

# You Can Leave Your Hat On

*by severina*

Times are hard after the Second War, and Snape is hard up for gold. Will he go the FULL MONTY? And more importantly, will he win back the elusive Miss Granger?

## Chapter 1

*Chapter 1 of 5*

Times are hard after the Second War, and Snape is hard up for gold. Will he go the FULL MONTY? And more importantly, will he win back the elusive Miss Granger?

A/N: AU, AU, AU! No, no. Not the chemical symbol for gold, but Alternate Universe! This is intended strictly as a joke, parody, and satire. I own neither the characters nor plots of the Potterverse, nor inspiring tale of the *Full Monty*. iPod is a product of the Apple Corporation, and all songs belong to their respective artists. That said, enjoy and review!

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Lucius Malfoy's shoulders bobbed rhythmically as he swung his hips and thrust his pelvis forward, gyrating to some music that was, in Snape's view, completely imaginary.

"Malfoy, cease that ridiculous undulating. We're here to look for scrap marble." Snape brushed a greasy lock of hair from his eyes and glanced back behind them. "Toby! Don't dawdle."

The small boy hastened forward, his own greasy hair falling in his face, mercifully covering his rather large front teeth. "Dad! I was looking for the Pensieve!"

Lucius turned his cold grey eyes upon his companion. "It's not ridiculous undulating, you uncultured fool. I found it on a Muggle one night after a raid. Bloody useful, this. It's like a Wizarding Wireless you can fit in your trousers."

"No one cares what you've got in your trousers, Lucius, least of all me." Snape picked up a bit of tawny marble from the floor. "I expect this'll fetch a few Sickles in Knockturn Alley. Toby, bring the sack!"

Sullenly, the boy shuffled forward and held out a cloth bag. "This is stupid. No one else's dad drags them around a crappy old ruin."

The Second War had not been kind to the Wizarding World. Though the Light Side had eventually prevailed, it had taken years of toil and losses on both sides. Wizards everywhere were plunged into poverty, even Lucius Malfoy, who had used his last vault at Gringotts to escape the Dark Lord's punishment for losing the prophecy. Hogwarts had closed after Dumbledore's death, though it was used as a headquarters by both sides at various times before being left to molder. No one, it seemed, had the Galleons required to reopen it or the patience to replace half the staff. For his part, Snape received ten Galleons a month on the Wizard's dole and currently occupied a grotty flat in Knockturn Alley.

"Silence, Toby." Snape glowered at his son, but to no avail. *Bloody hell*, he thought silently, *that look used to never fail when I was the fucking Potions master*.

"They call it an iPod. Plays all sorts of Muggle music," Lucius continued blithely as though Snape had never spoken. He pulled out the white earbuds, tangling them in his long blond hair. "Blast. A hand, Severus?"

Snape pointedly ignored him and began to lead the trio to the entrance hall where Lucius, so engrossed in removing the tangled wires from his mane, tripped and fell over a suit of armor that was lying supine on the cold floor.

Severus did indeed offer him a hand then, but Malfoy ignored him, choosing to lie weakly upon his back and stare up into his friend's dark eyes. "Fuck it all, Snape, I used to be a Malfoy. My whole fucking life... And now here I am, salvaging bits of Hogwarts for a few spare Sickles."

"Spare me the sorrow festival, Lucius," snapped Snape. "Do you think I enjoy destroying every last shred of my dignity? I, the Half-blood Prince! I, who once ruled the dungeons as Potions master! Striking fear into the hearts of all who crossed me..."

"Dad, shut up! The security guard is back," Toby interjected. Faintly, the men heard footsteps that grew closer and closer.

"Fuck, what now?" Lucius had returned to an upright position. "There's still that bloody Anti-Apparation charm on this damned place."

"Use your fucking legs, you useless aristocrat." Snape broke into a run, tatty black robes flapping at his ankles. Toby, having thrown aside the bag of marble, and Lucius soon followed him, not slowing until they reached Hogsmeade.

Pausing beside Madam Puddifoot's to catch their respective breaths, Snape ground out, "Toby, where's the sack?"

"I left it in the castle. I had to run away."

"Bloody hell, boy! You can't get a criminal record till you're of age," growled Snape.

"What, it's not my fault you're a witless loser who can't get a proper job." Toby mimicked his mother perfectly.

"Shall we go for a drink? I'm a bit anxious to see Rosmerta," Lucius cut in quickly. "Come on, Severus, you look like you could use a bit of Firewhisky."

"Fine, fine," agreed Snape idly with a lazy wave of his hand.

They set off for the pub, but were soon dismayed by the shrill sound of feminine screaming that pierced the air outside the Three Broomsticks.

"Oh, Gilderoy!" shrieked one besotted witch. "I've got my Floo address on the left cup! Hope you like the size!" A lacy red bra sailed through the air, over the long queue that wound up the street and into the pub.

"Make love to me, Sirius!" squealed a young witch in a violent purple robe.

Raucous music began to pour forth from the building, an incessant, pounding beat, and the women within raised their strident pitch.

"What the bloody hell is this?" grumbled Snape irritably, pulling a poster from the brick wall beside them.

*One night only!*

*See the sexiest men in the Wizarding World strut their stuff on the stage of the Three Broomsticks!*

*Gladrags Wizardwear and Weasley's Wizard Wheezes present: The Runespoors!*

*Let Sirius Black, Gilderoy Lockhart, Blaise Zabini, and Bill Weasley show you how real wizards can move!*

*Women only.*

"Bloody emasculating, that. For us, I mean." Lucius gestured to the poster that Snape had promptly torn in two. "I'd have killed Narcissa if she'd set foot in this company. Runespoors, indeed."

"Hey!" Toby tugged on his father's sleeve. "It's Mum!"

Snape's greasy head snapped up, sallow face turning toward the entrance, where he saw a head of bushy hair disappear into the pub. "Damn and blast."

"Ah, your ex-wife," drawled Malfoy, clearly enjoying himself. "What an interesting turn."

"*Estranged* wife," corrected Snape through gritted teeth. "There's been no talk of divorce."

