and fastened it with a few deft motions without looking down. It made her want to copy Ginny's example and swat at him for the obscenity of such an act in public.

Ginny had evidently misinterpreted her response as book- rather than bed-adjacent because she sent a pathetic pout at her. "Oh, come on, Hermione," she wheedled. "You're allowed to have a bit of fun, you know. Especially now—your brain needs a break from all the revising."

"I take breaks," Hermione defended. "And I have plenty of fun."

"Ah." Ginny's expression went sly, eyes darting between them. "I bet you do. I haven't seen you two around the common room in ages, and something tells me Malfoy doesn't let you sit in the library unattended for long. Putting the Head Girl's room to good use, hm?"

Draco smirked, and the shamelessness of it shot straight to all the places Hermione had been feeling quite alert all day. She squirmed, rubbing her thighs together unconsciously, but then clucked her tongue to cover her reaction.

All the same, Ginny grinned. "I see. And what, you can't wait half an hour in order to play a little game first?"

Draco closed a warm hand around the bare skin of her knee, dipping his face towards her temple in the semblance of a kiss. "She's been playing little games all day," he murmured in her ear, though loud enough for Ginny to plainly hear.

Between his sudden proximity and his hand on her leg, whatever temperance she'd had was swiftly deteriorating. But before she could stand and drag him to bed, Ginny made an interested sound, propping her elbows on her knees and leaning in.

"Oh? Tell me everything. I'm bloody cockstarved over here."

"Ginny," Hermione protested, laughing.

“So owl Blaise,” Draco suggested blithely. “He’d be here faster than the owl could bring his reply.”

“Now *that’s* a stellar idea.” Ginny pursed her lips thoughtfully. “Would he actually come?”

“Rather think that’s up to you, isn’t it?” Draco drawled, then dodged her next swat.

“Godric, how do you put up with this one, Hermione?” Ginny asked, eyeing Draco with a deeply pitying look. “No head for Snap strategy, jokes dragged up from the Middle fucking Ages—you’re lucky you’re pretty, Malfoy, or she’d be well shot of you.”

When Draco grinned, Hermione wondered if he missed the verbal thrashings she was sure Pansy had inflicted on him. He certainly didn’t seem at all cowed by Ginny’s playful aggression; in fact, the wicked curve of his lips suggested he had a retort forming. But before he could issue it, Neville and Dean arrived, diverting them with a round of hellos.

“And where’s your other half?” Ginny asked Dean as he folded himself down onto the sofa beside her, knees comedically high as his long legs bent into the low seat.

Dean shrugged. “Dunno. We’re not soul-bonded so your guess is as good as mine.”

“Smartarse,” Ginny tsked, stabbing a finger into his bicep. Dean snorted, batting her hand away.

“Just had him in Care of Magical Creatures,” Neville reported from the cushy maroon armchair to Dean’s right. “I expect once he gets cleaned up, he’ll be in.”

“Brilliant. I need him for Snap. This one,” Ginny pointed to Draco, “has been begging for a tutorial.”

“Oh yeah?” Dean sent a grin over to Draco, eyes sliding to fix Hermione with a conspiratorial look. “You’re going to let him get walloped by those two?”

“Oi,” Draco protested at the same time Hermione snorted and said, “Apparently so.”

Draco turned his affronted expression to her.

“I’m sure you’re a great player,” she said placatingly, “but Ginny and Seamus are rather notoriously the best, most brutal Snap players to ever walk these halls, so...”

“The *Gryffindor* halls, maybe,” Draco allowed.

Dean raised his brows. “Out of interest, have you forgotten their mutual penchant for explosions?”

“And for not holding back?” Neville added.

“Thank you boys,” Ginny cooed. When Hermione gave her an expectant look, she added, “And girl.”

“How was the library?” Draco asked, drawing Hermione into a side conversation. She felt the other’s attention on them for a moment longer before Dean said something that had them chatting amongst themselves.

“It was lovely,” Hermione told him. “I got loads covered, and the Centaurian gematria finally clicked. I don’t know what I was thinking before, but it makes *so* much sense now.”

Draco hummed a contented sound and stroked his thumb over her knee. “Happy to hear it, not that I’ve ever doubted your competency in Arithmancy. Next on your schedule is, what, Ancient Runes?”

It shouldn’t have delighted her so much that he’d memorized the calendar she’d drafted for herself, but the casual reminder of the intentional attention he exerted toward her had warmth gathering in her chest.

“Yes,” she confirmed, beaming at him.

He returned her expression, though his was laced with amusement. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

“You’re very attentive,” she said, then added in a confidential undertone, “and I like you a lot.”

He laughed softly, eyes flicking to her lips and back. “Yeah?”

“Quite a bit, as it turns out.”

He hummed, squeezing her knee, and suddenly all the affectionate warmth in her chest was melting to pool hotly between her legs. She shifted under his hand and his expression went knowing.

“I like you quite a bit, too,” he whispered. “I missed you while you were bent over your books.”

The phrasing sent another inappropriate twinge through her and she tightened her top leg to send a little grounding pressure between her thighs. He didn’t miss her adjustment, grey eyes glittering as the edge of his mouth pulled up in a barely restrained smirk.

Before she could retaliate, Seamus arrived, freshly showered and dressed down in cords and a t-shirt. His uniformed peers all sent expectant looks his way, but it was Neville who explained, “We were rehousing Dugbogs. Shay fell into the marsh.”

Dean barked a laugh, which Seamus sent him a flat look for before kicking his leg, indicating Dean shift over to make room.

“Here.” Draco’s hands curled around Hermione’s waist, hauling her sideways onto his lap in a smooth, athletic movement. “More space on this sofa.”

She squeaked at the manhandling, hands automatically dropping to her skirt as her legs slid uncrossed, though there was no risk of actually revealing anything with the careful way

Draco had shifted her. All the same, the suddenness of it made her heart rate spike.

“Ta.” Seamus rounded the table, taking the vacancy to her left. “What’re you lot up for then?”

Ginny, who’d sent a highly disapproving look at Hermione’s new location, clucked her tongue and leaned forward. “Draco here doesn’t think that the Baron’s Opening is a sound strategy. He says, and I quote, that *it’s idiotic*.”

Seamus scoffed, shooting a pitying look sidelong at Draco.

“Slytherins wouldn’t know true strategy if it bit ‘em in the arse. Gotta be brave to make the right move sometimes, eh, Malfoy?” Seamus grinned as Draco snorted, then faced front to jerk his chin at Ginny. “We’ll show him the utility, shall we?”

“Gladly.”

Ginny flicked her wand, summoning a pack of Snap cards from the makeshift games cabinet at the edge of the room, something else Hermione had taken as the staff’s suggestion they all attempt to relax and bond. Ginny shuffled, dealt, and then twirled her wand between her fingers, casting a rather predatory look up at Seamus.

“Ready then?”

He jerked his chin, and they began.

The gameplay was notably rapid but even so, only captured Hermione’s attention for a few seconds before she was disinterested. Snap was fun to play, but she’d long since gotten bored of spectating. It was much more interesting to get comfortable on Draco’s lap, sinking into the warmth of his chest where it was pressed to her left side and the strong weight of his right arm where it rested against her back and curled around her hip.

She nuzzled against him, shoulders and hips both, luxuriating in the easy comfort of sitting on her boyfriend’s lap in the common room without any hint of backlash or nasty glances. It was something she’d once resigned herself to living without. Knowing that her final year at school was repaying yet another debt she’d never thought to request remittance for filled her with a quiet sense of satisfaction. It wouldn’t fix all the things she’d missed—or had been forced to experience—in her adolescence, but it sure fucking helped.

“Jesus,” Draco muttered, and at first she thought the low curse was due to the speed at which Ginny and Seamus were playing, the explosions creating the ambiance of a mini-electrical storm on the coffee table as the pace of the game picked up, but then his grip went firm where he held her right hip, and she felt him under her a bit more insistently than before.

The number of times she’d had Draco Malfoy’s erection pressed against her was too many to count, but the quantity hadn’t diminished the quality of the sensation. The burst of awareness that rushed through her felt as potent as that very first time.

For a moment, she stilled. And then, when she was certain no one was watching them, she twitched her hips over him under the guise of getting comfortable. His fingers flexed as he tutted softly in her ear.

It would be fun to feign ignorance, as she had for a microsecond when she'd teased him in Potions, but in the spirit of showing Slytherins how Gryffindors played had her choosing to go bold.

"That was fast," she remarked, the words directed to Draco but not hushed. "I didn't expect you to find it hard already."

From the left, Neville's eyes lifted from where he'd been watching the cards, giving them a quick survey before concealing a smile behind his fist where he was leant on it, elbow on the chair arm. Dean barely spared them a glance, gaze intent on the gameplay. Draco dug his fingers in, curling around the front of hip bone in warning.

"Aye, it's tricky," Seamus confirmed distractedly.

"She doesn't mean the game," Ginny drawled without looking up.

Seamus turned to cast a curious look at them and Ginny hooted gleefully, her wand flicking down to touch a card and win herself another point.

Seamus spun back forward. "That's cheating, that is!"

"Don't look, don't lose," she told him in a sing-song, and barely won the next point off him.

"Don't tease, don't get spanked," Draco whispered in Hermione's ear, just for her, and she shivered as goosebumps swept down her body, giggling despite herself. She could feel the coiled tension in his hand and knew exactly what he'd be doing if they were alone.

There was something delicious about tormenting him in a place he couldn't retaliate how he wanted. And though it was raising her lust for him straight back to where it had been alternately simmering and boiling over all day, she couldn't help but see how far she could goad him.

"Is that a threat?" she whispered back, and then crossed her leg, the action pulling his hand from her knee to her thigh. "Or a promise?"

"These are *your* friends, Granger," he reminded her under his breath. "I'll do whatever you want me to in front of them."

She scoffed. "Please, as if you wouldn't be twice as inappropriate in front of *your* friends."

"That's not at all what I was implying. I think you know exactly what *my* friends would be willing to see."

"Don't tempt me," she warned playfully. "It would take absolutely zero convincing for me to manipulate another kiss between you and Blaise."

“You’re going to regret that,” he informed her lightly.

She laughed. “No, I don’t think I would.”

“I mean you’re going to regret that *shortly*,” he corrected quietly, voice low. “By my count, you’re going to have quite a red arse by the time I’m done with you.”

“Ah, so it *is* a promise.” She wiggled on his lap again. “Excellent.”

The majority of his reaction was overshadowed by a sudden whoop from Seamus and an excellent impression of a Banshee choking on tea from Ginny.

“Bloody hell,” said Dean appreciatively, and Hermione realized the game was over.

“Oh, you little—” Ginny hissed another sound of delighted rage. “*Damn*, that was a close one.”

“Honestly, I can’t believe I managed that,” Seamus said, flicking his wand to stack the cards and magically shuffle them. “Well played.”

“And you.” Ginny huffed out a breath then looked over at Draco. “Well? Thoughts? Did you pay attention at all?”

Hermione half expected Draco to make another flippant comment—particularly since she hadn’t exactly aided in keeping his attention on the game—so was somewhat surprised when he made a thoughtful sound.

“I rescind my earlier judgment,” Draco said, tone magnanimous. “It’s not so much idiotic as it is underexploited.”

Ginny arched a brow. “Oh really.”

“It’s a solid play,” he allowed. “But it can be improved with a simple adjustment.”

Based on the way Ginny narrowed her eyes, Hermione could tell she was begrudgingly intrigued. After a moment of deliberation, she pumped her brows in challenge.

“Time to put your wand where your mouth is, then,” she said. “Want to demonstrate your adjustment on me, or Shay?”

“Didn’t you just lose?” Draco said mildly, shifting Hermione off his lap. “I don’t do second-best.”

Ginny’s expression was pure affront, though her tongue poked into her cheek to stem her amusement as the boys around the coffee table *ooh’d* at Draco’s brazenness. There were few ways to win Ginny’s undying loyalty, and giving it as good as you got was right at the top of the list. At this rate, Draco was well on his way to getting the top spot in Ginny’s metaphorical Friendship Rolodex.

“Come on then,” she invited with faux-sweetness, scooting closer to Dean and patting the space beside her. “I’d love to see you try and beat Seamus.”

It seemed Draco had had the same idea, given he was already striding around the table to settle across from Seamus. It would have been just as easy for Seamus to relocate—and somewhat more logical, rather than separate the only established couple in the group—but when Draco’s gaze met hers, she suddenly understood his choice.

He wanted to watch her while he played. Wanted to see her reaction when he won.

She licked her lips, already unprepared for it, and saw him notice it. When his eyes flicked back up, his smile was wicked.

As always, the gameplay started out at a measured pace. Hermione didn’t know any of the ‘strategic’ openings so couldn’t identify what Draco did to adjust the way Ginny had begun the previous game, but given the chorus of contemplative sounds around the table, it appeared she was the only one.

It was clear that Draco was holding his own, though his efforts weren’t as overt as Seamus’s. Beside her, her housemate was fidgeting so much that it was jostling her, too, but across the table, the other sofa seemed steady. Ginny’s eyes were sharp on the cards, her expression a twin to that on Draco’s face. Dean and Neville seemed less invested, though rewarded the play with sporadic sounds of interest or resignation.

The pace ramped up as the draw pile shrank, the explosions more frequent and the intensity of play escalating. Hermione somewhat lost track of things, but when Seamus’s elbow nearly jabbed into her side at his sudden jerk backwards, her focus narrowed in again in time to see that he’d gambled and lost himself a point.

“*Ooh, brave,*” Draco praised sarcastically. “Was that the right move, then?”

Seamus clicked his tongue, exasperated at having his words thrown back at him. “Shove off. Bravery doesn’t mean you always get it right, just that you *try*.”

“Here, here!” Dean crowed.

“Ah, but why try if you’re not sure you’ll succeed?” Draco pressed.

“Spoken like a true Slytherin,” Ginny teased. “No sense of courage.”

“There’s a difference between bravery and courage,” Draco corrected, tone conversational though his eyes tracking the cards with laser-focus. “*And* a difference between the brave move and—”

His wand hand darted forward, instantly activating Seamus’s reflexes. The tip of Seamus’s wand touched the card before it had fully turned, and it exploded—it hadn’t been a scoring card, purely a trap sprung.

“—the cunning one,” Draco finished, smug.

Seamus barked a sound of disbelief then shook his head at the self-satisfied grin Draco shot across the table at him. And then those grey eyes landed on Hermione. She tried to give him a disapproving look for being, as Ginny had accurately termed him, a miserable little brat but she had to hand it to him, it had been a good feint.

“Always with the dramatic flair,” Seamus griped, eyes back on the cards. “But yeah, alright. That was savage.”

Draco flicked his gaze from Hermione to Seamus, then dropped it back to the game. “Ta, Finnegan.”

“You know, I never considered that games would be a frequent occurrence in the Slytherin common room,” Dean mused. “Hard to picture you lot letting loose.”

“Exploding Snap is a Wizarding game,” Draco reminded him as he tapped another card, flashing a grin up at Seamus as he did so. “It’s not only for Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs.”

“Sure.” Dean shrugged and leaned back on the sofa. “Just unexpected, that’s all.”

“And I’m sure the frivolity was more *refined* than rowdy, eh?” Seamus put in.

If the game-focused party at Blaise’s home was any metric to judge by, Hermione suspected the Slytherin common room had been far less refined than Dean and Seamus seemed to think. Draco snorted, hand twitching but not moving as the turn revealed a non-scoring card.

“Just say you’ve never spent time with a Slytherin before, it’s faster,” he advised mildly, then struck out to touch the last card the moment it turned over, winning the game.

“Oi!” Seamus barked as Draco flicked a pleased brow across the table.

“Aw, well done Draco,” Ginny said, giving his shoulder a shake. “You’ve done your House proud.”

He shook her off with a scoff, sending a wry smirk her way before leaning back and sending an expectant look across to Hermione.

“Well exploited,” she told him primly and his grin unfurled.

“Thank you, Granger,” he drawled. “I know how much you love to see a thing done well.”

“Ick.” Ginny screwed up her nose, side-eyeing Draco. “Enough with the public eye-fucking. You’ve had your quick game, Draco. Go take care of that now.” She flicked her fingers dismissively in Hermione’s general direction.

Hermione offered her friend two fingers in response, though she smoothed her skirt and got to her feet all the same.

“That *was* the agreement,” she told Draco nonchalantly. “And there are quite a few tasks still left to finish tonight, so we ought to get going.”

Draco raised an amused brow but stood as well, and Seamus made a sympathetic sound.

“That’s the downside of bunking with Hermione,” he offered up. “You’ll never escape an evening without schoolwork.”

“She does like to ride me hard,” Draco returned agreeably, tone completely devoid of innuendo. “But I’ll be getting plenty of O’s for the effort, so all’s well in the end.”

Neville chuckled under his breath while Dean and Ginny shared an *oh brother* eye-roll, but Seamus scoffed with disbelief.

“Bye,” Hermione said through a laugh, stepping over Seamus’s feet to make toward the exit. “Have a lovely evening, all.”

Draco copied her motion, sidestepping over Ginny and Dean to meet Hermione behind Neville’s chair.

“Mate, don’t tell me you came back to Hogwarts to actually *study*,” Seamus called after them, tone despairing. “There’s more to life than earning top marks! Have some fun!”

“Should I tell him it’s not always *top* marks that make life fun?” Draco murmured under his breath, finding her hand and intertwining their fingers.

“Absolutely not,” Hermione whispered, smacking his arm for effect though she squeezed his other hand. “His head might actually explode.”

But as usual, it seemed Ginny had things well in hand. As Hermione and Draco wove their way out of the common room, her voice carried high above the rest.

“Seamus Finnegan,” she scolded, then burst out laughing. “You are absolutely the daftest boy who ever lived.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading!

Obligatory: I have no idea how Snap is supposed to be played beyond the barebones descriptions I found online, so let’s just enjoy the suggestion of “a card game” as a reason for them to be hanging out 🤝 okay thanks

Find me on [Instagram](#), [Bluesky](#), and [Tumblr](#) 🖐️

Chapter 50: “What are you thinking about, Granger?” he asked, tone darkly knowing.

Chapter Notes

Happy 50th chapter!!! 🧠 How fun. How hilarious. I'm delighted with myself and these dang characters who refuse to let me go. Thank you so much for sticking around for it! It really means so much—more than I can say 🥰

Anyway, here's 10k of pure smut to show my gratitude. Mwah! 😘

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione let them into her suite then leaned back against the door, watching as Draco carried on across the room. He paused and turned, looking for her, and she bit her lip over a smile. Seeing him standing there felt like going downstairs on Christmas morning, the promise of something just for her concealed only by removable wrapping. At her perusal, his expression went amused.

“Staying over there?” he inquired mildly.

She hummed a thoughtful sound, pushing off the door and walking over. “We should play Snap sometime. Just the two of us.”

When her hand closed around his tie and pulled, he smirked but obliged her, taking a step closer.

“I know you like games, but Snap?” His expression was dubious, eyes fixed on hers as she worked the knot loose, slipping the tail free before tossing the silver and emerald silk aside. “I didn’t think it was your sort of thing.”

“Well, perhaps we could play a variation thereof.” She trailed her fingers down his chest to reach the hem of his jumper. “Ever played Strip Snap?”

“Did you not watch me play just now?” he said skeptically, brow raising. “I don’t lose often.”

She collected her expression into something deeply innocent as her hands slipped up under the soft material to trail over his stomach. “I suppose I’d be doing all the stripping then.”

“Hm.” His hands slid around her hips, expression amused. “That might distract me enough for you to win a round or two. That way you could at least get my trousers off.”

She shrugged with feigned ambivalence, fingers roaming over his shirt and feeling the flex of his abdomen below. “I’m sure you’d find a way to be useful even while fully clothed.”

He snorted but acknowledged her implication by dipping down to press a slow, firm kiss to the side of her neck, tongue darting out to skim across her skin in a suggestive swirl. "I bet I would."

She shuddered and felt his smile.

He trailed a pair of kisses up to her jaw then drew back to peer down at her. "Now, why don't you tell me what you've been thinking about all day, so I can do something about it, hm?"

Why tell when one could show? She reached back to grip his wrist, pushing his hand down her hip and under her skirt to nestle firmly between her legs. He tutted softly, fingers sliding over her knickers then pressing the material up against her. The touch sent rush warmth through her and she sighed, the sound more moan than anything truly content.

His chuckle was deeply knowing. "Oh yeah?"

"Mm. Yes please."

He cocked his head. "Polite, too? My my, you do need something, don't you? Should I have fucked you in the shower this morning, gotten it out of your system straight away?"

"Impossible."

He barked a laugh. "Trust me, I can fuck you in a shower."

"Impossible to get it out of my system," she corrected, sliding the hand still under his jumper up until she could close her fist around his collar. "Always want you."

He allowed himself to be tugged down, offering her a lusty smile as he rubbed slowly between her legs, lips hovering above hers. "Lucky me. And what, specifically, do you want tonight?"

"I'm open to suggestions," she murmured. "But you had some rather nice ideas in the common room."

He hummed. "Is that so?"

"It is."

The pressure of his fingers lightened as they slid upward, and then the pad of his middle finger circled over her clit, soft and precise. "You want to ride me hard, love?"

Yes, she did. But also...

"I recall some specific threats about my arse," she mused. "Perhaps a color you might turn it?"

"Ah." He snorted a soft laugh, then nipped at her bottom lip. "Gladly."

