

# Married Young

*by Jenwryn*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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It was eight o'clock and Hermione was at a book-club meeting. Of course she was. That was where she'd said she'd be, and so why would anyone have reason to imagine otherwise? She was, after all, a witch of her word.

Except that if anyone had ever thought to check, they would have discovered otherwise. But they never did. Her husband never did, just presumed that she was an obedient, well-behaved, quiet little wife.

And it was her bitterness at that presumption, perhaps, that had led her to do it in the first place.

That was what she told herself.

\*

Her lover would never have bedded someone else's wife. He had, despite popular belief, his own moral guidebook, and adultery was out. Besides, adultery upset everyone in the end. But with her...

He could still remember the moment her eyes had met his across the room, like he'd never seen her before in his life. They hadn't really discussed it; it had simply happened like a quick, sharp thrust of evolution blooming into full-colour. The gold of her wedding-ring hadn't seemed to matter.

In fact, after that, nothing much had mattered apart from her, for she was magnificent and forbidden...

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Once a fortnight she came to him, meeting at a hotel like a pair of sneaking Muggles.

She'd wear her hair up beneath a hat or a scarf, like something from a black-and-white movie, playing Anaïs Nin in the private novelisation of her own life.

He'd be there waiting for her, reading a book over a cool glass of something. The books never ceased to amaze her, although it made sense. He was the quiet type, and no-one, for all his other faults, could accuse him of stupidity.

She'd always liked intellect in a man.

And the sex was mind-blowing.

\*

He always lay there, afterwards, in the glow of their love-making, and marvelled at the damp, sleepy woman in the crumpled sheets beside him. Even after childbearing she was beautiful to him, although she complained of softness in places that had once been firm. No-one was more surprised than him to find that he genuinely didn't care. He'd been so convinced that it was just a physical thing. But the months became years...

Was it possible that this comfortable treason, this almost-taken-for-granted wonder that he felt when he looked at her, his forbidden woman – was it possible it was love?

\*

Her problem was a heart tied in knots. She would never leave her husband; the ties ran too deep, the mutual obligations, the children. Oh, they had warned her. Everyone had warned her. And when she lay, restless, and listened to her husband sleep, she wondered if all the nay-sayers had been right after all. She had been too young when she'd married. It was girlish infatuation, to have wed the war hero, to have promised life-eternal to Severus.

And this forbidden thing with his godson?

It was love.

But what good was Draco when she was married to another...?

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