Lucius smirked. "Perhaps. But that's only because she won't speak to you."

"That does it. We're going in," said Severus decisively. "Go around to the side, the blokes' loo has a low window." He moved stealthily toward the shadowy alleyway, Toby and Lucius in tow. Snape struggled through the small opening first, hoisting his son in after him. Malfoy bluntly refused to lower himself any further and, ironically, remained outside to guard the bathroom window.

"Now." Snape knelt down to the small boy's level. "You listen to me, Tobias Severus Snape. Go out there and find your mother. Tell her to come to the Gent's."

Raising a skeptical eyebrow, Toby departed, but no sooner had he left, than a trio of cackling hens swung open the door to the powder room, barely giving Snape time to lock himself in the stall. Cautiously, he peered through the crack between the stall door and its frame and was loathe to see Hermione, attired in a shiny red halter-top, trading lipsticks with Ginny Potter and Fleur Weasley.

"Beel eez een top form tonight," sighed Fleur. "Ee eez such a good dancer."

Hermione giggled. "But that Lockhart isn't doing too badly. He may not remember his own name, but he has no trouble getting his G-string filled up with Galleons!"

Snape clenched his fists in fury. *So she fancies Lockhart, does she? That fucking pansy can't even do a bloody Levitating Spell.*

"And the way Sirius shakes his arse, you'd never realize he was a ghost!" Ginny put in leeringly. After a few more lascivious comments, the three women danced back to their table. As Toby hadn't returned, Snape ducked out, casting a Disillusionment Charm on himself and quickly found the boy staring in open-mouthed shock at the fancifully lit stage of gyrating male bodies, nude save for a skimpy G-string. Dragging his son back through the loo and out the window, they joined Lucius in the alley.

"So?" queried the aristocrat boredly.

"Ah, fuck it, Malfoy, she's in there fancying other blokes. What chance've I got next to Lockhart and his bum of steel?"

"Mum thinks you're a loser," Toby spoke up helpfully. "She says you gave up after the war!"

"Quiet, you. We'd best be getting back," he said, speaking once again to Malfoy. Leading Toby down the street, he found a quiet place and Apparated the both of them back to Knockturn Alley.

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"So there you fucking are. Late as usual, of course." Hermione had barely opened the door before she began her usual lecture. "Merlin knows what kind of shit time you showed him this weekend. Out stealing things from Hogwarts with Malfoy again, were you? Or making the boy wait outside while you visit prostitutes..."

"I've never done that," he interrupted. "He had fun. He always does with me; I'm his father."

Hermione said nothing, but arranged her features into the most dubious expression she could muster.

"I'll be back next Friday, then," he said civilly.

"Oh, no, you bloody won't," she said waspishly, "not unless you can scrape together seventy-five Galleons by then."

"I beg your pardon?" He stared into her russet-colored eyes. "You're charging me to see my son?"

"Not me." She smirked. "The Ministry of Magic. I got an owl this morning. Seventy-five Galleons of back child support you owe. Seventy-five Galleons!"

He narrowed his gaze. "I heard you the first time. Salazar's balls, Hermione, he's ten years old. He needs a man to look up to."

"Yes, but I'd rather prefer he look up to someone with a job and a proper flat." She held his gaze for several minutes before adding helplessly, "Fucking hell, Severus, you're a brilliant wizard. You could at least try. If not for me, then for Toby."

"If not for you?" he repeated slowly. "I believe it was you who kicked me out, Hermione."

She snorted. "Well, it was obvious you didn't want to be married to me anymore."

"I didn't? News to me, and," he added in a low voice, leaning toward her slightly, "we are still married, Hermione. I, for one, haven't forgotten."

"Sure." Her voice was deeply sarcastic. "That's why you waste every single day at the bloody job agency playing Gobstones with your loser friends instead of looking for a fucking job! The war ended five years ago; that's no excuse anymore."

"Well, that's the reason our boy won't be going to Hogwarts next year. He'll be at Horace Slughorn's Magic School in a bloody attic, paying his tuition in candied pineapple!" Snape knew that he had outwitted her when she slammed the door in his pallid face without another word.

\*End Note: This gets funnier (I hope), but I had to set the stage a little with some semi-serious bits. Thanks for beta-ing, Andman!!\*

## Chapter 2

### *Chapter 2 of 5*

Lucius proposes a naughty moneymaking scheme, which is rejected--for now. Snape and Hermione face-off... until  
Snape uses the power of seduction.

A/N: Obviously, these five would never be friends in canon, but looking for work in the post-war rubble that is the Wizarding world has brought them all together.

The Wizarding Job Agency was located at 94 Diagon Alley, just across the street from the infamous shop, Weasley's Wizard Wheezes, one of the few businesses on the street that remained open. That fateful day, as with any other day, Severus marched past its garish exterior and into the blocky concrete building that had once housed a shop for secondhand cauldrons.

The shoddy interior boasted a few fireplaces for making Floo calls, a great deal of parchment for writing resumes, and ten or so owls for delivering them. Very few of the wizards who came to the Job Agency, however, made use of these resources. In fact, Snape noticed, Lucius had already set up the Gobstones game on the table they usually shared with Remus, Hagrid, and old Mad-Eye Moody.

Hagrid and Alastor gave gruff nods in his direction, but Remus said politely,

"Good morning, Severus."

Snape growled at him and carefully raked a few of the cheap stones across the table.

"Trouble with the ex-wife, Severus?" drawled Lucius in amusement, deigning to pause the music on his omnipresent iPod and speak.

"*Estranged* wife," grumbled Snape irritably, unsure of why he felt compelled to point that out. "But, yes. It would seem that I owe her a great deal of gold that I simply do not have."

Moody heaved an exasperated sigh. "How many times, Severus? How many times have I told you not to be borrowing gold? Especially from that beaver-toothed harridan."

"I didn't borrow anything," he snapped, for Moody's last comment had nettled him. "It's child support she wants. No gold from me, no more visits with Toby."

