

Revenge Can Be Sweet

by MystressXOXO

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Caught in the Act

Chapter 1 of 5

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***A/N:** I had intended for this story to be a oneshot, but it seems that my normally silent Muse thinks otherwise. I am writing this as a gift for my pen-pal in Sweden. Purely written for fun. Thanks to Lolafalola for being my second set of eyes! I hope everyone enjoys this!*

**Quick OC Info** - The ladies you're about to meet are 7th year Ravenclaws, 17 years old, and are best friends.

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Caught in the Act

"What's the matter, Jess? Don't tell me he's late again!"

Jessie looked up from her Potions book at that sarcastic remark with a scowl. Actually the same scowl that Rebecca Reed deserved, yet again, after reminding her just how late her boyfriend was, yet again! Repressing a growl, she returned to her book.

"Jess?" Rebecca teased, drawing out Jessie's name.

"I told you not to call me that," Jessie mumbled.

Rebecca laughed. "Jessie Bloom, are you pouting?"

Jessie answered by raising her Potions book.

"Oh, Jess. You know I'm just messing with you," Rebecca sighed. "Why you had to start dating that Slytherin, I'll never know. There are plenty of dateable guys right here in Ravenclaw that would treat you a lot better than Mark does."

Jessie closed her book slowly and looked up at her best friend. Ever since Mark Copeland and her started dating months ago, Rebecca would always make those kinds of comments, but usually in fun. Lately though, they were both realizing how alarmingly true those statements were becoming.

Running her fingers through her dark brown hair, Jessie locked her sapphire eyes to Rebecca's brown ones when her friend moved to sit next to her. "Well he is a Prefect..."

"And?"

"And..."

"Exactly. You'd think they only had one Prefect per house with all the *duties* he has to do," Rebecca sneered.

It was true. Mark's Prefect duties seemed to be his only concern as of late. He would now show up eventually to their arranged evenings together with nothing but an apology and a promise to make up for it. Then on top of that, he would just leave. Even on nights where there was at least an hour left until curfew! He had never acted like this before.

"No, and that's what makes this unacceptable," Rebecca stated, tugging lightly on her black tresses.

Jessie started a bit, realizing that she must have said that last part out loud. No, their relationship wasn't near what it used to be. She remembered how shy she was to be paired with him in Potions, given her weakness for cute blond guys. Mark had told her that he found her shyness endearing and pursued her relentlessly thereafter. They were practically inseparable after that, and as time wore on, Jessie was seriously beginning to think that she was in love. Funny that, how fast things can change.

A knock on the portrait disturbed the quiet silence of the common room.

"Speak of the devil," Rebecca scoffed as she waved a quick Tempus spell. "And only an hour late tonight."

Jessie did growl this time as she stood and smoothed out the cashmere pullover that she had worn just for him.

"Oy, Jessie! Sorry I'm late again," Mark began as soon as Jessie appeared. "Professor Snape had me patrol the other side of the castle, and then..."

Little did he know that Jessie had already tuned him out because she now accepted the fact that everything he was spewing were nothing more than his usual excuses. If he really cared about her, for one, he would've at least hugged her first before engaging in a conversation. Well, if you actually want to call this drivel a conversation.

"... that alright?"

She blinked at Mark, who seemed to be waiting for an answer. "Mmm," she toned.

"Good. I promise I'll see you Saturday then," Mark smiled as he leaned down to kiss Jessie's cheek. With a quick wave, he was gone, leaving as fast as he came.

Resisting the urge to wipe her cheek with disdain like a five year old, Jessie walked back to the couch and grabbed a book from her book bag.

"Jessie? You okay?"

Jessie could hear the worry in Rebecca's voice. "Yeah. I just need some time to think. I'm going to go take this book back and... just think."

She left before another word could be said.

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Taking her time on her way back, Jessie decided that her little trip to the library was exactly what she had needed. Upon reflection, she realized that the fog that had surrounded her since she met Mark had finally lifted. The honeymoon phase, she thought it was called. She had been so focused on him lately that she had inadvertently taken herself out of the equation. She simply needed to tell Mark how she felt and go from there. Yet, judging by the knots that were suddenly residing in her stomach, it was going to be easier said than done.

So caught up in her thoughts, it was only when she was staring at the Hufflepuff portrait that she finally grasped that she had taken a wrong turn somewhere. Blowing out a frustrated breath, she turned to make her way down the hall that would take her to the moving stairs, now that the perimeter walk was out of the question.

"Bloom, wait!"

Jessie paused mid-step at her name and looked down the corridor opposite from where she came. Blaise Zabini, with his usual mischievous smile, swaggered his way up to her, but he wasn't the one that had her attention at the moment. The Head Boy, Draco Malfoy, was with him as well, and Jessie hoped that the heat she suddenly felt on her face wasn't painfully obvious. She knew that her weakness for cute blonds paled in comparison to the six foot, blond god that was now standing mere inches away from her. Swallowing to wet her suddenly dry throat, she addressed Blaise.

"Zabini, what can I do for you this time?" Jessie asked sarcastically, knowing very well that Blaise only had one subject of conversation where she was concerned, and that subject was Rebecca. It was no secret that he was head over heels in love with the girl, and being her best friend, Jessie reluctantly became Zabini's personal messenger whether she had liked it or not.

Blaise chuckled at her tone. "Nothing like that this time I assure you, my lady," he smiled and bowed. "I actually wanted to speak with Miss Reed myself on this lovely evening. Might I inquire as to where she is presently?"

"No need to lay it on so thick, Zabini!" Jessie snickered. "I suspect that she is in her common room waiting for me as we speak."

Blaise's smile turned feral. "So there's a chance that she's in her skivvies!" he beamed, elbowing Draco, who just shook his head in amusement.

Jessie shook her head as well. "If you're going to race over there now, do me a favor and tell her that I am alright and not to worry, okay?"

Blaise's eyebrows came together in confusion, and Jessie was startled to see concern in the eyes of both men. "You're not hurt... physically, are you?" Blaise asked while giving her body a quick scan.

When Draco joined Blaise in his inspection, she was sure her face would explode from how hard she was blushing. "No! No, nothing like that," she rushed. "Not... physically."

Jessie shut her eyes as she realized that she had just all but screamed that she had indeed been hurt, just not physically. She opened them again to find that a hard glint had joined the concerned eyes of her audience.

"But you're alright," Blaise quietly stated.

Feeling a small smile form on her lips, she decided that at the moment she was alright, thanks to them. "Yes, I'm fine now. Thank you, Zabini," Jessie smiled. Turning to Draco, her suddenly shy blue eyes bravely met his gray. "Thank you as well, Malfoy."

The half-smirk, half-smile Draco gave her had Jessie quickly blushing again.

With his mischievous smile firmly back in place, Blaise put a friendly hand on both of his companion's shoulders. "Very well then, you two, I'm off to see my love before it gets too late. Don't do anything I wouldn't do," he said, squeezing his goodbye before taking off down the hall in a jog.

It was only when his echoing footsteps faded from the hall that Jessie realized she had been left standing at a three way intersection with Draco Malfoy. Alone. Just them. Together. Oh my god! Shyly, she stole a glance at Draco and was relieved when he gestured for her to proceed him down the same way she needed to go.