The hand on her hip slid around to ruck up the back of her skirt though the other idled for a moment, motions over her clit slowing as he craned his head back enough to meet her eye. He held her gaze as he pulled his hand out from between her legs, palm warm when he cupped her arse, and she braced herself, lip between her teeth. The spank was mostly gentle but it radiated through her all the same. He raised a questioning brow.

“Harder,” she murmured.

“Mm.” He got a better fistful of her skirt, holding it tightly at the base of her spine as he palmed her once before withdrawing to land another spank over the same spot, a glancing, sharp smack. The harsh contact made her clit twitch and she couldn’t help her gasped-out moan.

He made a complementary sound, expression rapt. “You really do like it, don’t you Granger?”

“Yes,” she whispered, savoring the lingering sense of his hand on her and the way it was making her warm all over. “I want to feel it with you inside me.”

His expression went devilish. “I bet you do. Bet you’d squeeze me so tight.”

“Let’s find out.” She tugged on his collar more insistently, wanting his tongue in her mouth, wanting his own lust set free so he’d do something about it.

“Ought to break more rules, if you like results,” he advised ruefully, resisting her tug, and she rolled her eyes.

“You don’t *give* me rules to break,” she reminded him. “Now come *on*, I’ve been waiting all day.”

“I’ve given you *some*,” he disagreed, tone thoughtful. “But I’d be happy to give you more, if you want to rebel.”

His touch was sweet as he stroked over her arse, but when she bit her lip, eyes on his, he gave her a hungry squeeze. The motion tugged her snug against him, and when she immediately rocked up against his hips, he breathed a strained laugh.

“You really are desperate for it, aren’t you? What’s gotten into you today?”

“Notably *not* you,” she sassed. “Care to rectify that?”

“Ha.” His hands slid under her thighs and the next moment she was airborne, lifted up around his waist. He walked them the remaining steps to the bed then dropped her down, catching himself with an arm beside her head as he hovered over her.

“Roll over,” he said quietly. “You’ve just earned yourself two more.”

But with his weight on her, hips pushing insistently down between her legs, Hermione found herself rather disinclined to reposition. She lifted her hips, knees spreading wide in order to introduce her cunt to whatever part of his body she could find first. The solidness of his belt

buckle had a gasp popping free, the smooth metal sending a jolt of pleasure through her as she ground up against it.

His brows raised, gaze dropping down to watch for a moment before meeting her eye from under his fringe, expression skeptically amused. “Jesus. Do I need to flip you over myself?”

“Take your shirt off?” she suggested, tone hopeful, and he snorted another laugh, settling more of his weight against her until her knickers were flush against his lower abdomen.

“I see what you mean,” he mused, picking up the slow grind from above. “I’m still quite useful to you even while fully clothed, aren’t I?”

“Yes, you absolutely are,” she sighed, running her fingers through his hair, luxuriating in the feel of it. It was so soft, so perfectly grabbable. When she made a fist, he groaned happily, eyelids falling heavy under the gentle scratch of her nails over his scalp.

“Are you getting hard again, Draco?” she murmured, soft and low.

“Yes, you wicked little thing.” He lowered down to an elbow, his other hand pushing her left thigh open so that he could shift upward enough to let her feel it.

“Then why aren’t we naked yet?” she complained, trying to rub up against where he was certainly well on his way to hard.

He chuckled. “So fucking eager. Have I been neglecting you?”

She rolled her eyes. “No. You just look so good today. I don’t know what it is but I just...” Her brows went up at the way he was suddenly *very* hard against her. “Oh?”

“*Oh*,” he confirmed, nudging his hips against hers in a firm roll. “Drives me crazy when you’re all hot for me. Even if it made you an utter fucking menace all day.”

She clucked her tongue. “Not *all* day.”

He clucked his right back. “Yes, *all day*. Don’t think I missed you squirming your way through breakfast, and dinner. And then *Potions*? And in the common room?” He shook his head at her with faux-disapproval. “Dreadful witch.”

“You’re the one that keeps getting turned on,” she reminded him, arching a brow meaningfully at the way he was, yet again, unmistakably hard.

“Oh please. As if I’ve ever stood a single chance against you.”

God. What was it about knowing she had the power to affect him so viscerally that got her so unbearably hot? It had been a day full of yearning, and now she had him on top of her, on what had become *their* bed. Further delay was unthinkable.

She slid her hands from his hair to cup his jaw, pulling him down so she could kiss him. The closeness brought a soft sound of happiness up from her chest. *Finally*. The first taste of him, warm and vaguely sweet and purely *Draco*, cracked on the part of her he’d so carefully

cultivated. The one that was desperately in love with him, ravenously horny for him, and deeply committed to him.

It ought to be studied, this thing between them; the raw magic living in it.

He hummed into their next kiss, tilting his head slightly to deepen it. Usually, Hermione was quite content to kiss for as long as he liked, but she'd been twitchy with arousal all day and every stroke of his tongue or careful graze of his teeth was ratcheting it up higher and higher. There would be plenty of time for kissing later. She broke them apart with a few chaste pecks.

"Roll over," she told him. "I want to suck your cock."

He scoffed. "Oh sure, when *you* order it, *I'm* expected to instantly comply?"

She held her hands between them like a set of imaginary scales. "Blowjob...spanking." She tipped them up and down. "Hm, that's a tough call."

"You know, I'd almost rather spank you right now," he teased, but pushed himself up, disentangling himself from her legs all the same.

He stood at the edge of the bed, hands dropping to his belt, and then paused, glancing up at her with a glint in his eye.

"Since you won't score many points against me in Snap..." he drawled, then slowly—so slowly—pulled the leather tail free.

She shook her head at him, compressing a grin, and then propped herself up on her elbows to better watch. He undid his belt the same care she'd watched him fasten that morning, and only when the buckle was hanging heavy did he his fingers close around the button of his trousers. The zip was dragged down with equal intention, the rasp of it tingling down her spine.

What had begun as a little game was swiftly bringing her pulse hard and heavy throughout her, and she was certain her face displayed exactly how much his little show was affecting her. He confirmed it a moment later, dragging her eyes from his groin to his face when he hummed a thoughtful sound.

"I can go slower, if you like," he offered, expression amused though his eyes held unmistakable heat.

She gave him a flat look, then pointedly dropped her eyes back to his hands. "Shut up. And *hurry* up."

He huffed a little laugh through his nose. "Yes, Granger."

He worked his trousers down his hips, though notably not any faster. It made the way he navigated the obstacle that tented his snug boxer-briefs all the more apparent. She had half a mind to slide off the bed and finish the job for him, or perhaps just get straight to it and suck at him through the fabric.

But if there was one thing Draco had taught her, it was the variety of pleasure to be found in delayed gratification. So often, the build up was the best part, and so she settled herself in to savor it.

Once he'd kicked his trousers to the side, his hands drifted up to flirt with the waistband of his pants before diverting to pull his jumper off in a smooth, one-armed tug. Hermione bit the edge of her lip at the throb of heat that pulsed through her when he emerged, tidy blonde now askew.

Jumper discarded to the floor, Draco moved to the buttons of his shirt, undoing them from the top to reveal first his collarbones, and then his chest, and then his abs at a pace that defined the word *glacial*.

A flush of pink had bloomed down his throat to paint splotches over his chest, a sight even more damning than the bulge a few feet south. All the bravado in the world couldn't conceal that dead giveaway: he was turning himself on too, teasing her like this. She couldn't help but squirm at the thought, wanting to feel exactly how hot he'd gotten. Exactly how quick his pulse was.

And she would. Soon. So, so soon.

He shrugged the shirt off, letting it flutter down out of sight, then paused. A moment of waiting, and she met his eye. The edge of his mouth twitched upward before he lifted his chin a half inch, holding her gaze as he trailed his fingers down his naked torso to curl under the waistband of his briefs.

The implication went unsaid. *Wait*.

And so she didn't blink, despite wanting desperately to look down to watch, anticipation building with every shifting movement in her periphery as he slowly worked the final garment down. Black material tossed aside, Draco wet his lips over a curling grin.

"Go ahead," he said. "Look at what you do to me."

The first glimpse of his cock sent another burst of lust through her and when he traced the flushed, hard length with his thumb and forefinger, she panted out a needy, impatient noise.

"Oh yeah?" he murmured, tone indulgent. "You want it?"

"I want it," she whispered, eyes catching his before dropping back to his cock. His perfect, gorgeous, disastrously fuckable cock. "Want you."

He huffed a little laugh then curled his fist around the base and gave himself a languid stroke.

"Mm." A soft groan of relief vibrated in his throat as he stroked once more and she felt all of it down to her toes. "Fuck, I want you, too."

She was sure her expression was open-mouthed lust, so she wasn't surprised when his nostrils flared, grip tightening. After another stroke, he let himself go, cock swaying heavily as he stepped closer then reached up under her skirt.

The prospect that he was finally going to fuck her had arousal pooling hotly and, judging by the damp mark the gusset left on her inner thigh as he tugged the cotton down, she'd completely soaked her knickers. He tossed them aside then used both palms to spread her thighs wide before lowering to his knees at the edge of the bed.

He sighed, soft and low, as he pushed her skirt up to her hips.

"*Wet,*" he informed her wryly, and for some reason, the simple statement of it made her flush. All he'd done was touch her fleetingly and slowly undress himself, and she was dripping with want. *God.*

His palms slid inward until the pads of his fingers brushed over her cunt from either side, the touch featherlight. She squirmed, breathing a soft moan, and then a louder one when he applied more pressure, rubbing along the sides of her folds.

"I want to play with you" he said, eyes rising to hers. "In the spirit of games, and all."

She bit the edge of her lip, nodding immediately. He flashed a smirk at her eagerness then trailed his gaze down her body, still clothed except for her lack of knickers. His gaze lingered where she was bare, then flicked up to hers.

"I promise you'll get to come."

She snorted dryly. "Comforting you felt the need to state that."

"You can come anytime you're able," he amended, and her eyes narrowed.

"*Less* comforting."

He laughed, then slid both hands back to push her thighs wider and brought his face close to her cunt. She braced herself for a light touch, something teasing but not enough to advance her orgasm, but all he did was inhale slowly, then meet her eye.

"You've been wiggling and squirming all day," he murmured, then paused significantly. "Stay still for me now."

She gave him a tiny nod, riveted as he leaned in to press his lips softly to her inner thigh. Staying still would take some effort, but she did her best not to squirm in an attempt to get his lips closer to center. He'd make her patience worth it, she knew.

He advanced with each kiss until finally she felt his breath over her folds again, making her keenly aware of exactly how wet she'd gotten in the interim. The soft strength of his tongue swept from her entrance to her clit in a sudden swipe, and she couldn't help the reflexive jerk of her hips.

"*Oh fuck,*" she blurted, then looked down just in time to watch him drag two fingers over his wet tongue before dropping the hand out of sight.

The edge of the bed hid what he was doing but the motion of his arm told the full story, as did the way his jaw went lax on a soft groan that she was well acquainted with.

“Draco,” she whined, walls fluttering at the knowledge that he was stroking himself with her arousal. “Let me do that.”

“Not yet.” He held her eye as he leaned in again, lips brushing at the soft skin just to the left of her cunt, close enough that her nerves lit up, inner walls twitching. “Stay still.”

She gasped softly, watching as he trailed kisses down her thigh until he paused a third of the way down, tongue darting out and then again before he closed his lips and sucked. It took a moment for her to realize it was the place her knickers had left a damp spot on their way down her legs, and then she keened, flushing with heat.

“Oh god,” she whimpered, and he sucked harder, teeth grazing the edges as he slowly released the tension. Her hands were reaching for him before she realized she’d moved.

He clucked his tongue, leaning back only enough to swat sharply at her inner thigh. She squeaked a surprised moan, the touch scalding in the wake of his mouth’s attention, her blood already close to the surface. It was somehow even more evocative than when he’d spanked her arse, knowing that she was spread open to him, all her very sensitive parts unprotected from whatever he might do—or spank—next.

“Hands on the bed,” he murmured, brow flicking in warning, then leaned back in to kiss sweetly over the warm mark he’d left. “Stay still, sweetheart.”

“Draco,” she whimpered. “God. Please.”

He hummed understandingly against her skin, working his kisses inward again. It felt as if every nerve ending had relocated themselves to the apex of her thighs, every bare brush of his lips over her skin sending radiating warmth to her cunt until she was absolutely throbbing with need. When he reached her center, he drew back just enough to keep space, then met her eye.

She could feel his breath, hot and harsh against her wet folds, and when he brought his hand to his mouth for another slow lick over his fingers, everything inside her clenched. It was with slack-jawed disbelief that she watched his hand drop down out of sight again, the subsequent hard swallow telling her exactly what he was doing.

“You’re so sexy,” he groaned, eyes roving over her as his bicep flexed with the hidden motion of his wrist. “How are you mine?”

Was it possible to combust from being *not* touched? It seemed likely that she was going to break her lip open with how hard her teeth sank in.

“*Draco Malfoy*,” she panted, the chastisement of his full name lost in her breathy delivery. “Come up here right this instant.”

“Yeah?” The speed of his arm increased, and he bit his lip. “You want to do it for me?”

“You know I do,” she whined. “Please. Don’t come without me.”

He huffed a laugh, pupils blown wide and the hollows of his cheeks rosy with arousal. “Never. It’ll be in you or on you—you know that.”

“Come *on* then.” It was horrific, how whiny he’d made her, but she couldn’t help her petulant tone. “I’m so—you’ve got me so—*ugh*, you’re the worst.”

He grinned as he slowly got to his feet. She watched with unabashed focus at the way he was gliding his fist up and down his cock, taking in the little sweep of his thumb around the glossy tip with every upstroke. She’d watched him wank before, of course, but there was always something mesmerizing about seeing it. It made her sordid musings easier to visualize, wondering what he’d been like alone in his dorm bed or how he might have entertained himself in a long, hot shower.

With a final stroke, he let go in order to reach down, hands sliding under her back to haul her up to a sit.

“Go ahead then,” he murmured, stroking her hair back from her temples to gather into a soft handful at her crown. “Do it for me then, Granger.”

She didn’t hesitate, instantly slipping off the edge of the bed to her knees and wrapping her hand around his cock to hold it steady as she closed her lips around the tip and sucked. The satisfaction of it pulled a moan up from her throat. *Fuck*, she’d wanted to do that for hours. *Days*. She suckled again, harder, and the resulting burst of salt made her moan, and him groan.

In her hair, his fingers flexed, the sharpness of his need shooting through her. Her mouth was rather too full to reply, so she hummed a happy sound and sucked him again.

“*Fuck*,” he groaned. “That feels good, baby.”

This. *This* is what she’d been craving all day. Being close to him, seeing his strength and feeling him start to unravel; tasting what she did to him, and tasting the traces of what he did to her, too.

She gentled her mouth, drawing back to swirl her tongue around his crown as she glanced up, wanting to look at him. The muscles in his jaw tensed and then went lax as his lips parted, eyes downcast to watch when she opened her mouth to let him see the way she flicked her tongue over the tip of his cock.

“Jesus Christ,” he mumbled.

She observed his measured intake of breath with delight, then closed her lips around him for another languid suck before drawing back to kiss over his slit and then down the ridge.

“Do you want to come like this?” she offered, then teased her tongue back and forth where she knew he was particularly sensitive.

He exhaled a soft breath, attention rapt on her mouth, then met her eye and shook his head. “No, not yet. But *fuck*—it’s tempting.”

She smiled against him before sliding further down, sucking intermittently and working her tongue across the underside. He grunted softly when she licked wetly over his balls, already snug in his sac, then retreated when he tugged her gently upward with the fist in her curls. She kissed the base of his cock then just below his navel as she got to her feet.

As soon as she was standing, he was kissing her.

He used his grip in her hair to tilt her face up to the insistent press of his lips and her back bowed slightly, hands coming up to clutch at his ribs as she moaned into his mouth. For a moment, they were lost to it, and then he gentled the kiss with a few soft motions and worked his fingers free from her hair.

“On the bed,” he instructed, voice deeper in the way it got when he was turned on, then gave her a little nudge backward.

She complied instantly, crawling up onto the mattress then waiting on her knees to see how he wanted her next. He followed her up, settling against the headboard at a low recline, naked and flushed. He gestured to his cock, then shot her a grin.

“Carry on.”

On a normal day, Hermione might have greeted such behavior with a tsk, or a playful glare, or a little retaliation in the form of touching herself just beyond his reach. But today, she couldn’t help herself. She dropped to her elbows between his thighs and smothered a moan around his cock.

Draco laughed a broken sound, hands coming down to gently collect her hair again. “Shit.” The word was crisply enunciated.

It was instinctual to set a quick pace, bobbing her head up and down, loving the way she could feel the slide of him over her tongue. It was tricky to keep both suction and speed, so she forewent the former in favor of using her tongue to work him up, undulating along the base with every descent and sliding side to side over his ridge at each rise. He withstood it for a few rounds and then she felt his thighs flex hard under her palms.

“*Christ.*” He tugged upward hard, and she acquiesced, stroking her spit over him with a tight fist as she caught her breath, the zing of his grip sending a shiver down her spine.

“Miserable little thing,” he groaned. “You’ve gotten me so close already.”

She stroked him harder and his hips jerked, cock throbbing in her hold. He breathed a choked laugh, soft affection still lingering in his touch as he caught her wrist and held it, but his eyes had gone dark and intent.

“You like that, hm?”

“Making you come? Yes, quite a bit,” she quipped, and tried to get her fist going again. He held firm.

“Sucking cock,” he clarified, the words low.

She tsked, purely to be a brat, but he wasn't having it. His fingers flexed around her wrist, still gentle but with an edge of intention behind it.

"Go on," he goaded. "Tell me how much you like it."

She tightened her fist around him, relishing the ripple of tension in his cheek, and gave him a bemused smile. "Are you asking if I'm wet over it yet?" she teased.

He chuckled. "No. I'm well aware how fucking soaked you are already. No, I'm asking how much you like sucking cock."

The metric by which he was judging her enjoyment was murky so she raised a brow and pulsed her fist around him in mild chastisement for the unclear question. He grunted and tugged her fist down until her squeezes were around the base. Obliging, she helped him find a measure of control. He exhaled, the tension in his jaw easing as the constriction forced his orgasm back, and finally let go of her wrist.

"I love it," she informed him, then immediately lowered down to suck around the tip as she stroked her fist soothingly at the base.

He inhaled a little groan but didn't seem at risk of falling over the edge anymore, and so she kept it up for another few bobs.

"Enough to make you come?" he asked after a moment, tone leading.

She wiggled her tongue over his frenulum, meeting his eye skeptically. There was about a one-percent chance she'd be able to orgasm without any direct stimulation, even if having him in her mouth did get her quite turned on.

"Not all by yourself," he amended, correctly interpreting her expression. "But I'm curious... you're a randy little thing tonight. Shall we see how little it'll take?"

One more firm suck and then she sat tall, intrigued. "What do you mean?"

He wet his lips, eyes heavy on her. "Want to see how close you can get from just this and nothing else?"

Oh.

Her subsequent squirm was instinctive, and caught his attention. The smile that curved his lips promised wickedness.

"Yeah? You do?"

"Do I want to suck your cock until I'm so turned on that I'll come as soon as you touch me?" she interpreted, raising her brows. "I don't see why I wouldn't."

He snorted. "Because your self-control is wobbly."

“Excuse me,” she scoffed, despite recent evidence to the contrary. “My self-control is exemplary.”

“Brilliant. Let’s prove it.” He raised a brow in challenge.

“Happily.” She matched his expression, then reached for her shirt, but he tutted and batted her hand away.

“Not yet. Your clothes stay on.”

Given that he was already naked, she frowned. “What? Why?”

“Because,” he said, sitting forward and brushing the tip of his nose just barely against hers, a new temptation, “I want you fully aware of how much I’m not touching you.”

“You can touch me through my clothes,” she reminded him wryly, resolutely not giving in to the proximity of his mouth, just to prove she could.

“True. But I’m not going to.” He sat back against the headboard again, hips shifting forward until he was half reclined. “I’m going to touch myself.”

He punctuated this by brushing his fingers over his stomach, the touch light and teasing enough that she watched his muscles tense in response, and then up over his chest. He hummed a low sound, palm flattening to rub firmly over his pecs in a few slow, broad back and forth strokes. It wasn’t immediately clear whether she was jealous of his hand for touching him, or envious of it for not touching her.

She shook her head at him, lips pressed into a firm line, and he smirked.

“Go ahead,” he encouraged, rocking his hips up so that his cock tapped meaningfully at his abdomen—as if she could have possibly forgotten about it. “Play with me until you’re desperate for it, hm?”

Perhaps she really ought to sit on his face, even if he wouldn’t deign to do anything productive in the position, just to muffle his filthy mouth. Because while achieving orgasm from nothing but going down on him was highly improbable, there was a non-zero chance that in the right conditions, he’d be able to talk her to something dangerously close to orgasm. Combined, the results might be disastrous. Particularly today, when she was experiencing a rather high libido.

But she was nothing if not a curious person, and there really was no downside to this little game that he’d devised, and so she clucked her tongue at him then braced her hands on his thighs, leaning down to lick up the underside of his cock and swirl her tongue around the tip.

She had half a mind to flip the situation on him, to lick at him until he was the one begging to come, but he had activated her curiosity—*damn him*—and so she closed her lips around his cock and began to suck, thoughts now only half on his pleasure and half on her own.