"Well, Severus," spoke up Lupin nervously as he smoothed the duct-tape on his robes, "perhaps it's all for the best. It never seemed like Toby really benefited much from your outings."

"Of course he fucking did!" Snape slammed his fist down on the rough-hewn table, and the Gobstones streamed their noxious liquid at Remus. "I'm his fucking father."

"Enough," snarled Mad-Eye, pulling Snape back by his robes.

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," added Hagrid.

"Indeed." Lucius had been watching the melee with disgust. "Is this what we're reduced to? *This*? I never thought I'd see the day when a Malfoy sat in the Job Agency with werewolves and giants and blood traitors!"

"Oh, my," Lupin put in, ignoring the insult, "you're quite right, of course, Lucius. Here, Severus, have a bit of chocolate. It's perfect for the nerves."

Snape snorted in disgust. "Keep your bloody candy. You can't settle my nerves unless you've got seventy-five Galleons hidden in your pants."

Moody's magical eye whirled. "Sorry there, Snape, but there's not much of anything in Remus' pants. Certainly nothin' valuable."

"Stop looking through my clothes already!" Lupin cast a quick spell on his trousers.

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about *that!*" chuckled Hagrid appreciatively.

"What was the trouble with Hermione, anyway?" asked Moody. "Besides the money."

Snape glowered and said shortly, "Nothing that regards you, Alastor."

"She went to see the Runespoors last Saturday night," Lucius expanded, "and I fear she found them most entertaining. Severus actually spied upon her from the Gent's."

"That's it, my boy, constant vigilance," stated Moody proudly. "What sort of Secrecy Spells did you use?"

Ignoring Alastor, Snape protested loudly, "What of it, Malfoy? She'll only speak to me to tell me what a worthless tosser I've become, but she paid ten Galleons to see Lockhart and his merry band of man-whores."

"Ten Galleons?" Lucius' pale skin had gone even whiter. "Are you certain?"

"I used the Disillusionment Charm to fetch Toby from the pub and overheard Angelina Johnson saying so."

"Disillusionment Charm!" Mad-Eye was positively giddy. "Nothing like it for that sort of work."

"How many women would you say were there?" asked Lucius, eyes narrowed with interest. "A hundred? More?"

"Certainly more. I'd venture to say five hundred. I warrant that place was magically expanded to fit all those whoring witches."

Lucius tossed aside his precious iPod in a display of glee that was rarely seen in him. "But that's five thousand fucking Galleons! Those bloody Runespoors are making a killing. Every witch in Britain turned out for that display."

"Sickening." Moody shuddered. "You, er, didn't see Rita there by any chance now, Snape?"

"I believe she was in the front row," responded Snape coolly, "having a lap dance from Bill Weasley."

Moody's remaining nostril flared dangerously. "I knew I should have followed her. She told me she was off to her Learning Annex writing class over in Knockturn Alley. *Crucio!*" Snape ducked instinctively and was rewarded with a pat on the back from the spell's caster. "Nice reflexes, my boy. Always on his guard, this one."

"Yes," replied Snape sardonically, "if I wasn't twenty years past my prime, I'd apply as an Auror."

"*That* is what we must do," declared Lucius. "Moody's wife will stop lying to him, I can do the upkeep on the Manor..."

"The Manor?" asked Snape with a quizzical lift of his eyebrows. "I thought you'd sold it."

"Entailed," grumbled Malfoy, "but, as I was saying, you'll get your son back."

"As what, an Auror?"

"No, you imbecile. As the Runespoors!"

Snape gave a rare laugh. "Now that I'd like to see."

"And so you will. Of course, we'll have a different name and all that, but think of it! Five thousand Galleons. That's a thousand apiece."

"You know, the Runespoors are a set of attractive men rather younger than we," ventured Lupin.

"Exactly. Who'd be paying ten Galleons to see a half-giant who looks like he's got a dead sheepdog for hair, a skinny werewolf with a needle-sized knob, a sixty year old ex-Auror with a false leg, a false eye, and no nose, a greasy-haired git, and a pale aristocrat with spindly legs?" Moody growled. "I can't even get the wife to see it for free."

"Lucius, you're an idiot," cut in Snape dismissively. "Alastor is right; no one in their right mind would pay to see this lot in G-strings."

Lucius scoffed. "That horny lot would pay to see any male flesh they could. Besides, what if we were to..."

"Go off and join the Runespoors yourself, then, Malfoy. I've business to attend to," interrupted the former Potions master brusquely. Snape swept out of the room before the others could inquire as to what 'business' he could possibly have.

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Tapping his foot impatiently, Snape loitered around the white picket fence that surrounded the well-kept home of old Horace Slughorn. Faintly, he could hear the simmering of cauldrons and the occasional explosion as the students within brewed a Calming Draught. At last, the children began to meander out the door toward the waiting group of parents.

Toby stopped short when he saw Snape swooping up the front walk to collect him. "Er... Mum was supposed to get me today. I don't have to go to your house until the weekend!"

"Be that as it may," Snape returned through gritted teeth, "I thought we might do something this afternoon. Maybe go for a butterbeer, just father and son?"

Before Toby could respond, Horace Slughorn himself, getting on in years, though still portly as ever, burst forth from the door. "Well, if it isn't Severus Snape! Been too long. Usually it's Hermione who collects him. I was sorry to hear about your divorce, Severus, that I was."

"We're still married," muttered Snape. "Separated."

"I see. Well, anyhow, your boy's got your talent for potions. Take a look at this Calming Draught!" He extracted a crystal phial from his robe. "Never seen any such from a ten year old, but then again, I never taught one. Your Hermione insisted I take him, though. It seems he's inherited at great deal of talent from the two of you."

Snape nodded. "Thank you." He glanced down at his son, who merely glowered and hugged his schoolbooks to his skinny frame.

"Severus, what the bloody hell?" Hermione stormed toward the small group, wearing the most outraged of expressions.

"I simply came to greet my son," he said as Slughorn vanished into the house. "I was under the impression I had a grace period before I'm barred from seeing him."

