

Il Core Vi Dono

by Dreamy_Dragon

What if you could be someone else? Just for one night...

Act One

Chapter 1 of 2

What if you could be someone else? Just for one night...

On Tuesday morning, rain was lashing against the small window. Hermione looked up from the file she had been reading and watched the streaks of water running down the glass. She wished Magical Maintenance would get their negotiations for a pay rise sorted soon; after two weeks she was becoming rather tired of the constant rainstorms. Granted it was April; all the same, a bit of sunshine would have been nice. With a frown, she took the report that described the latest proceedings of the ethics commission in excruciating detail and tried to concentrate again when a distressed face appeared in her fireplace.

'Hermione, can you pop over to my office for a sec? We've got a bit of a situation here.'

Without waiting for an answer, Harry's head disappeared. Hermione noted with a wry grin that some things just never changed.

One floor down, she found Harry leaning against his desk. Next to him stood a young man in Auror robes, who was obviously trying to fold his lanky frame into invisibility. Sitting in two chairs in front of the desk were George and Ron Weasley. While George's face was the picture of calm innocence he had probably practised in Filch's office for years, his brother looked decidedly mutinous.

'Anyone want to clue me up?'

Harry nodded at the young man. 'Cole?'

'Right.' He swallowed. 'A few days ago we received a tip from one of our contacts in Knockturn Alley. Something about Class A items finding their way into the UK, together with a number of dodgy potions and charms.' He shuffled from one feet to the other before he continued. 'They said it was no papers required, no questions asked. So we investigated. Turns out all clues lead to *Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes*.'

'...we'd never! Look, mate. You know that.' Ron started to rise out of his chair.

Before Harry could say anything, Hermione cut in, 'It's not a question of what you would or wouldn't do, Ronald, but of sorting out the facts. Please, do continue.' She nodded at Cole who had started to look slightly nauseous at Ron's outburst.

'We searched the premises this morning and found a Chinese dragon egg, a couple of illegal lust potions, and two crates of these.' He gestured towards a number of small cardboard boxes in various colours that were currently piled up on Harry's desk.

'What are they?' Hermione asked.

Neither George nor Ron offered an explanation, so Harry answered, 'We had them analysed. It's a variant of Polyjuice Potion. Adding a bit of another person doesn't change your appearance into that person's but makes you closely resemble someone they fancy.'

'How would the potion know this?'

Harry shrugged. 'No idea.'

Thoughts were whirling through Hermione's brain in rapid succession. Most of them were equally rapidly discarded. 'It sounds almost like the potion has qualities similar to Legilimency.'

'Maybe.'

Hermione cast a swift glance at Ron. 'So, say I add a bit of my ex-fiancé here, I'd turn into a brainless Quidditch groupie with big tits.'

'Too bad this thingy wasn't around two years ago. Might have turned me into a male bookworm with poncy manners,' Ron spit back.

Harry said quickly, 'In addition it contains a large dose of pheromones. In short, it's a very powerful seduction potion.'

'Or a very powerful instrument to obtain information for blackmail and other things.' Hermione said, a number of unsavoury possibilities running through her head.

'Exactly.'

They both looked at George and Ron.

'Any idea how these ended up in your stockroom?' Hermione asked.

Ron crossed his arms. With a glare at the three people in front of him, he shook his head.

George, too, shook his head. 'No idea. Might have come in yesterday. We received two deliveries. Busy day, so I just signed the papers and told the lads to dump everything into the room at the back. Haven't even looked at the stuff yet.'

Harry said, 'We need to go through your papers.' He looked at Cole again.

'We brought everything in,' he confirmed.

Harry nodded. 'Right. You can go now.' He ran his hand through his hair. 'I'm sorry,' he added.

Without a word, Ron and George stood up and turned to leave.

'Please make sure to inform us if you plan to leave town,' Hermione said.

On his way out, Ron had time to spare her a withering glance.

After Cole had left too, both were silent. Something in Hermione's stomach wasn't happy. Harry was staring at the rivulets that ran down his office window as if they held all the answers.

'What do you think?' he finally asked.

'It doesn't sound like Ron and George. I mean some of the stuff they sell can be a bit dodgy, but they wouldn't import things illegally. At least not in such an obvious fashion.'

Harry nodded. 'They wouldn't be that thick. So if it wasn't them...'