The weight of him in her mouth was immediately satisfying, but in a way that was only ramping up her need for him rather than slaking it. Watching as his hands continued to tease

little patterns over his chest and stomach wasn't helping keep her need in check, either. She knew what those hands felt like on her skin. Knew their gentleness and their firmness; the tease of them as well as the unrelenting strength. Her body still hummed with the echoes of those hands, fleeting though they'd been.

When he brushed the back of his knuckles over one of his pebbled nipples, she finally had to close her eyes. Even so, she felt the effect of it, his cock flexing up against her palate and breath leaving him in a little exhale. The beat pulsing between her legs was getting intense, every nerve on high alert for even the barest scrap of contact.

It was almost more torturous that she was allowed to touch him, because feeling the strength of his thighs under her palms felt nearly as good as rubbing herself over one. She squeezed the muscles, honed by running and flying and fucking, and panted out a little sound of desperate want around his shaft.

The back of his fingers grazed her cheek and she opened her eyes to see his touch was expanding, one hand still brushing over his abs while the one beside her was now sliding down to his groin, fingers curving down toward his balls. When she looked up, his eyes were on her, pupils blown wide, so she drew back to show him her tongue and the thick cockhead that rested on it. His jaw flexed.

"Sexy," he murmured, low and reverent. "Does it feel good to suck on?"

Damn him. She squirmed, wishing she was in the mood to be disobedient. It would be so easy to straddle one of his thighs, to grind down over him as she sucked on him. He'd let her—would probably praise her for using him for her pleasure. But the mounting need was turning her on in an endless positive cascade, and so she closed her lips back around his cock and hummed an agreeable sound.

"Yeah? It does?" he goaded. "It looks like you're enjoying it. Is your poor little clit throbbing, Granger?"

She sucked until her cheeks hollowed, tongue undulating within the vacuum of her mouth to transmit some of the relentlessly building need to him. He swore through clenched teeth, the hand on his abs lifting as if wanting to grip her hair before he remembered his own decree. It fell back to his stomach, his short nails digging in as the hand beside her slid further between his legs, his thumb resting against the base of his cock.

"Fuck," he bit out, and she felt him throb in her mouth. "Jesus *fuck*, love."

She drew off to lick down the side of his shaft, pausing to suck an open-mouthed kiss over his balls before finding his fingers and licking over them, too, half wishing she could suck on them while she was at it. His groan was part laugh, and she flashed a grin up at him, giving him another kittenish lick over his knuckles before sending the next along his shaft.

"Damnit, I wish you were on my face," he mumbled, half to himself. "Want my tongue in you."

You could have, she wanted to remind him tartly, but sank him deeply again. He hissed in a breath, hips flexing but resisting a proper thrust. It was tempting to force it for him, to drop down until he was pushed into her throat, to swallow around the thick tip until he couldn't help himself, but she was feeling a tiny bit selfish. She wanted to suck his cock until she couldn't help but come as soon as he pushed it inside of her, and she wanted that order of events to occur on an expedited timetable.

So, with a final lick up his shaft, she sat tall, swirling the fresh beads of precome over his tip.

His eyes half closed in a lazy blink. "Jesus, you know just how to get me going, don't you?"

She flicked a brow, pleased, eyes holding his before slowly dragging down his body. There was a thin sheen of perspiration on his torso and his elevated heat was making the scent of him heady and deeply arousing. In her hand, he was slick with spit and as hard as she'd ever felt.

God, she wanted him inside her.

Slowly, she brought her gaze back up, over his heaving chest and the noticeable throb of his pulse in his neck, over his flushed cheeks to where his gaze was steady on her.

"Take your shirt off, love," he said, as soon as their eyes met.

She obeyed instantly, unbuttoning her shirt with quick fingers and then slipping it off her shoulders to be cast to the wayside. The cool air combined with his hungry gaze worked together to pull her nipples tight behind the thin cotton of her bra.

Her hands lifted to them but he tsked, halting her. "Don't touch yourself."

It made her want to *so badly* that her hands twitched, an act that he catalogued and then, when she resisted the impulse, had the edge of his mouth pulling up.

"What a good girl." The words sent a lick of heat straight through her, particularly when given in such a low, half-sarcastic tone.

"Draco," she whined.

He smirked properly, knowing exactly what he was doing to her. "Come sit on my lap and show me your pretty tits."

It would be worth it in the end, she knew, but in the current moment, everything he was doing was pure torment.

She rose to her knees, scooting forward and straddling him, her skirt sliding up her legs so that her cunt was exposed to the open air between his spread thighs. She could feel the heat of his cock just in front of her, only inches away. A quick flick behind her back and then her breasts were equally bare. He hummed his approval and her clit, swollen and achy and woefully untouched, throbbed helplessly.

“Salazar, you're *so* pretty,” he murmured, voice thick with real praise as his gaze roved over her breasts. “It’s taking all my restraint not to pinch you. Bet you’d squirm if I did, hm?”

She squirmed anyway, at just the thought of it. The flash of tongue when he wet his lips made her whine, wanting that hot, wet tongue on her, literally anywhere. Sitting on his lap, knowing his cock was right there, thick and slick and perfect for fucking, was torture. In this position, he would slide into her so easily. Just a single alignment and a hard upward flex of his hips, and she’d be blissfully full.

And once he was inside, he’d fuck her. He wouldn’t be able to stop himself, not with how hard she’d gotten him; not with how wet he’d gotten her. The desire for it tugged a ragged moan from her throat and he chuckled a strained sound.

Her skin was buzzing, nipples tingling in a way she knew would send an electric sensation through her if he brushed over them. That thought cascaded down to her clit until she could almost feel the nascent pressure of his fingers or tongue, that first careful stroke as he found his place and the resulting burst of pleasure once he got to work. The wet suction of his mouth; the knowing glint in his eye. *Fuck*.

She fumbled at her skirt, getting it up around her waist so she could reach for his cock, slick from her throat and from the steady drip of precome beading from the flushed tip. The first stroke was reflexive, *necessary*, and then she couldn’t stop herself. He felt so good in her hand. She wanted to suck and pump and fuck him until he was groaning and coming hard all over her.

“What are you thinking about, Granger?” he asked, tone darkly knowing.

The imagined visual of it pulled the words from her. “Fucking you,” she whimpered, all breath.

The confession pleased him, eyelids falling to half-mast even as his breathing picked up at the determined stroke of her fist. “Yeah? How, baby?”

God, he was such a *tease*. She licked her lips, fingers tightening reflexively around the head of his cock.

“God, I want you inside me. Even just a finger. Even just your tongue—*god*, your tongue. I want it on me, at my throat and my nipples, sucking on my clit—”

Without meaning to, she’d carried the motion of fist down her arm until her entire body was bouncing lightly with each pump, and the sense memory of it—the feel of her breasts bouncing, the repetitive flex of her thighs—made her walls flutter sympathetically, as if were them wrapped around the hard cock rather than her fist. She tensed her inner muscles again, as hard as she could, and the sensation radiated out through her clit in a clench so strong, it took half a second to release.

“*Oh*,” she moaned breathily, eyes half rolling. “*Oh fuck—*”

“*Hermione*.” Draco sat forward, his breath warm over her lips, body so close to hers she whimpered. “You’re not *actually* going to fucking come from this, are you?”

“N-no,” she stammered, then squeezed her walls again and couldn’t hold her whimper. It felt like a mini-orgasm, but in a way that offered her no relief. “But...*Draco*, oh god, please. I can’t wait any longer. Please, *please*—I’ll come. Make me come.”

His arms slid around her back, lifting her up off his thighs and then dropping her onto the mattress in a single, strong heave, following her down. She scrambled to pull him close, her hands finding purchase on his shoulders as he aligned himself, the first brush of contact over her sensitive folds making her hips lift toward his. He held her down with one hand at her hip and then pushed inside, sinking in steadily until his pelvis bumped harshly against her clit. It felt so good, she wanted to sob. He hissed a breath through his teeth then pushed up on his hands, gazing down at her.

“Show me,” he whispered, then licked his thumb, batting her skirt out of his way so he could circle her clit with a firm, precise touch. “Show me how in control you are.”

It was magic. *He* was magic. That was the only explanation for the way that after a single strong, unrelenting thrust and a few strokes to her clit, every muscle in her body was tensing so tightly that her breath caught, and then her orgasm burst. The pleasure was pure relief, the tendrils of it sweeping out to her toes before crashing back up, her walls pulsing around him in a series of hard, rapid squeezes.

He choked out a sound of awe, and then he was finally fucking her. Her knees clamped around his hips, mouth parting on gasping pants as her orgasm doubled back on itself, the pressure building again as his cock stroked, quick and hard, inside her.

“So good. Such a perfect girl,” he groaned. “Did that feel good, baby?”

“*Ah—I’m—f-fuck*,” she babbled, and then she was coming again, this one so strong that she shook under him, eyes squeezing shut against the onslaught of pleasure, rushing through her like fire.

He panted out a harsh breath, hands curling under to palm her arse, his motions gentling as he held her close, working her through it with slow, languid strokes.

“Shit,” he panted. “Was that two?”

Words were beyond her but she nodded shakily, trying to catch her breath. He squeezed her arse, perhaps to dispel some of the coiled tension that lived in every careful thrust he was still rolling into her.

“You’re unbelievable.” He blew out a slow exhale. “Fucking *Christ*, love.”

His lids were heavy, eyes deep with lust and reverence as she continued to pulse around him, each aftershock another reminder of how very, very hard he was. Her clit felt hyper-sensitive and tingly, and she had an idle desire to feel his tongue on it, the soft, wet heat of it; or

perhaps to feel the gentle pressure of his mouth as he sucked it. Coaxing her down, or up to another crest.

He wet his lips, breathing heavily through his nose as he inspected her. “Do you need a minute?”

What she needed was his tongue.

But then hips flexed, the motion uncontrolled and desperate, and her walls clenched around him again in response, sending any thoughts of imminent emptiness away in an instant.

“I’m–m’kay,” she breathed, eyelids fluttering on a lazy blink as he repeated the movement on purpose this time, stroking the tip of his cock deep inside her. “Keep going. Fuck me. Please fuck me.”

“You feel so good,” he murmured, gradually increasing his pace, eyes never straying from hers. “So hot and wet around me. Did you come hard, baby?”

She nodded, pressing her crown down into the mattress, eyes sliding shut again. “Mm-hm.”

“Yeah?” he confirmed, voice low and resonant. She loved when he spoke to her like that, asking things he already knew purely for the delight in hearing her say it. “You got yourself all worked up, didn’t you, sweetheart? Thinking about us. Touching me all day. Feeling how hard I get for you. Sucking on me. You got *so* fucking wet over it. Can you hear it?”

She could. Every thrust was highlighting exactly how thoroughly she was soaking his cock, the obscene sound of it something that might have once mortified her but now was only making her *want*. She nodded again, stifling a moan, and he hummed a placating sound.

“Messy fucking girl. And you’re still turned on, aren’t you? Two nice, hard orgasms and you’re still so greedy for more.”

A pang of arousal, acute and electric, shot through her. Her untouched clit throbbed, nipples pulling even tighter. A choked sound of surprised arousal escaped her throat, eyes opening wide to find his fixed intently on her.

His eyes flared. “Oh yeah? That’s doing it for you?”

“God, yes,” she gasped. “Keep talking.”

He flicked a brow then snorted, gently derisive. “It’s so cute that you’re surprised by that. Were you under the impression that you *weren’t* a greedy little cockslut?”

Oh.

Her walls clenched around him, hips lifting up to get whatever friction she could from him. He glanced downward, then met her eye, brow raised.

“*Granger*,” he tutted, amused, then pushed himself upright, thighs spreading to support her as he slid his hands from under her bum to her knees, using the grip to drape her thighs over his.

As always, the position pulled his cock up against her front wall and so the next stroke made her whimper. Her walls were hypersensitive, swollen and well-worked. She wanted to come again, *so fucking badly*, but was also vaguely scared it would be so strong, it might hurt.

He gave her a few rolling thrusts then found his rhythm enough to slide his hands back up her thighs. Her clit throbbed hopefully but he bypassed it to skim her curves until he had a breast in each hand, thumbs brushing lightly over her nipples. The sensation made her walls flex and she bit her lip, gazing up at him with a pained sort of adoration.

He smirked down at her, knowing her tells almost better than she did. “Does that feel good?”

“Yes,” she breathed.

He brought a thumb to his mouth and licked the pad then returned it to her nipple. The glide and cool touch of air contrasted with the dry pluck he gave to the other nipple, a complex sensation that made her gasp.

“And that?”

She bit her lip, certain he could see and feel exactly what it was doing to her.

“You like being played with, don’t you?” he mused, plucking at her again and eliciting another breathy gasp and a helpless clench around his cock. He chuckled. “Mm. Yes, you do. A good little slut.”

She choked on a moan, the lick of heat searing through her so intense she was sure that, if she were a book, she'd have spontaneously combusted.

He rewet his thumb and circled it over her nipple again, his bottom lip pinned between his teeth for a quick bite at her responsiveness before he inhaled slowly through his nose. The muscles of his torso were tensing and contracting with each languid, easy rock of his hips, as if her walls weren’t actively closing down around him, as if he wasn’t fighting to keep pace. He looked both well fucked and completely collected, and the dichotomy of it was like a mouthful of a lust potion trickling down her throat. The longer she looked at him, the more desperately she wanted to come for him.

As if he’d heard her inner ramblings, his eyes cut up to meet hers, fresh wickedness in them. “What would you do if I stopped right now?”

He emphasized the question by pushing his cock deep and holding still, fingers giving her barely-there contact over her nipples. She squirmed against him, panting out a breath and then, mortifyingly, a whine, when she managed to graze her swollen clit over the groomed hair at the base of his cock. He was too hot, and she was far too needy to behave.

“Yeah? You’d try to fuck yourself on me?” He was watching her hips, surely feeling the way she was just barely not getting enough pressure to get herself off. “What if I held you down?”

He slid one hand from her breast to her sternum while the other hand sank down to her pelvis, applying steady pressure with the flats of his palms.

“*Draco*,” she whined.

The grin he sent her was slow and knowing. “Yes, baby?”

She squirmed again, trying to work herself on him enough to find an angle that would put steady pressure on the sensitive point just inside her, but he was too deep and holding her down far too competently. He watched her try, then cocked his head.

“You seem exceptionally horny today. How many times do you think you could come before I’d have to make you stop?” he asked, in a mildly inquisitive tone. When she didn’t reply, he raised his brows. “Really, what do you think? Give me a number.”

“I—I don’t know,” she moaned. He gave her a strong upward thrust and she gasped out, “F—five. Seven.”

“Jesus, that many?” he chided, tone laced with disapproval. “Oh, *Hermione*.”

She couldn’t hold it off.

Her orgasm rose up like a spark, the clench around him beginning so deeply that she hissed out a tight, primal sound from between her teeth. He grunted with surprised pleasure, then slid the hand on her pelvis down in order to swipe his thumb firmly over her clit. She exploded. The orgasm was like a wall being smashed down, the shrapnel of it setting off a series of crashes that had her spasming so hard around him, she couldn’t breathe.

She bucked up against him, keening, needing him to fuck her through it but shying away from the overwhelming thickness of his cock. His thumb on her clit was ceaseless, strumming at her until she was twitching with aftershocks. The overstimulation hit suddenly, the sharpness acute, and she panted out a feeble sound.

“Enough,” she gasped. “Stop, stop. Enough.”

He lifted his hand away immediately, squeezing her thigh comfortingly as his chest heaved, eyes burning down as he watched her twitch under him. She caught her breath, then panted out a laugh.

“Holy fuck.”

The careful concern in his gaze dropped away as he smirked. “Yeah?”

When she could only puff out a breath and grin, his smirk broadened. And then his head tilted thoughtfully.

“That was three,” he mused. “Shall we use the momentum to practice what I’ve been reading?”

In her post-orgasmic elevated mental state, it took her a moment to parse his question. And then the words and meaning came together, and she chirped a bright sound of bemusement.

“Oh god, absolutely *not*. I’m a puddle.”

“Well.” He flicked a brow. “Not yet.”

She rolled her eyes, then fixed him with a look. “I haven’t even read the material yet.”

He laughed. “It’s not a test, Granger. And anyway, I’ve studied enough for both of us. All you need to do is trust me, and relax, and not fight it.”

Two of those were easier than the last, and though she currently felt extremely unmotivated to fight anything, exerting any real effort held little appeal.

“Another time,” she told him, smiling softly. “I’m too worn out for it now.”

He hummed agreeably, eyes drifting down her lax, sated form. “Fair enough. I’ll give you prior warning for when we try it, hmm? So you can pace yourself.”

“I’d appreciate it. You know how much of an overachiever I am.” She waggled her brows.

“I certainly do.” He traced an absent pattern on her thigh with his fingertips, compressing a smirk. “*Seven*. Merlin. I’ll need a water break.”

She pouted with mock-sincerity. “How ever will you manage it?”

His expression went calculating, eyes narrowing. “I hope you’re not *really* asking how I’d manage it,” he murmured, smoothing his hands up her thighs.

The motion shifted his hips and, with a jolt, she realized he was still hard inside her. *Very* hard. The widening of her eyes communicated her sudden awareness and he made a little noise of apology, beginning to pull out.

“No, don’t,” she said, closing her legs around his waist. “Stay inside.”

The look he sent her was pure incredulity. “While I’d usually be happy to keep you full as long as you like, at the present moment, holding still any longer might *actually* kill me.”

The permeating warmth of orgasm was suffusing through her muscles, melting her into something lax and sated. But as she looked at him, saw that he was a perfect juxtaposition to her. His breath was regimented, chest lifting with each inhale, abs flexing with each exhale. The hands which had been idly doodling on her skin were adorned with raised veins, his blood close to the surface in all the ways that translated into a very aroused man.

How many times had he edged himself with her body while she’d been lost in her orgasms? Every cell in her body pulsed with heat at the thought.

“Oh? You’re close?” she asked, expression innocent.

He huffed a breath, head twitching in a half-shake, like her even asking was ludicrous. “You feel *so* fucking good, baby. You have no idea.”

It was wildly entertaining, giving him a dose of his own filthy medicine. The effect it was having on him was extremely gratifying and when she reached between them, wrapping her

hand around the base of his cock, the thick vein throbbed. He was absolutely rigid. Very fucking close.

She rubbed at the root of his cock with the pads of her fingers, mouth parting when it flexed again. “Needy,” she sighed, then met his gaze. “Aren’t you, Draco?”

His eyes were dark and intense, lids hooded as he stared down at her, nostrils flaring with every heave of his chest. “Granger,” he warned, low and rough.

Every exhausted, sated, stripped-bare nerve in her body flared back to life.

She bit her lip, only half for his benefit, and his jaw flexed. Without taking his eyes off hers, he pulled one leg from over his lap to hug up against his torso, securing her thigh flush with his abs, her sock-covered foot grazing platinum blonde. His hands slid along her thigh until he found the top of her knee sock, fingers sliding under. His hips jerked forward and she choked on a squeaky moan, eyes flaring at the sudden friction deep inside.

Socks and her skirt. That’s all she had on. It sent a strange pulse of pride through her, to accidentally be fulfilling his little kink again. In her haze, all she could think was *what a good girlfriend*.

Another metered roll of his hips, and then another. His fingers began to work her sock off.

For some reason, the fact that he was undressing her while actively fucking her pulled a low groan from her throat. He stripped the sock off then hugged her bare leg against his chest, her calf falling into the crook of his neck. When he tilted his face to kiss the inside of her calf, feather-light, her stomach swooped. Such a simple act, and yet it made her ravenous for him.

“I want you to come inside me,” she whispered.

His eyes glazed over with lust, hips rolling with intention this time.

“You’re not too sensitive?” he murmured, the vibrations of his voice tickling her skin as he dotted a kiss to her ankle. He flicked his tongue over the little round bone.

She shook her head. The sensitivity had faded, replaced with what she could feel—based on the deliciously snug drag of his cock—were plush, swollen walls. Perhaps if he was able to hold out for a few minutes, she *might* be able to work up to another orgasm, but it didn’t seem like he had it in him and she had no desire to test him this time. The measured strokes were only emphasizing how badly he needed more and she wanted him to have it.

“Faster,” she encouraged. “Fuck me as hard as you want.”

He groaned from deep in his chest, eyes holding hers as he gradually increased his pace. She moaned reassuringly, and he finally let himself go. The pace he set was rapid, his hip striking hard on the back of her raised thigh with every quick thrust, mouth parted as he stared down at her body, watching every soft, feminine part of her bounce.

His biceps flexed around her thigh with every forward roll, chest glossy with perspiration and fringe falling into his face. When his gaze dragged up to meet hers, she could see just how

close he was, the tension etched in every muscle from his jaw to his thighs. She hummed a warm note, wetting her bottom lip then pinning it with her teeth. His eyes caught on the motion and lingered, abdomen tensing harder and fingers digging into her thigh.

“So fucking pretty,” he bit out.

She needed to kiss him so badly, she whimpered, lifting her hand up into the air between them to chase the impulse. He pushed her leg off his shoulder immediately to curl forward over her, letting her wrap her hand around the back of his neck to bring his mouth to hers.

