

And I've Never Told You Till Just Now

by mrs_nott

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Chapter 1 of 1

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prologue.

The end will be where they start. The end will be where their story takes place.

The end will start with a deliciously primal desire. The kind of desire that climbs through your insides with raw claws, creeping upwards from down in your toes and spreading with the fury of wildfire. The end will be the tension felt on the edge that anticipates the quintessential relief. The end will be the bitter and sour taste at the back of their throats. The end will start with their rotten bodies falling to bits on the ground, like grains of sand that await being swept by the wind.

The end will not be their new beginning. It will not be the pleasant knowledge of knowing the worst is finally over. The end will not be an escape; it will be neither relief nor release.

The end will be a point next to an infinite number of other points in the lines of their lives.

The end will be that point where their lines intersect in precarious agony. The end will be where they meet again. It will be that point, that moment, that *second* in their lives when the clocks will stop ticking and the world will stop turning and they shall stand facing each other, as though seeing themselves for the very first time.

Before the end there will be nightmares and screams. There will be visions of dead eyes and bloody fingers. Before the end the hum of anxiety will crowd their ears, and

they will feel as though their blood is running cold in their veins.

The end will start with a wand.

It will be mid-July when the cuckoo clock on the wall chimes.

The setting won't be the dramatic thunderstorm that sends chills down your spine. No, the setting will be a midsummer's morning with all its stifling brightness and warmth. The setting will be the white marble floors and stonewalls at Malfoy Manor, the long vermilion curtains and the vibrant green grass seen through the tall, clear windows.

The clock will chime once, twice, echoing off the walls of the nearly empty Manor.

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Draco will take a moment to clean the sticky blood that runs down from his nose. He will be fighting the same dull ache against his temples. The one he's had for months.

Draco will walk down the path leading up to his home. He will walk tiredly, the gleaming sun and all the brilliant colours augmenting his flaring migraine.

Draco will stop at his own gate, staring with wide eyes at The Boy Who Lived. He won't speak as he lets Potter in.

Potter will hand him his wand, will offer it, no questions asked.

"It's yours," he'll say with a shrug.

And Draco will take the wand. He will hold it in his palm and feel his own magic pulsing through his nerves.

Potter will be looking at him the entire time.

*

Harry will watch, mesmerized at the glint in Malfoy's eyes. He will feel electrified, the itch to touch igniting his own skin.

Malfoy will offer him a drink and Harry will say, "Yes, please".

Harry will break the silence and ask about Malfoy's family.

There will be a pause when Malfoy's breath hitches, his eyes snapping closed.

Harry won't know what to do with himself.

He will apologize for asking.

Malfoy will tell him to stop being so goddamned noble about *everything*.

Harry will blink at him.

Malfoy will say, "The last time I saw him, I was in this room."

Harry won't understand what Malfoy means.

"Severus Snape," Malfoy will explain.

"He was... He was a good man," Harry will offer.

Gaping at him, Malfoy will ask why he says that. He will say he thought Harry hated Snape.

And Harry will tell him. Not everything. Not the small details with Lily and the younger version of their teacher. No, Harry will tell Malfoy he was wrong. Harry will talk about how he understood, in the end, why Dumbledore had such faith in Snape. Harry will leave out the part where Dumbledore trusted Snape with Malfoy's life. Harry will leave out the part where he understands how much their teacher meant to Malfoy.

They will find themselves conversing until Malfoy looks up to the clock, inviting Harry to lunch.

Harry will say no, he's already got plans with Ron and Hermione.

*

They will meet the following week and the one after that. They'll make it a regular thing where they manage to talk about their pasts and *never ever* talk about how everything ended.

They'll be fine until they won't be but by then, it'll be too late.

Their story will have already started.

i.

It was late August, and the pressure to *do* something, to *decide* how to go from here was getting to Draco's head. It wasn't as if he was exactly all that employable, or like he even wanted to be working. He was eighteen, for Merlin's sake. But the pressure was still there. Still prickling under his skin.

It was this pressure, really, that prompted Draco to ask. His question had absolutely nothing to do with the obnoxious amount of alcohol he had consumed. Not at all.

"So, Potter, enlighten me here. What *will* you be doing in September?"

Groaning, Potter grabbed his face with both hands. "I have nooo ideaaa," he whined, looking sort of pathetic as he dragged his vowels in the way people do when they're resolutely plastered.

Draco wouldn't say he couldn't sympathize. Quite the contrary, actually.

Not the plastered part, though. He had been the self-appointed 'designated driver' -- though in all honesty, the expression hardly fit, seeing as Draco couldn't drive if his life depended on it -- tonight. It had been unanimously decided by Draco upon seeing the copious amounts of Firewhiskey Potter *insisted* on ingesting. Draco was merely tipsy. Just a tad.

"I'd offer a toast," he began, turning his half-emptied glass in his hand. "But it seems to me that'd be a rather flimsy excuse to drink."

At this, Potter had enough presence of mind to snort. It made Draco smile, if only because their lives were taking pretty ridiculous turns.

Such as he and Potter being friends, or as close as one could be with one's former enemy at any rate. Not even in Draco's wildest, first-year fantasies. Because yes, for all of Draco's sneering and insults, he couldn't deny he had been sincere when he first approached Potter. Draco *had* wanted to be his friend, and to have been rejected, in favour of a *Weasley*, of all people, had certainly scarred Draco's pride for life.

"I bet you could do *anything* you wanted and still get away with it, bloody war hero," Draco muttered under his breath, not really bitter. Maybe somewhat jealous. Of Potter. As always. Because Draco's life hadn't changed *that* much.

"You really think I live my life freely, then?" Potter demanded in a tone Draco was not expecting, its gravity feeling entirely out of place.