'...they were framed,' Hermione finished. 'Have similar things turned up elsewhere?'

'Don't know. I'll get an Auror team on it.' After another moment of silence, he asked, 'So, are we still on for Friday? Or have you found a better date?'

Hermione gave him a little nudge. 'Of course we're still on. Unless you've got someone better, that is,' she said with a wink.

Harry shook his head. 'Not really,' he muttered.

'You've been fancying the pants off Draco for how long now? A year? Don't you think it's time you got your behind into gear and did something about it?' Hermione asked with an exasperated sigh.

'Pot. Kettle.'

'That's different,' she mumbled.

'Oh really? How's that?'

'He's older.'

'So.'

'Well, and...you know.'

This time the exasperated sigh came from Harry. 'Honestly, Hermione. What are you waiting for? He's dishy, available, you like him, and he has asked you to have dinner with him how many times now? Five?'

'Four,' she corrected. 'But that doesn't mean anything. I think he's after my Ministry connections.'

'Wonder why he didn't ask old Dawlish out then. Much better connected than you.'

Hermione shook her head. 'That's not what I meant; besides I've better legs.'

'Exactly. Y'know Malfoy might really like you.'

'He might,' Hermione conceded. 'But what if it doesn't work?'

'Why do you care? All you want is a shag, right?'

'I suppose.'

Their eyes flickered briefly to the colourful cardboard boxes.

'He's a lucky bastard that such a bright and beautiful witch is interested in him,' Harry continued.

Hermione grinned. 'Who says I'm not just after his library?' Then she gave him a hug. 'You're a sweetie, you know that? But you're right.'

Harry grinned. 'Of course I am. Besides, if Narcissa Malfoy can marry the Minister and Molly can cope with having Pansy as a daughter-in-law, you're perfectly entitled to shag Lucius Malfoy. I'd say go for it.'

Now, Hermione grinned as well. 'So, are you going to take your own advice and make a pass at Draco?'

'Er...'

Suddenly both fell silent as their eyes returned once more to the boxes piled up on Harry's desk.

'Now there's an idea,' Harry muttered.

'Which would be wrong,' Hermione pointed out.

'But then, we don't know if these actually work outside a lab situation.'

'And of course the investigation would rest on a more solid foundation if the evidence was conclusive.'

'Exactly my thoughts.'

Leaning against a tree, Lucius Malfoy twisted the empty glass in his fingers. Through his dress robes, he could feel the rough bark at his back, surprisingly warm. He nearly sneered. Since when was Scotland at the beginning of May warm enough to hold a party outdoors? Trust even the weather to cooperate with the Ministry's idea to hold the tenth anniversary celebration of Voldemort's downfall on the Hogwarts' grounds. Right on the battlefield so to speak. Who the hell had thought that would be tasteful?

The evening light cast a peaceful gleam on the lake, its surface occasionally ruffled by the breeze coming down from the mountains. At its very edge, Dumbledore's white marble tomb was visible. Lucius's eyes followed the path that led around the lake. Further down would be another stone, made of nearly black granite, its surface rough...no polished marble there. Of course, it was smaller and in a less exposed location. It was a memorial, not a gravestone because a grave usually required a body that could be buried.

At that thought, a small, barely visible, smile crossed Lucius's lips. It quickly died as he surveyed the people milling about the grounds. Naturally Potter was there, in the company of the delectable Miss Granger as usual. Lucius had it on good authority that there was nothing going on between them. Funny that the war hero, the darling of the wizarding world remained unattached. His eyes returned to the witch at Potter's side. He noticed that she had managed to tame her hair into a mass of soft-looking brown curls tonight. Her dress robes were a tasteful navy blue, loosely cut, yet hinting at the body underneath. By the looks of it, it was a very nice body. He felt a familiar tightening in his groin. Damn. Wrong woman, he reminded himself. She seemed to like him but wouldn't agree to have dinner with him. Not that he hadn't tried. More often than he usually did. With another wistful glance at her curves and a sigh, he turned to watch the other guests.

How much longer until the ceremony would start? He grabbed a fresh glass from one of the trays that were floating around the guests. The quality was exactly as he expected. That, as so many other things, couldn't be helped. His eyes lit upon Narcissa, tall, willowy, and impeccably dressed as always, she stood at Kingsley's side, the consummate hostess. Lucius quickly downed his champagne before he wandered over to them. Time to go and have a chat. He was here, and that was what counted after all.