The warmth of him pulled a little mewl from her, his chest radiating heat and lips slanting over hers with open-mouthed hunger. The pace of his thrusts was quick and erratic as he freely chased pleasure, and she kissed him greedily, then flicked the tip of her tongue against his. He took the bait instantly, licking into her mouth with a low groan, and she tightened her hold on his head, pinning him to her as she captured his tongue between her lips and sucked.

His cock throbbed so hard she felt it, and then he was moaning into her mouth, pulsing and rocking himself into her with urgent, shallow jerks of his hips. Another hard suck around his tongue and then she released him, stroking the tip of hers against his once more before drawing back to peck a kiss to his slack, gasping mouth.

He huffed a breath and dropped his forehead to the crook of her neck, panting hotly against her chest as his hips gradually stilled.

“Good boy,” she whispered impishly and felt his lips curve against her skin.

He reached down to pull her hand off him, collecting her fingers and lacing his through before pressing their joined hands to the mattress beside her head, then lifted his head to give her a bemused smirk.

“Damn,” he rasped, voice low and gravelly, then inhaled a deep, rousing breath through his nose. “Fuck me, that was a good one.”

She beamed up at him. “Good. Mine were...” She pouted thoughtfully, wagging her head from side to side, and he tsked, sliding their hands up the bed until her arm was straight.

“Cheeky little witch.” He squeezed her hand then freed his fingers to trail them lightly down her arm.

She squirmed when the sensation turned ticklish at her bicep, and then he broke his stern façade with a grin, tickling her properly under her arm and over her ribs. She shrieked and tried to roll, but he was still mostly on top of her and he was far too strong for her to dislodge him even when she wasn’t a wrung out, post-orgasmic wreck.

“*Dracooo*,” she squealed through a giggle.

A final barrage along both her sides and then he relented, capturing her hands and pinning both beside her head, leveling his face with hers. His expression was playful but there was a sliver of dark amusement simmer underneath.

“Go on,” he murmured, tongue darting out to wet his lips. “Tell me how they were, Hermione.”

She bit her lip, knees squeezing around his hips to keep her down against her. She was soaked, his come making a mess between her thighs and over where his cock was still half-hard against her. It made her want to rub herself up against him, but she really oughtn't start up another round just yet.

“Incredible,” she whispered, and then tilted her chin up, offering him her lips. “Just like always.”

His lips curled into a pleased smirk, then lowered down, brushing his lips against hers in a little nuzzle before pressing in a steady, meaningful kiss. She sighed into it, looping her arms around his neck and letting her fingers drag absently over his back. After a moment he gentled it, drawing away to gaze down at her.

“I love you,” he murmured, “more than I know how to say.”

“Words can't do it justice,” she agreed softly.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you, as always, for reading!

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Chapter 51: “For the record, I do know how lights work,” he reminded her.

Chapter Notes

Hi friends! Long time no see!

I don't have my usual bullet-pointed list of what I was writing between chapters because the answer this time is: not a lot (but not nothing, I suppose. My fic for the Hot Ron Fest was revealed ([Curved-Mouthed Bastards](#), Ron/Draco) and I completed another WIP ([Unqualified & Untested](#), Dramione coworkers)). Apart from those, it's been two months of touching grass (and sand, snow, dirt) which was rather lovely.

Today's chapter is a bit of fluff and zee-level angst (aka fluff wearing a sad face mask which is hastily shucked), which will hopefully lead us nicely into the next chapter (a veritable smutfest).

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Hermione was running late to class.

Barring the year she'd skipped altogether, Hermione had never, not *ever*, allowed herself to be late for class. Which, all things considered, she thought was rather impressive.

But now here she was, on the final Wednesday before two weeks of exams began, clattering down the corridor like some sort of inept time-keeper, hair a mess and uniform absolutely askew. It was ridiculous. Who had she *become*?

Though she didn't think it ought to really be counted against her. It hadn't been her fault, not wholly. The culprit of her tardiness was now strolling down to the greenhouses, probably whistling and definitely smirking, well pleased with himself. The thought made her stomach flip with a pang of affection, even as she blew out a frustrated breath. Fucking *Draco* and his fucking *eyes* and the way he'd managed to give their touch a physical presence.

All she'd been doing was sitting in Arithmancy, at her usual desk one over and one back from his, when he turned to glance over his shoulder at her, private smile in place. When their eyes met, she offered him a little smile in return, absently crossing her leg at the knee.

His gaze dropped to the motion and then froze for half a second before his eyes flicked back up to hers, laced with wicked delight and crowning a truly sinful smirk. She flushed, instantly and absolutely all over. His eyes dropped back to her leg, head tilting appreciatively before he tutted once under his breath and faced forward again.

The entire exchange had taken only seconds, but she'd been useless for the remainder of the lesson.

What had he seen? She wasn't dressed any differently than usual, just her standard uniform which the bloody prat had watched her put on only hours before. What was he playing at, distracting her like that?

She fumed quietly, gaze flitting between the board and the back of Draco's head, though he didn't look back at her again. Annoyingly, it seemed that despite the power of her raw will, she hadn't yet mastered the ability to turn her own gaze tangible.

As soon as Professor Vector concluded the lesson, Hermione shoved her things rather haphazardly into her bag and stood, closing the distance between their desks and standing right beside his chair.

Draco looked up, at first surprised and then pleased. "Hello."

"What was that?" she demanded quietly, shooting a furtive glance over his head to where their peers were packing up.

His brows twitched together. "What was what?"

"That *look*," she hissed.

His face melted into sly amusement. "Oh. I just hadn't realized it had left a mark, that's all."

She frowned, glancing down at her markless self. Before she could ask what he was on about a third time, she felt the ghosting touch of his hand at the back of her knee, the act mostly concealed by his body and the desk. His palm drifted upward several inches before pausing at the back of her thigh, fingers curling around to put gentle pressure on the inside.

"My mouth," he murmured and then, more quietly, "My teeth."

Realization shot through her like a burst of electricity.

He'd kissed and licked her there the prior evening, had sucked the remnant of arousal from her skin; had scraped his teeth. Hard enough to bruise.

The knowledge that she was wearing a token of him on her skin in such an intimate location did extremely inconvenient things to her pulse and the state of her knickers.

It was clear by the look on his face that her reaction had flashed boldly across her features. His hand drifted slowly down her leg before catching on the edge of her knee sock and finally slipping off. He sat back in his chair, peering up at her.

"Would you like me to heal it for you?" he offered quietly, heat smoldering beside amusement in the icy grey. "I'd hate to get accosted on my broom again."

"No, you wouldn't," she snorted, then bit the inside of her lip. "Don't heal it."

For a moment, he was smug satisfaction incarnate.

And then he sat forward and began packing up, as if he hadn't just lit a fuse within her. It was almost two o'clock and she had a double period still to sit through before she could corner him somewhere private and do something, *anything*, about his obscenely pleased smile.

Bag packed, Draco made to stand then paused, giving her a pointed look when he found her still blocking his chair. She stepped to the side robotically and he stood, looming over her for a moment before chuckling under his breath and turning toward the door.

She followed him out of the classroom and down the corridor, despite the fact that her next class was in the opposite direction. He seemed to notice at the same time she did, because he sent a bemused look down at her.

"Are you walking me to class?" he inquired mildly, still exuding boyish delight.

And, well, after that, what was she meant to do but drag him behind the nearest tapestry and pin him to the wall?

After class, Draco secured their second favorite table in the library, their primary having been taken over by a group of immovable Ravenclaw Third-or-Fourth Years who looked beyond stressed about their upcoming Herbology exams. He'd turned on his heel and ceded the space to them at the frantic looks on their faces.

The table at the edge of the Charms section afforded a better view down the main aisle if not the typical amount of privacy he usually preferred, and so he was able to catch Hermione's eye when she crossed through the double doors. She smiled when she saw him, diverting her course from the automatic right hand turn toward the Herbology section.

"Hi," she said, already beginning to unpack her bag before she'd quite reached the table.

"Hi," he returned, moving his textbook a split second before she thunked a stack down where it had rested. "How was class?"

An ink pot joined the stack, followed by two quills. "It was fine. Yours?"

He leaned back in his chair, twirling his quill idly as he watched her get situated. There was a frenetic energy to her that hadn't been there when he'd seen her last, tucked in that niche down the corridor from the Arithmancy classroom. He thought he'd done a decent job in helping her let off some steam but leave it to his little overachiever to have worked double-time in collecting it up again.

With a little hum, he relaxed his pose, softening his expression with a small smile in the hope that she'd instinctively mirror his body language and settle down.

“Likewise, although I was a little late,” he drawled. “But when I told Professor Sprout it was because I’d been held up by the Head Girl, she let it slide.”

Hermione clicked her tongue, sending him a slanting look, though the verve was diminished by the smile teasing at the edges of her lips. “Idiot.”

He feigned a pout then grinned, satisfied, when her smile broke free. She snorted a laugh, shaking her head as she finished setting up her workspace with slower hands. Draco sat forward, giving her shoulder a little squeeze before heaved a breath and refocused on the notes in front of him.

He had his Muggle Studies exam the following day, the last bit of real work to tackle before beginning a brain-destroying number of N.E.W.T.s during the next two weeks, and he was beyond eager to be done with it.

Once all her books and implements were arranged in her typical half-moon fashion, Hermione finally settled. A moment later, he felt her attention on him.

“What’re you working on?” she whispered.

“Muggle Studies,” he sighed. “The exam is tomorrow.”

She made a sound of mild interest. “Feeling good about it?”

“I think so.”

Hermione hummed then gave him a cheerful look. “Well, if you need help, I do happen to be an expert on all things Muggle. *And* I took Muggle Studies for a bit, mostly to see how Muggles are viewed from a different point of view, so I know the rough scope of what’s covered here. It was actually quite interesting to see how much misinformation there is about even the most basic things.”

Draco bobbed his head, not that he really knew enough to tease out what was accurate or not. The class wasn’t confusing, exactly, but some of the material was definitely out there in terms of what made immediate, logical sense to him. Thankfully the, albeit limited, time he’d spent at Blaise’s predominantly Muggle house had given him some much-needed practical experience.

Hermione cocked her head thoughtfully. “Speaking of, how’s the new professor? I expect things must be more sensible now that there’s a Muggleborn teaching the class. Professor Burbage did her best, sure, but it’d be a bit like if I taught classes on traditional Pureblood culture or something. Some things have to be lived, not just read about, you know?”

At the mention of Professor Burbage, Draco’s stomach clenched. “Yeah, definitely,” he mumbled.

A moment of expectant silence lingered and then Hermione prompted, “So? Professor Hughes? How are the lessons?”

Draco shrugged. “They’re fine. I mean, I don’t have anything to compare them with—well, outside of the mandatory lessons last year, but I suspect Alecto’s curriculum wasn’t exactly factual, so...this year’s are at least better than those.”

Hermione made a soft sound of displeasure. “I heard a bit about that class from Neville. Definitely not what I’d call educational material.”

Draco scoffed dryly in agreement.

Recalling the shambles of the past two years was a quick way to put him in a bad headspace, and when coupled with the reminder of Professor Burbage, melancholy loomed. Seeing the torturous last moments of someone’s life would be something he’d never forget, even amid the general horror of everything else he’d born witness to.

House arrest had given him ample time to reflect on his actions and inactions, whether he’d wanted to or not. Being confined to the place where most of his traumatic experiences had occurred had certainly been a choice by the Wizengamot. In some ways, it had been crueler than a stint in the newly Dementor-free Azkaban, though he was relieved to not wear the Ministry’s mark in addition to the Dark Lord’s.

His father had not earned the same leniency, but even the two months he served in Azkaban felt like only a fraction of what he deserved. Holding that sentiment about his father had put Draco into a complicated mental space. It was upsetting to see his father shackled and taken away but at the same time, he burned with quiet fury whenever he thought of everything his father had brought upon them. The first week of house arrest had been emotionally fraught. Draco had stewed in his suite, not allowing entry to anyone except elves bearing food, grappling with the anger and grief that seesawed through him.

The manor had never felt so empty. It was as silent as a mausoleum, except for the crack of distant spells as his mother waged a war of her own.

She’d gone from room to room, wand sweeping with careful destruction, her face a crystalline mask of determination. He’d thought it her own form of penance; an outward display to the Ministry that although she had not been charged with a crime, Narcissa Malfoy did not condone what she had housed. Knowing now that his mother had defied Voldemort in the forest shed a bit more light on why his family had been spared what he personally considered they had deserved, and suggested that the intention guiding his mother’s wand had not been only for outsiders.

They’d worked together after that, not speaking about anything more serious than how the roses were coming along or whether silver drapery suited the newly decorated grand dining room. In July, his friends had been allowed in and with them had come a new variety of anger and grief, though softer and directed back at himself this time. Their revelation and subsequent education had brought into focus the ambition that had been slowly weaving itself together within him: Draco Malfoy was allowed to be whoever he wanted now.

When his father had been released and allowed to return home, Draco had braced himself for an adversary in his unlearning, but Lucius had returned to the manor a contrite man, eyes

watchful over Narcissa as she'd pursed her lips on a slow inhale, observing her husband in the receiving hall.

"Lucius," she'd said, the first time Draco had heard the name spoken aloud since his father's trial. "Home for good, then?"

His father had lifted his chin, the expression so familiar Draco could feel the way his own head begged to mirror it as it always had done; his father's son. But this time, the pose held something other than the Lord of the Manor preparing to retake the helm from his doting wife and son. Deference; vulnerability.

With his throat bared, Lucius had murmured, "If I am permitted."

His parents had always been close, so much communicated through glances that Draco knew their private lives must be full of careful communication and deep understanding. The tenderness he'd seen between them in that moment had made him turn away, swallowing over a lump in his throat. There was nothing more agonizingly beautiful than a mutually-held glimmer of hope.

Hope was a sensation that had continued to bloom with the late summer flowers, the promise of a new life fueling his own soul-searching. But even with the help of his friends in relearning and deprogramming, there was still so much to reflect on and work through. For as long as he lived, Draco knew there would always be reminders of what he'd seen, and done, and allowed to happen. Little things, like Hermione's innocent question about a professor, that he could never be fully prepared for. But he would face them. He had to, in order to achieve the sort of deep healing that even magic couldn't provide. Weed by weed, he would pull it all up until his garden was tidy.

Hermione's hand on his forearm brought him back from his reverie, and he glanced over to find her looking at him with concern.

"Are you alright?" she whispered. "You seem...off."

"Yeah, I'm alright." He forced an instinctive smile, then let it drop when he remembered he didn't need to pretend with her.

The library was perhaps an unconventional place for confession, and for a moment he debated whether to divulge what had him toeing the line of past and present. But it was *her*, and so he drew in a small breath and tilted his face toward her.

"Sorry—this isn't exactly the best time or place to bring this up but—" He inclined his head in a *but when is it* motion, then murmured, "I was there when Professor Burbage was killed."

Hermione's hand froze on him, expression first surprised before creasing with worry. "Oh, Draco."

"It's fine—well, it's not, but..." He pressed his mouth into a firm line at the sympathy in her tone but set down his quill to overlay his hand on hers, squeezing gratefully. "I saw a lot of

fucked up shit—*did* a lot of fucked up shit—so that was...” He paused then cleared his throat. “Anyway, I just wanted you to know.”

Her expression of concern hadn't wavered, and neither had her grip on him. "I'm sorry you had to see it," she offered quietly.

Yeah. He was too.

"Mum destroyed the table where it happened," he said after a moment. "She destroyed most of the furniture in the house, actually. Anything *he* touched, she's removed and replaced."

It occurred to him then that Hermione's fingers were over his covered Dark Mark. The moment he thought about it, the skin tingled with awareness, and he grit his teeth, hating that he would always be among the list of something touched by that wickedness. Touched but irremovable.

Someone else might have simpered, or fawned, or recoiled at the reminder of the person he'd been, the people he'd surrounded himself with. But Hermione just stroked her thumb in a small back and forth over the hidden ink until the dull buzzing sensation finally faded, her expression serious but soft.

“If you ever want to talk about it...” she offered, leaving the rest unsaid. He gave her another tight-lipped smile.

“Thank you,” he said sincerely. “But I don’t think I do. Not more than this, anyway. I, erm, wrote a letter to her family during the summer; an apology and to explain what happened, in case knowing gave them any closure. Her sister wrote back to me and...” He sucked a canine, glancing away from Hermione's steady gaze to fix his eyes unseeingly on the books around them. He could still hear the shrieking transmitted by the Howler, sobs echoing through the halls in the way her sister's had never been allowed to. “Well. Rehashing it hasn’t brought much peace to anyone thus far.”

The gust of her sigh was soft and understanding, imbued with a thin edge of frustration. At what, Draco wasn't sure, but it didn't really matter. Not when her hand was still curled tightly around his arm, fingers pressed lightly against black ink and scar tissue, not shying away from the reminder that her boyfriend was...well, him. It was bloody decent of her. Rather miraculous, actually, when he stopped to think about it. He tried not to think about it too hard at the moment; a semi-private confession was one thing, but very public crying in the library was perhaps more than he could bear.

“Well, the offer still stands.” A final squeeze and her hand slid off him to pull his parchment toward herself. She read for a second and then snorted an incredulous sound. “Godric, you’re learning about the inner workings of light bulbs? *Why?*”

The change of subject was a relief, and he exhaled slowly, willing the dark memories back to the recesses of his mind.

“You’re the supposed expert in all things Muggle,” he quipped. “You tell me.”

She tsked, flicking a dubious glance at him. Checking on him. Affection swelled in his chest as she propped an elbow on the table, scanning further down his notes.

"It's just that electricity is a rather complex topic," she carried on, still reading. "Muggle specialize in it, both at a practical level and a scientific level. It's not exactly an easy area of study for someone who's only experience with indoor illumination is magic or oil lamps."

His brows raised, amused. "Is this another subtle stab at my quaintness?"

"Might be." She hummed a note of approval, then paused. "Oh, this isn't—Draco. In this context, a conductor isn't the same as someone who operates a train, it's..." She broke off, biting her lip to quell a wide grin.

He rolled his eyes over a laugh-tinged groan. "Don't laugh, I'm *trying*."

"This is so cute, I can't—" She allowed herself a singular giggle, smothering the rest behind her lips. "I'm sorry—you're adorable. And actually, a train analogy isn't bad, if it helps you understand. Hang on, let me just..."

He watched as she pulled out a fresh bit of parchment and began sketching out a rough railway system.

"For the record, I do know how electric lights work," he reminded her. "I use them all the time at Blaise's house."

She shot him a placating look then continued her scribbling. Rather than press the point, he propped his temple on a raised fist and watched her label the diagram with the electrical terms he'd memorized but not quite understood.

"Alright," she began, tone pure Head Girl, and he nursed another little burst of affection for her. "Now, I'm not an expert on this topic because, again, it's highly specialized, but this much I do know."

She tapped the disproportionately small train station she'd sketched out at the bottom of the page. "This is where the two ends of the tracks meet—trains go out and come back in." She traced the circular pathway she'd drawn. "Electricity makes the same journey along the circuit, electrons flowing from the negative to positive terminals like trains traveling between stations. Like this, see?"

Draco nodded automatically, only half paying attention as she continued her explanation. He knew enough to pass the exam, almost certainly, and if he didn't...well, anything he needed to know about Muggles or relations thereof going forward, he had Hermione to help. Exactly as he had her now. The lecture carried on, comparisons of steam to light, iron to tungsten, air to argon murmured softly as her finger skimmed and pointed, her eyes flicking up to his to confirm he was still paying attention.

Yes, Granger, he thought. Oh yes. I'm paying attention.

After going into far more detail than he'd ever be tested on, Hermione sat back with a soft expression on her face. There was a serenity about her that he hadn't anticipated seeing until after exams, as if the waters of her were completely calm and cool. While he was sure she'd derived a great deal of enjoyment in tutoring him on Muggle inventions, there was no way that electricity was a topic to leave her so peaceful.

"What's got you looking like that?" he asked quietly, raising a curious brow.

She smiled, something small that grew as she looked over at him. "I'm just thinking how nice it is to be stressed about exams."

At his expression, she breathed a soft laugh.

"I mean, *only* exams," she clarified, then pulled her own work towards herself. "This is the first year that I haven't been actively trying to keep Harry alive or solve some sort of mystery or barely survive an adventure on top of keeping up with school and getting through exams."

She sent him a fond, almost shy look as she inked a quill. "Not that this year hasn't been an adventure in its own right. Just...a happy one, this time."

In his chest, his heart swelled to bursting.

"Yes," he agreed quietly. "It's really, really nice."

Hours later, Draco slipped under the covers and nuzzled into the back of Hermione's neck. She shifted sleepily, body lax and warm as she tucked herself into the curl of chest, welcoming his arm around her and then hugging it.

They'd collapsed into bed after another lengthy revision session for her and an anxiety-purging run for him. After ensuring that he was as ready for Muggle Studies as he'd ever be, he'd kissed her hair and taken to the grounds. The run had helped tremendously, giving his system an outlet for the nervous energy simmering inside him at the lingering memories of snakes and soundless screams. He'd run until it was impossible to think about anything except his breath, and that he was alive.

When he'd gone up to her room afterward, still panting and sweaty, he'd found her already curled up in bed, closer to sleep than wakefulness. The sight had sunk through him like butter on warm bread, rich and soothing, and thrice as rejuvenating as when he'd let his feet take him along the shoreline of the lake, trespassing into the shallows to let the cool water splash up around his calves, further tempering him.

