

Partners for Life

by blue artemis

Draco makes his business partner realize they could be much much more. This was written for the second week of Malfoy Manor's October One-shot weekly challenge. Prompt at the end.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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He finally had it. He was going to have to say something. She was wearing an ill-fitting suit again. Her hair was pulled back into a severe bun, reminiscent of Minerva McGonagall, and her shoes looked like she pulled them from a bargain bin.

"Hey, Granger, for a high-powered attorney, you dress like a poor librarian."

"It is my arguments that matter, Malfoy, not my clothing. And why are you so interested in that anyway?"

Draco was about to respond with his usual snarky wit, but the slight fearfulness in her tone made him stop short.

"Hermione, love, what happened to you to make you dress like this?"

"Leave me alone, Draco. It is none of your business."

"You are my partner, love, the only woman who tolerates me during the day and not just because she wants to bed the notorious Draco Malfoy. Trust me. You are my business."

"How do I know you won't go to the papers after this?"

"Is that what you think of me? We've been working together for over six months; you should know that I would never do anything like that to you."

Hermione looked at him wild eyed, but seeing the sincerity in his face, broke down crying.

"You know my relationship with Ron went nowhere, right? We were pretty good at the snogging, but the first time we tried to get naked together, we gave up after we got the giggles for about half an hour. It is why we are still friends. Well, after that, I tried dating, but most of the wizards just wanted to be with 'Hermione Granger, War-Heroine!' which was really annoying. Charlie Weasley showed some interest, and I've always thought he was sexy, so I decided to give it a try. The first time I wore anything remotely snug, he pretty much got all hot and bothered, but it made me feel good to be desired, and he didn't push, so I just let it slide."

"No one has seen Charlie Weasley since the night of the Founder's Ball four years ago. He just left his job at Hogwarts without a word. They think he may be in Romania."

"He's in Azkaban."

"What?"

"Molly begged me not to publicize anything, so I didn't, but she agreed that he had to be put away."

"You looked beautiful that night."

Hermione looked askance at Draco.

"I know I was still under house arrest, but I did get the papers. I saw the pictures."

"Well, he told me that I must be hot for him since I was advertising. He pulled me to a balcony, set up a ward and started to rip my dress off. His comment was that even if I had mixed feelings, I obviously wanted him, even though I was saying no. He pinned me down and would have raped me, but two things happened. Ron broke through his wards and yelled, and I had gone past the 'this is someone I know, and he wouldn't do that' part of my mind, so my magic kicked in. Between the spell Ron cast at him and the accidental magic, Charlie currently is a completely hairless female."

"Why was he saying you had mixed feelings?"

"Apparently my knickers weren't sexy enough for him."

It was a very surprised Ronald Weasley, during the regular Saturday pick-up Quidditch game, when Draco walked up to him, gave him a hug, then handed him an invite to try out for the Cannons.

"Wha? Why?"

"Because. Hermione told me why she wears those hideous suits."

"She really trusts you enough for that?"

"I guess so, Ron."

"Hey, you called me Ron!"

"I can't call you anything else after that story. I'm glad you two are still friends. She's always defended you as being one of the best people she knows. I think I agree."

"So... this isn't a joke? I can really try out?"

"You can try out. But no one is going to give you anything. You will have to earn the position."

Ron smiled. "Thanks, Draco. Take care of our girl, will you?"

Monday morning, Hermione discovered a lovely business suit in a sharp, form-fitting, yet not vulgar cut on her bed with a pair of beautiful shoes. She smiled to herself as she put it on.

"Now, if we get your hair styled, you are in business. You look beautiful, love."

"Why do you call me that, Draco?"

"Because you are my love. You may not take me seriously, Hermione, but you were the first person to give me a chance. You believed in me when I got off of house arrest. You let me work here while I got my NEWTs, and you took me on as a partner when no one would even look at me. I love you. I just never thought I would get the chance to show it."

"Draco, I'm going to have to take it slow. I've never... "

"Good."

"Excuse me?"

"I'm still male, love. It is going to be wonderful to be your first and only."

"Only?"

"You don't think I'm planning to ever let you go, do you?"

It was the little things that got to her. The clothing, well, he was a Malfoy. Introducing her to his friends as his love, that was impressive. Pansy Parkinson, well, she was certainly a revelation.

"Granger, if you hurt him, if you are playing him, I will kill you. Dead."

"I thought you were together when we were in school?"

"I don't think we were together anymore than you and that red-headed hunk you call a friend."

"Hunk? Do you want to be introduced, Pansy?"

"I don't think he is willing to get past the 'she wanted to give up Harry Potter' thing."

"Oh, he's defended you to Ginny a couple of times, saying that people in difficult situations don't always show their best face."

"In that case, yes, please."