Their footsteps were the only noise in the unusually quiet hallway of Hogwarts. Jessie was reluctant to break the silence that she found almost comforting considering who she was walking with. There was really no need for her to be so nervous around him if she thought about it. After all, he knew that she was currently taken, sort of, and everybody knew that he was dating Pansy Parkinson, so why couldn't she strike up a casual conversation with him? *Because you nearly melt into a puddle of goo every time you even think about him*, Jessie's inner voice mocked. She scoffed at that voice, wondering when it had started to sound like Rebecca.

Keeping her tone quiet, she gave a small smile to Draco. "Should I be worried?"

Draco looked at Jessie with a raised eyebrow. "About what?"

"About doing anything that Blaise wouldn't do?" she giggled.

Draco's eyes widened before he smiled and quietly laughed. The sound seemed to come from deep within his chest, and it swirled around Jessie in the most wonderful way. Before he could answer, another giggle, almost muffled, made their steps slow to a stop.

Now completely still, another muffled chuckle echoed like thunder through the hall. Turning towards the sound, she saw that Draco had heard it as well and was scrutinizing some of the classroom doors that they had previously passed. Taking out his wand, Draco slashed a murmured spell, and Jessie watched in awe as every door in the hall began to turn red. As a door a few feet away from them turned green, the spell stopped, and an evil laugh rang through the silence. Jessie grabbed a hold of Draco's arm and clung to it without a second thought. A normal reaction to the sound of Professor Snape laughing like that, she decided.

Draco never relinquished his arm as he put his wand back in his robes. "Looks like we have a winner," he smirked.

"A winner?" Jessie squeaked eloquently.

Draco looked down at the captor of his limb and put his hand on top of hers. At his touch, Jessie's focus snapped back to Draco and... his arm. That she was holding. With his hand on hers. Touching. Oh my god! Jessie flushed and slowly unraveled herself from his person, but not before he gave her hand a little squeeze to let her know that it was okay.

Clearing her throat, she tried again. "A winner?"

Draco snorted and gave her an amused smile. "A winner. Snape taught me his own personal spell when I became Head Boy. It was made to quickly find 'rule breaking frivolity'," he finished, sounding eerily like Snape himself.

Jessie gasped in understanding. "So, in that classroom," she said pointing at the green door, "there are students..."

"Doing something bad? Maybe," Draco shrugged. His eyes gave off a gleeful spark as he looked back down at Jessie. "There's only one way to find out."

Jessie's mind started racing as they walked to the glowing door. "But..." she began, dropping to a whisper as they stopped, "won't they hear us? What are you going to do?"

"They can't hear us," Draco said, and Jessie winced as though he had just shouted. "Really, they can't. That's just one part of the spell. The first part not only identifies the room that a student is in, but the spell also knows by size and color, what that student is doing. I know that there's more than one person in there because the entire door is lit, and the green tells me that the activity inside is of the sexual kind."

Barely containing the urge to moan at the way he said 'sexual', Jessie voiced a quick thought. "And the laugh?"

Draco coughed. "Yeah, well, that seems to only happen with the green ones," he said as he rubbed the back of his neck. "The second part of the spell is genius," Draco continued. "It's as though the door has been charmed with two of the most powerful Silence and Notice-Me-Not spells. To the people inside, the door no longer exists. I could open it wide and scream at the top of my lungs. I could even take pictures, but until I actually step past that barrier, they wouldn't suspect a thing."

Picking her jaw up from where it had fallen on the floor, Jessie looked at the glowing classroom door in amazement. Being a Ravenclaw, she knew how complex and difficult a spell like that would be to master, let alone create. There was no question; Draco was powerful. And Professor Snape... well, Snape had to be extremely powerful as well as brilliant to make such a spell. Jessie wrinkled her nose. He could also be an extremely powerful and brilliant pervert.

"You don't have to look if you don't want to," Draco said. "I can give whoever it is their detentions later if this makes you uncomfortable in any way."

Jessie could have kissed him for saying that. "Thank you, but I'm okay with it. It is your job after all."

"Right then," Draco smirked as he gripped the handle.

With a click, the door opened just enough for Draco to look through. After a couple moments, Draco drew in a sharp breath, shut the door, and slowly turned to look at Jessie.

"What?" she gasped, wondering what he had seen to make him become so pale. She watched as he seemed to be at war with himself, and after taking a huge breath, he held his hand out to her. Taking his hand, he gently pulled her closer and placed her directly in front of him. Draco wrapped his left arm around her stomach so that there wasn't any space left between them as he opened the door.

Half expecting something to jump out at her, Jessie unconsciously placed her arms around the one that held her and gripped gently. The room was dark except... there, the candles that were glowing near the front. The tables that lined the classroom obstructed what was going on around said candles, and Jessie suddenly hoped she wasn't going to witness someone like Crabbe or Goyle in all of their glory. The arm around her waist stopped that train of thought as it tightened around her. Over the table tops, a silhouette came into view against the quiet glow of the candle light. Clearly a woman, Jessie could see her bowed head as well as her very naked chest. The image started to move in a way that obviously suggested that she was not alone, and that her companion should be somewhere underneath. As though they were summoned, two hands deliberately came up from below, followed by the upper half of the other occupant. Before the two shadows could meld into one, the pair's heads fell back in pleasure and their faces were unveiled to the light.

"Oh my..." Jessie strained.

Draco's arm anchored her as Jessie's knees gave out. He closed the door and carefully lowered her to the floor. Draco sat and gently reclined her yielding form to rest against his bent leg. Jessie sat in shock, staring forward with unseeing eyes.

"Cheating," Jessie stated to no-one in particular. "He's cheating on me," she whispered, turning her confused and hurt eyes to Draco. "He's cheating on me... with the same woman... who's cheating on you?" Jessie professed incredulously, still not believing what she had just seen.

Draco's usual mask was firmly in place when Jessie first looked at him, but as she talked, it had slipped slowly. She could see the pain of betrayal in his features, as well as a few others that she couldn't quite identify.

"It would seem," Draco sighed as he lowered his eyes, "that some questions have been answered tonight... in great detail," he sneered. Draco shook his head in disgust and glared at the floor. "Utter fools. A true Slytherin doesn't play with fire. A true Slytherin knows how powerful it is, and how bad it can burn," he ground out. The stone walls only strengthened the increasingly angry pitch that Draco was building. "A true Slytherin wouldn't add fuel to a fire that she knew she could never even HOPE to contain! A TRUE Slytherin creates his OWN spark and is ALWAYS ready to consume anyone WHO TRIES TO DROWN HIM!!" Draco shouted, filling the very air with his voice.

"Oh, Draco."

When Draco looked up at his name, Jessie wrapped her arms around him. Though in an awkward position, she held him tightly with the same comfort and support that she felt he had given to her just moments ago. She let out a relieved and somber breath when her hug was returned, grateful that he didn't reject her embrace. That he at least acknowledged her understanding and accepted it.

Draco's demeanor visibly changed as they released each other. The mask of the 'Slytherin scowl of nonchalance' had placed itself firmly back onto his face, and Jessie felt saddened to see it. Hoping that the sudden change was brought about by embarrassment, she thought quickly on how to alleviate it. She'd been the timid type her entire life and knew what she would like someone to say if she were in Draco's place, but that was just it; she wasn't Draco. Slytherins thought differently about... of course! Weakness for weakness.

"I wish I could do that," she sighed, feeling the truth from that statement. "I know I should be angry, but I guess I'm just trying to rationalize why he would do this. I can't imagine that I... pushed him away, or caused this. For him to put on an act with me and then go to another man's girlfriend? I just can't understand!"

