

A Sudden Change of Plans

by Pennfana

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Chapter 1 of 1

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I can't believe I'm doing this.

I've always been the steady, responsible one, the least impulsive witch imaginable and the very last person who anyone might expect might do something as surprising and spontaneous as this.

Five hundred invitations have gone out, nearly all of which have received an affirmative reply. Everyone of political or cultural importance in our world will be there; it frightens me to think that only about fifty or so of the people we've invited are actually people we *like*, and the rest were invited because there could be capital-C Consequences if we didn't ask them to come. We have engaged the most famous wizarding caterer to serve our guests a luxurious dinner in the great banquet hall at the Ministry of Magic. We have reserved the ballroom for dancing afterwards. The wedding of Hermione Granger, war heroine, and her equally famous fiancé is not supposed to be a low-key event. I took the preparations as seriously as I ever took my schoolwork, though I admit that I would much rather have planned something far, far simpler.

If it had been entirely up to me, the only people in attendance at my wedding would be me, my beloved, our two witnesses and the witch or wizard who performs the ceremony, really. I do not want or need this "wedding of the century" business. It disgusts me that something as personal as our wedding has been turned into yet another political event.

And yet, tonight I find that I can't resist the temptation to slip into my pale blue wedding robe just to feel the smooth, cool silk of it against my skin. I seldom purchase anything fancy for myself, and this robe, cut to resemble a mediaeval houppelande, is probably the most gorgeous article of clothing I have ever worn. As I admire my reflection—I'll never really be beautiful, but this robe helps me to come close—I hear a noise behind me. I whirl around into a combat stance, my wand sliding easily into my hand.

But as it turns out, my visitor doesn't mean me any harm. "Darling!" I exclaim, seeing my fiancé clumb in through the window. He's wearing a formal black robe with silver detailing, and the length of it is giving him a little trouble as he tries to sneak in with some semblance of dignity. Holding back a laugh, I put on my "Bossy Hermione" persona as he barely avoids tripping over his own feet. "*What* are you doing here? You *know* you're not supposed to see me until the ceremony tomorrow! And if you really had to see me tonight, why did you climb through the window instead of Apparating here?"

"Why not?" he asks, giving me what he probably thinks is a sexy half-smile, though it's really only very cute. (Not, of course, that I'd ever say so.) "And here I was, thinking that you were reading my mind, dressed as you are. That's a beautiful robe, by the way. As for why I'm here, I've come to elope with you."

"WHAT?!"

The corners of his mouth are tugging up again. "If you're having this much trouble hearing now, perhaps you should visit someone at St. Mungo's to check your ears before you go completely deaf. As I told you, I'm here to elope with you. But I thought that it might not have been so much of a surprise after all, as you appear to have anticipated me."

"I heard you perfectly well the first time, love," I smile. "It's just—we've been planning this for months. Won't it be a scandal if we simply fail to show up for the wedding tomorrow?"

"I've taken care of that," he smirks. "I've given the officiating witch a letter stating that our guests are to enjoy the party as planned; she'll read it to them at what would have been the ceremony. There's no need to disappoint them entirely, after all."

"But why?"

He steps closer to me and pulls me into his arms. I return his embrace, and as he strokes my back he tells me, "I know I haven't been as involved in the planning as I probably ought to have been, but even I have seen how much pressure you've been under to make our wedding day into a perfect and very *public* celebration. And if I know you, my dear, you won't be able to relax at all tomorrow or enjoy the festivities you've been planning for so long for fear that you'll disgrace us in some way by not being absolutely perfect. No, don't protest—I know you too well. So instead of letting you put yourself through all that stress, I've arranged for us to be married tonight. The witch who will marry us is waiting at the Ministry, and so are our witnesses. We'll leave for the honeymoon immediately afterwards. That way, the peacocks still get their chance to strut and we get to enjoy our own wedding."

I let loose a breath that I hadn't realized I was holding. "Thank you so much. I think I got so caught up in our supposed 'responsibilities' for the day that I lost sight of the fact that it's *our* wedding, not everyone else's. But think of the trouble it will cause when somebody realizes that we're not going to show up!"

This time, he gives me an outright grin. "That is, of course, another draw to the idea."

I laugh. "You are *so* bad sometimes."

"I am. But that is why you love me, isn't it?"

"Well...partly," I smile. "Shall we go?"

"After you, my lady."

I can't believe I'm doing this, but I'm so happy and it feels so right. We climb through the window and disappear into the night, giggling like the giddy schoolchildren that we never really were.

Author's Notes: So who do you think it is? It's someone from canon, and I have my own suspicions about who it is, but aside from that, even I'm not really sure—though he's rather obviously not Ron. Mind, regardless of my own confusion, I have to admit that this is the most fun I've had writing a "serious" fic in a long time.

This was written for a Saturday Night Drabble prompt by HermioneDiggory. "Runaway bride! Hermione shocks the wizarding world by fleeing her highly-anticipated society wedding."