He'd wanted nothing more than to slide under the covers and hold her, but love him as she might, no one appreciated a sweaty, lake-damped boy in their bed. After a rushed shower and

quick drying charm on his hair, he slid under the covers in just his boxer-briefs and burrowed in close.

Hermione shifted against him, and when his deep inhale gave way to a long, gusty exhale, she tilted her face up. "Alright?" she mumbled.

"Yeah." He squeezed his arm around her, palm flattening over the steady beat of her heart. "Sorry, didn't mean to wake you."

"I wasn't asleep." Given the way the words came out half slurred, he suspected she had been. She overlaid his hand with hers, stroking her fingers softly over his knuckles. "You were gone for a while."

"Mm."

They were quiet for a moment, and then a moment longer. Eyes closed, he breathed in the scent of her hair, filling his still-aching lungs with something sweet and lovely. He was beginning to doze off when Hermione drew in a premonitory breath, and his awareness instantly honed back in on her.

"What're you thinking about?" she asked quietly.

He nosed deeper into her hair. "How good you smell," he whispered drowsily.

Under his palm, her ribs vibrated with a soft laugh. "Oh really."

"Mm-hm." He inhaled deeply again, partly to prove his point but also because she really did smell wonderful. Like flowers and sleep and home. "Ought to bottle it up."

"But then you wouldn't need me," she mumbled, snuggling closer against him. "Better to get it from the source."

He tightened his arm, knees bumping the backs of her legs as he brought their bodies flush. "That's very true."

Sleep was slowly claiming her; he could practically feel her thoughts drifting off to tangle with his in that space between consciousness and the void.

"On your run," she said sleepily, and it took him a moment to piece together what she was asking.

"Oh." He thought back. How blissful to have already forgotten. "I thought about lots of things. The past. The future. You."

She made a contented sound. "Me?"

Warm in bed, eyes closed and arms full of her, sentimentality rose to the surface. He didn't even consider holding back.

“I want to know every part of you,” he whispered, the words soft and slow, spoken just above her curls-covered ear. “And I want you to know every part of me.”

She hugged his arm more tightly, chin dipping to press a kiss to the tips of his fingers. “I’d like that.”

She released his arm, rolling within his hold to face him. It took effort to open his eyes, and the moment he managed it, they fell closed again at the soft touch of her lips to his. The pressure lasted until it was just them, sharing his pillow on her bed, lingering. When she broke the contact, it felt like waking up but even so, he kept his eyes closed. Just slid his arm a bit more tightly around her, and let himself drift in the shallows.

“Tell me something about you that no one else knows.”

Her question had his eyes slitting open, then opening fully at the little smile on her lips. He breathed a soft laugh.

“I thought we were sleeping.”

“In a minute. Tell me something and I’ll reciprocate, then we can sleep.”

He hummed thoughtfully, closing his eyes as he ran his hand slowly up and down her back. He was exhausted enough from the run and from using his brain all day that feeling the brush of her cotton pajamas over his bare skin was only gently rousing. If she hinted at wanting more from him, it would take only seconds, of course, but as it was, her sleepy embrace was all he needed.

It was tricky to think of something about him that no one else knew but which was suited for a light, pre-sleep conversation. After a moment, he chuckled to himself then cracked his eyes open. She’d been watching him, gaze heavy-lidded and soft, and her expression brightened expectantly when his eyes met hers.

“Okay. Here’s something. When I was little, maybe five, I found a fox cub at the edge of the woods at home. I thought it was a kitten and decided to bring it up to the manor. I think I got it past the rose garden before it wriggled free, which was probably for the best. Mum would never have allowed it indoors, wild cat or not. When she saw the scratches on my arms, I lied and said I’d gotten caught in a rose bush.”

Hermione was smiling, eyes warm. “Aw. Did you see it again after that?”

Draco made an affirmative sound. “I fed it for a few weeks, covertly. Went down to the woods every afternoon with pilfered sandwiches from tea. And then one day it didn’t show up. I never saw it again.”

It had been ages since he’d thought of the little fox. The memory warmed a little kernel of emotion in his chest. It had been his first secret friend, and the closest thing he’d had to a pet. Where had it gone, all those years ago? Hopefully somewhere good.

“Probably went off and fell in love with a vixen,” Hermione suggested, thoughts mirroring his own. The emotion in his chest found a new source.

“As all young foxes do,” Draco agreed, smirking. She rolled her eyes but accepted his kiss. “Now you.”

“Hmm.” She blotted her lips thoughtfully. “I made up my own language once.”

“When was this?” Draco asked, charmed.

“I think I was seven or eight? I’m not sure. But I invented it during a summer break. It was a written language first, so that I could write in my diary without anyone reading it, and then I developed a spoken component once I realized how interesting it was to craft. I can’t remember much of it anymore, but there were a lot of clicks in place of vowels.”

“Merlin, what I’d pay to hear you clicking away to yourself,” he chuckled. “I bet you were adorable.”

“Only the *vowels* clicked, I said, and not all of them,” Hermione corrected, but she was grinning.

He ran his hand lazily up and down her back again, but could feel sleep tiptoeing closer. “Even so. Bet your name sounded incredible.”

She hummed agreeably. “Beautiful to look at, too. I made sure the letters all flowed together in a string, like cursive but smoother.” A self-deprecating, though affectionate, chuckle. “I was learning how to write in cursive at the time and hated how clumsy it looked. R’s especially. Never been able to get them as smooth as I want.”

“I’d love to see it. Your name, how you want it to look.”

Her toes found his shins, the tips cold despite how long she’d been tucked up in bed. He let her press them to him; welcomed them in closer.

“I’ll have to look for my old notebooks.” Her voice had gone drowsy and when he peeked his eyes open, saw that hers had also slipped shut. “Remind myself how it went.” She snuggled against him, hair tickling his cheeks as she burrowed into the hollow of his throat. He closed his eyes again. “I’ll write your name for you.”

“In your secret, special language,” he murmured.

Despite having no reference for how it might look, Draco was sure he could picture it. He’d watched her write enough notes and essays, had seen her sketch countless runes and constellations, to know the way her fingers made shapes with ink. It would be beautiful.

With a sleepy, happy hum, Draco finally fell asleep.

Thank you so much for reading 📖

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Chapter 52: “Or is that too difficult?” he taunted.

Chapter Notes

Hi friends! This chapter comes to you courtesy of my five-hour layover in the glorious Houston airport. While Business Boys™ tinkered away on slide decks and “ran the numbers”, I...did this.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

There was no sign of Draco in the Great Hall when Hermione arrived for dinner on Friday, but Ginny waved from the Gryffindor table, so she hefted her bag up her shoulder and made the familiar trek over.

“Hiya,” Ginny greeted when Hermione plonked her bag onto the bench beside her.

“Hi,” Hermione returned, then dropped down beside her bag with a sigh, resting her back against the table. “I’ll deny ever saying this if you bring it up in the future, but *Godric*...why did I elect to take so many N.E.W.T.s?”

“I promise not to say ‘I told you not to’ too loudly when you’re crying your way through the next two weeks,” Ginny assured her with a wry grin, then eyed her position dubiously. “Why are you sitting backwards? Are you not eating dinner?”

“I will. I’m just waiting until Draco gets here.”

“You’re incapable of eating without him?” Ginny screwed up her nose. “Fair warning: if you say yes, I’ll vom, and I have excellent aim.”

Hermione rolled her eyes. “Of course not. But we have an unspoken agreement to not eat at the Slytherin or Gryffindor tables, and I’d rather not wait by myself somewhere else when you’re right here.”

Ginny pouted out her bottom lip. “I’m so touched.”

When Hermione sent her a flat look, she grinned then flapped a hand.

“But come on, why not? It’s not like we’d ostracize you or hex him for sitting down with us, and there are hardly any Slytherins left who would care one way or the other, either, I’m sure.”

“I’m sure you’re right, but that doesn’t mean I want to sit over *there*.”

Ginny snorted. “Stubborn as ever, I see.”

“I’ll sit at Slytherin when he sits here,” Hermione said decisively. “And since *that* will never happen—”

“Over here!” Ginny called, interrupting Hermione and waving her hand high in the air.

Hermione turned, expecting Dean or Neville, only to find Draco coming over, expression perfectly unprovoked at being summoned.

“Evening, girls,” he said pleasantly, settling down onto the bench beside Hermione without hesitation.

He leaned in to kiss her cheek but she reared back to look at him, furrowing her brow. “What are you doing?”

Draco’s brows went up. “Uh...?”

“I mean, we’re sitting *here*?” Hermione clarified, then gestured around them significantly.

Draco looked from her to Ginny, then around the table. The bench across from them was empty and on either side, other groups talked amongst themselves, not sparing them any attention.

“Well, it’s not ideal,” Draco said slowly, then flicked his gaze past her to the right. “But Ginny’s alright in small doses, so as long as you think you can eat quickly...”

When Ginny scoffed an offended noise, he grinned then leaned in to land a firm kiss on Hermione’s cheek before beginning to fill his plate.

Hermione watched him with muted surprise. True, after they and their friends set an example by sitting wherever they pleased, the Great Hall had begun to slowly homogenize, but it still felt significant that Draco had crossed this final border.

“You might be the first Malfoy to ever sit here,” Hermione marvelled.

“Another first for the list then.” He shot her a fond look. “I’m the first Malfoy to do quite a lot of things, actually—eating a Gryffindor is merely one of many.”

A correction to his phrasing was on the tip of her tongue but then she saw the way a cheeky smile was waiting in the wings to unfurl, so instead, made an agreeable sound and rotated around, tucking her legs under the table. Draco served her the spoonful of mash he’d just scooped then went back to the bowl for another for himself.

“Thanks,” she said, then reciprocated by ladling a bit of gravy for them each.

There was something nice about sitting at the familiar table on the last day of classes. The thought sent a little spark of emotion through her, pricking in her sinuses. *The last day of classes*. How was it already almost over? From her vantage point, Hermione could see the entire Great Hall and she took a quiet moment to memorialize it.

“I like this,” Ginny said thoughtfully, and Hermione brought her attention back to her tablemates. Ginny was looking past her to Draco. “You’re good for her.”

Draco snorted a little laugh, glancing over before going back to filling two goblets with pumpkin juice. “Yeah? Why’s that?”

“Ignore her,” Hermione advised dryly.

“Lots of little reasons,” Ginny said, undeterred. “But predominantly the fact that N.E.W.T.s begin in two days and, despite having only minutes ago admitted to doing too many, Hermione is sitting here, nicely eating her dinner rather than poring over the same book for the fifth time this week.”

Draco hummed a knowing sound, passing both a goblet and an amused smile to Hermione. “Don’t worry, she’ll be revising as soon as dinner is finished. My presence does nothing to curb that particular habit.”

Hermione took the cup with a smile then sent Ginny a smug expression at his having ignored her little disclosure regarding N.E.W.T.s. Ginny narrowed her eyes back.

“In fact,” Draco carried on, picking up his cutlery, “I even came up with a little study guide we can try out later.”

That got Hermione’s attention. She pivoted toward him eagerly. “You did? Really? For which subject? Oh—or is it split into—”

“*Dracoooo*,” Ginny whinged, cutting her off. “Just when I was saying a nice thing about you? C’mon, mate.”

“I was going to focus on Transfiguration as that’s the first exam, but as it and Charms are so interconnected, it’s a combination,” he said, ignoring Ginny, then flicked a brow at Hermione before looking down to assemble a bite. “I think you’ll find it...immensely enjoyable.”

There wasn’t a study guide on earth that Hermione wouldn’t relish sinking her teeth into and she was certain that anything Draco’s beautiful brain thought up would be doubly satisfying, and so she hummed a little sound of excitement. Ginny, however, snorted a derisive sound beside her.

“*Oh.*” Ginny’s tone was wry. “Yuck.”

Draco smirked around his fork as Hermione frowned, not following. When Draco offered no explanation, she pinned Ginny with a confused look instead.

“What’s yuck about a study guide?”

“Don’t tell me if I’m right,” Ginny implored, leaning around Hermione to give Draco a stern look that lasted for half a second before she broke with a mischievous grin. “But I am, aren’t I?”

“I certainly won’t be telling you,” Draco said imperiously, but even Hermione could hear the agreement in his tone.

As Ginny snickered then drained her goblet, Hermione heaved a dramatic sigh. “You know, I’m starting to regret facilitating a friendship between you two.”

“Sure you are.” Ginny dabbed at her mouth then set her napkin neatly aside, plate cleared. “I’d say I’ll see you in the common room later, but I’m guessing I won’t, will I?”

“Probably not,” Hermione said regretfully at the same time Draco drawled, “Definitely not.”

“Right.” Ginny patted Hermione on the head as she stood. “Your chosen partner notwithstanding, I’m exceedingly envious of your upcoming study session. Have fun! Learn loads!”

Ginny was a good student but never, not once, had she ever showed such enthusiasm for revisions. But as Hermione watched Draco offer Ginny a somewhat sarcastic salute with a finger to his brow bone, smirk teasing the edge of his mouth, the implication finally landed. *Oh* indeed.

When his eyes fell to her expression, he grinned broadly. “Figured it out then?”

“I cannot believe you,” she accused softly. “Seriously? In front of *Ginny*?”

“You’re not embarrassed, are you Granger?” he teased. “After everything else you’ve proudly proclaimed in front of her, a study-guide-with-rewards is the thing that finally does it?”

Hermione scoffed. “I’m not *embarrassed*. But she’s already so nosy, you can’t keep giving her new fodder like that.”

Draco inclined his head agreeably. “Fine, fine.” He eyed her mostly-cleared plate, then cut his gaze up. “Are you finished?”

To be obstinate, Hermione forked a roast parsnip and popped it into her mouth, chewing slowly as she held eye contact. Draco compressed a smirk.

“Well, when you *are* finished, we’ll go up and I’ll show you the study guide.”

It was tempting to give up the ruse of not being deeply curious about what he had in store, but Hermione managed two more measured bites before finally placing her cutlery together neatly on her plate. Draco stood at once, hoisting her bag over his shoulder with a little grunt of dismay at the weight before slinging his on top and holding out his hand to her.

Up in the room, Draco deposited their bags beside the desk then flipped the top of his open to draw out a scroll. Despite knowing that whatever he had planned would not be the same manner of rigorous study guide she’d have compiled, she was eager to see what he’d put together.

And how he might reward her for correct answers.

Draco placed the scroll on her desk then turned to face her, eyes running down her figure once before meeting her eye.

“I’m going to activate the charm on your knickers in a moment,” he began, and her pulse jumped. *She’d been wearing charmed knickers all day?* That little snake. “And then you’re going to come sit on my lap.”

He waited for her to disagree with his suggested order of events but, obviously, she had no intentions to. She did, however, fix him with a deeply disapproving look.

“I can’t believe you,” she scolded, taking a step toward him. “I’ve been wearing these all day! You could have activated them at any time.”

He gave her an impish smile. “I certainly could have, yes. But it would’ve ruined the surprise.”

She looped her forearms around his shoulders, returning his cheeky grin as his arms wrapped, warm and secure, around her waist. “Counterpoint: I could’ve had an orgasm.”

“I seem to recall you being quite *aggressively* clear that riling you up in the middle of the afternoon was the reason I’d found myself shoved behind that tapestry a few days ago,” he drawled. “Not that I believe *I* did any active riling.”

“You know what you did,” she told him primly. She’d made quite sure of it.

He nodded with feigned earnestness. “Yes, and I feel very chastised for it. I won’t ever look at you in class again, I promise.”

“Prat.” She rose up to kiss him, sighing happily when their lips met. He made a complementary sound into the press of her mouth, deepening it for a few moments before drawing back.

“So, do you want me to tell you what we’re going to do?” he offered, tucking a curl behind her ear. “Or are you in the mood for more surprises?”

Surprises were amongst Hermione’s least favorite things, for a multitude of reasons, a sentiment she conveyed with a flat look. He snorted a soft laugh.

“Right—of course.” Hands around her hips, he walked them backward to the chair. “As I said, I’m going to get your knickers vibrating—just softly at first—and you’re going to sit on my lap and answer the questions I’ve prepared.”

The prospect of being posed questions sent a burst of excitement through her. Quick to follow was anticipation about feeling the uniquely squirmy, wonderfully warming sensation of vibrations between her legs.

He sat and she arranged herself over his lap at once, facing him with her hands on his shoulders, toes of her shoes braced on the floor.

“I do have one little surprise left,” he admitted, and then slid a hand under her skirt, fingers grazing along her hip to rest against the fabric of her knickers. Intention settled heavily in his gaze, and a moment later the gusset began to gently rumble.

Her mouth dropped open, at the sensation but more so at the knowledge that the utter menace had mastered the charm nonverbally. And not only that, but—

“Oh...my *god*,” she enunciated, tone accusatory. “*Wandless?*”

“Wandless,” he murmured, gazing up at her. “Though I do still have to touch the fabric to get it to work properly. I’ll practice until I can do it from across a room.”

She slowly shook her head, half annoyed and half wondrous at his competence, then rocked down against him instinctively, wanting to press the fabric as close to herself as possible. He smirked at her transparent wiggling then reached out to snag the scroll beside them, his other hand moving to hold her still at the hip.

“Now,” he began, “I have a few tiers of questions that I assembled from lessons and assignments and random, interesting things I saw while reading. Every time you answer correctly, I’m going to increase the vibrations.”

She scoffed at the implication that she wouldn’t answer *all* of them correctly, something he marked before carrying on.

“While answering tier one questions, you’re not allowed to move. Once you reach tier two, you can grind on me.”

A personalized quiz *and* logically ascending rules toward pleasure—was it possible to find a more perfect man? She licked her lips, nodding.

“At tier three, I’m going to take my cock out.” He paused, the implied *and put it inside you* communicated via a meaningful look. “And then no moving again.”

“How many tiers are there?” she hedged, beginning to see the shape of his wicked plan.

“Five,” he said, flicking a brow when she huffed a laugh.

“I think you get off on controlling my orgasms.”

He gave her a pitying look. “Surely you’re not only now realizing that?”

She tsked, then settled herself comfortably over him, enjoying the gentle buzz between her legs.

“Go on then,” she said bossily. “Quiz me.”

“Gladly.” He charmed the scroll to hover just behind her back then cleared his throat. “Who invented the Levitation Charm?”

“Jarleth Hobart,” she said instantly.

Draco compressed a smile at her rapid response. “And the year?”

It was too easy. “1544.”

“Correct.”

The vibrations deepened, rumbling teasingly against her folds. Already, she wanted to roll her hips against him to increase the sensation, but she behaved. Particularly with Draco’s hand, heavy and warm, on her hip, reminding her of the rules. He glanced back at the parchment.

“Explain the Fundamental Laws of Magic as pertaining to the field of charms.”

As she rattled off the answer, his gaze drifted from her eyes down to her mouth. It was highly distracting, and doubly so when he tilted his head thoughtfully, as if he was more interested in the way her mouth formed the words than the words themselves. From anyone else, that sort of dismissiveness would have irritated her. From Draco, it made her throb.

But when his eyes lifted to hers once she finished her thorough response, she saw that he had been listening, even as he’d admired her.

“Huh,” he mused thoughtfully. “I hadn’t thought to differentiate between instinctive emotional energy and intentional focused energy when spellcasting. That’s a good distinction.”

“Yes, exactly,” she began enthusiastically, and then sipped in a surprised breath when the vibrations surged. “*Oh.*”

He was watching her closely, smug grin in place. “Mm, yes, paying discrete attention to my emotions and intentions when spellcasting certainly adds an additional layer of power, doesn’t it?”

It did. The vibrations were radiating through her, making her warm and lax. The urge to rub herself on him was growing but she kept herself an attentive, relaxed weight over him.

The next handful of questions earned her little smiles and nods and small increases in the intensity, gradually building heat and sensitivity. While the spread of her thighs meant that the fabric was taut against her, it was still confined to the outside of her cunt. The temptation to wiggle down on him, or shove a hand in her knickers to part herself and expose her clit, mounted with each correct answer.

When he rewarded an answer with a genuinely impressed expression and a sincere, “*Damn, that’s a good answer,*” her arousal increased in a surge, walls fluttering despite the lack of acute stimulation. She gasped out a needy sound of pleasure, and he chuckled.

“Shut up,” she chided, wanting so badly to grind that she couldn’t help the minute twitch of her hips.

“We’re only at tier one, sweetheart,” he tutted. “Although actually, that was the last question so...tier two now.”

Instantly, she rolled her hips forward, letting out a low sound of satisfaction at the added pressure and the way she could finally feel the shape of him under the placket of his trousers. Draco huffed a strained laugh.

“Shit. I can feel it all along my cock.” He let her rock twice more before holding her still at the hip again. “But you haven’t answered a question correctly yet, so stay still.”

“Come on then,” she whined.

“Impatient,” he scolded, then looked behind her at the scroll. “What are considered the ideal emotions or state of mind to be in for successful, powerful charming?”

“Feeling confident,” she recited. “Embracing a sense of fun and eagerness. Finding joy in what magic can do.”

“That’s right,” he murmured. The rumbles sank deeper, as if he’d managed to extend the vibrations from the fabric into her body itself. “Can you tell how much joy I’m putting into this?”

She breathed a soft laugh, winding her arms more tightly around his shoulders from where they’d been resting inertly. “Yes, you prat.”