Over the time they had started talking, Draco had discovered Potter was the unpredictable drunk. The one who could turn from angry to laughing to crying in the blink of an eye and still remember nothing the following morning.

"You won. You got rid of the Dark Lord and now the whole world adores you. I don't really see how you can complain," Draco answered simply.

"That's ridiculous," Potter barked, taking Draco by surprise. *Angry drunk*, he thought. "You know, you're always doing this*thing* where you somehow become the bloody victim! It's no one's fault but *yours*."

It was stupid, really. Potter was drunk and Draco was well on his way there, and *still*. He couldn't help the flash of anger, the familiar swell of rage racketing in his ribcage. He felt fourteen.

"I cannot believe you just brought that up, Potter."

"So what if I did?" Potter countered, staring him down. "You can't be a victim if you're responsible for the mess."

"*Responsible*?" Draco managed not to screech, noticing people had begun staring. "What the bloody hell do you imagine I was doing back then? Rooting for the bastard so we could all be left to be miserable in peace?"

"You *were* on his side."

"I had no bloody choice!"

And now he felt entirely *too* sober to be having this conversation.

"Yes, you did!" Potter argued as he slammed his fists on their table. "You could've gone to Dumbledore."

"He was dead, in case you've forgotten."

"*Before* that."

"And risk my family?" Draco demanded, now way past trying to indulge in Potter's thick drunken argument. "I know you haven't got one, Potter, but that doesn't mean the rest of us don't!"

Potter's eyes went impossibly wide and, for a moment, Draco thought he was about to burst into tears.

Instead, Potter stood up, staggering, as he said, "Fuck you."

But then Potter kept staggering until he fell, arse first, after just taking two steps. Now everyone at the pub was *surely* staring at them, and Draco was certain someone would tell someone. With his luck, this would end in Draco going to Azkaban for not helping Potter out, or something equally ludicrous.

It took another swig of his Firewhiskey for Draco to work up the resolution to take Potter back home with him.

Potter, though, the ungrateful bastard, was having none of it as Draco went to offer his hand.

"You're not taking me to mine," he said with drunken resolve.

"Of course I'm not," Draco stated. "I don't want to go anywhere near that dingy flat of yours."

"S not dingy!"

"It isn't even properly guarded! Merlin knows someone from the Ministry should've already had you arrested by now."

He had already lifted Potter off the floor, when Potter decided to eye him suspiciously.

"Where *are* you taking me?"

Rolling his eyes, Draco answered, "Malfoy Manor."

"I'm not sleeping in your bed!" Potter exclaimed, the horror blatant on his face.

"*Disgusting*. That's what guest rooms are for, you tit."

Potter seemed to ponder this for a while.

"I'm no bender," he finally said.

"Neither am I."

"But I'm still going home with you."

"Only because I've taken pity on your poorly dressed self."

"You're no fashion statement yourself."

"*Blasphemy!*"

"That's really homosexual of you, you know."

"What is?"

"That *thing* you have for clothes."

"Normal people call it *taste*."

"Normal people are total shirt lifters!"

"Oh, Merlin." Draco sighed, realizing Potter was clearly in no shape to even be Apparated sidelong.

Grabbing a hold on Potter's arm, Draco draped it around his own shoulders before he led them both outside the pub. Taxi it was then, Draco thought, feeling a mild irritation at Potter. Merlin, he *hated* taxi drivers. They were just so picky about *every damn thing*. And Draco didn't even *get it*. It wasn't like wizards were ever in much need of them. Really, wizarding taxis were practically non-existent, and yet the few that were around were absolutely nonsensical about the places they would and wouldn't go.

However, there was no way Draco was taking the Knight Bus, the filthy thing.

Sighing, Draco considered how absolutely displeased he was about the way the evening turned out. Starting off with the fact that apparently every bloody driver in Wiltshire had some sort of personal vendetta against going uphill to Malfoy Manor because the stupid little shitheads thought it was *curse*d or whatever the fuck else. Then Draco managed to get an old bloke to take them there, not before he made sure Draco could pay the exorbitant price he was asking for. Not that Draco really cared about the money. It was simply a matter of principle. Draco had been around the village long enough to know about regular prices, and therefore it was utterly impossible to ignore the large sum the old man had asked for.

It didn't help that Potter kept falling on his shoulder and drooling all over his coat *Disgusting*, Draco repeated over and over in his head. It was a bloody nightmare.

When then they *finally* got to Malfoy Manor, Potter was too passed out to be awakened. Draco had to endure the driver making some snide comment on how Draco's 'boyfriend' was 'too smashed to be bothered'. He really felt like murdering someone with his bare hands.

*

Draco found trying to drag Potter upstairs without waking a single soul in the Manor to be a difficult task. Especially since Potter decided to stir somewhere in the middle of the stairs and had been since trying to struggle out of Draco's grip.

"Stop being so difficult!" Draco hissed as they made it to the second floor. "I'm going to *kill* you tomorrow, Potter, you know that, right?"

"Wangohome," was the only response Potter was able to articulate.

Fortunately, the second-floor guest room wasn't that far from the staircase, and Draco managed to open and close the door without making much noise.

"Get to bed, already," he ordered as Potter slumped on the mattress.

"Malfoy?" Harry asked just as he was about to leave the room.

"What now?"

"I'm sorry."

Draco couldn't not turn around. He *couldn't*. He found a confused-looking Potter staring at him with apologetic eyes.

Before Draco could react, before he could get a single word out of his mouth, Potter was sitting up on the bed and rambling on, his voice decidedly more sober.

"I lost friends," he was saying. "I... I watched them die. You can't just go ahead and forget that. It doesn't... It doesn't work that way." Potter paused. "You're not the only one, Draco."

It startled him, the use of his first name. It startled him and maybe freaked him out a little because they *never* talked about the war. It was their unspoken agreement. Yet here they were.

"I wake up screaming," Draco said eventually.