"Go wait at the Portkey, Toby." Hermione shooed the little boy away before turning back to Snape. "I know what this is about."

"Do you?" Snape raised a skeptical brow. "Then my Occlumency is not quite as impenetrable as I had thought. No, Hermione, I don't wish to discuss the seventy-five Galleons. Is it a crime to come and see him on occasion?"

Irritated in the extreme to have been outfoxed, Hermione grumbled, "I suppose not."

"Perhaps it wasn't Toby I wanted to see," added Snape smoothly. "I know very well that you come here to collect him in the afternoon."

"Me?" said Hermione dumbly. "Why in Merlin's name would you want to see me?"

"You are my wife, Hermione." Snape rested his hands on her shoulders. "I have every reason to want to see you."

"We're getting divorced," she snapped rudely.

"Are we?" His mouth held the ghost of a smile. "No, I don't think we are." Leaning down, he brushed his hooked nose down her cheek and murmured into her ear in a soft, challenging voice, "I'll never see divorce papers from you, will I, *Mrs. Snape?*"

"Bugger off." Hermione shoved him away, ignoring the heat that flooded her body at his nearness and especially the wetness that had pooled beneath her scarlet robe. "I've got to get back to work." She stalked off toward Toby and the old paper bag that served as their Portkey.

Snape, in a strangely satisfied mood, Apparated back to Diagon Alley to meet Lucius for a Firewhisky and perhaps to mock him further at his suggestion that they become the Runespoors.

## Chapter 3

*Chapter 3 of 5*

Firewhisky, an unfortunate run-in with Cole Porter, a deus ex machina, and DANCING!

A/N: Sexual favors to everyone who reviewed/plans to review! Any song lyrics are not mine.

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Lucius threw back another three fingers of scotch, having abandoned Firewhisky after Severus had shown up in a foul mood and swept the bottle from the table. It still lay reorganized upon the rough planks of a floor that was rapidly soaking up the liquor. "Another meeting with the missus, Snape?"

The greasy git's only response was a growl and jerk of the head before he drank deeply from his glass of gin. The feeling of satisfaction that he had felt at not only besting Hermione at wordplay, but also sparking her desire for him had abated by the time he had Apparated to Hogsmeade, and he was left with nothing but the knowledge that he was too poor to be of any use to his son and too disillusioned to stay married to the woman he thought would remain with him through anything.

Severus and Hermione had married eleven years ago, right after the final battle, when nearly everyone in the Wizarding world was swept up in the glory of defeating Voldemort, and no one was giving a thought to the future. Hermione had managed to get a job with the Ministry, and Severus had found work brewing healing potions for a shop that had gone out of business when Toby was seven. Mrs. Snape had thrown her husband out the year before when it became clear that he had no intention of seeking another job.

"Hear me out, Snape," Lucius said eagerly, breaking into his cohort's mournful reverie. "All five of us owe money to someone. You more than anyone ought to be interested in this proposal. Think of it, you'd have all the money you need to keep seeing the boy."

"And for what?" Snape retorted bitterly. "He has no respect for me now; why would he have any if I were to strip down to a pair of colorful panties for a couple of Galleons?"

"Because you'd be fucking rich!" snapped Malfoy. "Think of the gold, man, the gold!"

Snape heaved a long-suffering sigh, but did indeed think of the gold. "Perhaps you're right, Malfoy. After all, there's not a job to be had this side of Ottery St. Catchpole, and the scrap marble trade is not at all sufficient. You'll have a job of it convincing the others, though."

With that, Remus, Alastor, and Hagrid appeared from beneath Moody's old Invisibility Cloak, and Moody said wryly, "Should have checked the area for possible spies, Snape. You never know who could be listening, eh?"

"I take it you've all agreed to this addleheaded scheme of Malfoy's?" queried Snape drolly as he eyed the three men and their cheesy grins.

"Why the hell not?" said Remus. "We have very little dignity left to lose. Besides, if I were to do something exciting, Luna might consider moving back into my bedroom."

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," Hagrid put in resolutely.

"You're right, Hagrid, we could *all* use the money." Alastor clapped the half-giant on the back. "So, Lucius, when should we start?"

"The sooner the better, I say." Lucius stood, tossing a handful of Knuts and Sickles onto the table. "We should get to practicing, and I have just the place to do it. Come on, then."

The other four men filed quietly from the pub and out into the cobblestone street that led straight toward...

"Hogwarts!" cried Remus in disbelief. "But what of the security guard? Didn't you have a run-in with him this past weekend?"

Snape snorted. "Only because Malfoy here was too busy with his Muggle music-box to notice a pile of stones. I'm certain Alastor will take pains to conceal us."

The five men stole across the open green, allowing Hagrid to hide himself beneath the cloak, and furtively slid into the entrance hall. Piles of rubble and cobwebs greeted

them, and sleepy portraits gazed boredly at the intruders.

"Right," muttered Moody, magical eye whirling madly, ostensibly checking behind the walls, but more often than not landing on poor Remus.

"Enough already!" Lupin hissed as loudly as he ducked behind the now-visible Hagrid.

"Silence." Lucius glowered at the two men. "So, Severus, where should we go? Great Hall?"

"No, no, it's too heavily guarded," grumbled the ex-Potions master. "We'd do better to try the dungeons. My old classroom is amply large for this travesty of a dance class."

So, down the twisting stone passageways the motley band processed, deeper and deeper into the bowels of the castle until they reached the dusty old room where Snape had once held court. With a wave of each man's wand, the broken desks and chairs flew against the wall, clearing the middle of the room for the festivities.

"So..." ventured Lucius, eying the space with uncertainty, "I suppose we ought to begin. Go on, then."

Moody snorted. "You first, mate. This was your brilliant scheme."

Reluctantly, Malfoy drew the tiny pink iPod from the folds of his robes, placed it on the windowsill, pointed his wand at it, and said *Amplius!* Immediately the snapping of the click wheel resounded through the dungeon as Malfoy agonized over a song for their first dance. At last, Lucius took the floor as the dulcet tones of Cole Porter began to fill the vast room. Sweeping an imaginary partner into his arms, the former aristocrat began to glide over the stone floor, giving his limbs an almost boneless quality.