He grinned and she leaned down to kiss him, rocking herself over his lap with all the eagerness and confidence she could feel he was imbuing his charm with. He was hard between her legs, angled slightly off center but a deeply effective surface to rub along all the same.

“How many more questions until I can get this inside me?” she asked, breaking the kiss but staying close, hips rolling at a cadence that felt unsustainable.

“Two.” She felt his mouth curl into a knowing smile. “I figured this tier ought to be the shortest.”

She hummed her gratefulness into another slow kiss, matching the grind of her hips to the pace of her tongue. After a moment, he broke off, tilting his head to see around her at the parchment.

“List three weather-modifying charms.” Gratifyingly, his voice had caught an edge of strain.

“The Atmospheric Charm,” she recited, “Fogging Spell, Wet Weather Charm, Sunshine Spell.”

“That was four,” he tutted. “Trying to score bonus points, Miss Granger?”

She tsked at his taunting, letting her fingers drift up his neck to stroke through his hair. She wanted to reach between them and align his cock properly, but in only one question, he’d be taking it out and so she bided her time. He leaned back into her touch, expression indulgent.

“How many variations of the Shield Charm are there?”

“Six,” she said promptly, then shifted back to perch on his knees, hands dropping between them to work his belt open. “*Protego, Protego totalum, Protego maxima, Protego du—*”

He cut her off with a chuckle, hands overtaking hers when the angle proved tricky. The buckle clinked open, followed quickly by the button and zip. Satisfied, she lifted her weight off him enough that he could shove his trousers under his bum. As soon as he settled back, she reached down to palm him through his briefs.

“Finally, something hard,” she teased, giving his cock a squeeze.

He snorted an amused sound. “Oh I’m sorry, are these questions not difficult enough for you?”

“They’re perfect,” she assured him. “We’ll get to tier five quite quickly, and then I can do a proper revision after we’re done here.”

There was a new fire in his gaze, amusement mixing deliciously with challenge. “Alright then, Granger,” he said, voice laced with a new sort of heat. “You want a challenge?”

“If it’s not too much bother,” she sassed.

“Not at all,” he said graciously, then closed his hand around her wrist, tugging it from his cock and rotating it to press between her legs, his hand sliding to cover hers and pressing up hard.

The firm contact sent the vibrations skittering over the entirety of her cunt, so powerful against her sensitive folds that her eyes rolled shut.

“*Oh,*” she breathed.

“Mm.” He rubbed their fingers over the gusset, putting pressure on her middle two until she was forced to press the pulsing fabric a fingertip’s worth inside her, the length of her fingers holding the vibrations hard against her clit.

Pleasure swelled, quick and hot, and she moaned.

“Walk me through the theory of creating a counter-charm,” he said, then added, “And by the way, you’re now forbidden from coming *or* getting my cock until you get it right.”

She bit her lip to stem the forlorn whimper as her hips rocked mindlessly, everything already beginning to tighten.

“Or is that too *difficult*?” he taunted, and her eyes slid open to find him smirking.

It was a decently advanced theory to explain even without losing half her brain to carnality, but she’d faced harder under more dire circumstances. She welcomed the challenge.

“First of all, the term *counter-charm* is a misnomer,” she began, then paused as her walls clenched deliciously when he began to rub their fingers over her entrance in a slow back and

forth. “*Fuck*—because rather than being a...a reverse engineer of a spell itself, it’s actually an independent charm that...that simply counteracts the *effect* of another.”

Draco nodded along attentively but curled their palms up until they were cupping over her mound, lighting up every nerve even remotely connected to her clit. She hissed in a soft breath and he raised his brows with faux-concern. She refused to let him win, even as her walls constricted with building urgency, the clenches starting deeper and deeper.

“In order to invent a new charm, one must first—” She broke off again when his forefinger slid under hers to touch the fabric directly, and her entire body shuddered at the new frequency of buzzing. “Oh my god, *ah, Draco*—”

“One must first...?” he prompted, expression mild but unrelenting.

“One must first...” Thoughts drifted past like summer clouds, forming and dissipating just as quickly. “One must first...determine the intention of the charm. Then...you can pull from existing sources. To invent an anti-vibration charm, for example—”

“For example,” he echoed, amused.

“—I would pull from the Freezing Charm, or...or the Full Body-Bind. And then localize it.”

Draco hummed interestedly. “Okay. Go ahead.”

“What?” she bleated, despairing. “I’m not inventing a charm like *this*.”

This being more than three-quarters of the way to orgasm, and barrelling straight ahead with no brakes in sight.

He clucked his tongue understandingly, and even though he was just teasing her, and had no real authority of giving her any sort of grade, the *ah, too bad* of the sound ignited her competitiveness in a snap.

“Fine. Give me your wand,” she demanded, holding out her free hand and doing her best to breathe through the ever-increasing tension in her core. It was a good thing his other hand was still holding onto her because her thighs were beginning to shake.

Draco’s brows creased. “What for?”

“What do you think?” She clicked her fingers impatiently and he quirked a brow, but withdrew the hand on her hip to reach for his wand on the desk beside them and passed it over.

It would be easier to succeed with her own wand but that was still tucked safely in her bag and felt miles away. His was right there, and it worked perfectly well for her.

She took a moment to re-familiarize herself with the weight and feel of it, but looking at him while holding his wand, feeling what his magic was already doing to her, was far too distracting, so she closed her eyes.

It was getting hard to resist knocking their hands out of the way and sinking straight down onto his cock, but she was Hermione Granger, damn it. She'd invented a charm before; had successfully cast charms well beyond her expected skill level. This was doable.

Confidence, eagerness, joy, she reminded herself.

And, the most delicious of all: the look on Draco's face when she managed it.

Determined, she focused on the magic already collecting along her arm, drawn by his wand. The Freezing Charm was the better fit to counteract vibrations, given that a Full-Body Bind might only render the motion locked into place if she wasn't careful and that would be... fuck. More than she could withstand.

So, yes, good—she'd start with a variation of *Immobulus*. To localize it to just her knickers... she flipped through her mental Latin dictionary.

Between her legs, his fingers guided hers into another round of slow, firm rubbing. Behind closed lids, her eyes rolled back again. Oh god, it felt *so good*.

Draco shifted under her as if he couldn't help it, groaning a low sound deep in his throat. "Christ, you're getting so wet. These'll be completely ruined, won't they?"

"Shut up," she breathed.

The agony of holding her orgasm off made her reckless and so without thinking through the myriad of possible ramifications of casting an untested spell in close quarters with half a brain, she channeled her intention through the hawthorn and incanted, "*Immobulus locibombacio*."

The vibrations stopped, and she nearly sobbed at the loss, except it meant she'd *done it*—ha!—and so opened her eyes, victorious.

Draco gaped at her. "No *fucking* way."

"Easy," she said, the nonchalance of it somewhat hampered by the way she was panting.

As the threat of orgasm plateaued, she drew in a deep breath and assessed her work. She could still move her hand, even the one pressed against her cotton knickers, so that was a relief. She couldn't, however, move much else of her body. Because...ah.

Locibombacio had localized the charm to cotton, of which she was wearing a full outfit of. As was Draco. And given the way he attempted to shift under her with minimal success, she surmised that her charm had frozen his clothing as well.

"You're *insane*," he marveled, then drew in a deep breath, nostrils flaring. "Finite this and get on my cock immediately."

Yes. An excellent idea.

It was impossible to move her arm for the full motion typically used in a Finite, but a flick of her wrist was enough to convey the important elements.

“*Finite*,” she said firmly, and then yelped when the buzzing under her other hand surged anew.

“Oh,” she blurted, rising up instinctively, little good it did her when his hand rose with her, keeping the knickers flush. “Oh *fuck*. The charm doesn’t cancel with Finite?”

He scoffed, other hand moving to shove his briefs down enough for his cock to bob free. “Of course not. And it doesn’t invoke the Completeum Constant either. You’d be able to cancel it before I was ready if it was something as easy as that.”

She nodded absently, attention riveted down between them, completely distracted at the sight of him, thick and flushed. Cock out, he brought both hands between her legs, gently nudging hers aside and then curling his fingers under each side of the buzzing gusset.

“Sorry,” he said, not sounding it, then sharply tore the fabric apart.

She gasped, half surprised and half astonished, when he pulled her over him to slick along the underside of his cock. With her knickers framing either side of her cunt, she could still feel the buzz of his charm.

Together, they aligned until he was notched, the tip slipping through the copious wetness that had gathered at her entrance. At the first nudge inside, she let out a soft moan, and his eyes held hers as he slowly pushed upward, pulling her down on him at the hips.

As always, being so close to him felt intense; so much so that she almost didn’t lament the fact that this would be it. Just a downward settle and then stillness, at least until she’d gotten through the next lot of questions.

After a moment to adjust to the sensation of being full, she let out a soft breath. As long as she didn’t move, she could hold him inside herself without undue torment.

Except...the vibrations were making it harder to relax her inner muscles around him and...*god*, she wanted to come so badly she could taste it.

But seeing the way Draco’s face was slowly morphing into an expression of glassy-eyed arousal gave her the motivation to stay strong.

“Fuck,” he whispered. “How can you possibly feel this good?”

“Says you,” she returned, then pinned her bottom lip in a quick, sharp press. “I want to fuck you so badly.”

A muscle ticked in his jaw, then he swallowed and asked, “Can you cast a Patronus?”

For a moment, her brain stalled. *What?* And then he raised his brows expectantly.

Oh, right. She was revising.

“Yes.” She inhaled slowly. “An otter.”

“Brilliant. Suits you.”

She breathed a laugh. “That’s it? I don’t have to practice casting it?”

“D’you want to?”

With her wand still out of reach, she shook her head. She could practice it later, if she so desired.

“What about you?” she asked. “What’s yours?”

“Dunno. Never tried.” He wet his bottom lip with a slow drag of his tongue, gaze locked on her mouth. “Bet I could cast something fully corporeal right now, though.”

She tsked, mostly to cover the way his sentimentality had added another layer of warmth to her core, heart constricting with affection as much as her cunt.

“Try,” she encouraged. “I want to see what yours is.”

He snorted, eyes lifting. “Absolutely not. If I tried to cast something now, it’d probably be pathetic. A turtle stuck on its back, or a belly-up kitten, or a worm.”

She grinned, highly amused. “A *worm*?”

“I haven’t been inside you for days,” he reminded her, voice strained. “You underestimate what you do to me.”

“I make you pathetic, hm?” She pressed her lips together, delighted. “Like a little kitten on its back, mewling for its tummy to be fussed?”

“Granger,” he groaned. “Don’t be adorable while you’re full of me, Jesus Christ.”

“You said it.” She carded her hands through his hair then spread her knees a little wider, ensuring they were completely flush. It made it impossible to escape the vibrations tingling on either side of her cunt, radiating through her muscles and up into her inner walls.

If she had an uncontrollable orgasm while sitting nice and still, surely she couldn’t have been blamed. Not that she was forbidden from coming now, was she? She’d invented a counter-charm on the fly—surely that meant she was allowed to do whatever she wanted, should the opportunity for it arise.

All the same, she endeavored to be good.

“Ask me a question,” she reminded him breathily.

“What?” For a moment, he looked completely dazed, then blinked hard and shook his head.

“Oh yeah. Right. Uh, wand movement to change the color of your hair.”

With a forefinger, she performed the motion.

“Perfect.”

Hands on her hips, he cancelled the vibration nonverbally then, with a swift motion, he lifted her off him. She squeaked at the sudden motion, the slick withdrawal having made her walls clench desperately.

“Hold onto me,” he instructed, hands coming around to cup her bum. As soon as her arms wrapped around his shoulders, he rocked forward then up to his feet, hauling her into his arms and carrying her briskly across the room to drop onto her bed.

When he didn’t immediately follow her down to fuck her straight through the headboard, she made a despairing sound.

“Why aren’t you inside me?” she whined, tilting her head to where he was still standing at the edge of the bed.

“Tier four,” he said, chest heaving. “Time to add Transfiguration to the mix.”

Was he serious?

Fuck the study guide, she almost said but, if nothing else, his commitment to the bit was ridiculously impressive. She could play along a bit longer, surely.

All the same, she couldn’t help a petulant, “*Draco*” when he went to retrieve his wand and something from his bag.

He gave her a look as he returned, tossing both to the bed before shoving his unfastened trousers and briefs down and off.

“Well, I’m taking the exams too, aren’t I?” he said, stripping off his shirt next. “So I thought we ought to both revise. It’s just that you’re doing the theoreticals and I’m,” he picked up his wand and spun it in his palm, “doing the practicals.”

She’d lost the plot again, what with the way his torso had flexed and stretched as he’d taken off his shirt, and the way his cock was pointing at her like a homing device. But as he began casting, she regained enough of her faculties to go up on her elbows, curious what he was up to.

Whatever he’d tossed down to the bedding beside her had begun to morph. It was a Snitch, or had been. The little wings were still present, though they’d sunk from the middle of the ball down to the base as the sphere stretched, widening and tapering into teardrop shape. When it finally settled, the Transfiguration complete, she picked it up and examined it.

“Ah,” she said after a moment, intuiting the purpose from her extracurricular reading. “Is this for me or you?”

Deliciously, his cheeks flushed. “Oh. You, but...yeah, let’s revisit that later maybe.”

She flicked a brow at him then returned her gaze to what she'd correctly guessed was a plug. "We certainly will. Using a Snitch feels like a variation of a fantasy...?"

"Purely a convenience-based choice," Draco said, though his tone indicated she'd been close to the mark. "Now, flip over and get up on your knees."

She rolled onto her belly instantly then pushed up to her knees, arching her spine perhaps a bit more than was strictly necessary. When his wand clattered to the floor, she arched even further with a pleased smirk. A moment later, the heat of his body was close behind her.

His hands slid under her skirt to palm her arse cheeks, thumbs skimming up the edge of her torn knickers before lifting to push her skirt up around her waist.

She wiggled her hips and he groaned a rather tortured sound, hands tightening around her waist once before grazing back down to her arse, touch light but possessive in a way that made her eyes slip closed with a hum.

"So pretty," he whispered. The brush of the words across her skin was her only warning before his tongue slid up the length of her cunt.

She muffled her squeal into the bedding, clit so swollen from the vibrations and near orgasm that even the barest brush of contact sent a bolt of pleasure through her so strong that her walls closed down hard around nothing. Draco licked over her clit again with a chuckle.

"Felt that," he mumbled, then circled her entrance with the tip of his tongue, dipping just barely inside and triggering another clench.

When his tongue carried on upward, she groaned, pushing her arms forward until her breasts were flush with the bed, knees sliding further apart. He hummed a pleased sound then licked, slow and wet, over her arsehole.

She rocked back into the sensation, fingers curling into the bedding when he flicked the pointed tip of his tongue across her then began circling with firm pressure. *Turned on* didn't even come close to describing how she felt.

"Draco," she whined, then turned her head to the side in case he hadn't heard her. "Draco. Please."

He tilted his head to kiss her bum before nipping lightly at the plush curve. "Yes, baby?"

"More," she mumbled.

He hummed. "Yeah?"

She nodded so fervently that her curls spilled forward, obscuring her view. Immediately, he began kissing his way up her tailbone to her lower back, sending goosebumps racing up the full length of her spine. Her nipples tightened within her bra and when his hands slid under her shirt to smooth across her stomach, she sighed around an inhale, wanting to feel his hands absolutely all over her.

“You want my finger inside you?” he murmured, leaning up to brush her hair off her face, tucking the wayward curls behind her ear.

“I want your *cock* inside me,” she complained, catching his eye over her shoulder.

He grinned. “Soon.” Then raised a brow expectantly.

She sighed with excess drama. “Yes, I’m ready.”

“More than ready, I’d wager,” he teased, then reared back, hands skimming down her back in two greedy sweeps before one slid further to stroke gently over her arse.

He circled her rim then eased just the tip of his finger in, a tease or a test, she couldn’t tell, before petting over her again and murmuring the lubrication charm. The next time his pressed his finger against her, she took it easily to the first knuckle. And then the second.

Having any part of him inside any part of her was always deeply satisfying and as he slowly worked his finger in and out, she sighed happily.

Once he’d judged her ready, he added a second finger. It was more than she’d ever taken there, and the initial burn of the stretch rippled through her. It was not at all unpleasant, but he made a little noise of hesitation when she squirmed.

“Feels good,” she assured him. “More please.”

The mattress shifted slightly as he reached sideways for the transfigured Snitch.

“Okay baby,” he said, withdrawing his fingers and pressing the rounded tip of the toy in their place. “Relax.”

He stroked his other hand along her back, palm heavy and soothing, and then with steady, firm pressure, he eased the plug inside her. Her body resisted only slightly at the rounded, wider base but with a careful twist, it popped inside.

“*Oh.*” She shifted on her knees, getting used to the sensation.

“How’s that?” he checked, tracing around where the winged base rested snugly against her. “Okay?”

It was definitely okay, and when his circling nudged it gently inside her, she flushed with heat. *Better* than okay.

Experimentally, she flexed her inner walls. It was a strangely pleasurable sensation, different from how his finger had felt there. Bigger, and harder.

“It feels good,” she mumbled, squeezing again.

When he said nothing for a long moment, she craned her neck back to look at him. He was staring, eyes downcast and bottom lip pinned firmly between his teeth.

“Does it look good?” she murmured knowingly.

His eyes flicked up, caught, before he released his lip with a slow exhale.

“It moves when you...” His eyes dropped as she clenched again and he swore softly. “Fuck.”

“Can I have your cock yet?” she asked. “Or is there more to tier four than you staring at my arse.”

He tsked, then tapped lightly against the winged base. She sipped in a little breath as awareness streaked through her again and he hummed a satisfied sound.

“Ought to make you practice transfiguring a pillow into a mirror, so you can see how unfucking-believable you look right now, dressed so nicely in your uniform but with your knickers torn and arse full. Then we’d see who’s unable to stop staring.”

“Gladly,” she teased. “It would be hot to watch us.”

He snorted then paused. “Damn, you’ve just given me a truly wild idea. Fuck. Hang on, that’s —” He broke off with a huffed out laugh, then smoothed his hands over her arse cheeks.

“One thing at a time, Draco. Right, up you get, love.”

“Wait what’s the idea?” she asked, tone laced with disbelief that he had the audacity to react like that and not share the cause.

“I’ll tell you later. You were right to remind me—tier four. I have a final question for you and then I’m going to make you come in as many ways as I can.”

“Draco,” she whined. “Seriously? You can’t not tell me.”

He clicked his tongue at her, giving her bum a rousing pat. “Come on, up on your knees.”

Helpfully, he slid his hands up, pulling her upright so her back was to his chest. He swept her hair to the side to dot a soft kiss to her skin, lips working inward to find her neck.

Fine. She could pester him later, after she’d finally had an orgasm. Or several.

His hands slid around to cup her breasts, squeezing in a firm massage before his fingertips drew close around her nipples, rolling them lightly through the material of her bra and shirt. Against her spine, his cock was thick and damp, slightly tacky from her arousal and what felt like fresh precome leaking from the tip. She wanted him to slide up inside her *so* badly.

With deft fingers, he began unbuttoning her blouse, though only until her bra was exposed. His hands were warm on her skin, fingers teasingly light as they skimmed over the rounded tops of her breasts before dipping down into the cups, finding her nipples directly.

When he toyed with them again, her walls throbbed with new urgency, the prolonged and varied stimulus having kept her orgasm lingering nearby.

“*Oh*. I’m...so close,” she gasped, leaning into his touch.

He hummed a low sound. “Just from having your arse filled? Mm. I’d like to see that.”

She nodded desperately. Yes, so would she.

“Yeah? One last question then.”

She whined, lamenting the fact that he’d managed to make her want to throw the entire list of questions into the sea, if they stood between her and the delicious pressure steadily building in her core. Who even *was she*? What had he *done* to her? *Merlin*.

“What is the spell to anti-conjure?” he asked.

For a moment, her brain stalled. And then she huffed a breath through her nose, annoyed at his attempted trickery.

“The *vanishing* charm is *Evanesco*,” she answered.

“So it is,” he agreed, then withdrew his hands to curl both fists around her bra and shirt before repeating the incantation. “*Evanesco*.”

And just like that, she was topless.

The cool air brushed up against her like many hands, pulling her nipples tight and sending a cascade of goosebumps down her skin, heightening her awareness to her entire body.

She wanted to berate him for vanishing her clothing to the void, but couldn’t bring herself to care. She had other shirts. Other bras. And—when his hands had dropped to whisper the word again—other skirts and knickers.

And she could always shout at him about it later.

“Such a clever girl,” he purred. “If only there was a score to earn above Outstanding, because you certainly deserve it.”

Or perhaps instead of shouting at him, she could get on her knees and drag her tongue all over his cock.

Fuck.

Her clit was throbbing, begging for attention, and the needy sound she made spoke to it.

Instantly, he slid a hand down her front to pat just above her clit and she drew in a hasty breath. He groaned softly, patting her again before sweeping his fingers further down, straight through the mess he’d made of her.

“Oh *fuck*,” he muttered, then slid two fingers into her cunt with zero resistance.

Her eyes half crossed at the clit-throbbing friction, and the glorious sense of fullness at feeling his knuckles bumping against the plug from the inside. The hot pressure of orgasm was collecting fast.

“*Baby*,” he groaned, slicking his fingers in and out of her again and again, mouth brushing against her neck. “You’re dripping. Ohh, you’re feeling *so* good, aren’t you?”