"What?" Potter asked, perplexed.

"I have nightmares, sometimes," he explained. "I wake up screaming."

"I can't even go to sleep."

"I didn't say that so we could start a game of 'my horse is bigger than yours'."

"I know." Potter's voice is suddenly ridiculously small. "We're... sharing."

"Go to sleep, Potter."

"So you won't hate me tomorrow?"

"I think we're a bit too old for that, don't you?"

"I guess."

*

When tomorrow came, Draco pretended their conversation never happened.

*

August withered away with Draco resolving to do absolutely nothing. He met September with no wish to do anything more than lie on his back and scratch his belly. And talk to Potter, for some reason.

Not because Draco had no friends -- he *had*, they just weren't exactly willing to see each other's faces, probably because that meant admitting their friendships and lives couldn't remain the same.

The talking to Potter thing, that was mostly because it made Draco feel a little less guilty, a little more normal.

And Potter wasn't doing anything with his life besides lying on his back and scratching his belly either, so they might as well join forces.

*

"What was it like?" Potter asked on one cool September day as they sat in front of the garden's fountain.

"What was what like?"

"Growing up here," Potter replied, his eyes going from the flowerbeds to the fountain to the taller bushes.

"It was nice, I suppose."

"Nice? That's all?" he asked again.

"Well, yeah. Normal."

"To *you*," Potter corrected him. "I slept in a cupboard."

Draco's first response was to blink.

"*What?*"

"My uncle, he hated me," Potter explained.

The air turned tense, stifling around Draco's face.

"Really? So I haven't been alone all this time?" he joked nervously, feeling like a prepubescent boy for some reason. "There have been other people to hate the great Harry Potter?"

"It's not funny, Draco!" Potter protested like a small child. "It was stupidly small."

Nodding, Draco agreed. "I don't doubt that."

There was a pause. Not very long but not short enough. It was an awkward pause. Draco hated awkward pauses.

"I think I was jealous of you," Potter eventually said.

Draco gaped. And then gaped some more because *really?*

"What? You always got all these sweets and stuff from your mum, and you know, I never got anything. In all honesty, I might have been secretly jealous of anyone with a mum right until I was thirteen."

"Really?"

He couldn't believe what he was hearing. Or that Potter would even tell him that.

"Yeah... you... you wouldn't understand, how it felt. Not knowing your parents and having your only relations hate your guts."

"But everyone else loved you," Draco countered, to balance out the situation, to put some sense of normality in it.

"It wasn't the same."

"And now?"

"It's better, I guess. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley are like the parents I never had."

"I always did wonder what you saw in them."

Shrugging, Potter flashed a grin at him. "Mystery solved."

It did make him wonder, though. About their days together. Draco was not complaining. Don't get him wrong here. It was just that, it seemed odd. When Potter clearly had so many friends who all hated Draco's guts. It was odd, and he couldn't help noticing it.

"You know, Potter, I've been wondering." Draco's tone was nothing if not conversational. "How come you're spending all your days here? Not that I'm complaining or anything. I think the Ministry has stopped being a pain in the arse ever since you decided to stop by, but still, what gives?"

"Ron and Hermione are sort of dating?"

Chuckling, Draco turned to look straight at Potter.

"And you're afraid of being the third wheel *now?*"

"Well, as obvious as they were back in school, they weren't exactly snogging in my face."

"Oh." It made enough sense. Until another question arose in Draco's head. "Wait, I thought you were dating the Weasley girl."

"We broke up."

"No kidding."

"It was mutual."

"So, what did you do?" Draco prompted, knowing that Potter's explanation wasn't the *whole* truth.

"I just told you it was mutual!"

"You could probably tell Weasley that and he'll believe you, if only because he doesn't want to pry into his little sister's sex life."

Sighing, Potter admitted, "I told her I needed a break and she said she wouldn't wait for me."

"And that's it? No sleeping with her best friend or snogging her archenemy? How *boring*."

"So is that what happened between you and Pansy?" Potter asked, effectively turning the tables.

"Pansy is *insufferable*."

"But you were always on top of each other! The Slytherin couple or whatever."

"Correction, *she* was always on top of *me*. And then she went and suggested the school give you over to the Dark Lord. You know how *well* that turned out."

"Are you saying *you* wouldn't have given me over?"

It threw him off balance. It made Draco uneasy inside.

"I didn't rat you out when you were here, did I?" was the only thing he managed to articulate.

"Why not?" Potter prodded.

"I don't want anyone's blood on my hands, Potter."

"Okay. Nice."

"Nice? What are you, *twelve*?"

"Oh, bugger off."

Smirking, Draco saw in this an opportunity and took it. "But *this*'s my house."

"You make such a good case for yourself, Draco," Potter replied, flopping back on the ground.

Eventually, Draco said, "I'm hungry."

His stomach was really starting to stage an uproar.

*

"You have something on your nose, Potter," Draco commented while they had lunch.

"Oh." His nose scrunched up as he reached for its left side. "Wait, where?" he asked when he felt nothing there.

"On your right," Draco instructed.

"Now?"

"No, it's further down," he said.

Frustrated at Potter when he couldn't wipe his nose properly, Draco moved across the table, reached for Potter's nose with his thumb, effectively wiping off the spicy sauce.

When Draco sat back down, he couldn't help but notice how rosy Potter's cheeks suddenly looked.

ii.

Draco didn't notice it suddenly, his desire for Potter. He didn't wake up one day with the need to have his tongue down Potter's throat or go in the shower to find that he liked wanking to Potter's mouth. No, it started slow in his veins, pulsing through his body like a ghost. It crept into his sleep in the form of conversations and during the day as he looked forward to reading Potter's wobbly handwriting when they weren't actually talking face to face. Had he not been so bored out of his mind, Draco would have probably missed it.