The roars of laughter from his comrades interrupted his daydream, and Severus was the first to say, "Yes, we'll be rich as King Arthur if we ~~do that~~ in g-strings."

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," said Hagrid nervously.

"Haven't you got something we could really *move* to?" complained Lupin. "If we're all going to throw away the remaining shreds of our dignity, we might as well have a decent dance while doing it."

Glowering, more with embarrassment than ire, Malfoy sighed and turned back to his trusty iPod and guiltily made a selection from his "Top 25 Most Played" list.

Dashing back to the center of the room, Lucius threw his arms into the air and thrust out his narrow hips.

***I believe in miracles, where you from, you sexy thing, you...***

As the beat grew stronger, Malfoy's gyrations gathered steam, until the aristocrat's whole body was undulating wildly in time to the music.

***I believe in miracles, since you came along, you sexy thing, you sexy thing, you...***

His pale fingers grasped the lapels of his dusty black robe. Shoulders twisting, he began to peel back the folds of fabric, staring down his cohorts with a heavy-lidded, come-hither stare.

***Where did you come from, baby? How did you know I needed you?***

The rhythm had gotten the better of Hagrid, who was awkwardly nodding his head on the off-beats. Remus managed a few pelvic thrusts, which sent Moody's eye a-whirling, but Snape merely looked on in disgust. "*Silencio!*" He aimed his wand at the offending Muggle device.

Lucius toppled over in mid-booty-shake, landing on the cold stone floor in a blushing, bare-chested heap, and Lupin's hand froze in the attempt to rip off the duct tape holding his robes together.

"Ah, yes, I can just smell the Galleons," announced Snape sardonically. "That performance will be sure to draw witches from as far as Durmstrang."

Springing to his feet, Lucius made a quick scramble for his robe before he burst out: "It was our first bloody try! I rather think we're in with a chance. Come on; just get in the middle of the floor here. Line up... no, Hagrid in the middle there, Severus and me beside him, Lupin and Mad-Eye, on the outsides. Now, start again." He waved his wand at the iPod.

***Now you're lyin' close to me, givin' it to me! It's sextasy!***

Hagrid stood still as a gargoyle with stage fright. Remus and Snape turned in opposite directions and ended in a tangled heap. Lucius and Alastor made the mistake of executing simultaneous pelvic thrusts, and Alastor toppled over at the vigor of Lucius' crotch connecting with his ass.

Snape's muffled voice came from the bottom of the pile at Hagrid's massive feet: "You know, Malfoy, this may not be the solution you're looking for."

"Perhaps so," Lucius finally conceded. "Those blokes in the Three Broomsticks made it seem so easy. I just figured if that lot could get that easy money, then why not us?"

"You know," Lupin began timidly, "the Runespoors are a professional exotic dancing group. They've a choreographer and everything. Those are bloody expensive, too. When Luna was dancing at the Horny Horklump down in Knockturn Alley, they had a bloke come in every week to teach them new dances. Routines, they called them."

"How much was this choreographer?" asked Moody apprehensively.

"I think she said about fifty Galleons a week," he answered dejectedly.

This was met with gasps of outrage and dismay from all the others, and Hagrid cried out, "I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that!"

"That's it!" cried Lucius triumphantly. "Dumbledore!"

"Have you gone completely round the bend, Malfoy?" complained Snape. "In case you haven't gotten the memo, I murdered him twelve years ago. Besides, dead or alive, I hardly think he's the type to know how to choreograph semi-nude dances."

Lupin scoffed. "As much as I hate to admit it, I think Lucius has a point. When Albus was alive, anytime anyone had a problem, the man always seemed to have the perfect solution and know the exact way to implement it. He succeeded in getting Severus and Hermione together on at least one thousand, seven hundred and ten occasions, his portrait told Harry exactly where all the missing Horcruxes were, not to mention giving everyone explicit instructions for the final battle. If anyone could solve all of our problems for us, it would have been Dumbledore."

"His portrait?" queried Snape with significance, for he was just as interested in getting gold as anyone, no matter how odious the task. "Do you know it still hangs in his office? We ought to steal up there and ask his advice on..."

Before he could finish, however, the cracking voice of Stan Shunpike filled the corridor, and his footsteps drew nearer to the old Potions classroom.

"Blast," growled Snape in irritation, "it's the bloody *deus ex machina*." He gestured to his comrades, and they followed him toward the former office of the Potions master and dashed behind him through the twisting passageways that led to the greenhouses and out of Hogwarts.

# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 of 5

The troupe pays a visit to Dumbledore, who tells the story of Grindelwald's defeat. He also insists that they audition another dancer. Hilarity ensues.

A/N: I apologize sincerely for the exceedingly long hiatus from the fanfictional world. I have a "real" manuscript in sore need of editing. Time is at a premium, so Snape and his g-string got pushed to the backburner for a while. The whole picket fence simile comes from my hilarious former Latin professor, Dr. Clack. I couldn't take credit for it; he actually described a person this way...

\* \* \*

Toby Snape, peering anxiously from his window with his large nose over the sill and large teeth gnawing at his lower lip, put Severus in mind of a horse trying to eat an apple through a picket fence. The elder Snape approached his former home at Spinner's End with dread, not at all in the mood for a conversation with his bushy-haired Xantippe. Nonetheless, he rapped sharply upon the door with his burn-scarred knuckles and waited.

When the door flew open, he was appalled to see a shock of red hair atop the slightly stocky build of none other than his wife's Ministry co-worker, Charlie Weasley. The upstart gave him an easy smile and leaned back against the doorframe...*my* doorframe, thought Snape furiously...when Hermione appeared behind him.

"Late again," she snapped and turned to bellow up the stairs, "Toby! Your father! Don't forget your jacket!"

"I don't pretend to be an exemplary parent, Hermione," the ex-Potions master began coldly, "but at least I can refrain from carrying on my sordid affairs right before the boy's eyes."