It was too much.

“I’m going to come,” she whimpered.

He sank his fingers deep, grinding the meat of his palm against her clit, and her orgasm crashed through her. She moaned brokenly as her walls clenched around his fingers and the toy again and again, savoring the pleasure as well as the experience of discovering another dimension to how orgasm affected her body. She’d never been quite so aware of her arse.

“So fucking sexy,” Draco said, voice deeper with arousal. “How did it feel?”

“Mm.” She lifted heavy arms to reach back, wrapping them around his neck, rolling her hips over his hand to extend the aftershocks still twitching through her. “It makes me want to fuck you again.”

He chuckled. “Oh yeah?”

“Yes.” She ran her fingers up the back of his neck, letting her nails scratch just a little and relishing his shudder. “Or maybe you’d enjoy it like this, with something to come on while your cock is buried inside me?”

The motion of his hand went right back from soothing to intentional, fingertips stroking with renewed strength against her front wall as the heel of his hand flexed, rubbing hard against her clit. She grinned.

“How hard are you right now?”

He tilted his hips forward, cock slotting into the cushion of her arse and leaving a damp mark at the ridge of her tailbone. Hard as a rock.

“Very.” His touch gentled again as he exhaled with control.

She rocked her hips again, grinding back against him. “Are you going to put that inside me yet?”

Inside her cunt, his fingers curled further to stroke along her front wall. “Right here?”

She tilted her head back against his shoulder. “Anywhere you want.”

“Oh yeah?” He withdrew his fingers, sliding them further between her legs so he could rub them over the golden wings. “You want to feel my cock here?”

It was something she’d spent plenty of time considering, and now, knowing how different and wonderful even something small could feel, she was more than eager to experience his cock stretching her open.

“I can take it,” she said, perhaps over confidently, but he only hummed a low sound of agreement.

“I know you can.” He tapped lightly on the plug and she whined. “You’d take it so well, wouldn’t you?”

“And you’d make it so good for me,” she mumbled, absolutely certain it was the truth.

“I would,” he murmured, lips brushing along the shell of her ear. “But not tonight. I’ll be taking your arse for the first time with quite a bit more fanfare than this. After all, I didn’t have the foresight to savor your *traditional* virginity, so I have a lot to make up for.”

She scoffed. “Don’t even start. You were *perfect*.”

“You didn’t know any better,” he whispered, the words low and taunting. “You just wanted to feel a cock inside you. And I was too caught up to bide my time.”

“What would you have done differently?” she asked, widening her knees when his free hand nudged at the inside of her thigh. “To make it special?”

“Hm.” He withdrew his fingers then rubbed them, slick and warm, around her clit. “What *will* I do, you mean. A long bath first, in candlelight. I’ll wash your hair, and rub you all over until you’re all soft and relaxed.”

A final pat and he lifted his hand from between her legs to her hip, steadying her as he sat back on his heels behind her, thighs bracketing hers.

“And then I’ll dry you off, and carry you to our bed.”

Our.

“Obviously, I’ll kiss you all over,” he carried on, and she leaned forward, hands braced on the bed by her knees, when his hand slid up her spine in suggestion that she should. “Would you want to come on my tongue first, do you think?”

“You’re impossible,” she informed him, though she couldn’t wipe the smile off her face.

“That’s a yes then.” She could hear his smile, too. “Arch for me, love. I want to look at your full little arse while I fuck you. *Yeah*, like that, baby.”

She bit her lip, and then again, harder, when she felt his cock sliding through her folds before aligning at her entrance. On instinct, she pushed back and panted out a little sound of pleasure when the thick crown slid inside, rubbing up against the plug in her arse.

“Oh,” she gasped. “*Oh*. God, that’s...you feel so big like this.”

He hummed a knowing sound, hands flexing on her hips. “And you’re *so* tight. Why do you think I didn’t finish fucking you earlier?”

It wasn't until she'd fallen in love with Draco that she realized how perfectly the sensations of bemused annoyance and deep affection could tangle up with one another.

"Because you're a horrible tease," she said decisively.

He chuckled. "A bit. But doesn't this feel good?"

It did. And better still when he pushed forward, giving her more of his cock. It was getting hard to keep her eyes open, the sense of being filled—*full*—dominating her focus.

"Play with it," she breathed.

"Yeah?" His hand slid inward, fingers splayed over her low back as his thumb came to rest against the winged base. The first bump of it inside her made her walls flutter, and then he rolled it around and around, the shifting inside making her muscles tense hard. "Like this?"

"Yes," she breathed. "That feels so good."

He kept it up as he slowly drew his hips back then sank back in, and she moaned. In her wide-legged kneel, everything felt more snug, and when Draco leaned back, hips tilting upward, she felt impossibly full.

"And this?" he murmured, and then carefully pulled on the base.

Instinctively, she squeezed to keep it in and then panted out a breath as pleasure streaked through her.

"Oh," she gasped. "Yes."

"Christ," he murmured, tugging gently again. "You'd suck me right in, wouldn't you? I wouldn't stand a chance at easing you into it."

She nodded absently, eyes closed and head bowed, as he kept up the motion. They were only tiny little tugs but it was the smallest taste of how it would feel to be fucked there, and it was driving her mad with need. Already, a second orgasm felt right at the edge of her reach.

"You're getting so fucking wet," he groaned, hips picking up the pace with a touch more urgency and filling the room with the sounds of a slick, well-fucked cunt. "You like having your arse played with, hm? Does it feel good, baby?"

Obviously it did but as always, being made to say it turned her on even more.

"Mm-hm," she moaned. "Feels so good."

The insistent throbbing of her clit was becoming unbearable. She darted a hand down to rub tight circles and then all of a sudden she was coming, *hard*.

Behind her, Draco groaned long and low from deep in his throat, hips stalling at the initial clutch of her crest before resuming a measured roll, thumb braced against the plug to keep her stuffed full as her body pulsed around his cock.

“*Jesus*,” he praised. “Fuck, that feels so good.”

She muffled a moan behind her lips, thighs trembling as the orgasm shook through her. The waves of pleasure had barely begun to fade when he made a tight sound and huffed a harsh exhale against her back.

”Damnit,” he groaned, almost whiny, and then she felt the telltale throbbing of his cock deep inside her. “Fuck, you came out of nowhere. I wasn’t prepared—*fuck*, you feel too good.”

It was hard to catch her breath when he was so determined to make her lose it, but the knowledge that she’d made him come before he’d planned to never failed to make her proud and somewhat awestruck.

She managed to keep her preening to a minimum, though kept up the delicate circles around her clit until the aftershocks were well and truly finished.

Draco ran both hands up her back, bringing them both back down. She melted into his touch, then finally drew in a deep inhale.

“Wow,” she sighed.

He made a complementary sound. “*Wow*.”

Carefully, he slipped out and then eased the toy free, tossing it aside to roll and accidentally clunk to the floor.

“Whoops,” he chuckled, pulling her with him to collapse up by the pillows.

“Poor Snitch.”

“Hardly. That’s the luckiest Snitch in the world.”

She scoffed, draping her arm over his chest and nuzzling into the crook of his shoulder. His arm wrapped around her waist, fingers splaying absently over her hip.

“That was only four,” she murmured thoughtfully after a moment of contented silence.

Draco made a choked sound. “Wait, *four*?”

She snorted. “*Tiers*,” she clarified. “And you said there were five.”

“Oh.” He nuzzled back against her, relaxing again. “Yeah.”

“So?” she prompted, eyes closed. “What was tier five?”

“No idea,” he chuckled. “To be honest, I didn’t think you’d hold out until tier four. But you’re such a determined, clever little swot, aren’t you?”

She swatted at him without looking, the back of her knuckles colliding with a satisfying *whack* against his chest.

Chapter End Notes

I keep remembering little seeds of ideas I've planted in previous chapters and find myself re-inspired to make them grow, so here we go--a teensy step closer to Hermione getting DP'd like she deserves 😊

Also I don't want to talk about how long I'm dragging out their school year. I fucked up around chapter 44 by not having exams start the week after Draco's birthday but I'm just pulling the "transformative works" card and dusting my hands of it. (I'm also aware that no one has likely noticed this aberration but I just needed to get this off my chest ty)

Thanks for reading!

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Chapter 53: “She’s lying,” Draco mumbled

Chapter Notes

HI IT’S ME, YA GIRL! I got humbled real quick by summertime chaos this year but now that the little zee's have been back in school for almost a month, I'm getting my rhythm (read: creative energy) back.

This chapter has a bit of everything, but the predominant theme is: Draco gets sleepy when stressed because girl, same.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The Great Hall was as hushed as a cathedral, the high ceilings charmed to emit a soft, warm light reminiscent of a mild summer afternoon—just bright enough to energize but not so beautiful as to distract them with fantasies of walking out of the exam and sprawling on the lawns.

Soon, they could. But first: Transfiguration, at a nastily-exhausting level.

Despite the ever-present whisper in the back of her head claiming otherwise, Hermione *knew* she was prepared. Perhaps the most prepared amid the sea of her Seventh and Eighth year peers.

All the same, as the proctor circled the room confirming all were accounted for sans prohibited materials, her stomach roiled with nerves.

The Seventh year girl seated at the desk to her left—Gaines, a Ravenclaw—fiddled with her quill anxiously. Hermione caught her eye and sent her a sympathetic smile. In another life, it would’ve been Goyle sitting beside her, likely less outwardly anxious but perhaps a bit more fiddlesome.

Would she have sent him a smile, too? In another life, anything was possible. Yes, she might’ve smiled. They might’ve even been friends.

She pressed her lips together to hide a small smile at the realization that in *this* life, they’d managed to find friendship of a sort. Truly *anything* was possible then, if Harry had risen from the dead and she could share a genuine smile with Gregory Goyle.

She adjusted her posture, pulling her shoulders down until she was sitting straight and strong. A mindful breath helped a bit, though any steadiness gained was instantly lost as the proctor neared the base of the dais. A jolt of anticipation made her flinch, and then shiver with pent-up nerves.

Behind her, someone scuffed their shoe, the sound notable only for the fact that the room had gone suddenly silent, every student turned toward the front where the proctor had settled herself in the exact center.

This was it. The first day of exams was moments away from beginning.

A wave of nerves swept through her. She drummed her fingers softly on the desk to dispel it, stomach twisting with a noxious mix of anticipation and anxiety.

The shoe scuffed over the stone floor again, with clear intent this time, and she couldn't help but glance back over her shoulder, ready to shush the culprit.

Several rows back and over, Draco's eyes were waiting for her.

When their gazes met, he mouthed "*Breathe.*"

Her lungs emptied as if compelled, shoulders relaxing down with them. His little nod of approval melted through her like hot tea. And just like that, her nerves settled.

She pressed her lips into a grateful smile then mouthed back, "*Love you.*"

The corner of his smile ticked up into something deeply pleased, before neutralizing as the proctor cleared her throat. Hermione faced front to find the witch conjuring a large clock to hover just above the lectern.

"Welcome to the written portion of your Transfiguration N.E.W.T.," she announced, voice pitched to emphasize the gravitas of her pronouncement. "You will have three hours to complete the assignments before you. Anything you produce within the allotted time period will be scored, whether completed or not."

She paused to allow the information to settle and then raised her wand.

"Your time begins..." With a flick, the large hand began ticking. "Now."

Hermione drew in a revitalizing inhale, sent a little wish for calm focus back a few rows, then inked her quill and began.

Four hours later, Ginny was still whinging.

"And *then*, to finish it with a long-form response?" she complained, slumping sullenly in the yellow settee across from Hermione. "My quill hand will never un-cramp."

"Well it's not like a short response would have let anyone fully answer the question," Hermione said reasonably, shuffling through the sheaf papers she'd set out onto the coffee

table between them. “I mean, Dackon’s Imperative alone requires a good few paragraphs of contextualizing, and that’s before even touching on—”

Ginny made a loud, keening whimper of abject despair and Hermione finally looked up.

“Did you not reference Dackon’s—” she began, concerned, but Ginny waved a hand as if trying to wandlessly silence her.

“Why are you like this,” she whined. “Tell me honestly, is there a single subject you’re not one-hundred percent confident on?”

“Um.” Hermione pressed her lips together, taking in Ginny’s forlorn body language and wanting to find some way to relate. “I’m not looking forward to the practical portion of Potions, I suppose.”

“She’s lying,” Draco mumbled, cheek squashed against her shoulder.

“Shush,” Hermione chided, nudging back against where he was mostly draped over her back. He allowed himself to be jostled but not displaced, chuckling softly at her attempt.

He’d pulled her backwards between his spread thighs as soon as they’d reached the common room sofas after the exam, his arms wrapping around her waist and head resting heavily on her shoulder like a pillow.

She’d allowed it, *obviously*, even if having her boyfriend playacting as a koala had somewhat hampered her ability to organize her notes for the practical Transfiguration portion which would take place during the afternoon session.

It had also made it difficult to eat the sandwiches they’d snagged from the platters arranged on one of the side tables by the common room door, but as she didn’t have much of an appetite, she’d let that inconvenience slide.

Ginny sighed. “It’s alright, I don’t even know why I asked. Hermione may as well sit on her hands during the exams for how little she actually needs to take them to prove her knowledge.”

“Oh please—” Hermione began, but Draco hugged his arms around her middle more snugly, and she faltered, distracted.

“Don’t worry, I didn’t appreciate it either,” Draco told Ginny, voice drowsy. “Long form after two lengthy essays was barbaric, no matter the necessity.”

“Thank you, Draco,” Ginny said pointedly.

“I’ll be glad when it’s all over,” Hermione said magnanimously. “We can all agree on that.”

“That we can.” Ginny propped her feet up onto the table, accidentally nudging one of the sandwich plates. It bumped into a teetering stack of parchment, sending pages swooping down like autumn leaves. “Honestly, I don’t know why I elected to take so many.”

“Three isn’t many,” Hermione said absently, reaching as best she could under Draco’s hold to fix the stack. With a little sigh, he moved with her.

Ginny clicked her tongue. “You are a bloody nightmare sometimes, d’you know that?”

Hermione snorted wryly. “Believe me, I do.”

Around her waist, Draco’s arms tightened then slackened, and she waited for a comment—whether in support of her or Ginny, she was unsure. But nothing came, other than a slow, deep exhale that she felt all down her back.

She shifted against him, suddenly aware of the heavy weight over her and his general lethargy.

“Are you asleep?” she asked skeptically, face angled back toward him.

When no response came, she shot a glance at Ginny, brows raised. Ginny tilted to the side, checking his face, then snorted a laugh under her breath.

“Passed out,” she confirmed, amused. “Poor thing. Been working him hard, have you?”

“He finished his revisions last week, actually. Though I’ve been up late all weekend so I suppose that’s been disruptive.”

“That’s obviously not what I meant.”

Hermione rolled her eyes. “Sorry to disappoint.”

Ginny examined them for a moment, tonguing absently at her teeth, and then her warm brown eyes fixed on Hermione’s. “So am I allowed to ask about after Hogwarts?”

“What about it?” Hermione asked, resting her elbows on her knees to brace against Draco’s weight.

“Tell me to shove off if you don’t want to think about it right now, but...do you have any plans?” Ginny pulled her feet back, leaning forward to mirror Hermione’s pose. “For work or...anything?”

Hermione raised her brows, curious at Ginny’s interest. “Well, my immediate plan is finding a house, but after that...” She trailed off, then shrugged as best she could. “I’ll see what catches my interest. And go from there.”

“Wait, you’re not moving in with Harry?” Ginny asked. “I assumed you would, rather than be alone.”

In the rush of the end of the academic year, Hermione realized she’d somehow neglected to keep up with her closest female friend. Well. No time like the present.

“Oh, I won’t be alone. Draco and I are getting a house together,” she explained.

Ginny's brows threatened to touch the ceiling. "You *are*?"

"Yes." Hermione frowned at the sustained look of surprise. "So what? That's not strange. People live together all the time."

"Right, but he's..." Ginny paused, searching for the words before finally landing on, "Old fashioned."

Hermione snorted. "He's absolutely not, I promise."

Ginny clicked her tongue. "I mean his *family* is. Although you know what? Say whatever you like, I stand by the fact that he absolutely has an old-fashioned air about him."

"*Air*," Hermione echoed, amused. "Who are you?"

Ginny graced her with a smirk then sobered. "But really. I don't know how Muggles are about it all but there are expectations about that sort of thing amongst some families. I mean, think about Ron and Daphne. If *my* mum is hell bent on marrying us off at the first provocation, consider how Narcissa Malfoy must be with her *only* son."

"Narcissa's helping us look for the house, actually," Hermione informed her, mildly amused at this speech coming from Ginny, of all people. "And if she has any marriage-based ulterior motives in helping us, so be it."

"Because fuck her and her motives?" Ginny posited, eyes flicking once to where Hermione could feel Draco's slow breaths, presumably checking his awakeness in the wake of bad-talking his mother.

"Because we'll be aligned in them," Hermione stage-whispered, then laughed softly at Ginny's flared eyes. "If *that* surprises you, then you really haven't been paying attention."

Ginny rallied with a scoff. "I do have my own life, thanks very. But seriously, Hermione?" Another cautious flick to Draco. "I mean, he's your first boyfriend."

It wasn't the first time Hermione had considered the direction that she and Draco were headed, nor the rapidity for which they'd walked the path.

And while they were perfectly able to live together without needing to involve an officiant nor sign their names to a piece of paper—and she'd be content to live without it, if that was his preference—a not-insubstantial part of her liked the idea of it. Of being bound together by both magic and Muggle methods.

True though Ginny's statement—and the underlying argument—were, Hermione had always had a knack for knowing the answer to something. And to the question of whether she was jumping too quickly into something without broader experience, she knew the answer as surely as any other.

Perhaps if they'd met years in the future, after time and experience had had its way with them first, they might not have fit with such preternatural ease. Perhaps if she'd had her heart

broken too many times, she might've been more wary. Perhaps if he'd cultivated cynicism rather than compassion in the wake of the war, he might've never opened himself up to her.

But all those theoreticals were immaterial in the face of her reality, here and now. He was who he was, and she was her.

They'd fallen hard and fast, yes, but with startling compatibility. Communicating with him, being open and vulnerable with him—all of it felt natural. And as they'd reinforced their innate rapport with conscious, intentional work, it felt simplistic to distill their relationship down to the number of days it had existed.

Because what was quantity in the face of such quality?

The answer was as easy as they were.

"Then I suppose I got very, very lucky," she said simply.

There hadn't been anything defensive in her tone but Ginny held up her hands in surrender all the same, though a small, pleased smile played at her lips.

"I ask only out of love," Ginny assured her. "Well, I'm happy for you—as long as you live somewhere within Apparition distance. I'll miss you terribly if you let him drag you off to France or Iceland or wherever-the-fuck."

"I'd miss you too. It'll definitely be in England," Hermione promised, then cocked her head. "Are you moving home after?"

Ginny sighed. "Just until I find work and get a bit of money saved up. Ron offered me his spare room but the risk of stumbling across him and Daphne going at it a second time absolutely isn't worth it."

"So come stay at Blaise's with us," Hermione suggested. "That's our immediate plan after school. Narcissa has some viewings scheduled out, but I decided I'd rather not crash at the manor between now and moving somewhere of our own. I'm sure Blaise would be happy to have you."

She paired the last with a little waggle of her brows, one of Ginny's own favorite suggestive gestures. Ginny gave her a round of silent, sarcastic applause for the attempt.

"Maybe for a night or two, but mum will be an almighty horror if I played house with a boy. Fairly certain she's been planning my wedding for ten years at *least*, and I will not be encouraging her, passively or otherwise."

Considering the almighty horror Molly had been for Bill's wedding, and how generally pushy she'd been toward Hermione and her available slew of sons, Hermione could scarcely imagine the overbearing amount of hopeful pining her only daughter might feel.

Hermione shuddered. "Fair enough."

At the movement, Draco stirred and a moment later, she felt his weight lessen infinitesimally.

“Welcome back,” Ginny said cheerfully, then winked. “Does her hair make as good a pillow as it looks?”

Draco hummed agreeably, the noise catching sleepily in his chest.

His hands slid off Hermione slowly as he sat back, and the lazy drag of them across her stomach made her suddenly, viscerally aware of how long it’d been since she’d last felt them on her. The last few days had been full of her typical brand of exam prep, no sexy quizzes in sight. But ugh, what had she been thinking, depriving herself?

“Damn,” he yawned sleepily, leaning back against the settee behind her. “I’ll need a Pepper-Up before the second session.”

“Or a proper nap,” Hermione suggested, twisting to inspect him.

He smiled at her from under heavy lids. “Good idea. Come with me?”

It was highly tempting, particularly as she could still feel the ghost of his touch and the heat of his body where his thighs still bracketed her. But there would be plenty of time for sex—and sleep—later.

“I should finish this,” she said regretfully, tilting her head toward the materials on the table. “I know it’s overkill but I’ll feel better if I do a final run-through. I’ll come wake you up in an hour?”

Draco made a noise of understanding, leaning forward to press a soft kiss to her temple. “Whatever makes you feel ready.” His lips brushed her ear. “Do I need to set a timer?”

She tsked, purely for the sport of it, though she didn’t hide the little shudder his low tone set loose along her shoulders. “I’m perfectly capable of keeping time.”

His lips curved against her skin before he kissed her again and sat back. “See you in an hour then.”