It was one of those things he tried not thinking about, telling himself he could be imagining the whole thing. He told himself it was a desire for Potter's company because he was the only decent person his age Draco was currently speaking to. He told himself it was because he was bored and lonely in the Manor.

It was all so he didn't lose his bloody mind over something absurd like fancying a bloke.

But lying to himself only lasted so long.

*

The first time Draco noticed something was really, *really* wrong with him happened when they were flying.

How on earth Potter managed to get them a free Quidditch field every two weeks was still beyond Draco's imagination. It was Potter's undisclosed secret.

They had just come down from flying all morning, Potter having caught the snitch just *seconds* before Draco could grab it.

"You cheated!" Draco accused, breath ragged and thick drops of sweat falling down his face.

"I did not. I'm still better than you, face it."

"Lies!" Draco panted, staring down at the floor with his hair falling over his eyes.

This happened more often than not. They were still pretty damn competitive between themselves, though now Draco had lost any real interest in strangling Potter to death. Or reporting him to McGonagall.

This day shouldn't have been any different than those times Potter accused Draco of cheating at chess - *no one* was a match for Draco, he was bloody fantastic at wizard's chess. Just as Draco did the same to Potter in Quidditch.

Except now Potter's hand was reaching for his forehead, pushing back the strands of hair. His fingertips brushed over Draco's warm, sweaty skin. And the touch gave him goose bumps instantly. It sent an electric wave down Draco's spine, and Merlin he would have blushed bright crimson if his cheeks weren't already rosy from the exercise.

Draco remembered clearly thinking, *Oh, fuck*.

*

After Quidditch and chess, Draco decided going for a swim would put them on neutral territory. Which was a massive mistake because Potter agreed, and Draco miscalculated the intensity of these *things* he was having around Potter.

They started when Potter took off his shirt, even though it was mid-September and nowhere near warm enough. Potter's chest was pasty-white but it wasn't on the verge of transparent like Draco's. He wasn't exactly hairy, though Draco wasn't able to tell any more details from the prudent -- not really -- distance he was standing at. These

things kept fluttering in the pit of his stomach.

"What are you doing standing there?" Potter inquired upon noticing Draco was, apparently, not doing much.

He felt like slapping himself.

"It's freezing."

"Draco, *you* suggested this!"

"Well, I'm human, Potter. People make mistakes. It's a known fact of life."

"Or is it that you're afraid I'll be better than you?" Potter challenged him.

It was a lost battle. Draco could never *not* rise to any of Potter's challenges, silly as they were.

"That's ridiculous," Draco replied, already starting to strip.

His shoes, socks and trousers went first. Draco had started unbuttoning his shirt when, on the third button, he remembered his scar. The somewhat long and thin scar Potter had given him in sixth year. The one that had almost killed him.

He swallowed.

"Well?"

Potter was already in the water, his hair damp and sticking to his forehead.

Deep breaths, Draco told himself.

He finished unbuttoning, dropped his shirt and was about to jump in the lake with Potter when he saw Potter staring at him with horror.

"Draco," he began carefully.

"Come on, Potter. Let's see who's better," Draco tried.

"No," he said, getting out of the lake and walking to Draco. "Is that...?" Potter attempted to ask but it was painfully clear to Draco that the words were trapped somewhere in his throat.

"It's just a bloody scar, Potter. Leave it."

"Is that... The bathroom, that's the one? Merlin, it left a *scar*?"

Potter kept staring at his chest in utter and unmistakable horror.

It angered him.

Draco didn't need to be reminded of that day.

"Well, Potter your bloody curse almost split me in two, *of course* it was going to leave a scar," he snapped.

Then Potter began closing the distance between them, coming to a halt only when they were inches apart.

"Shit, Draco, I'm so sorry," he thought he heard Potter say but the truth was, Potter's breath was so, so close to him, Draco could barely think straight.

And then Potter's hand was reaching to touch his torso. Right above his ugly scar.

And Draco accidentally-on-purpose flinched away.

"I'm sorry."

This time, Draco was sure Potter had apologized. Even if his voice had been barely above a whisper.

"It's nothing, get over it."

"But it *is*. And I'm sorry. I didn't... I didn't know what that spell would *do*."

Draco stared incredulously at Potter.

"So, for all you knew you could've been showering flowers on my head?"

It was an absurd thing to say but it earned him a chuckle from Potter. His chest felt lighter.

"I knew it was very bad. Just, not how bad. And I was so pissed off. You were trying to kill Dumbledore."

"I haven't forgotten," Draco felt the need to admit. To himself. To Potter.

"Why'd you do that? You aren't like that."

"My father was in Azkaban while the Dark Lord decided to set headquarters in my home. I wasn't in a position to choose."

"But Dumbledore would've..."

"He would've helped *me*, and maybe my mother if I had really begged for it. But father would've rotted in Azkaban for all he bloody cared!" Draco was suddenly very aware how cold the weather was. It felt icy on his bare skin. "I know you think *we* deserved this," he continued, moving to sit as he threw his shirt back on. "That we brought it upon ourselves. And maybe you're right but I don't regret siding with my family."

"I'm still sorry about your scar," Potter said, sitting down on the spot next to him, his hand on Draco's arm.

"It's a stupid scar," Draco replied, meaning to sound as nonchalant as humanly possible but he ended up smiling inexplicably.

*

That night, Draco tossed and turned in his bed. He was sweating and gasping for breath as he dreamed of Potter's lips ghosting over his own.

He woke up with a start, a thick, hard stain on his sheets.

Oh, bugger.

Draco needed to talk to someone.

*

He owed Zabini because Zabini was a bloke who was into both. He didn't owl him so he could laugh mercilessly at Draco.

"Draco and Harry, sitting in a tree. K-I-S-S-I-N-G!" Zabini chanted for what felt like the thousandth time, much to Draco's grief.