After a fairly amiable conversation with the Minister and his ex-wife, Lucius found a spot at the back of the crowd. It was a good place to watch and be seen without making his presence too obviously known. The speeches seemed to take forever. Lucius had decided to have a fresh glass of champagne with each one. After a while, he lost count and gave up on his drinking game as one pompous arse after another waffled on and on, saying exactly what everybody else had said.

Finally, it was over. He waited a few more minutes before he strolled to the edge of the grounds. He needed a drink. A real one. With that thought, he Apparated.

Moments later, the warm, elegant atmosphere of the *Tail and Talon* enfolded him in a comforting embrace.

'The usual?' Terry asked.

Lucius nodded. A few seconds later, a tumbler of Ogden's Finest, Single Malt forty-one years, appeared before him. He took a sip, savouring the smoky taste and the fiery liquid running down his throat. Once again, he found himself surveying the people around him. The room was almost empty except for a few other regulars...witches and wizards who definitely had not been invited to the celebration at Hogwarts. *At least I was there and made sure everyone saw me. Well, everyone who is anyone* he thought. *Hopefully it will prove advantageous in the long run.*

The opening of the door interrupted his musings. Lucius quickly glanced at the woman who had just walked in. She seemed to be in her mid-twenties, dressed in midnight blue robes...the understated, very expensive kind that weren't too revealing but clung in just the right places. Dark brown hair fell in soft waves down her back; a silver-grey scarf was draped around her neck. And then there was the dazzling smile she directed at him. Lucius perked up. The woman went over to the bar, passing close to him. He caught a whiff of her strangely familiar scent. After she had ordered a half of cider, she flashed him another smile. Lucius's eyes glued themselves to her arse as she sauntered over to a table in the corner. After she sat down, she took a sip from her glass, but not before her eyes had caught Lucius's. Maybe the evening wouldn't turn out to be a complete waste of time after all.

'Pretty lass,' the landlord remarked with a wink.

'Very nice,' he agreed. He waited for a while longer until she smiled once more, and her eyes sought his again. Then he walked over to her, taking his time. He stopped at her table. 'Lucius Malfoy. May I join you?' he asked with a small bow.

Once more she showed a row of pearly, white teeth. 'Jean Wilkins. Please do, Mr Malfoy,' she answered.

He detected a faint Australian accent in her voice. 'Thank you, Miss Wilkins. And please call me Lucius.'

'Then you must call me Jean.' She took another sip from her glass, looking at him.

Her eyes, he noticed, were brown and warm, reminding him of another pair of brown eyes he wished would look at him like these. Whatever else he was thinking was derailed at the sight of her pink tongue darting out to catch a drop of liquid at the corner of her mouth.

He quickly took a sip from his own glass. 'Well, Jean. I don't think I've seen you here before?'

'No, I only arrived yesterday. I'm here for the Royal Opera.'

Lucius found his interest rising another notch; not many witches were interested in Muggle opera. It was one of the benefits of the post-war wizarding world that he could now openly indulge into what before had only been a secret pleasure, carefully hidden from his acquaintances and the Dark Lord. His passion for a Muggle art had come in

handy at his trial.

He smiled at the woman opposite him. 'Opera Australia has a good reputation, too,' he ventured.

'It's no comparison with European performances.'

'Yes, I suppose it is rather inferior compared to the Royal Opera,' he conceded. A sip from his glass enabled him to look at her in more detail, and he noticed that the woman opposite him did indeed remind him pleasantly of Hermione Granger. Seeing that her glass was empty, he asked, 'Would you like another?'

When she nodded, he got up and strode over to the bar. He ignored Terry's wink as the landlord pushed two fresh glasses towards him. After he arrived back at the table, he said, 'You should go to Milan, see some performances at La Scala.'

'I very much hope to one day,' she answered, twirling one of her soft curls around her finger.

Lucius's eyes were arrested by her movement while he wondered if her hair was as soft as it looked. Before his thoughts could stray any further, he continued, 'Not everything is brilliant of course. You have to know which ones to choose.'

There was that warm, open smile again. 'Maybe you could help me there?'

'It would be my pleasure. What are your favourites?'

