

He's a Good Lad

by Keppiehed

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Prompt: Ron/Astoria, "ribbons and lace"

A/N: Written for SortingHatDrabs.

Ron added a box to the ever-growing stack of parcels he was carrying and sighed. One last stop, and he was finished for the day. He would be glad when the wedding was over; he was tired of running errands for Hermione!

Madame Malkin's bell chimed, announcing his presence. The robe-maker was with another client and waved him towards the front, so Ron went to the counter and dropped his packages. He tried not to eavesdrop on the other customer, but it was almost impossible not to overhear in the small shop.

Ron recognized Astoria Greengrass as the girl being fitted. There seemed to be a problem; Astoria was crying, and she left without making a purchase. When Madam Malkin turned to Ron, she seemed unusually distracted.

"Mr. Weasley, you must be here for Hermione's trimming. Did she decide on ribbons or lace for the wedding gown?"

Ron blanched. Hermione had said nothing about *him* having to make decisions! "Um, ribbons?"

Madam nodded. "That's an... interesting choice."

Ron panicked. "Was it wrong? Lace, then. Lace!"

"No. I expected something else, but who can tell? The world is certainly not what I understand anymore," the woman said darkly and shook her head.

Ron frowned. This was what he didn't like about women; he was here for a simple task, and the conversation had turned. He had an inkling that they weren't talking about adornments anymore. "Is everything alright?"

"No, Mr. Weasley. Astoria was supposed to marry that Mr. Malfoy. She's been fitted for her wedding clothes, same as Hermione, but the engagement has been canceled. And her with child, too. It's a shame."

"What?" Ron was shocked. "She's pregnant? Why aren't they getting married?"

"Family debt. After the war... well, you know how things went for certain... members of society. She cannot even pay for the robe she commissioned. And for Draco to have left her in this position... Tsk! A tragedy for the girl!" Madame made a face of disgust. "Oh, but I forget myself. Please, don't mind my loose tongue. This isn't your concern. Here, take your package. And have a good day."

"Thanks." Ron took the bag in a daze and left the shop. He didn't know Astoria personally, but he did know Draco, and his heart went out to the girl. Malfoy had always been a villain, and it seemed that things hadn't changed in the intervening years.

Ron turned and went back into the shop. "Please put Astoria's dress on my account. I know it isn't much, but Hermione would agree—we'll help where we can."

"Why—"

Ron ducked out. He didn't want thanks, he just wanted to start off this new world in a better way. Draco might not agree, but Ron could do his best to be kind in the ways he knew how.

He went home to where life waited: friends, family, and the love of a good woman.