

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY HBAR!!

*by Keppiehed*

Draco gets carried away while reading a bedtime story.

## (or: The four little pigs)

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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**Prompt:** "the three little pigs"

**A/N:** This is written with much love for my dear friend HBAR on her birthday. I am a pigface and didn't send her a card. I hope this makes up for it! \*squishes and loves and yes, icing hugs\* Now everyone go out there and give her some well-wishes on her big day!

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A musty smell rose from the old book as Draco thumbed through the tattered pages. He wrinkled his nose, but there was no shirking his duty; Hermione had specifically requested that he read these fairy tales to the children. They'd already been through *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* twice, and she wanted to give the kids something traditional from her own childhood. Draco shrugged; one story was as dull as the next, as far as he was concerned. Muggle Fairy Tales it was.

"Let's see, how about ... Thumbelina?" Draco asked, after looking through the table of contents. They were about halfway through, but he could never remember which ones they'd read.

"We heard that last week," his son complained. "Do a new one!"

"Bearskin? Snow White?" Each suggestion was met with a shake of the head. Draco sighed. "The Three Little Pigs. We can't have read nonsense about pork. I'm sure I would have recalled that."

The children giggled. "No, Daddy. Let's read it!"

Draco flipped to the page and cleared his throat. "Once upon a time ..." Why did Muggle stories all start so predictably? Were they trying to bore the children to sleep? Draco checked. No, the kids were still wide awake and hanging on every word. Draco sighed inwardly and continued the story, talking about hapless pigs, until he was first interrupted by what was bound to be many times.

"What was the piggy's name?" his daughter asked.

"Name?" Draco echoed. He scanned the pages. There was no mention of the pigs having names. This first pig was stupid and had chosen to build its house from straw, of all things. That sounded like a Weasley pig if ever Draco had heard of one. He hid his smirk. This story just got a mite more amusing...in his own imagination, anyway. He pictured the pig with a hank of bright red hair. "Ron," he said. There was no harm in it.

"Like Uncle Ron?" the girl asked.

Oops. "No," Draco said. "It's a common name. For pigs, especially." Draco continued the story. "So Ron foolishly built his house out of straw. Which is also cheap. He was

never a pig who wanted to do things right, I can tell you that much." Draco imagined the Ronpig in overalls, chewing on a hayseed whilst he tried in vain to construct a decent straw house that wouldn't rattle in the first stiff wind. Sucker!

Then there was a second pig. "This one is Harrypig," Draco said, warming to the idea. "Harrypig wears glasses, and his problem is that he's lazy. He's a terribly slothy pig. He just can't do a job right because he has no work ethic whatsoever. And so he builds his house out of whatever is at hand, which for farm animals is sticks. Of course it is, children. So Harrypig lives in a lazy stick house."

The children blinked at him.

Draco went on with gusto, animating the voices. He'd never enjoyed a story so much! "And so the regrettably shortsighted Ronpig and Harrypig whiled away their days in fun, while the important people did the hard work that makes the world go round."

"But Daddy, what about the third pig? It's called the three little pigs."

"Yes, yes, I'm coming to that." Draco read for a moment and frowned. A responsible, smart pig. A pig who wouldn't take time to play, who was always working, who had a penchant for saying 'I told you so' ... Draco could only picture one person, no matter how hard he tried. "Er ... this last pig is a very special pig. A beautiful pig." He began to sweat. His fevered imagination could conjure nothing else, and yet he knew what he was about to say was so very wrong. He glanced around and lowered his voice, hoping Hermione would never hear the words he was about to utter. "This third pig looked a lot like Mommy. In a good way. In the most wonderful way a pig can, of course."

"Mommy is a pig?"

"Sh!" Draco winced. "The Mommypig was, of course, the smartest and best of all the three and she built her house out of brick." Draco tried to rush past that part, mostly so he could stop saying "mommy" and "pig" in the same sentence. There was no way that sounded flattering. "Oh, look! A wolf!" Shit, really? A wolf? What kind of story was this turning out to be? Was this what Muggles read to their kids at bedtime?

The children, instead of being lulled to sleep, were wider awake than when he'd started, thanks to the gusto he'd put into the wolf part. Draco frowned. "A big bad wolf, in fact, named Hagrid...served him right, the tosser...came along wanted to eat the three little pigs." *The fuck? Sadistic Muggle bastards.*

The kids' eyes were rounded in their sockets.

"Yeah, he said some shit...stuff!...about huffing and puffing, but ... oh, wait, he caved Ronpig's house in. I knew that worthless pile of hay wouldn't last! Ron is such a loser!" Draco laughed.