'Mozart. Also Verdi, though mainly his later pieces.'

'You have excellent taste.'

'Thank you.' Her hand brushed his.

He wondered if it was by accident. Around them the pub was now brimming with activity. People were greeting each other, glasses clinked, and there was a general shuffling to and fro. It suddenly felt too loud, too public, too vulgar.

'Do you like *Così fan tutte*?'

'Very much.'

'I happen to own a recording of the 2000 Zurich performance. Maybe you would care to listen to it? And some Barolo to go with it?'

'I'd love to.'

They Apparated in front of Malfoy Manor. Lucius had briefly considered taking her directly into his music room, but he liked the impression the façade of his house usually made on any guests seeing it for the first time. Jean did him the favour to look suitably impressed.

Inside, he took her cloak. Not knowing what to do with it, he used his wand to Levitate it in the general direction of where Gilby usually disappeared to with the guests' garments.

Lucius led Jean upstairs and through a corridor lined with family portraits. One glance from him quelled any mutterings at the sight of the young woman. When they had entered the music room, he quickly moved his wand behind her back, trying to remember basic household spells to get rid of the dust and clear up the general clutter. Jean didn't seem to notice as her gaze wandered over the comfortable sofa, the little oval-shaped basin on the table in front of it, and stopped in the corner at the window.

'Is that yours?' She pointed at the cello that was propped against the chair.

Lucius nodded. 'Yes. Do you play an instrument as well?'

Her face lit up with her smile again. 'Yes, the violin.'

'Maybe you'd like to get together some time for a duet?'

'That would be lovely,' she said.

Lucius led her to the sofa and went to Accio the promised bottle of Barolo. To his relief, the wine and two clean glasses soared into his hand without any difficulties. A quick peek at Jean confirmed that she hadn't noticed his hesitation.

He handed her a glass of wine and went to a shelf that held numerous crystal phials, each one containing a swirling strand of a different colour. After selecting one, he turned back to his guest. Jean was watching the stone basin with an interested look on her face.

'I've never seen anything like this. How does it work?' she asked.

'Similarly to a Pensieve. These,' he gestured towards the shelf, 'are recordings of various performances. The technique is modified and allows one to either delve into it and watch the whole performance or just to listen to it.'

Jean looked impressed. 'This is a nifty bit of magic.'

Lucius hesitated for the fraction of a second. 'A friend helped me to make it; it took our combined abilities to get the technology to work.'

The dazzling smile Jean bestowed on him confirmed that she valued his unusual bout of honesty. She seemed the type.

'Would you prefer to watch or just to listen?'

'I'd rather just listen,' she said.

Lucius nodded. He poured the contents of the phial into the basin and settled on the sofa next to Jean. He took a sip from his glass, savouring the taste of the dark red liquid before he started the music with a specific wave of his wand. When the first notes of the overture filled the room, he closed his eyes, concentrating on the music.

After a while, he opened his eyes again and watched Jean. She, too, had closed her eyes and was listening to the opera. Her face was glowing with a look of concentration and intense pleasure.

Lucius let his eyes wander over her body, but his gaze returned again and again to the expression on her face.

He sidled a bit closer to her on the sofa and found her eyes open, looking at him. They held each other's gaze for a while until he tentatively raised his hand and traced a finger along her jaw. A tiny sigh, almost inaudible, escaped her, and she slowly brought up her hand to trail along his neck. Her lips touched his. A question. He answered by sliding his hand through her hair to the back of her neck and pulling her closer. Her curls, he noticed, were exactly as soft as they looked. Her lips were smooth and

warm, and when he tentatively trailed his tongue over her bottom lip, she willingly opened her mouth to him. She tasted of wine and something sweet and delicious. He nearly purred when he felt her hands running lightly through his hair.

As Don Alfonso was plotting, her hands strayed to the upper buttons of Lucius's robes. Soon he felt her hands exploring his bare skin while she continued to kiss him. He moaned, and his own hands found their way into her robes. He fiddled with the clasp of her bra until he managed to open it. Her breasts were exactly the right size, warm and soft in his hands. She moaned and her nipple pebbled under his caress. When she mirrored his movements on his nipples, he moaned as well; her hands on him felt exquisite.