"Sordid affairs?" cried Hermione in outrage. "How bloody dare you? Charlie and I are going over some numbers for the Goblin Liaison budget."

Snape's sloe eyes narrowed. "That's not a euphemism you hear every day."

"It's all right, Professor," said the redheaded dolt. "Your wife's in good hands."

Irritated that a grown man had just called him 'Professor,' a title that he had not held for a decade, Snape said icily, "Good hands, indeed. Not from a Gryffindor, Godric's own five-minute militia."

"Tobeeel!" Hermione shrieked desperately until the boy finally skulked down the stairs.

"I'm here, I'm here," he grumbled, shuffling over to his father with a resigned expression.

He and Snape quickly exited Hermione's foyer and stepped outside to find the empty liquor bottle that served as the Portkey back to Hogsmeade. "We've got to meet the lads for the choreography," he explained.

"Oh, Dad," sighed Toby, "you're not still on about this Runespoors business, are you?"

With a resigned groan, Snape crouched down to his son's level. "The only reason I've agreed to demean myself in this egregious fashion is so that I can keep joint custody of you." When Toby glowered, his father continued, "I'm your father, Tobias. Not that dull-witted Weasley boy or any of your mother's other afternoon specials. And I love you," he mumbled uncomfortably.

"All right, Dad," returned the boy, just as gruffly, but he slipped his small hand into Snape's and gave him a quick, horse-toothed grin. "So do I get to meet Dumbledore, then?"

\* \* \*

"So there you are, Severus," Lucius greeted them when the father and son had finally reached the outskirts of Hogsmeade. "Remus has taken the liberty of divulging the whereabouts of a more direct route to the former Headmaster's office."

Snape grunted, but beyond skeptical as he was that Dumbledore's portrait could be of any help with exotic dancing, he allowed Toby to drag him by the sleeve up the stairs and into a narrow corridor. Within moments, they arrived at the gargoyle, cracked with age and minus an extremity or two, but still the faithful guardian of the former headmaster's office.

"Altoids!" said Lucius authoritatively, and the sculpture spun slowly away to reveal the dimly lit, crumbling staircase. "Right. The others are already waiting for the late Mudblood-lover to return from his Ministry portrait."

Snape, Lucius, and Toby ambled into the dark, dusty room just as Dumbledore returned to his frame, beyond surprised to find that an audience had gathered in his office.

"And to what do I owe this leaping delight?" he said cheerfully, blue eyes twinkling with the glitter the painter had used to decorate them. "Help yourselves to a Sherbet Lemon, and do please sit down. What dire problem do you need my assistance with today?"

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," Hagrid began timidly.

"Exactly," interjected Remus. "You see, Albus, we've had a bit of trouble, all of us, getting a scrap of gold together ever since the war ended. So, Lucius here..."

"Decided our time would be better spent tearing our clothes off in front of scores of shrieking witches," Snape interrupted, "and, sadly, it was discovered only yesterday that not a one of us possesses any sort of talent for it whatsoever. Since you served as not only the omniscient *deus ex machina*, but also the wise elder for the whole of the *Harry Potter* series, we assumed you might be able to shed some light upon the subject."

"Of course, of course," assented Dumbledore, eyes still a-twinkle. "Few know the disturbing tale of just how I defeated Grindelwald. It was a balmy summer's eve at the bandshell. Sounds of light jazz echoed in the fading twilight. Suddenly, he appeared, bringing with him the savory smoke of the barbecue and the rugged self-assurance of a powerful Dark wizard. I could sense that Grindelwald wanted a fight, so I drew myself up and crossed the floor. No wands were drawn that night, for he and I settled our differences through the art of dance. To this day, I look back upon that night and think, thank Merlin I was wearing my Tuscan leather boat shoes."

Lucius snorted derisively. "What, you're writing for the bloody Peterman catalog? You expect us to believe that malarkey?"

"Yeah, I can't think that a Dark wizard like that would solve his differences with a dance contest," scoffed Moody. "Besides, that was ages ago, Dumbledore. This sort of dancing's a bit different than that flittering about in the bandshell."

Dumbledore raised a pacifying hand. "Now, now. Naturally, there are some differences that must be accounted for. But I will say this to you: the basic principles are the same. Choreography, grace, and coordination. You will need another dancer."

"*Another* dancer?" gasped Lucius in disbelief. "It was hard enough to get these four interested, what the bloody hell do you..."

"I am sure," Dumbledore interrupted, "that you will be able to find someone willing to make a few extra Galleons in these troubled times. Now, go on. Find yourselves someone and return here at this time next week."

\* \* \*

"Next!" called Snape irritably from behind the staff table in the Great Hall. Moody had ambushed the Hogwarts security guard and put a strong Petrificus Charm on him, thus freeing the whole of the castle for their use.

Toby raised the needle on Lupin's old Wizarding record player and found the trite Serge Gainsbourg song that the next auditioner had requested.

**Je t'aime...oui, je t'aime...**

Peter Pettigrew strode out, rat face curled into a suggestive leer, but when he came before the staff table, his eyes widened in stage-fright. Nose twitching, he began to slowly peel off his robe, digging his clawlike fingers into the fabric of his shirt.

**Je t'aime...moi non plus...**

Snape gestured to his son, who immediately stopped the record. "All right, then. We'll, er, Floo you. Lucius, who's next?"

"Filius Flitwick!" called Malfoy. "You're on!"

The former Professor Flitwick ambled out excitedly and thrust his arms before him and pushed his buttocks back just as Toby put a medley of Motown hits on the phonograph. Flitwick started with 'Ain't Nothin' But the Real Thing,' throwing off his velvet cape and battered old hat, and quickly progressed to a disco-like routine to Jackson Five's 'ABC'. Filius slowed it down with 'Let's Get it On,' sensually stripping down to his jocks, speeding it up again at the end with 'Love Machine.'

**I'm just a love machine...** blared the record player as Flitwick did pelvic thrust after pelvic thrust...**and I don't work for nobody but you!**

At last, he was finished, and the entire row of would-be strippers at the staff table stared at him, aghast.