"You said it was made of straw, Daddy," his son said.

"Whatever. Same difference. The structural integrity of the house is the point. And also, it bears noting that Ronpig was a stupid ass and his house got blown down by Hagrid. It serves him right, in the end," Draco reasoned. "Oh, and look here! It says the same thing happened to Harrypig. His shoddy shack got the same treatment. And probably those glasses got blown off in the ensuing melee. Yep, I'm sure of it. So he was pretty much useless, as far as pigs go. How did I not *know* about this story before now?"

His daughter started crying. "I don't want Harrypig to die! Don't let Hagrid eat them!"

"Er ..." Draco looked at the book. Perhaps he'd let the story run away with him. "It's not the end yet. It'll all work out! Calm down. You'll give yourself nightmares."

"They'll all be eaten!" his son wailed.

"They won't," Draco said, flustered, but this was fucking Muggles rules, where it all went pear-shaped for no good reason. Who was he to lie to his son? He flipped the page. It didn't look promising. God, he was going to have to read aloud the Mommypig's gruesome slaughter and eventual ingestion by Hagrid. He should have given this more thought. Well, he was nothing if not a realist, and Malfoy children should follow suit. It was never too early to learn about the cruel vicissitudes life could throw at you, even if it involved wolves eating your mother (in pig-form, of course). The Muggles couldn't write a story that he was too squeamish to read aloud. Draco took a breath to detail the horror.

"You forgot the fourth little pig."

The room fell silent.

Draco gritted his teeth at the sound of his wife's voice behind him. "Honey? How long have you been there?"

Hermione ignored the question. "But for now, I'll tell you about the wolf. He chased those first two pigs into the third pig's house, where he threatened to huff and puff and blow their house in, but of course he couldn't. A wolf can't blow bricks over, can he? After awhile, the pigs invited him in for a party, because they were all friends, and they knew the wolf was just play-acting."

"Hey!" Draco yelled. "It doesn't say anything..."

"And," Hermione continued, raising her voice, "what's more, the pigs had stuffed mushrooms for the wolf to eat, which were his favorite. Because he was a vegetarian."

"Mommy, what's a vege..."

"A wolf who doesn't eat meat. Or pigs. Because we don't tell those kinds of stories in this house," Hermione said, giving Draco a pointed stare. She walked in the room and sat on the edge of her daughter's bed. "So, it was a perfectly lovely party. The pigs were all friends with the wolf, and they had pumpkin juice and sugared quills and chocolate frogs and they stayed up all night long and played Exploding Snap. But there was a fourth little pig, you see. In all of the excitement, he is almost always forgotten about. He had hair so blond it was almost white."

Draco stiffened.

"Like Daddy!" the son said, giggling.

Hermione smiled. "Just a little like Daddy, yes. And this little pig lived on the edge of the woods. He didn't build his own house."

"Why would he?" Draco sniffed. "He was probably rich enough to subcontract the house-elves into servitude."

"For whatever reason, he was an isolated piggy, and he didn't understand friendship very well. So when he saw the wolf, he felt threatened, even though the wolf was harmless. And when he saw that the other pigs needed help, he stayed away, thinking that they were going to take advantage. In reality, they had much to offer in return." Hermione picked at a spot of lint on her daughter's quilt. "I think the fourth piggy was really very lonely, and perhaps misunderstood."

Draco swallowed.

"What happened next, Mommy? There was a big party, but the fourth pig was all alone." Their son sat up in bed. "Did he ask to join the party and be friends?"

"No," Hermione said. "But the third little piggy happened to look out his window and see the fourth pig out there all alone, and she left the others to their games and she went outside. She stood next to him, and she found out that he had more interesting things to say than she had realized. And for his part, the fourth piggy learned to trust,

and they became friends. And eventually they fell in love."

"Ewww!" the boy shouted.

"Did they kiss?" the girls asked.

"They did," Draco said. "But not until the fourth pig understood what an enormous prat he'd been. The third pig was pretty good at showing him that."

"Then did they get married and have babies and fall in love and was everyone friends in the end?" asked the girl.

"Well," Hermione said. "Mostly. Sometimes friendship is hard. Especially for pigs that never had to build their own houses. But it all did work out, because the piggies...and the wolf...are nicer than they are given credit for sometimes." She stood. "It's bedtime."

"But how did it end?" the boy asked.

"How things always end in these ridiculous stories," Draco muttered, but when Hermione came close and slipped her hand in his, he saw that she wasn't really mad at all, and he pulled her into his lap and kissed her. "Happily ever after."

Maybe it wasn't such a bad way to end things, after all.