Jean continued to peel him out of his luxurious robes, alternating between feather-light touches and soft caresses as she explored him. Though most of his blood had left his brain for another part of his body, he made sure that her state of undress kept up with his own.

Finally, he had her completely naked except for the grey scarf around her neck. He drank in the delicious sight of her before he buried his face into the silk. It was warm and smelled deliciously of her skin underneath. He sighed.

'Do you like silk?' she whispered into his ear.

He nodded. With a swift movement, she untied the scarf from her neck and pushed him back lightly until he lay spread-eagled on the sofa. She smiled at him, a mischievous little glint in her eyes. The briefest moment of worry flashed through Lucius's mind, but something about her made him sure that she wouldn't hurt him.

She settled between his legs and started to trail the scarf over his neck, his shoulders and his arms. Her breasts were bobbing gently as she ran the piece of cloth down his torso and his thighs. The view of the woman above him and the feeling of the smooth silk running across his skin had his cock desperately straining for attention.

'Do you trust me?' Jean asked.

After the slightest bit of hesitation, Lucius gave a tiny nod. He couldn't explain it, but he did. Besides, he was rather good at wandless magic.

So was Jean, apparently. He watched as, out of thin air, she quickly conjured a twin to the scarf she was holding. She proceeded to caress his body with both scarves now, running them down his sides and up over his stomach and his nipples to his neck and over his face. In a fluent motion, one of the scarves fell over his eyes; he could sense her movement while she fastened it at the side of his head. Lucius swallowed as his vision darkened.

Then he felt her curls tumble over his face and her lips briefly touch his before she asked, 'All right?'

Again, he nodded, strangely exhilarated. Her tongue trailed over his lips, and he willingly opened his mouth, enjoying the kiss. He could feel the other scarf still running over his skin, every touch of lips, skin, hands, and silk heightened by the absence of sight.

Her mouth went trailing little kisses on his collarbone, moving down until he felt it wet and warm on one of his nipples. He moaned.

Suddenly the absence of touch. This time his moan sounded a little desperate. He couldn't, wouldn't beg, but he very much wanted her mouth back on him.

Then the tiniest flick of a tongue over the tip of his cock. He made no effort to hide the effect this had on him. As a reward he felt her licking along his length before her mouth engulfed him in wet warmth.

He writhed under the ministrations of her mouth and tongue, feeling himself getting closer and closer when a wave of cool air on his cock interrupted his pleasure. He made a disappointed noise. Kisses on his stomach, the hollow on his throat and then her mouth soothed him, and soon he felt his cock slowly sinking into another delicious, wet heat. He bucked up and heard an appreciative whimper from the woman on top of him.

She moved, riding him. Tight, hot wetness engulfed his cock as her rhythm brought him closer and closer to the edge while Fiordigili and Dorabella professed their eternal love and devotion.

And then he drowned in colour and sensation. 'Hermione!'

A/N: The Potterverse belongs to JKR. I only take them out to play.

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Act Two

Chapter 2 of 2

What if you could be someone else? Just for one night...

On Saturday evening, Lucius Malfoy was lying on the sofa in his music room, his eyes closed, listening once again to the same overture, the same arias, the same voices. He didn't bother opening his eyes when he heard footsteps approaching. Only two people had nearly unlimited access to his house.

'This is a pig sty.'

'And good evening to you, too, Severus,' Lucius said, slowly opening his eyes to see his old friend standing in the doorway, dressed in casual black Muggle trousers and a white shirt. 'Is France so boring that you have to come haunting me? In those... *garments* no less?'

'At least I am dressed,' Snape answered with a pointed look at Lucius's dressing gown. 'You didn't respond to my Floo calls, so I stepped through.'

'How touching.' Lucius slowly sat up, stretching the aching muscles in his neck. 'Fancy a glass of wine?' He pointed to the opened bottle on the small table, his own glass sitting next to it.

'Thank you.'

Lucius fished for his wand. 'Accio clean glass.' Nothing happened. After a quick glance at Severus, he swiftly Transfigured an empty bowl that had sat next to the sofa on the floor into a pristine wine goblet.

Severus didn't comment; he merely cleared a space on the armchair. With dexterous fingers, he removed scraps of parchment, an empty plate and a handful of crumbs before he sat down. Lucius simply flopped back on the sofa and closed his eyes again.