"You have every right to be mad. As long as you and Parkinson have been together, and to see that... I'd be furious as well. I, on the other hand, have only been with Mark for a few months and yet I..."

Jessie trailed off as realization set in. Mark didn't know that she had found out, and she would have to see him again. Then what? What about Potions tomorrow? Her normally pale skin became white as her thoughts started to run wild.

"Hey," Draco soothed, "if you're worried about confronting Copeland, don't."

Jessie blinked, seeing that she had been staring at the green door in horror. She shifted as Draco moved to stand and accepted the hand that he offered to help her to her feet. With a gentle tug, they resumed the walk where they had left off.

With a wave of his hand, Draco ended the spell and smirked at Jessie. "You forget, we still have Zabini and Reed to tell."

**TBC...**

## The Reaction

*Chapter 2 of 5*

"Whoa there, darling! All in good time," Blaise cooed, giving a significant look to Draco. "I do believe that revenge is the next item on the agenda."

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### The Reaction

Jessie stood silently, watching the yellow and orange flames from the fireplace with little interest, as Draco devolved the night's unexpected discovery to their friends. Being so close to curfew, Draco had invited everyone to his room to have this discussion, and if Jessie had been in a better state she would have appreciated it more. Draco had adopted a casual stance, reclining only just against his desk across from her, while Blaise and Rebecca took the couch in the middle of his sitting room.

The silence was deafening as Draco finished, and Jessie had to turn around just to make sure that everyone was still there.

Had it been in any situation other than this, the gob-smacked expressions on their friend's faces would've had Jessie laughing until she cried. As it were, their astoundment was genuine and she found a sense of comfort in that knowledge.

Jessie moved her eyes to Draco and suddenly forgot how to breathe. She had seen his head slightly hunched in her peripheral vision, making her automatically think that his attention was held somewhere below him. Instead, she found herself taking in the most enticing image she had ever seen. Arms crossed in a relaxed, yet controlled, pose and his gray eyes piercing her own from beneath his lashes--didn't he know what that look did to someone?

Draco raised his head a fraction. 'Are you okay?' he silently mouthed to Jessie.

Tearing her eyes from Draco's lips, she nodded shyly. 'Yes, thank you,' she mouthed back.

Finally, one of the occupants from the couch moved, drawing everyone's attention. Rebecca opened and closed her mouth several times in an attempt to find words while looking from Draco to Jessie.

"So, let me get this straight," Rebecca stated. "You're telling me that you guys found Mark and Pansy... together, even though Mark had-" Rebecca gestured wildly at Jessie, "you and Pansy had-" Draco received even more manic gesturing, "you... to begin with?!"

"Yes, I believe you've got it in one, my pet," Blaise answered her while his face never softened from its original shock. "I don't think I quite understand it myself."

"Gross." Rebecca shivered. "No offense to either of you, but Pansy and Mark is... just wrong on so many levels!" Rebecca said. "Gods, Jessie! You knew I didn't care that much for Mark, but I never expected him to do anything even remotely like this. I'm so sorry, lovely. You never deserved that kind of treatment. At least now we know the reason behind it all," she growled and turned to Blaise. "And why in the seven hells are we not hexing them into a new species yet?!"

"Whoa there, darling! All in good time," Blaise cooed, giving a significant look to Draco. "I do believe that revenge is the next item on the agenda."

"Is it?" Rebecca asked, turning her attention to Draco. "I had wondered why you didn't hex them on site. You Slytherins have a specific protocol for this sort of thing?"

Draco's eyes widened a hair and would've gone unnoticed if you didn't look for it. Blaise gazed knowingly at his friend with a smug smile on his face which had caused both girls to raise an eyebrow.

"I told you," was all Blaise said, and Draco nodded in return.

Rebecca looked between the two and shared a questionable look with Jessie. "Blaise, sweetie?"

That got Blaise's immediate attention. "Yes, darling? I am at your command."

As Jessie rolled her eyes with a small smile, she caught Draco doing the same and they shook their heads together in amusement.

"What did you *tell* Malfoy," Rebecca voiced in a way that was far from asking.

"Oh, I've just been telling Draco and the rest of my house about some of the wonderful qualities you Ravenclaws possess. You hinting upon a Slytherin procedure of revenge with the intent to know more about it just proves my point. Ravenclaws and Slytherins are a great combination," Blaise said with a wink.

Jessie made a disbelieving noise out loud and looked down. As if Mark and herself wasn't proof enough to discredit that assumption.

"Everything that made your relationship turn out the way it has is because of Mark, Jessie, not you," Rebecca said firmly.

"That's right," Blaise agreed. "What he did to you and to Draco is completely unacceptable in the house of Slytherin."

"Which brings us back to revenge. Why is that a Slytherin rule, and why would it be important that we cared to know more as opposed to any other house?" Rebecca asked.

"Well think about it. I don't see a Gryffindor or a Hufflepuff agreeing to exact revenge on somebody like this, especially one of their own. You Ravenclaws will at least hear all the facts before making a decision," Blaise answered.

"Okay, I understand that, and the rule for revenge?"

"Is because that's the only way to effectively get your point across to a Slytherin."

"Really?" Jessie asked. "So if Mark or Pansy were in another house you would do something different?"

"Oh, yes," Draco confirmed. "Hexing would've been a sure thing if that were the case. This, however, involves two Slytherins disgracing their house and one of their own. They need to be dealt with properly."

Blaise shook his head. "Sloppy. No self preservation whatsoever. They're going to be exiled as soon as word gets out about this."

Both girls gasped. "Exiled? From Slytherin?" Rebecca breathed. "For sleeping with another man's girlfriend?"

"Partly." Blaise winced. "The reason I called them sloppy is because they didn't cover their tracks like you would expect them to. Using Slytherin ambition to get what you want is all well and good but to leave so many things behind that could come back to bite you in the arse? Very un-Slytherin."

"That pales in comparison to what Pansy has done though. And Copeland." Blaise stopped to shake his head. "If he slept with her knowing that Pansy had accepted a Pureblood Adiuro with Draco--"

Rebecca's sharp intake of air cut through the room, and she glared Draco with a look that screamed outrage. "Oh, gods," she whispered as her lip started to curl. "That... *that bitch!*"

Jessie gasped slightly at her friend and wrinkled her forehead in confusion. *Pansy accepted a what?* she thought to herself.

Reaching into the front of her shirt, Rebecca pulled out the gold chain that hung around her neck. "The Malfoy Crest?" she asked Draco. "A ring?"

"A necklace," Draco affirmed. "A year and a half ago."

"Merlin," Jessie exhaled.

She had never known the technical name, but Jessie knew exactly what they were referring to once Rebecca took out the crested jewelry that never left her friend's person.

Generations ago, almost every Pureblood male received a heavily warded token of value that bore his family's coat of arms when they reached the age of puberty. To ensure the bloodline, any Pureblood heir was forbidden to become sexually intimate with anyone until their Pureblood Adiuro had been made and accepted. As the heirs, the Pureblood women were also taught in kind. Agreeing to wear the crest of an heir was an oath of fidelity. Thanks to the many spells upon the crest, it ensured that any future pregnancies could only be accomplished within that promised union because, once given, the token could only be removed by the one who bestowed it.

