

Memorable

by Cecelle

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Chapter 1 of 1

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When Hermione opened her presents on their first Christmas as an official couple, the very first gift was one she'd never forget.

Season tickets for the Chudley Cannons.

The one thing less thoughtful Ron could have given her was a bathroom scale. Their relationship survived only another two months.

So it was with considerable apprehension that Hermione looked down at the package Severus had handed her *on their* first Christmas.

Gift-giving was a potential minefield, especially with him.

Nagini's venom had left a permanent disability – he tired easily. Holding down his previous position had proven impossible, and he was reduced to doing odd jobs *for Slug & Jiggers*.

It had taken years to persuade him that it wasn't anything about him other than *him* that she wanted. And that the fact that she made more money than him had nothing to do with his worth.

She still wasn't entirely sure he believed her.

"Go ahead." He nudged the box in her direction. "Open it."

"All right..." She hesitated for a moment before resolutely removing the wrappings.

And blinked.

Coal.

He'd given her a *lump of coal*.

"So I haven't been a nice girl, hm?" She hated the way her voice quivered.

He gave her a smug look. "Observe."

His wand moved in swirling, complicated patterns, and the coal in her hand began to glow with a cold, bluish light, growing brighter and brighter, until she had to avert her

eyes. And then, with a final, radiant flash, the light died.

She held her breath as she looked down. The coal had disappeared. In its place lay a shimmering, octahedral crystal.

A diamond.

"Once you figure out the spell, the Transfiguration's surprisingly easy. You're not even changing the nature of the thing. It's still just carbon." He smiled. "I've worked on this for months. Happened on the solution more or less by chance. But it is, I believe, a marketable skill."

Gaping, Hermione stared at the stone on her palm. "Brilliant!"

He smirked. "Not yet. But—" The smile fell away, and suddenly, there was a look of naked, fearful longing. "But I'd like to have this cut and set in a ring. If you'll have me, that is."

"Of course!" There was sheer joy on his face as she flew around his neck. "Of course I will!"

Now *this* was a gift she'd never forget.

And this time, for all the right reasons.

A/N: This is a one-shot I wrote for dyno_drabbles' "Last Drabble Writer Standing" final challenge. The story had to include the phrase "The very first gift was one she'd never forget." Slightly expanded from the original 300 word limit.