'So, are you moping because your elves deserted you?' Severus asked, one of his eyebrows close to his hairline.

'I. Am. Not. Moping. And my elves haven't deserted me. They're on holiday,' Lucius answered.

'On holiday?' Severus's hand holding his glass stopped midway to his mouth.

'Order of the Ministry. Tiffany cried when they left.'

'I see. No surprise there. She's utterly devoted to you,' Severus said, finally taking a sip of his wine.

'Of course she is. As a matter of fact so are the others.' Lucius crossed his arms behind his head.

'Who's the woman?'

Lucius opened his eyes again. 'I don't know what you mean.'

'Ah. So there *is* a woman. What happened? Did she dare to reject the dashing Lucius Malfoy?'

Lucius scowled. 'If you must know, she didn't reject me. We spent a very pleasant evening.'

'And?'

'And nothing. She just... vanished. She doesn't seem to care for another little soirée,' Lucius answered.

'You have my sympathy.' Severus sounded vaguely amused. 'What's that?' he asked and bent forward to inspect the grey something that poked out from the chaos under the sofa.

'No idea.' Lucius pulled at the piece of cloth and retrieved a grey silk scarf. His heart started to beat a little faster when he recognised it.

Severus was watching him closely. 'It seems she left you a souvenir, at least,' he said with a smirk.

Lucius was too busy running his hands along the smooth material to answer. In one corner, he saw two entwined letters. 'HG,' he whispered, a slow smile spreading over his face.

Getting up, he said, 'Severus, don't let me keep you. I'll see you for dinner next week.' With that he swept out of the room, leaving Snape to stare after him.

On Sunday afternoon, a bleary-eyed Hermione Granger was staring into her mug. Nearly a week ago, she had seduced Lucius Malfoy. No, Jean Wilkins had seduced Lucius Malfoy. Which precisely summed up her current predicament.

Her heart had nearly missed a beat when he had called her "Hermione", which had prompted her to leave him a little clue in return. She sighed. In the background, Guglielmo and Ferrando were entreating favourable winds to convey their longing. She'd expected Lucius to come barging into her office any day or to owl or...something. She had also strengthened her wards and made sure her post was double-checked for jinxes. It wouldn't do to underestimate Lucius Malfoy.

But nothing had happened. It seemed she had got exactly what she wanted: a steamy one-night stand with the dishy blond. That was all she wanted, right?

She stirred more sugar into her tea before she went and dug out a new packet of chocolate biscuits. Did Lucius like chocolate? What would his hair look like when he woke up in the morning? And what would it feel like to wake up snuggled against him? With another sigh, she popped a biscuit into her mouth.

By ten a.m. on Monday morning, Hermione had snapped at her secretary twice because the tea was too hot and the milk was too cold, and then again because she couldn't find the report from the last meeting of the MLE.

By two p.m. on Monday afternoon, she found out that the reason Harry had neither owed nor been round to see her was because he was too busy spending every free minute with Draco Malfoy. Hermione briefly considered the bar of Honeydukes Dairy Milk in her desk drawer but instead pointed her wand at one of the obnoxious memos circling around her inbox and blasted it into smithereens. Much better.

At four p.m. the same afternoon, Tina stuck her head round the door.

'What is it?' Hermione snapped.

Her secretary was holding a large bunch of dark red roses in front of her like a shield.

'These have just been delivered for you, Miss Granger. There was no card.'

'Just put them on my desk. Thank you,' Hermione said.

After Tina had practically tripped over her feet in her haste to get out of Hermione's office again, Hermione stared at the flowers. They were beautiful, deep crimson, with long stems, tied together with a silver silk scarf. Her heart gave a little leap.

At nine p.m. on Monday evening, Hermione was sitting in her living room, looking at the roses, while she kept running the smooth grey material through her fingers, remembering the way it had looked whispering over pale skin. She contemplated a little visit to Malfoy Manor. In the background, Ferrando sang about his hope for love.

By two a.m. on Tuesday morning, Hermione had fallen asleep on her sofa, her cheek pressed into the scarf.