Even today, with the exception of most of the original spells, some older families still practiced the Pureblood Adiuro. It had become widely respected in the wizarding world, and many daughters of those bloodlines, as well as some new, have adopted the tradition themselves. Only two major rules remained unchanged since it had originally begun. Those rules were not only broken tonight; they were witnessed by both Jessie and Draco.

By all indications, Pansy broke her Pureblood promise and Mark had been a knowing accomplice.

"Wait," Jessie voiced quietly as she replayed what she had seen in her mind. She had remembered seeing Pansy, but something was missing. "Pansy wasn't wearing anything."

Glancing around the room, she mentally rolled her eyes at the baffled looks that she got from her statement. "As in, not even a necklace..." she urged.

Blaise was the first to blink. "Glamour?"

"A bloody good one if it can mask weight as well as touch," Rebecca sighed.

"Draco?"

The occupants of the couch shifted their attention to the blond man as soon as they heard Jessie's worried tone.

The table in the middle of the room would've been nothing but ash had Draco been able to release the fury that had all but consumed his gaze.

Jessie's heart began to ache as she looked at him. He didn't deserve this. As if Pansy breaking the promise wasn't enough to hurt Draco, he had to find out that she had been hiding it. That just begged the question of how long had she been doing this? Worse yet, with Mark's blond hair and Pansy's darker eyes, Draco would have been none the wiser had she become pregnant and claimed that it was his.

"Malfoy?" Rebecca cautiously spoke to get Draco's attention. "I just wanted to say that you have my complete support, and I would gladly beat the Slytherin shite out of Parkinson for you wherever and as often as you desire."

Blaise let out a bark of laughter and was soon joined by the rest of the room.

"She does deserve it," Blaise said. "What about Copeland? We'll probably never know what his true intentions were, but I am glad that Mark didn't pull you in that far before you had discovered all of this, Bloom."

"He almost did though. Lucky for me, his spark was never that strong to begin with," Jessie softly said. Biting lightly on her bottom lip, she looked over to Draco and gave him a shy smile. She saw that he had understood her reference and fought to keep her blush at bay when his appreciation all but showed in the genuine smile that he gave her.

In doing so, both Draco and Jessie missed the conspiring look that their friends had exchanged and the devilish grins that followed it.

Waving his wand, Blaise saw that it was just before midnight. "I think it's about time to take our ladies back to their dorm, Draco. We'll have to pick this back up tomorrow- oh no!" Blaise exclaimed as he stood up. "We have that test in Ancient Ruins to study for tomorrow night, love!"

"That's right. I'm glad you remembered," Rebecca said a little less dramatically than her counterpart. She walked over to Jessie and linked their arms as they headed for the door.

As the boys followed the girls out, Blaise swung his arm around Draco's shoulders. "So you and Jessie will just have to meet without us to discuss revenge ideas I guess," he said and smiled as Draco visibly tensed. "You're free after nine on Mondays, right, Draco? Your room would be the best place to meet again I reckon. Is that alright with you, ladies?" Blaise smirked.

Rebecca turned her head around without missing a beat. "That sounds just fine. Jessie will meet Draco at nine tomorrow, and then we'll all get together on Tuesday to see what we've come up with."

Jessie had her best friend's arm in a vice grip, and Rebecca was in serious danger of losing that arm if she wasn't careful. She couldn't believe that both Rebecca and Blaise had just blatantly arranged for her and Draco to spend a night in his room together without even regarding them in the process! *Tomorrow... Oh gods!* Jessie suddenly thought to herself.

"Potions, Rebecca," Jessie rambled frantically. "I can't do this while I'm paired with him in Potions! He'll start asking me questions and I don't even know how I'm going to react yet!"

"Shh, Jess. Don't worry. We'll figure something out," Rebecca shushed as they finally arrived and stopped a few feet away from the Ravenclaw portrait.

When the girls turned around, Blaise took Rebecca's hand and walked about half the distance left, leaving Jessie and Draco together.

Breathing a shaky breath, Jessie steeled herself because she wanted and needed to say something to Draco and now was as good a time as any.

"I'm sorry."

The seconds seemed like hours as she stood with her head bowed. Jessie wasn't really sure what she was waiting for *Should I tell him all the reasons why I'm sorry?* she asked herself. As her heart pounded in her chest, she cursed her shy nature for making her feel this way. Just when she thought about apologizing about the apology, strong fingers slipped under her chin and gently brought her eyes to his.

"Why are you sorry, Jessie?" Draco asked, giving her skin the smallest of caresses.

"I... I-" Jessie's voice broke and she struggled to keep her nervousness in check. She swallowed hard and pushed on. "I'm sorry about everything. That they hurt you."

Draco shook his head and moved his hand to squeeze Jessie's shoulder. "There's no need for you to say you're sorry because they hurt you as well. We're not the ones at fault here. They'll get what they deserve, and we'll never have to worry about either of them again."

"But we all have Potions together tomorrow-"

Draco bent swiftly and whispered into her ear, "-and I will take care of you. Trust me."

Jessie's breath hitched as he pulled back. "Okay," she said with wide eyes.

"No worries?"

"No worries."

Blaise and Rebecca chose that moment to reappear. After a short goodbye, Jessie found herself marching straight to her room. The stress from the day seemed to overwhelm her tired body all at once, and she silently thanked the stars for giving her a friend like Rebecca when she felt herself being tucked into her soft, warm bed.

*No worries, Draco. I trust you,* Jessie thought as she finally fell asleep with a small smile on her face.

**TBC...**

## A Talk with the Potions Master

*Chapter 3 of 5*

The Potions master pinched the bridge of his nose and released a long-winded, irritated breath. "From the beginning, Mister Malfoy," he grated.

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A Talk with the Potions Master

Draco Malfoy gracefully strode through the lower region of Hogwarts with nary a sound, despite the heavy dragon-hide boots he wore. His robes rippled behind him and gave the occasional snap whenever he would turn a corner just right. Draco allowed himself a small smirk at the thought of his godfather actually grading him on his *lurking* through the dungeons. He supposed he would get an Outstanding, considering whom he had learned it from.

Coming to stop in front of the heavy door that led to the Potions classroom, Draco knocked four times, the way he always did.

"Enter!"

Draco walked inside and closed the door as silently as he could. As he suspected, his godfather, Professor Snape, had a few cauldrons bubbling and wanted to make sure they were not disturbed from his presence. Draco took a seat at the front of the room and waited.

As the dark-haired man swooped from cauldron to cauldron, adding ingredients and stirring as he moved, Draco couldn't help feeling how lucky he was to be able to see Severus like this once again.

When Draco's father was sent to Azkaban at the end of his sixth year, Severus had been there for both him and his mother, and with an oath of secrecy, disclosed that he was in fact a spy for the Order. The remaining Malfoys were shocked to the core, but the more Severus talked, the more reality began to sink in. They were in more danger than they had realized with Lucius imprisoned, and Severus was walking the thinnest line imaginable, as far as his life was concerned. Draco and his mother decided then and there to do everything in their power to make sure that both Severus and they survived.

It wasn't a moment too soon as they found out. Once they were safely secluded inside of Hogwarts, they gave Professor Dumbledore enough information and access to Malfoy Manor to prove most valuable. The Order had apparently been busy and were in the process of planning their final move when the Manor fell into their lap. A trap was soon set, and on the very next night, Harry Potter killed Lord Voldemort.