Rita Skeeter would have had a field day. Pansy Parkinson and Ron Weasley were on a triple date with Harry Potter and his wives, Luna Lovegood and Ginny Weasley, Mrs. Black and Mrs. Potter respectively, as well as Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy. It was a good thing Rita and Bozo were currently in Ministry custody for having attempted to blackmail the Minister of Magic with a badly doctored photo of him canoodling with Narcissa Malfoy.

There was a light wind blowing which was lovely, when all of a sudden a gust came up, blowing all the women's dresses up. Pansy was wearing a lovely lace boy-short in Gryffindor colors. Luna wasn't wearing anything, and Ginny had a black thong on. All that was quite interesting to all the men, but what got them talking was Hermione.

"Did I see what I think I saw?" questioned Draco.

"You mean the cotton knickers with little yellow flowers on them?" Harry asked.

"Not just that. When the wind blew her hair, I could swear I saw a tattoo on her back."

"I didn't see anything," said Harry.

Ron just smiled. He knew what it meant that Draco could see the tattoo.

"What, Ron?" came the chorus of voices.

"That is a true love tattoo. Only someone who truly loves her will see it."

That night, after Draco accompanied Hermione home, she invited him in.

"Are you certain, love?"

"Yes, Draco. I know you love me, and I love you, so I think it is time."

Draco caressed her face then plunged his fingers into her hair. He kissed her deeply, thrilled that she responded passionately. He started to walk her backward toward her bedroom, slowly pulling the hem of her dress up. He squeezed her rear cheeks then moved the dress further and further up until he had it clean over her head. He looked at her so closely she started to blush.

"Don't cover up, love, you are so beautiful."

"Even with my cotton knickers?"

"Oh, yes. It is very you, you know. Wild hair, no bra, and these little cotton knickers. Now, what exactly is on your back?"

"You saw that?" Hermione breathed out, unable to do more with Draco stroking his hands up and down her body.

In answer, Draco hooked his fingers into the elastic of her knickers and, in one move, pulled them off and flipped her over. He ran his fingers up her sides, making her giggle. He swept her hair off her back to see a pair of phoenixes in a fierce embrace, one all fiery reds, orange and gold and the other icy blues, silver and white.

He kissed the small of her back, making her writhe, then kneaded her rump, finally smacking her lightly, which made her twist over a bit to look at him.

He took the opportunity to kiss the valley between her breasts, cupping them in his hands, then moved lower, kissing every inch of her skin. He reached the tight brown curls between her legs and looked up at her, seemingly to ask permission. She nodded, and he ran his hands up along the inside of her thighs, parting her legs. He nuzzled into her folds then licked her. He was pleased by the scream he managed to elicit from her. He slowly licked his way to her clit, making her wriggle and buck her hips until her entire body shuddered in ecstasy.

He eased his way upward, lying on the bed next to her. She curled into him.

"Was that all right, love?"

"It was amazing. Do you want to finish?"

"Oh, I do. I just wanted to make certain you still wanted to."

In answer, Hermione raised up and straddled him. "Help me, please."

He guided her onto him, easing her slowly downward, letting her set the pace, when she lifted herself up and impaled herself onto him. She looked a bit shocked and he quickly held her in place, reveling in the feeling of warmth surrounding him. As her body got used to him, she began to move again, and he bucked up against her. Her movements grew more frantic and she again shattered around him, bringing him to completion.

She collapsed against him, and he turned them onto their sides, still coupled, and they fell asleep like that.

The morning found them entwined. Hermione woke up, went to the bathroom for her morning ablutions then returned to the bed, where Draco was watching her, his face an interesting mix of wariness and adoration.

"You stayed with me, Draco. Thank you!"

"How could I leave you?"

"I've heard stories, Draco. You have never spent the night with any of the girls you've been with."

"I haven't been with a girl since you took me on as a partner, love. None of them meant anything, anyway. You are the only woman that matters to me."

"Partners for life?"

"Exactly."

Three months later, Draco and Hermione eloped. Six months after that, Cassiopeia Jean Malfoy was born with her father's blond hair and her mother's curls. The grandmothers spent the next year arguing over what color her eyes were going to be; they ended up her grandfather Lucius' steel grey. No matter what he had thought of the circumstances of her birth, no one could argue that she had him wrapped around her little finger.

"Hermione."

"Yes, Mr. Malfoy?"

"First of all, call me Lucius. Secondly, when are you planning another child? I think I need more grandchildren."

"Well, Lucius, I can tell you that Cassie was not planned, but very welcome. And you will be a grandfather again in about six months."

The British Wizarding world was taken by storm when Lucius demanded that Draco re-marry Hermione in the traditional manner on Malfoy land. When asked why, he always said the same thing. She may not have been planned, but she has been very welcome.

Many thanks to Southern_Witch_69 for the beta! I don't know what I would do without her!

Prompt: The wind revealed more than her inability to wear sexy knickers...