

The Contingency Plan

by ofankoma

See Hermione run. Run, Hermione, run!

Rules of Engagement

Chapter 1 of 1

See Hermione run. Run, Hermione, run!

Most of England was in bed when the broadcast went out.

"Post-war... negative... population growth... More children! Passed... controversial... so-called 'Marriage Law' by... Monday... loss of Magic... enforced!"

Overcast skies rendered the Wizarding Wireless Network's signal hazy at best, but everyone knew what the pronouncement entailed. The Wizengamot had been debating the proposed law for weeks, and the worst had been expected.

Draco and Theodore were lying in an exhausted, sweaty heap of entangled limbs atop grey satin sheets, but not because of their Auror training exercises earlier that evening.

Ron was gutturally moaning Pansy's name in a sequence of expletives, but not because she had hexed him for failing to notice her new haircut.

Seamus was polishing Dean's broomstick at the time, but not because they'd brought their Firebolts from the Quidditch pitch.

Ginny and Harry were hoping their third Silencing Charm would hold, but not because they were dancing to the Weird Sisters upstairs from Arthur and Molly.

Hermione was sitting alone in her library.

Everyone had a contingency plan.

"Mother always says there's a time and a place for respectability, Nott. This is it."

"I've got an heiress in Kent lined up, myself."

"I think Mum's expecting curly-topped grandkids. Er...*really* curly."

"Darling boy, a Parkinson fucks for fun, but marries for status. You understand."

"I guess I'll go after Coach's daughter."

"Cannons fans are pretty desperate, right?"

"Ha! And Mum said we were too young."

"Now we can marry tonight!"

"Is our Ministry completely *mad*?"

Meanwhile, Ron put *his* plan into action.

"Have you lost your mind? Do you even *know* me? I knitted stocking caps for house-elf freedom! Why would I suddenly acquiesce to this kind of misogynistic archaism? I've never *heard* of anything so inane."

"Everyone will go along with it, Hermione."

"Merlin, *why*?"

"They'll take away your Magic if you don't!"

"Rubbish!"

"Don't you see? You *have* to marry me, Hermione! Nobody else will have you!"

"Nobody else will—*Hmph!*"

"Don't get upset... *Pumpkin.*"

"*'Pumpkin?'* Tell you what, *Ronald*. I'll agree to a government-mandated marriage the day you cure lycanthropy."

"Hermione, stop laughi—"

"Or when you prove that Malfoy's a Veela? *Then*, Ron, I'll marry you *then*."

"Hermione—"

"Discover that Professor Snape was Harry's real father, and I'll agree to it."

"Hermio—"

"No, no, still going... I'll marry *you*, Ronald Weasley, when Neville employs a Time-Turner to go back and seduce a virginal Pomona Sprout."

"Herm—"

"When George is pregnant with Lee's love-child, I'll marr—"

"FINE! *Don't* marry me! You'll be sorry!"

Exceptionally clear weather in Bulgaria the following week left WWN signals intact.

"*Hundreds of couples wed last week in England, days after the close defeat of the Marriage Law. Is this an act of governmental defiance? Interviews to follow with Mrs. Pansy Parkinson-Malfoy, Mrs. Ginevra Potter, Mr. Seamus Spinnet, and Mrs. Romilda Weasley.*"

Miss Hermione Granger was in bed when the broadcast went out.

Viktor ripped off her nightgown, and she switched off the radio.

The prompt: A garbled message on the Wizarding Wireless causes mass panic.

A/N: Please excuse Hermione's gentle mocking of the following fanon clichés: the Marriage Law, the cure for lycanthropy, Veela!Draco, Severitus, time travel, and Mpreg. Given a larger word limit, she would have kept on going. And please allow me to thank kittylefish, an unbelievably patient beta, who keeps me from submitting misspelled words and cleans up my commas.