Draco sighed. His former self would've loathed to admit that he was, dare he say *grateful* for Potter's... bravery. Okay, even now he hated to admit it, but he guessed that's simply what living does to a person.

"I assume from your silence that this isn't a social call?"

Pulled from his thoughts, Draco glanced up to see the familiar wand movements Severus usually made near a potion's completion, meaning that it was now safe to talk.

"Not completely, sir."

The dark-haired man took a seat at his desk and merely raised an eyebrow for Draco to continue.

As his professor picked up a quill and started to write, Draco decided to go in for the kill. Affixing his usual smirk on his lips, he began.

"I thought it was appropriate to let you know what I have discovered tonight. After Zabini left me in the company of Miss Bloom in Hufflepuff territory, we both came upon a couple of students having sex in an unused classroom, thanks to your spell," Draco drawled. "As it stands now, Zabini and I, along with Misses Bloom and Reed, are working to find a suitable punishment for Copeland and Parkinson."

SNAP!

Oh, yes. That was worth it Draco thought as he watched Severus stumble over himself to find words, as well as a new quill.

After a moment's pause, Severus' face contorted to look like he had just sucked on a rather strong lemon.

"In Hufflepuff?"

Draco snorted. "Yes, sir. Not too far from their common room actually."

The Potions master pinched the bridge of his nose and released a long-winded, irritated breath. "From the beginning, Mister Malfoy," he grated.

So Draco recounted the night from the time Blaise had called out to Jessie, to when they escorted the girls back to Ravenclaw. He left out a few things, like his reactions and feelings about it all, but everything else was retold accurately enough.

"And you believe that Pansy has put a glamour on the necklace?"

"I am nearly certain. Jessie and I witnessed them together, and she said she never saw the necklace."

"But you did."

"Yes," Draco murmured.

"I must say, Draco, that you are taking this far better than I would have expected you to," Severus said in a soothing tone.

Knowing that his godfather would press him if he tried to pass it off as though it was of little importance, Draco had no choice but to talk honestly, something he wasn't entirely used to.

"I'm more relieved than angry, really. Pansy... I thought I knew her better than that. I thought she had respected me more as a person, than to do this to me, to our friendship. At least I know where she stands now, and I can move on from this, relatively unscathed."

Severus gave a nod of approval. "It seems that everyone has changed in some way since the war ended. Some for the better, I suspect," he said with a meaningful look to his godson. "Maybe your friendship can still be saved depending on where her motivation in this lies?"

"Honestly, I don't know," Draco shrugged. "As for Copeland—"

"*Copeland*," Severus interrupted with a sneer, "will spend the rest of this year, if not his life, ruining the day he was ever sorted into Slytherin! Ruddy bugging twit..."

Draco quietly laughed as Severus continued to insult his, now hated, housemate under his breath. It was good to know that no matter what kind of punishment they decided to give Copeland, he would still get exactly what was coming to him one way or another.

"The other reason I came was to see if you could change the seating arrangement in Potions."

"You want me to separate Bloom and Copeland?" Severus asked.

"I—" Draco uttered before his mouth clicked shut.

He had assumed that his situation with Pansy would've been the clear reason for the seating change and would naturally come across as such; however, Severus saw right through that. Draco could easily act as he always did with Pansy while he planned revenge against her, whereas Jessie could not. Which was why he had asked, and was why he suddenly didn't know what to say.

Severus chuckled at Draco's discomfort. "I had wondered why you seemed *socordia*! as far as Miss Bloom was concerned." Letting Draco off the hook, he said, "I shall see what I can do, Draco. Now off with you. It is late."

Thankful for the dismissal, Draco got up immediately. "Thank you, sir," he said as he left.

As he got ready for bed, Draco realized that he really hadn't changed that much at all. He was still as driven and passionate as he used to be, it was just what he was passionate *for* that had really changed.

With that thought, he crawled into bed and thought about Jessie. Now *that* was a change for him. He was prepared to have a blubbery girl on his hands when he showed her what was going on within that classroom; instead, he found someone who seemed to worry and care more about how he was feeling. It was... nice. He wasn't used to someone doing that for him, and as he succumbed to the softness of his pillow, Draco smiled.

TBC...

Emotions Over Easy

Chapter 4 of 5

"Come to think of it," Blaise said with frown, "I don't remember Copeland ever sitting here." He turned abruptly to examine Jessie with steely eyes. "Why isn't he sitting with you right now?"

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Emotions Over Easy

He didn't even try to look for me Jessie thought with a slight scowl as she discreetly watched Mark and Pansy sitting next to each other at the Slytherin table.

Rebecca had since removed the supporting hand she had placed on Jessie's back when Mark had walked into the Great Hall. With a long exhale, Jessie went back to the task of mutilating her sausage with her fork.

Sensing movement by the door again, Jessie quickly looked up from her plate and sighed as a couple of Gryffindors walked in.

"*Must* you do that every time someone comes in for breakfast?" Rebecca teased in between bites. "Malfoy will be here soon."

"Who said I was looking for Malfoy?" Jessie asked in feigned innocence.

"No one did. I just said he'd be here soon," Rebecca answered smugly. "Which reminds me... who *exactly* were you dreaming about last night?"

With a groan, Jessie pushed her plate away and buried her head in her arms. Rebecca *just had* to remind her of that, didn't she!

She should've known she was dreaming right away but it had seemed so real. Jessie couldn't remember every single detail now, but what she did recall made her wish she had never woken up.

Jessie was walking with Rebecca and Blaise to the Great Hall when Draco joined them and fell in step beside Jessie, walking very close to her. She wasn't nervous at all and felt so content and comfortable. When they entered through the doors, she turned towards Draco when she heard his voice call her name. With the entire hall watching, he moved closer to her and said Jessie's name again. He placed one hand on her hip and tucked the other hand around her neck, just enough to let his thumb caress the sensitive skin below her ear. She knew the kiss was inevitable; as he leaned closer, flickering his gaze between her eyes and her lips, her lids fell closed, and she eagerly awaited the bliss that would surely follow.

Not even a second later, Jessie's name was said again; however, the tone she heard was distinctly feminine and not the heart stopping voice of Draco's.

Why in Merlin's name is Rebecca calling for me at a time like this? Jessie had barely pondered before she opened her eyes... to find she wasn't in the Great Hall and that it wasn't Draco's face that hovered inches away from her own.

Jessie groaned anew as she remembered the near banshee shriek she had bellowed when she finally realized that it was indeed Rebecca's face she was staring at instead of Draco's. She had grabbed her wand, after nearly falling off of her bed, and would've hexed Rebecca into next week if her hand hadn't been trembling so much. Instead, she just sent Rebecca into greater hysterics by shaking the stick at her.

"You really shouldn't wake people up like that," Jessie said with a pout, sending a glare at the simpering face of her friend. "It's not very nice."

"Oh, please!" retorted Rebecca. "I saved you the embarrassment of everyone in the dorm watching you snog your pillow! If you don't want to thank me, then you can just consider it *payback* for what you *didn't* do for me that one time. Remember?"

"That was four years ago! You weren't *that* embarrassed."

Rebecca placed her silverware on her plate and pushed it aside, in a very deliberate manner, before turning slowly to face Jessie.

Jessie bit her tongue in an attempt not to smile. She had spoken a little too quickly, and it was all she could do to keep from laughing as she remembered that incident.

"Really? As I recall, I had barely opened my eyes before all of my *loving* dorm mates told me how funny I had been while I was sleeping," Rebecca drawled as though she were talking to a child.

