

A Vexing Tail

by *linlawless*

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A Ficlet

Chapter 1 of 1

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"Take that back!" Ron yelled.

"No! It's true! Your sister dumped me for Malfoy!" Harry insisted.

"She isn't shagging Malfoy! She would never!"

"She is!"

"If you don't take that back..."

"You'll what? Hex me? Go ahead! I dare you!"

"Don't tempt me, Harry! You deserve it, lying about Ginny like that just because she got sick of waiting for you to get off your bum and marry her!"

"For the last time, Ron, she's shagging Malfoy. It's still true even if I stop saying it!"

"*Duocaudae!*"

"*Replicato incantatem!*"

"I cannot believe you two *still* haven't stopped hexing each other!" Hermione said, glowering at each of them in the two hospital beds that were separated by an aisle that clearly was nowhere near wide enough if the glares shooting across it were any indication. "You're adults! Stop acting like you're twelve!"

Severus followed a Healer into the room. "Now, Hermione, I'm confident your friends have a perfectly good explanation for their juvenile behaviour," he said.

Hermione looked at him, suspicion in her expression. "I'm sure you're just dying to throw a few juvenile insults yourself, Severus, but I would like to think you're at least a little more mature than these two fools." Turning to the Healer, she asked, "Any luck?"

"No, Ms. Granger, I'm sorry to say that none of our best minds have yet figured out how to reverse these spells. We've never seen anything like it."

Turning to her oldest friends, Hermione announced, "It would serve you both right if you were stuck with those tails forever!" She headed toward the door. "Do try not to do any more damage before I get back, will you? Severus, I'm counting on you to keep them from killing each other."

The three men were staring at each other silently, awkwardly, when Hermione poked her head back into the room. "I assume it goes without saying that *you* are not to harm them either, Severus."

Several minutes later, Severus broke the still-awkward silence. "Well, fortunate as I am to have her in my bed, she certainly knows how to take all the fun out of a good fight, doesn't she? No more hexing, no killing anyone..." Brightening, he said, "She didn't forbid good old-fashioned punches, did she? You could—"

Harry burst out laughing. "You haven't been with her long enough if you think that argument will get you anywhere. She'll say something like, 'Don't try to tell me you didn't know that was implied.' And then she'll go off in a huff, and we'll all spend weeks getting back in her good graces. And that's if she doesn't hex us herself."

Their dispute apparently forgotten, Ron sniggered and added, "Yeah, mate, if she hexes us herself, it'll make this little spat look like the third coming of You-Know-Who."

Harry was still grinning when he said, "Yeah. He was a pain in the arse, but—"

Ron finished the thought with him, "—she's scary!"

Severus said, "All right, then, based upon your long experience with my wife's temper, are we better served fixing this now, ourselves, or should we wait until she finds the solution in one of the books she's gone to consult?"

The three stared at each other for several moments. "It's a no-win," Harry concluded reluctantly. "Either way, she's wasted all sorts of time in the library looking for a solution we already knew and could have implemented at any time."

"We're doomed," said Ron.

"Not necessarily," Severus said thoughtfully. At their quizzical, hopeful looks, he asked, "What does Hermione want more than anything from the three of us?"

"Easy: she wants us to get along," Ron said immediately.

"So, if we present it to her as we've finally found a way to work together productively..."

"She'll be thrilled!" Harry's delight and relief were palpable. "That's brilliant, Professor! But what's in it for you?"

"Do you honestly believe that once she calms down, she won't realise that I must know the remedy? And if we're to convince her, you'd best call me 'Severus' instead of 'Professor'."

"Good point."

"All right, then, we're agreed."

In the ensuing years, Hermione sometimes found the bond amongst the men in her life rather irritating. Especially when Harry and Severus ganged up on Ron as he taught Ginny and Draco's son the finer points of Quidditch.

At those times, she reminded herself that the alternative had been much, much worse.

A/N: Written in response to MuseAmusant's SND prompt: 1. A nasty spat between friends results in someone ending up with an extra body part(s) and the Healers can't figure out how to put them to rights. How do they deal with this unexpected development?

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