"Could you be a *worse* friend, please?" he suggested in the vain hope it would shut Zabini up.

"Oh, but I'm already trying so hard!"

"Zabini! Focus."

He was snapping. Zabini at least noticed that.

"So, you *think* you fancy Potter, who's a bloke, and that's currently giving you a massive stroke," Zabini recounted, probably to see Draco cringe -- which he predictably did. "Worse things have happened, Malfoy. Cheer up."

"Well, I'm sorry we can't all just *accept* we're bloody poofers like you!" Draco exclaimed, losing his temper in exasperation.

This was supposed to be for *advice*.

"Hey! I like my fair share of birds, too. Get your facts straight, Malfoy."

"Fuck you!"

Draco realized only too late that was the wrong thing to say to someone as sexually depraved as Blaise Zabini. The smirk Draco's comment produced was anything *but* relieving.

"I would but I don't think Potter would be into a threesome this early on."

"You're the worst friend *ever*." Draco groaned.

He wanted to *die*.

"What can I do? Your little gay crisis is so boring, I think I'm falling asleep here."

"That's it. I officially want you out! Go on, OUT!"

"So *sensitive*. That time of the month already?"

"You really want me to punch, yeah?"

"Hey, if that's what stirs your cauldron."

Draco used his best death glare to stare Zabini down. It didn't hurt that he was a good two inches taller than him. This was bloody *serious*. Why wasn't Zabini getting that?

Draco was ready to complain some more, however Zabini decided it was a good time to stop being a nuisance and actually *help*.

"Look, if he's touching you," he started, stopping upon seeing Draco was about to protest. "No matter how *friendly* it seems, this is you two we're talking about so my money's on him fancying you back. Make a move, Malfoy. Don't be such a pansy."

"You think he fancies me?" he inquired because Zabini was good at picking up on these things.

And Draco was almost useless.

"Oh, for fuck's sake, Malfoy," Zabini replied, rolling his eyes.

"Hey, I had to go through all your woes as you tried to get into Nott's pants!"

"I was *fifteen*."

"I was a good friend to you," Draco complained. "Why can't you just return the favour?"

"Oh, great Lord Malfoy, do forgive me for being such a rude, inconsiderate arsehole."

"Well, at least you've got your praising right."

"I'm *excellent* at arse-kissing," Zabini stated, wiggling his eyebrows.

"My ears, Zabini, my ears!"

"Do forgive me," Zabini apologized, his voice dripping with sarcasm. "I had no idea your innocence would be this offended."

Draco would've punched him. If he could've stopped thinking about fancying Potter, that is. Yet, as life had it, Draco couldn't stop thinking about it. His mind simply wouldn't shut up about Potter's red lips and his absurdly green eyes. It simply *wouldn't*.

"I'm screwed," he said gravely. "Am I screwed?"

Zabini agreed. "You are."

"How very supportive."

*

Draco told himself he couldn't fancy Potter for real. Except, if he thought about it, Draco really did.

And that was like setting himself up for disappointment. Because Potter was Potter. And Draco was Draco. Which, in short, meant they were a) both blokes, and b) supposed to hate each other.

*

Draco didn't want to do this. Not really. He wasn't ready to start fucking around. He really, really wasn't. He thought about this whole thing, remembering every little thing that had been said between them. Draco kept telling himself this wasn't a good idea. But every single time he tried to reason with himself, he'd get caught up imagining Potter's face so impossibly close to him, and just there. Just there for Draco to touch and stare at for the rest of eternity. Draco's heart skipped a beat, everything Potter had said to him coming back to him, every touch Draco remembered coming back in technicolor snapshots.

This was bad for him. He and Harry, that was not meant to be. And yet, there was no denying it. Draco wanted this.

*

October drew nearer and the problem was, Draco couldn't control it.

The problem was, Draco couldn't *not* think about it.

The problem was, Potter kept coming to him.

The problem was, Potter kept brushing his fingertips on Draco's skin.

The problem was, Draco couldn't stop the electric shocks.

The problem was, Draco couldn't stop being caught up in Potter and his ridiculous eyes.

The problem was, Draco didn't really want to.

*

September eventually became October. October brought pumpkins and celebrations and Halloween. Halloween brought decorations and Draco helping his mother set up their traditional Haunted Manor while his father, as per usual, laughed at them. Halloween brought Potter staring with a slack jaw at the magnificence of the Malfoy's decor.

It brought Potter saying, "We should get plastered together!" And Draco replying, "Why the hell not?"

The first of November met Draco with his head in the sink.

Fuck, his head hurt.

*

November was calmer. It was easy in the way Draco had settled into a routine with Potter. It wasn't exciting or nerve-wracking. It was easy, simple.

Except for the part where Draco still had wet dreams about Potter's mouth. And the part where Draco would *accidentally* brush their knees together or let his hair fall to his face at a moment where he was absolutely certain Potter would notice. And that part where the things he felt when he saw Potter grew stronger and louder within him, almost violent in their intensity.

*

December was colder, whiter.

In December, Potter told him he missed Christmas at Hogwarts.

"Who *wouldn't*?" was all Draco could reply.

He remembered in vicious detail his last Christmas.

He remembered.

"I guess last wasn't a good one for many," Potter suggested, and all Draco could do was think how that couldn't begin to cover how *bad* it was.

"How was yours?" Potter asked, morbid curiosity probably getting the best of him.

"Fantastic, really," Draco answered, sarcasm flooding his tone. "Heard him torture Muggleborns in my own basement while my mental aunt cheered him on like the bloody groupie she was. A real treat, that one."

Potter seemed to consider this for a moment.

"You really hated him here, didn't you?"

"I don't think hate is an adequate word. Then again, I don't know any other suitable words. How about you?"