At eleven a.m. on Tuesday, two items arrived in the morning post. The first one, a long roll of parchment with several motions for the next departmental meeting, wasn't particularly remarkable. The second one was a small, dark blue box, tied with a silver ribbon. Hermione stared at it for a whole minute, her heartbeat accelerating considerably before she opened it. It contained another silk scarf, silver-grey, identical to the one she had received the day before. Closer inspection confirmed that this one didn't have her initials on it either. In addition, she found a silver clef and a card. It simply said *Saturday, seven p.m. Your company would be an honour and a pleasure.* Written in a confident, elegant script, silver on midnight blue. No signature. Hermione took several deep breaths to control the tingling that had spread through her, and then she smiled.

On Saturday, it only took three changes, a few exasperated searches through her wardrobe, and one or two Transfiguration spells before Hermione had found an outfit she was happy with. She had toyed around with wearing blue again but wanted something different this time. Dark red was discarded because it didn't go well with her complexion. Dark purple made her look matronly as her mirror informed her in no uncertain terms. Finally, she settled on emerald green, so dark that it was nearly black. Her long taffeta skirt matched the tight-laced bodice perfectly and went well with her black, patent leather court shoes. She had decided to use one of the scarves as a shawl. *I'll be hopelessly overdressed if he just wants to go down the pub* she thought as she fastened the second of her silver earrings. *But somehow I don't think that's what's on the agenda for tonight.*

She checked for the umpteenth time that her hair was still done up in a chignon with a few curls framing her face and hadn't reverted to the unruly bushy mane it usually was. Then, she draped the shawl around her shoulders, took her handbag and placed the silver clef firmly into the palm of her hand. It was two minutes to seven. Trying to ignore the swarm of butterflies that had taken up permanent residence in her stomach, Hermione waited for the Portkey to activate.

The familiar spinning stopped, and Hermione quickly took a look around. She had arrived in a small alley in what looked decidedly not like the UK. The soft, warm night air confirmed that assumption. Before she had time to survey her surroundings any further, a familiar looking figure stepped into view. Tall, impeccably dressed in obviously made-to-measure black dress robes, his long silver-blond hair gave him away despite the black Venetian silk mask he was wearing.

A long time ago, the idea of Lucius and a mask would have sent shivers of fear through Hermione; now, shivers of an entirely different kind were racing up her spine. He looked so very enticing, and she remembered the way he had looked with the grey silk over his eyes, his body stretched before her in all its glory.

He greeted her with a slight bow and an appreciative look, 'Good evening, Miss Granger. You look beautiful. Or would you prefer that I call you Jean?' he asked with a smile.

'Good evening. Actually, I'd prefer it if you called me Hermione,' she said, taking a deep breath.

'Hermione it is, then. Shall we?' he asked and offered her his arm.

Apparently, he wasn't going to tell her where they were. As Hermione took his arm, the butterflies were in full flight.

They walked a small distance in silence before they turned onto a larger square. At the look of the building that greeted them, Hermione gasped. She looked at the man next to her.

'I own a box; the rest is coincidence,' he said.

'How convenient.'

'Isn't it.'

Hermione leaned back in her chair, listening to the first notes of the familiar overture. Lucius was sitting next to her. Close enough that she could faintly smell his after-shave and feel his presence, but somehow not close enough. In the dark, their hands found each other, never parting company until the intermission.

'Thank you very much for the invitation. I really, really enjoyed this,' Hermione said as they were standing in the foyer after the performance. She twisted the programme in her hands.

Lucius draped her shawl around her shoulders, his hand lingering over her skin a little longer than necessary. 'I'm glad you enjoyed our little excursion. Would you care for a drink and a little snack?'

Hermione's hands stopped. 'That would be very nice,' she said.

'We could go somewhere around here or retire to my home for something more private,' he suggested.

Hermione could feel his eyes on her face; despite his mask, he looked almost anxious. 'A little privacy would be nice,' she answered.

Lucius nodded and removed one of his silver cufflinks. He put it in the palm of her hand and then closed his own hand over hers before he steered her behind a pillar. Away from prying Muggle eyes, he took his wand from the fold of his robes and pointed it at their joined hands. '*Portus*,' he whispered.

They materialised in the entrance hall of Malfoy Manor, standing very close to each other. Hermione raised her head a bit so that their lips were almost touching; then she pulled back again. 'Take off the mask.'

'Sorry?'

'Take off the mask. I want to know that it is you I'm kissing,' Hermione said.

Lucius hesitated for a moment, then he did as she had asked. 'All right. No more masks.'