Jessie failed to repress a squeak of mirth that passed through her lips, and Rebecca's tone only increased her struggle.

"Apparently, I had decided to have a nice conversation with my bedpost in the middle of the night."

Jessie shut her eyes and covered her mouth with her hand.

"For *forty-five minutes*."

Giving up the fight, Jessie released a steady stream of giggles that made a few students stop and look her way.

"You didn't have a nice conversation with your bedpost," Jessie managed to say over her laughter. "*You interrogated it!*"

"I did *not!*" Rebecca smiled and started giggling herself. "You should've woke me up or something within the first five minutes, Jess!"

Jessie wiped the tears that were starting to soak her cheeks. "I wanted to see if the bedpost would talk!"

"Oh, shut up!" Rebecca shook her head with a grin and refilled their glasses of juice while Jessie calmed herself. "Now, about your dream." She smirked as she handed Jessie her drink. "Are you going to tell me who you were about to kiss?"

"No," Jessie mumbled. She immediately started to drink her juice so she would have an excuse not to answer any questions.

"Well, I doubt you were dreaming about Mark," Rebecca sneered, sending a scowl in his direction, "and I know you weren't about to kiss me. It couldn't have been Blaise because then I'd have to hurt you."

As the gleam in Rebecca's eyes grew brighter, Jessie busied herself even more with her sips of distraction.

"Why can't you just admit that you were dreaming about kissing Dra--"

"Good morning, ladies!"

The cool pumpkin juice that Jessie had attempted to swallow scorched her throat when it forced its way down the wrong pipe. Covering her face with her hands, Jessie gasped for air in the small breaks her 'Blaise induced' coughing fit allowed. Mortified beyond belief, she kept her crimson face covered as she slowly attained her ability to breathe again.

"You okay there?" Rebecca questioned, rubbing small circles along Jessie's back.

"I didn't startle you, did I?" came Zabini's voice, immediately followed by the sound of a slap across fabric. "What?!"

"Thank you, Rebecca," Jessie rasped and smiled behind her hands.

"You're welcome," Rebecca replied before turning her full attention back to Blaise. "Honestly! What kind of question is that?!"

"Well, I didn't *mean* to scare her!"

"Far from the point, Blaise! The next time you hurt yourself, I'll just ask you how bad the pain is and be done with it!"

"Are you sure you're okay?" another voice softly said.

Jessie jumped and drew in a breath from hearing Draco's deep tone so close to her ear. One of her hands automatically traveled to the side of her neck to smooth down the tiny hairs that had sprung up.

Sitting next to her, Draco reached into his robes and pulled out a silk handkerchief. It was decorated in Slytherin green with silver accents, one of them being Draco's monogram. With a slight nod, he offered it to Jessie.

"Thank you," Jessie nearly stammered as she accepted the elegant fabric. Cleaning the tear tracks and water from her eyes, she almost swooned every time she inhaled Draco's virile scent that clung to the silk.

Reluctantly handing the cloth back to its owner, the blush she had so valiantly contained broke free when she turned away from him.

Rebecca and Blaise wore giddy smiles on their faces, and their eyes were twinkling as Jessie shifted her gaze to them. Sending them a heated glare, Jessie grabbed the *Daily Prophet* Rebecca had in front of her and quickly scanned the headlines, studiously ignoring the chuckles she could hear from them.

"Wankers," Jessie said under her breath.

Draco snorted beside her and leaned in closer to say, "Well said."

Jessie blushed again but did so with a smile.

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"Malfoy?" Rebecca asked a short while later. "Isn't Parkinson going to become suspicious about you sitting with us? Not that we don't welcome your company."

"Not likely," Draco replied as he stirred his tea. "I doubt she even knows I'm in the hall, let alone at this table."

"Yeah, she hasn't kept tabs on Draco for about a month now," Blaise affirmed. "I didn't notice it before, but today I can see why."

As everyone looked over to the Slytherin table, Jessie couldn't hold back the sigh that escaped as she watched Mark and Pansy. They appeared to be reading something together, and as innocent as that looked on the outside, the four sitting at the Ravenclaw table knew better.

"Come to think of it," Blaise said with frown, "I don't remember Copeland ever sitting here." He turned abruptly to examine Jessie with steely eyes. "Why isn't he sitting with you right now?"

Sharing a brief and understanding look with Rebecca, Jessie simply turned her attention to the groove patterns that adorned the wood of the table. This was just another detail in the relationship of Jessie and Mark: the one where he never sat with her in the Great Hall for meals while she never questioned his motivation until it was too late.

Rebecca took in a disconcerting breath. "Mark has never sat here with Jessie, nor has he ever invited her to sit with him at mealtimes."

"So did you two even date?" Blaise asked before raising his hands in a pacifying manner when Rebecca glared at him sharply.

"We did," Jessie quietly said. "We used to take walks after classes, and after a while, we would spend weekends at Hogsmeade together. Gradually, our meetings became less frequent." She stopped and didn't say anymore as she began to feel upset.

Sensing Jessie's change in mood, Rebecca shifted in her seat to bring her closer to her best friend. "It isn't your fault, Jessica."

When Jessie looked up at the mention of her proper name, Rebecca continued to speak in a way that demanded her full attention.

"You went into this relationship with Mark with only the *best* of intentions. From the very beginning... you never pushed too hard for his time or his company because you allowed him to set the pace. You gave him nothing but respect," Rebecca stated firmly. "You believed that what you had with him was special and would only grow. *That*, Jessie, was your only fault."

Jessie smiled fondly and nodded. "You're right, as usual."

"It's a gift," Rebecca teased and started to gather her belongings with Blaise. As they stood to leave, Rebecca placed her hand on Jessie's shoulder. "All right?"

"Yes, Rebecca," Jessie said and squeezed her friend's fingers. "Thank you."

"We'll see you two in Potions," Blaise toned, expressing a familiar grip on the shoulders of Draco and Jessie.

As their friends left the hall, Draco rose from his seat while Jessie collected her effects.

Taking one last look at the Slytherin table, Jessie faltered when she noticed the expression on Mark's face. He was openly smiling and laughing with his female companion in a way Jessie was all too familiar with. She shook her head faintly, feeling conflicted when she experienced the strong mixture of both sadness and anger.

Jessie let out an uneasy breath before leaving the hall, noticing that Draco had already gone.

Walking towards her first lesson, she immediately began to feel the familiar sensation of self blame again. Draco had escaped from her as soon as he had the chance, and Jessie cringed in dismay when she realized that she hadn't said but two words to him all morning.

*It's a wonder anyone talks to me*, Jessie thought dejectedly as she walked into the Arithmancy classroom and sat down. Even though she had resisted the thought of going to Potions for most of the morning, Jessie couldn't stop the tremor that passed through her when the first lesson bell chimed.

*It's going to be a long day.*

**TBC...**

## What's the Plan

*Chapter 5 of 5*

"It wasn't exactly planned. Mark and Pansy had to be touching, skin to skin, for the plan to work, so I'd say it was more like they fell into our trap."