"I spent it on the run with Hermione. We almost missed it, really. And then we were attacked by that snake. Eventually Voldemort showed up and my wand was broken."

"Well, at least yours wasn't stolen," Draco quipped.

He was getting rather good at this deflecting thing.

He didn't do it on purpose, though.

Draco simply really, *really* hated thinking about it.

"It was *necessary*."

"Like fuck it was."

But Potter didn't look one bit angry and Draco himself was feeling pretty light-hearted.

"I gave it back, didn't I?" Potter replied with a grin.

"I guess."

A comfortable sort of silence stretched between them. The kind that was okay so long as it was between friends.

Draco wasn't ready to admit it but he was really happy Potter was his friend.

Eventually breaking the silence, Potter said, "I am glad, though."

"That you stole my wand?"

Potter, who had been looking past the window as snow fell on the garden, turned to look at Draco. His expression was something Draco couldn't place. Something between eager and blissful.

"Well, I wouldn't have talked to you unless I absolutely *had* to, and now I'm glad I did."

*

December was good.

Draco had never really understood the true meaning of the season. Had never bothered understanding because his parents had always been there, his mum hovering over him and his father buying *whatever* Draco asked for. He didn't get all the fuss about hugging and telling people how much you loved them. Until this time around.

Because by the time Draco finally realized his parents might die, that his life wasn't as granted as he had thought it was, he was already worried sick, and Christmas seemed entirely futile.

And now, Draco could see the whole point of the Christmas spirit.

Sometimes, it was hard for him to believe how childish and spoiled he had been.

December was really fucking good.

*

Right up until today, until right now. December was now a disaster.

Draco was in Potter's still unguarded, still dingy flat. There was only a small couch in the living room that Draco had by then become used to after having been dragged to this place against his will over and over. Because who in their right mind would agree to spend a night at Potter's dingy flat? No one, that's who.

And yet here he was, exchanging gifts, of all things. Or well, ~~he~~ was here to exchange gifts. Now, Draco was a little tipsy on the adulterated eggnog Potter forced on him. *Traditional drink, my arse*

Draco had just given Potter his gift, and he knew the eggnog couldn't make him hallucinate but Draco sort of thought he was, anyway. Because Potter was smiling this blinding grin at him, all white teeth and dimples. Draco thought he was hallucinating because on top of that, there was the fact that Potter's eyes were practically shining. Really, all of Potter's being seemed to be glowing. And that just couldn't be right.

Draco felt dizzy at the general brightness. He felt dizzy enough that the fact that Potter was reaching for his face as Draco sat on the ~~only~~ couch in the flat didn't even register. It wasn't until he felt the full press of Potter's weight on him, almost smothering Draco to death but not quite, that he even realized Potter was cupping his face.

Harry Potter had Draco's face in his hands as he stared at him like he was the best thing ever. Or something. Draco was about to say "get off" or "what the hell, Potter?" but Potter's lips were soon smashed against his and Draco couldn't move. He couldn't breathe or speak or hear or do much besides being acutely aware of Potter's hands on him. On the way they moved down his neck and arm before they snaked their way to Draco's hips, pulling his body closer to Potter's.

Draco felt suddenly very alive, very aware of his surroundings, the fuzziness induced by the eggnog now entirely gone. His blood pumped, and he wanted to unfreeze, to wake up or something because surely, he was imagining things.

After the longest five seconds of Draco's short life, Potter began pulling away. His face was streaked with astonishment and a tinge of disappointment.

"What are you..." Draco started as soon as he had regained his breath, his heart beating fast.

"I shouldn't... I shouldn't have done that. Shit, I really need to go."

And now that wasn't right. Draco had done nothing here to deserve this. He hadn't fucked this up, so why was Potter saying he needed to go? Why was he leaving Draco?

"No!" Draco exclaimed, holding a firm grip on Potter's forearm. "Don't go."

"I... I really need to go," Potter said, already turning his back on Draco.

Potter was walking out his own door, leaving a very confused, very scared Draco behind.

He felt so stupid and young and foolish.

He shouldn't, he shouldn't have done that. He could've let Harry's lips press on his. He could've opened his mouth and let Harry's tongue slide inside. He should've done that.

And his heart still hadn't caught up with the situation. It still beat loudly in his chest.

Draco felt... he felt tight in his chest, heavy in his arms and so, so cold everywhere else.

It hurt. Being alive fucking hurt.

*

Draco turned that night over and over in his head. He had waited for Potter, in the end. He had waited until the sun had risen, and Draco was almost too tired to move. He had waited for him and the bloody git never showed up.

Draco wished he could rewind. Wished he could go back and unfreeze himself for those five seconds on Potter's couch.

He still had no idea why he didn't react. Wasn't this what he wanted? Didn't he fancy Potter? People didn't freeze when their alleged crushes tried to snog them. So, what was wrong with him?

He felt like an idiot.

He probably *was* an idiot.

*

Potter owed him. Four times. And Draco read each and every letter, not knowing what to say or answer.

The first letter arrived on December 25th and read:

'Happy Christmas.

Sorry I fucked up.

Harry.'

Draco wanted to smack Potter over the head. He didn't *want* Potter to say he was sorry. The thought of the kiss happening on impulse, by mistake, it angered Draco. It wasn't *fair*.

So he didn't answer and Potter didn't owl until two weeks after.

The next three letters could've all been the same one, for all Draco cared. They were all apologies. Potter saying it would *never ever* happen again, and Draco only got angrier and angrier.

The last one ended with Potter writing, *'don't hate me'*.

The thing was, Draco couldn't hate Potter now. Not even if he tried. And he didn't want to try, so there.

Draco would be lying if he said he didn't cling to that last bit. Because it showed Potter at least cared, and Draco hadn't lost this brand new *thing* between them.

Because it wasn't really friendship if all Draco could think about were Potter's lips.