Before Hermione could say anything else, Lucius's mouth came crashing down on hers. She gave in and kissed him back, feeling a sudden raw hunger racing through her. He steered her backwards until she could feel the banister at her back. Lucius pushed her against it; fumbling with the strings for a bit, he untied her bodice. Hermione gasped when she felt his hands stroking and fondling her breasts. Then his arms closed around her, pulling her tight against him, and a familiar sensation informed her that he was Apparating them somewhere.

They materialised in front of a large bed. Hermione barely had time to register the room around them before they tumbled onto the bed, Lucius on top of her.

He slipped one leg between hers and hastily unfastened the rest of her bodice. He pushed the straps down so that her arms were trapped at her sides and then lowered his mouth hungrily to her nipples alternatively licking and nibbling at them. Hermione gasped at the pleasurable sensations and felt raw hot desire shoot through her. His hands went further down, pushing up her skirt and peeling her out of her knickers. Hermione happily assisted in getting rid of them. He moved his mouth up to hers again, his hand now between her legs, stroking and teasing. Hermione's arms were still pinned to her side, her nipples exposed to the cool air, and he was again kissing her hard. She moaned, becoming more and more aroused by his hunger. When he slipped two long, elegant fingers into her, sliding up and down quickly inside her, she gasped into his mouth. Meanwhile, he had managed to unfasten his own robes and free himself from the constraints of his trousers. She whimpered in protest when he withdrew his fingers from her. He released her arms and pulled up her legs around his hips and pushed into her. Hermione moaned as he was filling her. It felt so good.

'I've wanted you for so long,' he whispered into her ear as he thrust fast and hard.

Hermione threw back her head and matched his rhythm. 'Yes.'

'Say it,' he demanded.

She was so close now that she found it hard to remain coherent. 'Yesss, I want you.' She raked her hands through the strands of his long, silver hair, knowing it was the truth.

When he heard her answer, his rhythm became faster and deeper, then his thrusts became more and more erratic until he shuddered and moaned her name. Hermione clung to him as if her life depended on it, crying out his name as she came, her body shuddering in his arms while her world exploded in a world of living flame.

They lay on the bed, panting and exhausted. Lucius wrapped his arms around her. 'I...' he began.

'Shshsh...' Hermione quickly placed a kiss on his lips. 'I know.'

Silver-grey eyes looked into hers, and then he slowly nodded. Hermione snuggled into his embrace, feeling warm and increasingly drowsy when her stomach rumbled audibly. 'About that snack...' she murmured, feeling slightly embarrassed.

Lucius smiled at her and snapped his fingers. A house-elf appeared, wearing a pristine white tea towel, embroidered with the Malfoy crest.

'Master called,' she said.

'Tiffany, we'd like a few titbits and some champagne, please,' Lucius said.

'Right away, master,' the little elf answered, adoration clearly visible in her eyes.

Within minutes, a tray materialised, floating next to the bed. It contained a variety of sandwiches, mini quiches, samosas, cheese and olives, strawberries and grapes, a bowl with mousse au chocolat, as well as two glasses and a bottle of champagne.

By the time they had eaten their way through the nibbles and drank some of the champagne, Hermione was fully awake again, especially as she discovered that mousse au chocolat tasted ever so much better when she licked it off Lucius's body.

Soon another appetite took over. Their lovemaking now had nothing of the heated urgency from before. They leisurely explored one another's bodies, learning how they liked to be touched.

Some time later, Hermione lay sprawled across Lucius's chest. He had one arm draped around her while his other hand played languidly with her wayward curls.

'What happened to my scarf?' she asked.

'I kept it.'

'As a trophy?'

'No, as a proof that you'd really been here,' he explained. After a pause he added, 'I wouldn't mind using it again.'

Warmth spread through her as Hermione smiled and looked at him. 'I can think of a number of good uses for it. Besides, I'm not going anywhere.'

Several weeks later on a very cloudy Wednesday, two men met in a remote corner of the Malfoy grounds.

'Worked a treat,' the younger said with a grin.

'It was a well-executed plan,' the older replied.

'The Weasley brothers?'

'Not my concern.'

'It will be if Hermione finds out, Father.'

'I'll see that they get off lightly.'

~fin~

A/N: *The Potterverse belongs to JKR. I only take them out to play.*

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