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***A/N:** I apologize for how long it took to get this update out. This has not been a great year for me, and unfortunately, my muse has suffered as well. I still try to work on this daily, so hopefully the next chapter comes fairly soon. Nonetheless, I hope you enjoy it.*

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### What's the Plan

Lunch, lessons, and just about everything else was a heavy fog in the back of Jessie's mind as she walked, one foot in front of the other, towards her last class for the day. She tried to keep her thoughts clear and focused, but that task proved difficult with each thundering footstep she took, pounding a reminder that she would have to see and be touched by her boyfriend: the same boyfriend who showed his devotion to her by shagging another woman. And not just any woman... Draco Malfoy's woman.

Jessie was angry, as any girl in her situation would be, but she was also very confused. Why would Mark do such a thing, and most of all, why did he do it with Parkinson? Jessie had to agree with Blaise in thinking that both Mark and Pansy's actions were very sloppy. Did they really think no one would ever find out? Did they even care?

Shaking her head to clear the dramatic thoughts she couldn't help but think, Jessie took a deep breath as she rounded the last corner that would take her down to the Potions classroom.

"Hey, Jessie, wait up!"

Snapping her head around after nearly jumping out of her skin, Jessie breathed a sigh of relief when she saw Rebecca running up from behind her. God, she really needed to get a grip! Thankfully, Jessie had her friend with her now, and Rebecca would help keep her paranoia in check. Hopefully.

"So, how's your day been so far?" Rebecca asked, lifting her book bag higher on her shoulder to get a better handful of her hair to tie back.

"Miserable," Jessie responded half-jokingly.

Rebecca clicked her tongue at that answer. "That bad?"

"Well, you know me."

"I do know you. Let me guess... you've imagined every horrible scenario possible that could happen with Mark and have now worried yourself to death?"

"I can't help it! You know I like to be prepared for the worst."

Rebecca leveled a chastising glare at Jessie. "I know you do, Jess, but it won't be that bad. You'll be okay," Rebecca said, throwing an arm around her friend. "Besides, Blaise and I will be there if you need us."

Jessie allowed herself a small smile. "Yeah, and Draco said he would..."

Jessie's eyes widened when she realized what she was about to say. She looked over to her friend and groaned when she saw the inquiring smirk that was on Rebecca's lips. She had neglected to mention anything that was said between Draco and herself to her friend last night, and as far as she knew, Rebecca had forgotten all about it since she had yet to ask her about any of the details. Now, though, Rebecca's eyes took on a gleeful glow. Jessie was screwed.

"Spill, love. What did Draco say he would do?" Rebecca asked with a lecherous grin.

Taking a reluctant breath and looking around to make sure no one was in earshot of them, Jessie whispered, "He said he would take care of me and to trust him."

"Take care of you?" Rebecca asked softly, her stride slowing a little.

Jessie gasped. "In Potions! Take care of, you know, Potions." She glanced at her friend when Rebecca removed the arm she had around her and did a double take at Rebecca's expression. "What?"

"Nothing. If he really said that, though, I don't think you have anything to worry about." At Jessie's wondering look, she continued in a lower tone. "Well, I may not know Malfoy that well, but from what Blaise has told me about him, Draco wouldn't just say something like that and not be serious about it."

Jessie made a small noise of acknowledgement before saying, "So... if that's true, what do you think he would... take care of?"

Shrugging, Rebecca smirked and said, "I don't know, but they're Slytherin, Jess. They don't like to do things by halves."

Jessie nodded and took a steeling breath as the corridor gradually darkened.

There were a few students mingling in front of the Potions classroom as though they were prey for a still hunt, unknowingly waiting for Professor Snape to come around the corner and capture them. Luckily, at least at the moment, both Mark and Pansy were nowhere to be seen. Draco and Blaise were there, however, standing not too far away from them, talking quietly to each other.

"Hey, ladies," Blaise said with a smile as soon as he saw the both of them. He quickly ended the conversation he was having to walk over to Rebecca and give her a peck on the cheek.

Draco, who had his back to the girls, turned around and flashed them a small smile in greeting. It was enough to make Jessie blush a little.

Standing and listening to the random conversations that filled the hallway took Jessie's mind off nearly everything she had been worried about; at least it did for a few seconds.

"Hey, Jess."

Jessie's eyes flew wide open at the voice, and she barely had time to blink before she felt an arm slide across her shoulders and pull her close. *Mark!* She tried to keep her expression neutral when he leaned towards her for a kiss that Jessie was a bit reluctant to give. It was a chaste kiss, thank goodness, and was over quick enough to keep her from thinking too much about it. She turned towards her friends and froze as she took in the looks on their faces.

Pansy had apparently arrived as well and was standing at Draco's side. She looked between Mark and Jessie with an air of indifference, but the lines on her forehead didn't seem to agree with that. She was clearly uncomfortable with the situation.

Blaise and Rebecca looked as though they were having a hard time masking their feelings about the newcomers. Blaise switched between looking up and down at Mark and looking away with a minute shake of his head. Rebecca seemed like she was struggling not to openly growl at Pansy.

Jessie sighed, glancing in Draco's direction, and she barely refrained from sucking in an audible breath when she saw him. Draco's eyes were like ice, his gaze piercing everything in its path, and Jessie nearly shivered. She might not have known Draco that well personally, but there was no mistake in Jessie's mind; Draco was *mad*. He was rigid in his stance, and Jessie could see his curled fist resting on the hip of his girlfriend.

Draco looked between Mark and Blaise a few times, but before Jessie could question what that look was about, the air around them seemed to change as Professor Snape entered the hallway they were standing in. With quick steps, Snape waved a hand to unlock the classroom door and walked in, fully expecting to be followed without question.

"Stand by your seats and do so without talking," Snape ordered as he walked to the front of the class.

Everyone shuffled and quickly filed into the room to stand at their assigned tables. While Jessie was grateful that Mark was now focused on following orders instead of her, she couldn't help but wonder what was going on. The last time they were told to stand was right before she was paired with Mark. As Snape pointed to the first table in the first row, Jessie's heart skipped a beat, realizing that they were indeed getting new partners.

In a matter of seconds, names were barked out, and each student gravitated to their new seats as they were called. Jessie was dismayed to hear Pansy and Mark's name called together, sitting them at the middle table in the front row, but that quickly turned to surprise when she heard her own name along with Draco's. She sat with Draco in the second row on the left, and before long, she heard Rebecca's name called out along with Blaise's, sitting them two tables away from her. As she glanced down the row, she could see that her friends were intently watching Mark and Pansy. Jessie saw Professor Snape's occasional scowls at the couple, too, but then he would look at Draco right afterward.

Jessie sat back and frowned in thought. It almost seemed as if they were purposely placed to keep an eye on her boyfriend and Pansy, but that would mean...

A familiar, quiet laugh broke Jessie's train of thought, and she leaned forward immediately. Pansy had a small, almost shy, smile on her face, and that prompted Jessie to glare at the back of Mark's head. She didn't need to look around to know that she wasn't the only one who was glaring.

"Today's potion," Snape snapped, getting everyone's attention, "requires exact measuring and precise brewing." His dark eyes scanned the room, pinning everyone with a silent warning. "I shouldn't have to remind you that this is merely to review the advanced techniques you should have mastered by now. Anyone who fails will be doing it over in detention." He tapped his wand against the board at the front of the room and revealed the ingredients.

*A healing potion*, Jessie thought as she looked over the ingredients. *A strong healing potion*. She recognized that some of the ingredients could be relatively volatile if they were combined incorrectly, and a simple mistake could render the potion completely useless.