*

On the last day of January, Potter was standing in front of Draco.

"I don't hate you," was the first thing that came out of Draco's mouth upon seeing Potter on his doorstep.

Potter's eyebrows furrowed in confusion, like he hadn't quite managed to get Draco's words.

Clearing his throat, Draco repeated, "I don't hate you." But Potter was still looking puzzled. Draco had to add, in a small voice, *"Harry."*

And then Potter's face did this thing where it broke into a grin. It wasn't huge or blinding. It was warm, it was calm and understanding. And Draco's heart leapt to his throat, choking him, as he thought he wanted to see that grin again. Because another million times probably wouldn't be enough.

Draco thought, *this is it*. He had no idea what *it* was. He just knew this was the moment. *The* moment.

"I was worried," Harry said, still grinning at Draco. "You never answered my letters."

Draco could feel his face falling, his insides twisting.

"I..."

"It's okay. I'm sorry about what happened." *Sorry, again*, Draco thought. Taking a step back, Draco drew in a breath. Who the fuck apologized for a kiss? "Listen, I really am sorry," Harry insisted.

"Stop saying that."

And Harry stopped grinning.

And Draco was really fucking angry this time. Rage pulsing violently in his veins.

"I had no idea it had upset you this much," Potter continued, like he didn't *get it*. Like this wasn't affecting Draco so much. "I just... Well, you should know it won't happen again. I don't know what came over me, really. It was a te..."

"Shut up!" Draco snapped. "Stop apologizing for trying to snog me. Just stop, will you?"

"But I thought you hated me for it."

"And I just told you I didn't."

"Yeah, but that was still..."

"You're a twat, Potter," Draco half-sneered, half-murmured before placing both of his hands on Harry's face.

Holding him steady, Draco leaned down to brush his lips against Harry's. It was a light touch at first. It was just Draco's lips doing the work and Harry standing there, completely frozen. Then he was stepping away, licking his lips as he looked at Harry. Draco fretted, knowing Harry could very well leave him standing there and never talk to him again. Draco wondered if this was really how Harry had felt or if that other time had really been a mistake.

Yet, soon enough Harry was smashing their mouths together again, and this time it wasn't a light, hesitant touch. It was raw and certain, and Harry's teeth clashed with Draco's before they really got the hang of it. Draco felt the kiss in his bones, like Harry was reaching that deep within him, ridiculous as that sounded. It felt like a sweet, delicious desperation that crawled underneath his skin, making him itch for more. So much more.

iii.

"You fancy me," Harry said, blindingly smiling and placing kisses along the line of Draco's jaw as they lay on Draco's bed with Harry on top.

"Yeah, yeah, we all know that."

"I fancy you."

"You're such a sap."

"You like it."

"I do not."

"But you *do*," Harry insisted and, as if to make his point, ground their hips.

Draco was obviously hard. Harry was obviously hard. There wasn't much to be embarrassed about, so naturally, Draco's very fair skin turned pink.

"You're cute when you blush."

"Fuck you," Draco muttered under his breath. "And don't even say it. Don't eventry that joke," he added.

"I wasn't, I promise!"

"No one believes you," Draco deadpanned.

At this, Harry grinned wickedly. He rocked their hips together until they fell into a lazy rhythm that Draco, for the life of him, couldn't possibly stand. He wanted more ~~friction~~ friction. He wanted more skin, and he definitely wanted Harry's mouth on him. Everywhere. Anywhere.

"Come *on*, Potter," Draco commanded from under Harry's body.

Harry couldn't be bothered. He took his bloody time unzipping Draco's trousers and wouldn't let Draco's fingers anywhere near his own. It was so, so incredibly idiotic. But at the same time, so, so *good*.

Finally, *finally* they were both down to their boxers and Draco could *feel* Harry on his upper thigh with intoxicating sensitivity. It was insane. Insanely fantastic and mind-blowing, and Draco could swear he was seeing freaking *stars* with the way Harry kept pressing into him.

He wasn't going to last. He hoped Harry wouldn't last. *Merlin, that would be embarrassing*, he thought but then shaking fingers grabbed a hold of his cock. Draco couldn't really be expected to think, and he wasn't. No, Draco was pushing into those fingers, his hand grabbing a fistful of his own sheets. It was beyond amazing. It was *heavenly*.

*

"You're a virgin?" Harry asked, gaping at Draco.

"So what."

"I just... *Seriously?*"

"What the hell is the problem, Potter?" Draco was sure this wasn't a big deal. It happened. Not everyone could be a pervert. "I'm a virgin, big deal."

"But... I was so sure you had like groupies and stuff."

"Well, I didn't. Plus, why are *you* talking like this is some revelation? You're the freaking Boy Who Lived. What, little Weasley never put out?"

"Ron would've *killed* me. And then all his brothers would've brought me back to do the same. Endlessly."

Draco smirked. "Who said I was talking about the girl?"

"Shut up! Shut up!" Harry began whining, his fingers in his ears. Draco was not finding this adorable. Not at all. "I did not hear that. La la la."

Snorting, Draco scooted closer to Harry to remove his hands from his ears. "Very mature, Potter."

"Why would you say that!"

"To see the ridiculous faces you make, of course."

"I don't make ridiculous faces."

"Fine. Your face is simply ridiculous," Draco said almost on Harry's lips.

"Leave my face alone."

But Harry didn't mean it. After all, it was he who closed the gap between them.

"Mmm," Draco hummed, enjoying the feeling of Harry's tongue moving against his own. "Don't wanna."

*

"Can I put my finger in you?" Harry asked one day in March with his hand on Draco's cock.

His thumb circled the head just as Draco managed to breathe out a shaky, 'Yes'.