Moody's eye whirled more wildly than ever, and he finally said, "I think 'Tiny Little Professor Flitwick' is a misnomer. We'll definitely be in touch, mate."

Remus glowered a bit jealously and barked, "Next!"

At that, Barty Crouch, Jr. ambled onto the scene, confidently kicking aside the clothes that Not So Tiny Little Professor Flitwick had yet to magic back onto his body, and said, "My record, please, boy."

"Barty Crouch!" cried Snape. "What the bloody hell are you doing here? You were Kissed after ~~Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire~~"

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," interjected Hagrid, equally confused.

With a causal, unconcerned shrug, Barty said, "It's Alternate Universe; anything goes. Let's just say I was saved by a mysterious American Muggle in return for low-grade sexual favors."

With that, Toby put the music on, and Barty was able to begin his dance.

**I need some hot stuff, baby, this evening, gotta have some hot stuff, baby, tonight...**

Unfortunately for Barty, the mysterious American Muggle had not been able to instill him with any ability for dance, and, as Moody whispered after a turn with his magical eye, those sexual favors must have been very low grade indeed.

"I've seen enough," groaned Lucius. "Clearly you possess no talent for the gentler arts. How fitting for a family of uptight blood traitors."

"*MORSMORDRE!*" cried Barty, attempting to summon the Dark Mark. "I'm no blood traitor! What the hell?" His wand had produced nothing but green sparks. "Well, that's funny. That could be a very fascinating little side story if you-know-who (and I don't mean the Dark Lord) wasn't too bloody lazy to write about it."

"We won't bother saying we'll Floo," said Snape in a bored tone. "You're no doubt busy with your mysterious American Muggle anyhow. Next!"

Blushing frightfully, Arthur Weasley crept out to the middle of the Great Hall. "Hello, gents, I'm very impressed with your scheme. As the token 'poor person' in the ~~Harry Potter~~ series, I could always use a way to make a quick Galleon."

**Right foot, left stomp, left foot left stomp. Turn it out. Cha cha now y'all. Two hops this time.**

Each man at the table and Toby winced in turn. Arthur had chosen the 'Cha Cha Slide,' a song-with-dance created by former Death Eater, Mr. C. The song, or so they said, was bewitched so that it would never end, and the dancer was forced to repeat the same movements over and over.

**Now it's time to get funky. Right foot, right stomp. Take it back now, ya'll.**

Minutes passed, then hours, until finally, the record player gave out and burst in a purple cloud of mist and sparks. Arthur wiped his brow and shouted *Agua ment!* at his wand and began to suck directly from the tip as fast as the magic could work.

One by one, the other men stood, and the sound of their applause filled the vast chamber.

"Arthur Weasley has conquered the 'Cha Cha Slide!'" cried Remus in admiration as Moody's eye whirled in equal awe.

"No wonder he had the stamina to produce seven children! You're in."

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," wept Hagrid joyfully, wiping a tear from his eye with his large, spotted handkerchief.

"That he will, Hagrid," replied Snape gravely. "That he will."



# Chapter 5

Chapter 5 of 5

Snape and Hermione have a passionate interlude. The dancing goes much better with instruction from Dumbledore, so well, in fact, that they choose a name for their little troupe.

A/N: Sorry for the month-long lag between updates. I had other stories I was more inclined to work on, plus I moved, an experience I don't at all relish. But I'm in the new place, sorted with the internet, and so I give you... Snape and his merry band of strippers. Please review!

\* \* \*

It was well past suppertime when Snape finally skulked up to his former Spinner's End abode with Toby at his side, and the dread of another face-off with Hermione was making him more sour than ever.

"Er, so, I reckon Mum shouldn't know about this whole thing with Dumbledore?" asked Toby in a low voice, glancing up at his father for confirmation.

"If I'd wanted this big a dunderhead for a son, I'd have adopted Potter," returned Snape coldly. "Of course you shouldn't go telling your mummy, Tobias."

"Sorry," the boy muttered gloomily, shoving his hands in the pockets of his greying robes and shuffling ahead to the door.

"Hello, Toby!" exclaimed Hermione with false cheer. "Did you have a nice time?"

Her son nodded his greasy head. "Yeah, it was all right, I suppose. I got to go to the Hog's Head."

At this, Hermione sent a glare over the boy's head. "Go on upstairs, then, Toby. I've to have a word with your father." Though she waited for Toby's pounding footsteps to cease and his door to slam shut, she needn't have bothered, for she shrieked shrilly, "The Hog's Head? I ask you, Severus, what gets into that oily skull of yours? Sure, you sit around that dingy flat of yours all day, listening to *The Proud and the Pureblood* or playing games at the Wizard's Job Agency, and I've said more times than I can count what a bad example *that* is, but taking our child to a dodgy pub? I expected..."

"I'm not a child!" Toby's defiant voice floated down the stairs.

"Extendable Ears AWAY!" roared Hermione. "Don't make me come up there, Tobias Snape!"

The corners of Snape's mouth twitched upward. "'Don't make me come up there,'" he repeated in a shrill, angry voice that really did sound remarkably like his wife's. "Ah, how convincingly you play the martyr, my dear. The struggling, young, single mother, tormented by her shiftless ex-husband, just barely making ends meet."

"There's the pot calling the cauldron," Hermione sneered. "Seeing as how only one of us is gainfully employed, and it certainly isn't you." Pointing her wand at a thick stack of parchment, she muttered, "*Accio Divorce Papers*." She shoved them into Snape's hand. "I think you'll find that everything is in order, Severus. There'll be a division of property, custody arrangements, since you persist in taking our impressionable son to places like the bloody Hog's Head, so you'd better find a solicitor. I'm using Longbottom; here's his card." After a long, gloomy look at Snape, she began to turn away. "You'd better go."

Though he eyed the door for a moment, the former Potions master did not leave. Instead, he grabbed his wife's wrist and spun her to face him. Before she could react, he kissed her deeply, threading one hand into her bushy hair and pressing against the small of her back with the other. His mouth was hard, intense, and met no resistance from hers. Rather, she deepened the kiss, molding her taut, peaked breasts against the heat emanating from his robe.