As she turned away from the board, the question she was poised to ask Draco died on her lips when she looked at him. He was studying the ingredients even more intently than she had been, and as she watched, Draco moved his attention to Snape and shared a quick series of looks with him. Jessie saw Snape give Draco a brief nod, and a moment later, she found herself staring at a pair of stunning gray eyes. Beautiful, really.

*Stop ogling and ask him the question!* her 'Rebecca' inner voice yelled. *And close your mouth!*

*What question?!* Jessie frantically asked the voice, knowing very well she wouldn't be answered. *What the hell was I going to ask him?* The familiar flush of embarrassment was already spreading across her skin.

Draco had a full-blown smirk on his lips, which didn't help Jessie at all. Motioning his head toward the board, Draco casually asked, "Shall I get the ingredients while you set up here?"

"Oh!" *Right.* "Yes... yes, that's fine. I can do that," Jessie said with a hesitant smile. Both corners of Draco's mouth turned upwards before he gracefully rose from his chair to get the supplies.

Resisting the urge to introduce her head to the table in a painful way, Jessie went about setting up everything they would need to make the potion.

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"Twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine," Jessie said as she stirred, watching as Draco added a bit more of the powder they had spent most of the class preparing. Various medicinal herbs were meticulously cut, sorted, and then ground into a fine powder, and the task of adding that powder to the other ingredients was a challenge. One wrong move and the potion would boil over.

"Almost done," Draco said, and Jessie made a small noise of acknowledgment. The muscles in her arms were burning.

As soon as Draco put in the last of the powder, Jessie pulled out the stirring rod and cast a quick *Scourgify* to clean it. She glanced around the room as she massaged her hands, and she was surprised to see that they had finished first.

Jessie found herself ridiculously proud of the work they had done, and she couldn't help but smile. Draco had been very easy to work with. They had used looks and gestures to communicate as they worked together, and it amazed Jessie at how natural it had felt. She had always been a bundle of nerves when she was around Mark, and that didn't fare too well in the classroom at times. Draco's cool demeanor and silent authority had put Jessie at ease right away, letting her focus on the assignment.

Draco took the finished potion up to Professor Snape, and Jessie made short work of cleaning up the mess they had made. She felt Draco's presence when he returned to his seat, and she nearly bumped into him when she sat back up after getting her book bag from the floor. Draco heard her gasp and apologized, but Jessie had noticed why he had been leaning over near her when his eyes went back to their target.

Draco blew out a breath and turned to look at Jessie with a scowl on his face. He beckoned Jessie to come closer and then asked, "Is Copeland's hand on Pansy's leg?"

Jessie's mouth fell open before she blinked and gave a dirty look to the couple in question. The nerve! Jessie scanned the underside of their table, but she couldn't see anything because their robes covered a lot from behind. As Pansy stirred the contents of their cauldron, Mark was carefully adding the powder mix, and when Pansy's arm raised during one of her revolutions, Jessie thought she could see a small amount of skin. She bent down a little, leaning towards Draco, and saw it. Mark's right hand was there, resting on the pale thigh of Draco's girlfriend. Jessie's insurgent look must have been all the answer Draco needed.

"Get out your wand," Draco stated quietly, "and get ready to put a shield around us."

Jessie frowned, wondering why Draco would make such a request, but she reached for her wand anyway. Her movements were nonchalant, as to not draw attention to herself, and Draco's smirk told her that he was pleased with that.

Draco's fingers stroked the silver ring he always wore on his right ring finger, and Jessie gripped her wand tighter as she heard him start to murmur softly. In that same moment, she heard the abrupt screams of Pansy and Mark and only had a second to raise the shield. It was a weaker shield, only used to deflect inanimate objects, but it effectively kept the maroon sludge that had erupted from the target's cauldron from soiling anything around her and Draco. Jessie dropped the shield and winced as she took in the damage that was done.

The room was silent as the students all gaped at the couple now completely covered in reddish-brown goo. The blast had been relatively localized, but she was sure more than a few student's shoes were now ruined. Jessie looked over at Rebecca and Blaise and saw her friend smirking while Blaise was busy trying to keep his laughter behind the hand over his mouth.

Professor Snape slowly rose from his desk, his face showing disgust, and Jessie couldn't help but sit up straighter in her chair. Snape waved his wand, almost casually, toward the floor, leaving a clean path between him and Mark and Pansy's table.

"Well?" Snape drawled, the one word conveying a multitude of questions in itself.

Mark's head bowed immediately, and Pansy just stood there, holding her ground, but she, too, didn't look her professor in the eye.

Jessie still didn't know exactly what Draco had done with the spell he had cast, but she did know it had only succeeded because they had been touching in some way. She found herself not feeling the least bit sorry for Pansy or Mark, which shocked her a little; it was nothing they didn't deserve, after all.

*Come on, Mark,* Jessie thought with some venom, *tell us what happened.* She knew Mark could spin a believable excuse pretty quickly, considering how many he had used with Jessie, but he had his work cut out for him if he could explain why he and Pansy screamed at the same time right before the potion erupted.

"Very well, then," Snape said, turning his nose up. "Detention. Tonight. And you will both stay after class and clean up the mess you have made."

Only then did Mark and Pansy turn to look at the rest of the room. Their faces and upper body were still drenched in dark sludge, and Jessie ducked her head when Mark turned toward her. She knew it was in her character to act demure like this, but in all seriousness, she didn't trust herself to look at Mark at that moment. She had an odd mix of emotions running through her, and she didn't want to give anything away.

The lesson bell cut through the strained atmosphere in the classroom, and Snape didn't raise an eyebrow when some of the students scrambled to finish their potion, having been sidetracked and all. Jessie and Draco gathered their belongings and left without giving their 'significant others' a single glance. Blaise's laughter rang throughout the hall as Draco and Jessie left the classroom.

"Brilliant!" Blaise said as soon as he saw Draco. "Copeland's squeal was hilarious!" In a lower tone, Blaise continued, saying, "I can't believe he was actually touching her in class."

Jessie's steps faltered at that, and she quickly looked between Blaise and Draco before she resumed her original pace. "This was all planned?"

Draco shot Blaise a glare before answering. "It wasn't exactly planned. Mark and Pansy had to be touching, skin to skin, for the plan to work, so I'd say it was more like they fell into our trap."

Jessie nodded in agreement and almost laughed at the surprised looks she got by doing that. "What? Did you guys really think I would be upset about what happened?"

Rebecca blinked. "Actually, yes."

Jessie smiled and shrugged. "They deserved it. Even I can't deny that."

"Too right," Blaise said with a smirk.

"Well, now they have detention together. I guess we don't have to worry about them getting 'together' tonight. Not unless they plan on meeting past curfew," Rebecca said

as they exited the hall.

"Are you going to be at dinner?" Blaise asked Draco as they stopped.

"No. I've got to head out to the pitch and talk to the Slytherin captain, and then I have a meeting with Professor Snape; we're going to have dinner in his quarters." Draco turned to look at Jessie. "I'll send word to you if our plans for tonight happen to change." With a nod, Draco turned and started walking toward the Slytherin tower.

"Which means," Blaise announced after a few moments, "that he has another plan in the works."

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At dinner, Jessie found out that Blaise had been right. Draco's eagle owl had delivered that confirmation as Jessie sat down to eat in the Great Hall.

*Jessie,*

*Meet me in front of my room at 8:30 tonight. We have plans to watch over a couple of students in detention.*

*Draco*

**TBC...**