The intrusion was odd, at first. Not exactly uncomfortable but not really pleasant either. Harry added a second finger as he kissed Draco deeply, murmuring his name like a mantra. The scissoring motion got better as Draco became used to Harry's fingers inside him. He felt warm all over.

And then Harry crooked his fingers, pressing *on something*.

"Shit," Draco could hear himself moaning.

His hips jerked forward and then down, trying to make Harry's fingers dig further into him. Faster, ~~he needed~~ to go faster.

"More," Draco demanded in Harry's ear.

"Spread your legs."

Draco did, watching as Harry descended on him. Both of Harry's hands were working on him as Draco all but yelled Harry's name, coming hard, harder than ever before.

*

It was mid-April when it happened.

*

"*Merlin*," Draco muttered under his breath as his hips jerked. "I'm gonna..." His voice trailed off as Draco got lost in the feeling of Harry's tongue slick against his cock.

The heat of Harry's mouth around him was bordering on the unbearable. Harry murmured something Draco couldn't make out. It didn't matter because the simple gesture sent vibrations just *there*, and Draco was so sure, so sure that if Harry didn't move his bloody face away *rightnow*, he'd come inside his mouth. Because it felt that good. Because Harry's *face* gave Draco a freaking boner so Harry's mouth on his cock pretty much short-circuited Draco's brain.

And that *tongue*. That tongue that sent shivers down his spine. That tongue that had his hips bucking forward, pushing further into Harry's mouth. That incredibly wet and slick tongue. It was the death of Draco, surely.

Harry's tongue was the death of him as it brought Draco to the edge and over in precarious agony as his body jerked on the bed, everything around him suddenly becoming peripheral noise.

Draco only came back to his senses when he felt Harry's lips on his.

"I want to fuck you," Harry wheezed against Draco's mouth, still smiling.

He nodded.

*

"I want to see your face," Harry said when Draco began turning around. "I want to see you come undone," he whispered.

The lube was already spread on Harry's fingers, warm but not enough to keep Draco from yelping when the first finger prodded inside. Harry wasted no time in adding the second, quickly scissoring Draco open.

He felt anticipation building slowly in his belly.

He felt awkwardly exposed, even though they had done this before.

This part. Not *everything*. Just this. With the fingers.

Harry kept placing butterfly kisses on his face, reassuring him.

It made Draco feel even weirder.

His nerves were on edge.

Harry added a third finger.

Draco had to grip Harry's shoulder, moaning low and guttural as Harry found the right angle. He was writhing under Harry, rocking his hips forward, jerking up and trying to press down on Harry's fingers inside him. All at the same time.

And then Harry removed all three fingers at once.

And Draco squealed, he *squealed*.

But Harry was soon placing himself to enter Draco, the head of his cock *there*, blunt and simply *there*.

Draco braced himself.

Harry pushed in.

He cried in agonizing pain. *Fuck*, he thought. *Fuck, buggering fuck*

And Harry wasn't even all the way in.

And Draco already wanted him out. Just. Out.

"Hey," Harry said, brushing the strands of hair that had fallen on Draco's face.

The pain was almost unbearable. It gave him trouble breathing. But Harry's face was so close to his, his expression clouded, worried. And he was brushing hair off Draco's face.

And Draco couldn't help recalling how he purposely let blond locks fall on his face just so Harry would brush them away, the things they'd been through flashing through his mind.

He burst out in loud laughter, his whole body vibrating.

"What?" Harry asked above him.

"Nothing!" Draco lied.

But it was sort of funny. After everything. This not being perfect. It was okay.

And then Harry was all the way in, and Draco stared up at him in confusion. When did that happen?

"I can't believe you're laughing." Harry groaned.

Draco knew that groan. It was the please-oh-Merlin-please-I'm-gonna-come groan.

"I'm bored down here," Draco commented lest Harry forget about him.

It earned him a shocked glare.

"*Fuck*," Draco heard Harry curse before he began moving.

His thrusts were forced, too controlled, and Draco was having trouble enjoying the whole thing. Except then Harry found the angle that made Draco's hips jerk as he

squirmed around Harry.

Unfortunately, that apparently was enough for Harry, who came, groaning Draco's name. It was the longest twenty seconds of Draco's life as he lay there, letting Harry ride out his own orgasm.

"Bugger," Harry panted eventually. "I'm sorry."

He really did look sorry and Draco was about to say something when he felt Harry's hand on his cock.

It was fast and certain. There was no taking it slow, Harry just touching him the way Draco liked.

He promptly came.

*

It was May and they had spent their morning practicing. So to speak.

But they *were* getting ridiculously better at it.

Draco couldn't believe how addictive, how *good*, how mind-blowing the shagging was. Amazing, really.

So, that morning, Harry had sneaked into Draco's room. And they shagged. And shagged. Because it was really that good.

They were sated, completely and blissfully satisfied with their naked bodies lying next to each other, when Narcissa Malfoy walked in on them.

"Draco, darling, lunch is..." she began as she threw open the door. Her eyes flew from her son to Harry. Her jaw dropped, only slightly, but Draco had seen it. Narcissa, however, composed herself almost immediately before closing the door.

Draco wanted to *die*.

Harry was all laughter, though.

"It could be worse."

"She saw us in bed. *Naked*. Together. I don't see your point."

Harry's lips came to brush lightly over Draco's ear as he whispered, "She could've walked in when my fingers were still in you." Harry's tone was nothing if not lewd.

"I want to *die*," Draco whined.

*

It was June when Draco said, "I think I'm in love with you, Potter."

"I think I'm in love with you, too," Harry whispered back, his face suddenly in front of Draco's.

Author's Notes: Written for serpentinelion's GLOMPFEST!! I haven't written H/D in AGES and the prompt (link below) was SO AMAZING, really, I just had to. Pretty please, R&R :D

LINK: <http://serpentinelion.livejournal.com/274692.html?thread=3821828#t3821828>