"Mum, Dad? I thought Mum said you were getting divorced."

Aghast, Severus and Hermione sprang apart, both gaping at the small boy in green and silver pajamas, who was standing on the stairs and clutching a battered copy of *Moste Potente Potions*. "Go back to bed, Toby." Snape was the first to recover his voice. "I'll see you next weekend."

With that, he hastened from the foyer and Apparated straight back to the Hog's Head.

\* \* \*

"One, two, ready, DANCE!" Malfoy pointed his wand at the iPod he had strategically placed on Dumbledore's desk.

**Lookin' for some hot love, baby, this evening; I need some hot stuff, baby, tonight...**

The six men immediately sprang into action, thrusting out their pelvises wildly and pumping their arms in the air vigorously. Too vigorously.

"Ow!" complained Arthur, rubbing at his now-bloodshot eye. "Bloody hell, Remus, you elbowed me right in the eye."

Remus was busy trying to unstick his duct-tape covered robes from Moody's wooden leg. "Sorry about that, Arthur. Here, have a square of Honeydukes chocolate, take the edge off." He gave his shabby robe a tug and pulled it free of Mad-Eye's prosthetic. "All right, Alastor?"

Nodding distractedly, Moody glanced up at Dumbledore, who was watching the sad, little scene. Lucius was still dancing obliviously, shaking his blond mane to and fro; Snape was glowering disgustedly at the lot of them; and the others were stumbling around in a daze.

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," mumbled Hagrid, flushing under his tangled mass of beard, then continued boldly, "The cloak! Harry, put the cloak on!"

At once, Arthur stole a glance at Lucius' portable music device. "Oh, but you have a Muggle artifact!" he cried excitedly. "Is it one of those ~~three~~ *PM players*? Or is it that Eye Pot sort?"

Lucius rolled his cold, grey eyes in disgust. "It's an ~~i~~*Pod*, you Muggle-loving milksop."

"Chaos," muttered Snape in a steely voice. "Utter chaos."

"Enough." Dumbledore's voice rang out clearly over the din. "What must I do to stop you from flailing about? For the last time, stand the proper width apart and ~~control~~

*yourselves*. What have I said about coordination and grace?"

Wearily, the six men reformed their line and started the music once more.

**Wanna share my bed with a warm blooded lover, wanna bring a wild man back home!**

Tapping their feet in time to the music, each man spun successively to face Dumbledore, and they all began the Wiggling of the Shoulders.

**Gotta have some hot stuff, baby, this evening, I need some hot stuff, baby, tonight, gotta have some lovin', got to have love tonight...**

In unison, the men walked the length of the office and back again, making sure that their asses were on prominent display, and then they started on the pelvic thrusts. The arm pumping, happily, was kept to a minimum, and no one's crotch knocked anyone off balance, though Hagrid and Lucius had a rather close call.

"Brilliant!" cried Dumbledore when the performers had struck their final pose. "There's plenty of room for improvement, you should know, and it will get a bit more difficult once you're taking off your robes, but on the whole, you've done well."

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," agreed Hagrid brightly.

Remus nodded his approval. "A butterbeer sounds like a brilliant idea, Hagrid. Shall we go to the Three Broomsticks?"

"Right you are, Remus," said Arthur. "But I'd better be getting back to the Burrow before long. No doubt Molly will have found new, as-of-yet-unknown methods to henpeck me while I was away."

Recalling the previous evening's *tête à tête* with Hermione, Snape snorted, half in disgust and half in agreement with Weasley. "Very well, the Three Broomsticks it is."

The six would-be dancers hurried out of the castle, narrowly escaping from the security guard, who was no longer under the Petrificus Charm, and headed down the path toward Hogsmeade. Hagrid, as usual, was allowed the Invisibility Cloak, which did not cover him completely and left him as a pair of legs hidden in the middle of the group.

However, they did eventually reach the pub and order their butterbeers, at which point Lucius remarked,

"You know, we didn't do badly today at all. The Mudblood-lover seemed pleased." He took a swig from his foaming mug and went on, "If this continues thus, we'll have to see about performing. That is, after all, how we're going to get the Galleons."

"P-performing?" quavered Arthur. "In front of... " He swallowed convulsively. "... w-witches?"

"No, mysterious American Muggles and prisoners from Azkaban," snapped Snape. "Of course witches. As Lucius said, how else do you expect to make any gold?"

Arthur bit his lip nervously. "With g-strings and the whole bit? H-how soon are we going to be... you know."

"In a week," declared Snape firmly. "I've 'til then to give Hermione the child support money." *That is, unless we reconcile*, he continued mentally, feeling Snape Jr. twitch at the memory of their kiss.

"A week!" howled Lupin. "Have you gone mad?" Burying his face in his shabby robe, he moaned wearily. "But... but Luna said it took them at least a month to get new routines at the Horny Horklump!"

With a nod, Moody agreed, "I dunno, Snape, this seems a bit fast. We don't even have a catchy name like the Runespoors."

"I expect Dumbledore'd have summat ter say about that," Hagrid chimed in.

"A name would be a good selling point," mused Lucius.

"Yes, but 'The Pathetic Middle-Aged Lap Dancing Idiots' just doesn't have the same ring to it as the 'Runespoors,'" grumbled Snape, taking a long drink of his butterbeer. "And as to performing, we'll need costumes, advertising, and all that."

"We'd need a suggestive one," spoke up Arthur meekly. "Like the 'Broomsticks' or the 'Ashwinders.' Something like that. Oh! What about the Firebolts?"

Thoughtfully, Lucius said, "The Firebolts. I like it. Weasley, you are one creative blood traitor."

"Firebolts it is," agreed Snape. "If we're going to humiliate ourselves, we might as well have a memorable name." Finishing his drink, he stood. "Well, I've some things to see to. I'll be at practice tomorrow, seven-thirty sharp." He waved goodbye to his fellow Firebolts and Apparated straight to Spinner's End.