

# For the Children

*by pokeystar*

Draco and Hermione get a Crup.

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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Their cozy flat looked as if a tornado had hit it. Hermione almost checked her feet for sparkly red shoes, but alas, the olive green leather chesterfield was not squashing her mother-in-law beneath its behemoth weight.

*She should be so lucky.*

Her husband surreptitiously palmed his wand as their shock subsided, and they absorbed the extent of the mayhem surrounding them. Potted plants were overturned and soil peppered the gleaming hardwood floors. Throw pillows had been disemboweled and their entrails had settled on every surface in miniature snow drifts of downy fluff. Draco's Firebolt 2005 was lying on the floor, snatched nearly as bald as Pansy had been after that legendary catfight with Lavender. Only the broom was sadly pathetic, not triumphantly snogging her ginger Weasel prize. Hermione sank to her knees with a whimper, cradling the remains of Hogwarts: A History to her chest as Draco scanned the room for the sinister perpetrator of such devastating havoc.

His eyes took in a large, disgruntled, marmalade Kneazle-cat perched precariously atop the tallest bookcase, covered in pillow fluff, tail swishing in extreme agitation. He noted the ragged hole in the wood and heavy-gauge wire safety gate spanning the kitchen doorway with dark amusement. A mushy chewing sound finally drew his attention to a petite forked tail wagging hyperactively like a pair of semaphore flags signaling attention. The rest of the diabolically destructive omnivore was hidden behind his wife's favorite reading chair.

"We were only gone two hours," moaned Hermione, horrified dismay dripping from every word. Clearly, the rosy bubble she had been floating in—a bubble manufactured from tiny fleece onesies and lovingly knitted booties—was burst.

Draco eyed his wife, reading her body language with an informed knowledge as thorough as her understanding of the once-book she cradled in her arms.

"How could we possibly know that creature was able to chew through industrial strength metal?"

"Parents always know. It's an instinct we undeniably lack. Ginny would've known to put a magical barrier on the gate," Hermione responded with a forlorn sigh. "We can't even parent a puppy properly."

"First of all, that is *not* a puppy," Draco replied, rolling his eyes and pointing at the frenzied tail. "That is a malevolent force of nature."

*What is that puny fiend chewing on so enthusiastically?* Draco crept hesitatingly toward the chair, not sure he wanted to find out.

"Secondly, there is no such thing as parental instinct. Ginny and Harry will learn to parent James through trial and error, just as we will." He threw his wife a deeply

comforting yet brief look and turned to spy over the embroidered wingback she held so dear. His eyes widened and his fists clenched as he identified the lumpy pulp between Tiny's mischievous Crup paws.

*His brand new custom-made, soft as butter, specially dyed deep-Slytherin-green Bruno Magli loafers!*

"Thirdly, we will invest in a very large, magically enhanced, impenetrable crate," he gritted out while internally counting to one hundred. In French.

Hermione tilted her head and her nose wrinkled. "For Tiny?" she inquired.

"No, my love," he said as he made a mental note never to agree to suggestions his wife verbalized before he had his first cup of tea in the morning. Disaster armed with sharp, pointy teeth and the needless sacrifice of impossibly perfect shoes awaited such foolish agreements. "For the children."

A/N: Dedicated to (and written for) floorcoaster. With ♥, floo!

Inspired by a comment by sbrande, who suggested that all children (and husbands) need crates. Amen, Sonia!