She stood so that he could extricate himself from behind her, then dropped back down on the cushions, savoring the lingering heat of body. Ginny raised a hand in farewell, which Draco returned with a lazy salute before turning and crossing the room.

Hermione sighed forlornly as she watched him go then refocused on the piles of notes. Ginny snorted dryly, and Hermione glanced up.

“I don’t care what bullshit Ron or Harry try to pull, *I’m* going to be your maid of honor.”

Hermione choked on a laugh. “Oh god, that just made me picture them in ball gowns. Are you *sure* the honor is worth missing that spectacle?”

“Ah, they can wear them for your hen do,” Ginny bargained, grinning. “And anyway, dress robes are essentially a gown. Won’t be too far a stretch, really.”

Dress robes at her wedding—an update to the extensive plans she’d assembled at ten. She smiled.

“I’ll keep that in mind—*not* that any of this is going to happen soon.”

The look Ginny gave her was rich with skepticism though for once, she elected not to voice it. Hermione rolled her eyes all the same.

An hour later—*preceisely*, thanks very much—Hermione headed up to locate Draco.

There were just over two hours left until their final exam session of the day, which meant that once she woke him up, she could have him give her Transfiguration prompts. Or possibly read one of her essays out loud, so she could hear the words in a fresh voice. Or, better still, read one of *his* essays to her.

In fact, damnit, why hadn’t she allotted time to reading through all his essays already?

The promise of new revision material quickened her steps and in no time, she was unlocking her door and stepping quietly inside.

The room was quiet, the lighting dim. A lump in her bed suggested that Draco had indeed gone back to sleep. Good. He’d clearly needed it.

Keeping her movements quiet, she left her bag by her desk and then crept over to the bed. He was sleeping more or less on his side, though had snuggled her pillow down to his chest, face tucked into it not unlike how he’d fallen asleep on her shoulder.

Waking him felt distinctly cruel, particularly when he was being so adorable, but Hermione knew it was a necessary evil. He wouldn’t want to be overly groggy for the afternoon session.

Leaning over, she gently shook his shoulder. “Draco,” she murmured. “Time to wake up.”

He didn’t move. She tried again, leaning further so she could shake him a bit more firmly.

“Draco—” she began, and then bit off a little shriek of surprise when, quick as a viper, he shoved her pillow up out of the way and curled his arm around her, capturing her down beside him.

“Hi,” he murmured, voice still raspy with sleep despite his burst of agility. “Take your shoes off.”

“This is the opposite of what I came up here to do,” she remarked lightly, though toed them off lest she get castle dust on the sheets. They fell to the floor with twin thunks and then he tugged her fully under the covers.

“Pity.” He turned her so that he could tuck her back firmly to his chest.

He’d taken off his shirt before getting into bed and she could feel the heat of his skin through her clothes.

“Don’t go back to sleep,” she warned. “I just had a brilliant idea for you to read me your essay on—”

He made a disgruntled noise into the back of her neck.

“You’ve read it,” he mumbled, lips against her hair. “You’ve read everything, ever. Just cuddle me for a minute.”

“A minute,” she repeated, amused. “Why don’t I believe you?”

“Hm.” He kissed her hair then nuzzled his cheek against her curls, getting comfortable. “Maybe you ought to lie here and contemplate that.”

“Oh really? For how long?”

He wiggled his fingers against her side in punishment for the attempted trap. “For a *minute*.”

It was cozy under the covers, and the familiar weight of his arms around her settled the little buzz of exam day agitation that hadn’t let up since she’d awoken that morning. A tiny break would be good for her, perhaps.

“Fine,” she agreed, putting more aggrievement into the word than she truly felt. “But afterward, you’re going to read me your essay on human-to-animal transfiguration.”

“Impossibly rude of you to make me revisit that topic,” he muttered. “Why not my essay on conjuration? You know I’m very good at conjuring.”

She snuggled back against him, encouraging his knees to tuck up behind hers until they were flush. “You can read me that one, too.”

He sighed with feigned resignation but hugged his arms around her, one up around her ribs and the other snaking under her neck, giving her his bicep as a pillow. She relaxed against him, eyes falling shut. He was so warm behind her, so solid.

For a moment, they were motionless, basking in the simple pleasure of a stolen moment.

And then Draco’s top hand slid from her waist up to her breast.

Eyes still closed, she smiled. “Hello.”

“Why are you wearing so many clothes?” he grumbled.

“Well, I wasn’t intending to get into bed with you, was I?”

He gave her a little squeeze. “And isn’t that just the story of your life,” he teased.

She had no choice but to roll over at that, though as expected she found a wholly unrepentant grin waiting for her when she did.

“Hello.” His hand took a journey down her spine to rest on the curve of her bum, giving her a little squeeze there, too.

“Hoping for something?” she asked, trying to keep her tone disapproving but somewhat failing.

Draco’s smile was lazy, expression still sleepy and wildly, unbearably content.

“You’re in my bed,” he drawled. “I’m always hoping for something.”

“This is my bed, actually.”

He clicked his tongue. “Semantics. And if it’s *not* my bed, then why did you come here to wake me, instead of going down to the dungeons, hm?”

She narrowed her eyes at him and he smirked, victorious.

A fringe of hair had fallen down over his forehead and she raised a hand to brush it back. His hair was getting long; long enough that it took a moment for her fingers to run the full length of it. When had he last had it trimmed? And in fact, who trimmed it for him?

Ron and Harry had subsided on Molly’s wandwork during breaks to the Burrow, but they’d never kept themselves to the same standard of groomed as Draco did. As her fingers continued to sift meditatively through his hair, she pondered it.

Was there somewhere in Hogsmeade that he went? Or had he learned the requisite domestic charms himself?

“I love when you touch me like this,” Draco murmured.

She made an inquisitive sound, letting the soft strands fall through her fingers again before immediately going back for another pass. “Like what?”

“Like you love me.”

She tempered the flutter in her stomach with a wry smile, glancing down. His eyes were already on her. “Perhaps that’s because I do love you.”

“I know. That’s why I love it. Because it’s true.” He shifted closer, the tip of his nose brushing hers. “Because it’s real.”

The kiss was like an inhale; an automatic, biologically necessary act that filled her with a pervasive sense of existing. Of being alive, here and now.

For a moment, she idled, letting him kiss her with a lazy, indulgent press.

And then she exhaled slowly, fingers gradually descending from his hair to his temple, his cheek. He deepened the kiss, and the strong line of his jaw pulled her fingers to the hinge and then around it, thumb lingering over the muscle just above. It flexed as he kissed her, and beneath her fingers, the underside of his jaw shifted.

It kept her present, noticing the languorous motions of his lips, feeling all the parts of him that wrought such carefulness.

Her fingers drifted down the column of his neck, tracing the slope of tendons before diverting to lay her thumb gently over his Adam's apple. He swallowed reflexively, lips pausing for a moment before they curved against hers. She smiled back, starting another slow kiss as her fingers skimmed down to trace the dip at the base of his throat, feeling the throb of his heartbeat.

His hand lifted to mirror hers, palm warm and heavy at the base of her neck, fingers gentle over her pulsepoint. The soft brush of his thumb along her jaw made emotion prick behind her eyes, but only for a moment before he was thoroughly distracting her with the tip of his tongue at her bottom lip.

She opened instantly, meeting him with her own, but he only teased her with a taste before pulling back with a series of softer, more chaste kisses.

"It's been more than a minute," he reminded her, voice raspy.

"Mm. But we aren't cuddling anymore."

He chuckled. "Aren't we?"

"Not *only* cuddling," she amended.

"You're so sexy when you exploit loopholes," he murmured. "But don't worry, I rescind my taunt. You can stay in bed with me as long as you want."

It was impossible not to touch him. Not when he was like this, all bed-warm and impossibly smug. She ran her hands over his chest, fingertips digging into the muscle for a fleeting grope before sweeping further down, making him hum from low in his throat.

"You're going to get me hard," he warned. "So if you're still entertaining thoughts of getting out of bed in any sort of hurry, you'd better stop."

She brushed her hand over the front of his boxer-briefs, feeling the way he was already more than half-hard. "Stop this?" she said with feigned innocence.

"Stop thinking you're getting out of bed," he corrected, then rolled on top of her, pinning her hand between them. "I've got you now, love."

He was deliciously heavy over her, warm from sleep and arousal. *Hers*.

"Have you?" She smiled up at him, just a hint of tease in it, and cupped her palm firmly around his cock. "Or have I got you?"

“Oh, you’ve got me,” he murmured, eyes glinting down at her. “And always will.”

“Aren’t I lucky,” she purred, leaning up to kiss him, sweet and slow.

He matched it for a beat and then deepened it, lifting his hips just enough to allow her to slip her hand into his boxer-briefs. She closed her fist around his cock, squeezing gently, and his teeth scraped at her bottom lip, cock swelling even further in her hand.

“I can feel you getting harder,” she murmured, caging her fingers around the comparatively spongy tip, applying a little pressure before tracing the broad ridge. His hips twitched forward.

“Wonder why,” he returned dryly, nose brushing hers as he searched for her lips. “You get another minute before I take over.”

“Oh really.” She smiled into his kiss before pressing in closer, claiming a second. She could feel the throb of his pulse under her fingertips as she traced a vein down the side of his shaft. “This is too much for you to handle?”

Under the blanket, his hand slid to her stomach, and she braced herself for retaliation. His hand was warm on her pelvis, fingers teasingly light as he slipped up under her skirt, advancing until the pad of his middle finger rubbed lightly over the soft cotton of her knickers covering her clit.

She squirmed at the spark of pleasure, fist tightening around him.

“I’m going to lick you right here,” he promised in an undertone. “*So slowly*. Until you’re begging me for more.”

She gyrated her hips, stealing a few firm rubs before he noticed and lifted his finger with a tut.

“Fine by me,” she whispered. “You know begging turns me on.”

He sighed. “Horrible little thing. You never let me win.”

“Oh *please*,” she scoffed, then gave him a quick, firm stroke along the full length of his cock. “This isn’t winning?”

“*Fuck*.” His hips bucked forward, greedy for more. “I don’t know...show me again?”

“We have Transfiguration practicals in two hours,” she reminded him, because it felt like one of them ought to keep a reasonable head. “And I want to go through my notes one last time.”

“You don’t need to.” His hips rolled upward once, fucking himself into the curl of her fist as his fingers resettled firmly over her clit, any promise of withholding instantly forgotten. “You know everything. More than you’d ever be tested on.”

Logically, she knew he was probably right. But she wouldn’t know, not for *certain*, until she’d sat the exams. She huffed an exasperated sigh at her stubbornness; at the ever-present

weight of self-doubt in her gut.

At the sound, he paused then reared back to look at her, expression at first inquisitive and then understanding.

“Ah.”

He withdrew his hand from under her skirt, circling her wrist and gently pulling her hand from his cock. She let him, enraptured by the look of purpose on his face. He braced himself on his forearm, fingers intertwining with hers just above her head.

“Hermione,” he began, and her breath caught at the careful way he said her name; at the steady eye contact. “You know more than you’ll ever be tested on.”

Hearing it again made her pulse skitter with nerves.

With his other hand, he skimmed the backs of his fingers along her cheek before slipping into her hair, palm cradling her skull. The forthrightness in his expression softened into patient affection.

“Don’t you?” he prompted.

It was a gentle encouragement, and one she begrudgingly accepted.

“I know quite a bit,” she allowed.

He looked down at her for a moment, and then used his hold to tilt her head, making space to lower his mouth to her neck. When his teeth closed gently around the tendon, her breath left her in a little gasp.

“More than I’ll ever be tested on,” she corrected, and he rewarded her with a low sound of approval and a gentle kiss over the bite.

“You’re going to get all O’s,” he carried on, pressing another kiss to her neck, then paused expectantly. “Hm?”

“Yes,” she breathed, leaning into his touch.

He tutted softly against her skin. “No, darling. Say it back to me.”

She wasn’t exactly humble with her intelligence nor her ability to apply what she’d learned, but there was something distinctly squirmy and vulnerable about stating it so boldly.

Perhaps he sensed her embarrassment because he brought his lips up to the hinge of her jaw, scraping his teeth lightly before kissing up to brush his lips beside her ear.

“Say it, baby,” he murmured.

She bit her lip, eyes falling shut at the closeness of him.

It felt easier to say in the relative darkness of her lids, with his body covering hers, and so she whispered, "I'm going to get all O's."

He pecked a soft kiss to her earlobe. "That's right."

As she basked in his faith in her, he pressed a kiss to her cheek, beginning to work his way inwards. When he reached her mouth, he paused again, lips just barely brushing hers.

"There's nothing you can't do," he murmured.

"Draco," she whispered, heart clenching, but he only brushed his mouth against hers again coaxingly.

"There's nothing I can't do," she repeated. And then, because she wanted a partner in her immodesty, and because it was true, added, "And same for you."

He smiled against her lips.

"There's nothing I can't do," he whispered, and then he kissed her.

She sank into it, letting him hold the pace just shy of languid, endeavoring to savor the contentment of being kissed by the person she loved, safe and warm in bed.

A novelty, when she really stopped to consider it. An incredible privilege.

It made her cling to him, arms lifting to loop around his shoulders and legs drawing up around his hips. His hand was there at once, hitching one up higher around his waist, body tilting in toward hers as he deepened the kiss.

And just like that, she was throbbing for him.

"Okay," she mumbled as they broke apart for a breath. "Okay, we have time for sex."

Despite the solid evidence of his support in this activity grinding between her legs, he hesitated. "Are you sure? Even though *I* know you don't need it, I'd hate for you to regret not taking the time to revise."

"It'll take five minutes, maximum."

"Oh yeah?" His expression went knowing. "You'll be quick?"

She nodded. "Very. And then you can read me one of your essays."

"Deal."

With a little lift of his hips, he reached down to ruck her skirt up, thumb hooking her knickers to the side before rotating his wrist in order to slide two fingers over her clit and down to her entrance. He stroked through the arousal that had gathered before sinking both in straight to the knuckle.

Her walls pulsed happily and he hummed. “Oh. You’ll be off like a shot, won’t you?”

She moaned, arcing into his touch. “That’s up to you, I suppose.”

He smirked down at her, fingering her with a steady roll of his wrist. Against her inner thigh, his cock twitched.

“Better take me out then,” he murmured.

She fumbled with the waistband of his briefs immediately, tugging them down as best she could. The moment he was free, she curled her fingers around the shaft and squeezed. He felt good in her hand, scorching hot and very, very hard.

Inside her, his fingers curled, pace speeding up unconsciously, and on reflex she marched it, stroking down to the base each time his hand met her pelvis; squeezing up to the tip as he withdrew. When he increased the cadence again, so did she.

He groaned softly under his breath, easing up the pace. “Open your shirt, baby. I want to see you.”

She got to it, fingers working quickly down the buttons of her blouse. But before she could get any further than her bra, Draco was lowering his mouth to her neck, kissing his way down to the rounded curve of her breast and impeding any further unbuttoning.

Useless, her hands fell to the bed.

“You smell so good,” he mumbled, tracking kisses across her chest. “And god, you’re so fucking soft.”

He made the double meaning known with a firmer stroke along her inner walls.

Pressure was forming in her core, sinking into her hips until she felt antsy, needy. When his teeth scraped lightly over her covered nipple, she keened.

“Put your cock inside me.”

“Right here?” Fingers firm, stroking, stroking. “This is where you want it?”

“Draco,” she whined, but couldn’t help grinding up against the heel of his hand, seeking more.

“Impatient,” he accused, mouth hot and wet as he tracked open-mouthed kisses over to her other breast, but the next moment he was rising up, eyes intent on her as he slid his fingers out with an audible, wet sound.

Her gaze dropped to his lips, watching as they parted on a soft exhale as he ran the tip of his cock along her entrance, coating himself in the slickness.

His mouth flattened into a determined line, and then the broad head was pushing insistently against her entrance, sliding inside, stretching her open until he was buried deep.

“Holy fuck,” he groaned.

“So good,” she agreed breathlessly. “Don’t stop.”

She swept her hands down his sides until ribs gave way to tensed obliques, fingers diverting up and around to feel the way the muscles of his back flexed as he pulled back before thrusting forward with rolling, steady motion.

As her fingers dragged slowly up his back, nails just barely scratching, he exhaled hard. And then he was kissing her, hands digging down under her hips to palm her arse, lifting her into his hard, rapid thrusts.

With a moan, she curled her legs around his waist, ankles crossing to hold herself up against him, greedy for the friction each juddering motion was sending to her clit. The pure heat of him alongside the cozy warmth of the bed worked in concert with the insistent slide of his cock in and out, making perspiration bead at her temples and along her spine.

Because while he was naked, she was dressed for class. Knickers pulled to the side, shirt opened, but otherwise perfectly presentable.

On the bedside table, the Head Girl badge gleamed. And in the bed, the Head Girl moaned.

It made her hazy with lust for him, to realize that he’d gotten her so addicted to his cock that she’d found herself in bed, getting shagged good and hard, in the middle of the day—between sitting the fucking N.E.W.T.s, no less.

Pleasure built fast, climbing up the scaffolding already long-constructed inside her until it was a throbbing, solid presence; strong and unignorable.

“You’re so good at this. So good at fucking me,” she panted against his mouth, then gasped when he lifted her hips higher, biceps bulging against her thighs. “Ah—Draco. Fuck, I’m so close.”

“I know,” he groaned, face burrowing into the crook of her neck. His breath was hot against her sensitive skin, great heaving breaths as he kept the pace with his hips. “I can feel you. What do you need?”

Nothing. Nothing more than he was already giving her.

She shook her head, half-distracted by the first taste of her orgasm where it curled sticky sweet around him. “You’re perfect. So perfect.”

He made a rich, low sound of pleasure. “Go on then, baby. Come on my cock. Make me lose it. Make me come with you.”

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before she was doing it, walls gripping him in a firm squeeze as she crested hard. He swore brokenly, fingers dimpling into the plushness of her arse as his thrusts stuttered, taken in by the pull of her.

And then he was groaning and bucking against her in short, hard snaps, cock pulsing into the clutch of her orgasm.

She caught her breath, fingers gentling where she'd been close to breaking open the skin of his shoulders, and he hummed a deep sound of satisfaction, nuzzling against her throat before pulling out and collapsing onto his side. With his arms still shoved under her, the motion tipped her with him. They shared a sated smile and then, when she leaned in, a kiss.

"Thank you for indulging me," he murmured, eyes mischievous behind heavy lids.

If anyone was indulgent between the two of them, it was absolutely him. All the same, she grinned at him.

"Yes, it was quite a hardship."

"Poor thing." He kissed her again, slow and sweet, and then rolled onto his back, pushing up onto his elbows until he was propped against the headboard.

He sighed, raking his hair back into some semblance of order, then looked down at her.

"Right. Which one did you want?"

What?

She blinked up at him, trying to get her brain up to full speed.

"Conjunction, you said?" he clarified.

Oh—essays. Right.

Too content to argue, Hermione merely hummed an affirmative. "Yes please."

Draco held out his hand. A papery rustle heralded the scroll of parchment that zoomed across the room, presumably from the neat stack he'd made on her desk. It zipped into his waiting hand and then a moment later, so did his wand.

"Bout all the wandless magic I can manage at the moment," he told her wryly, then flicked his wand.

The essay unfurled to hover in front of him. She scooted closer, resting her cheek on his chest. The steady thud of his heart, still quick, welcomed her in.

He shifted to wrap an arm around her waist, pulling her snug against his side.

"I must really love you, to put up with this," he mused, then drew in a preparatory inhale. "Alright, here we go. *'While many consider the departure from international protocol to nation-specific standards to be the basis on which ultimately—good lord, this could have used a bit of editing. But why use one word when I could use six, eh?'*"

She snuggled closer, nuzzling into the rumble of his voice where it vibrated against her cheek, loving the way she could feel his voice as much as hear it.

“Verbosity is sexy. Keep reading.”

He snorted but cleared his throat and carried on.

As his reading went from self-conscious to fluid, she let her gaze go unfocused, thoughts drifting between listening and reflecting on what would come next.

After they got out of bed, she would straighten her shirt. Fix her hair. Change her knickers. He would stretch, watching her, and then slip out of bed. He'd get dressed and then would wash his hands and run them through his hair. He'd shoot her a grin, still flushed from sleep and sex.

They would walk down to the Great Hall, wands in hand, and do their utmost to prove themselves Outstanding.

And then they would do it again and again, for days, until there was nothing left to prove.

And then...

She exhaled, heart clenching. But not with anxiety but an eager rush of excitement.

Beyond the walls of Hogwarts, the world was a blank page. But with him beside her, the uncertainty of her future felt only like possibility.

Because he was right: together, they could do anything.

Chapter End Notes

To anyone who was worried that the end of Hogwarts would mean the end of this fic, rest assured that is absolutely not the case. And in fact, I'm getting antsy for the things I have planned post-graduation (don't @ me, I have British friends who call it graduation, it's fine) so I *think* that we have one (maybe two) more chapters until we are outttttta Scotland and into some fun, fun stuff.

Also a quick but heartfelt: THANKS FOR READING THIS!! It's been so, so lovely to get comments during my unplanned summer hiatus both from people diving in for the first time (and lovingly roasting me for my early chapter end notes 🐼) as well as from OG readers jumping back in to gently poke me for more (I see you, I love you). This fic continues to be a joy to write, and a not-insubstantial reason for that is due to you. So, thank you 🧡

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