

After the Gnomes

by *Fairfield*

A trio of wizards find a brilliant solution.

Chapter 1 of 1

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It read

Secret project. Requires valor and discretion. Survival not guaranteed. Great reward.

The advert caught the attention of one Xenophilius who had been feeling downhearted. Ever since his daughter had helped the trio vanquish what's his name, she had fallen more and more under the influence of that Miss Granger who confused rationality with believing all the comfortable lies people told themselves about the world around them. He was thinking this was a chance to redeem himself in the eyes of the two girls.

Xenophilius arrived at the address, the Malfoy manor, just in time to hear the last of the argument.

"Do something," said a female voice.

Xenophilius rounded the corner as the husband protested.

"I was doing something, my dearest," said Lucius. "That ancient remedy of moonflower pollen and Thestral dung was driving them off. It's not my fault that the Ministry declared garden gnomes a protected species. We're still on probation, and we don't dare use magic against them."

Even Xenophilius recoiled as Cissy gave Lucius the look that said, "Eat Thestral dung and die."

Lucius definitely wouldn't be pollinating his little moonflower any time soon.

After Cissy left, Lucius noticed his visitor who, after an explanation, agreed there was a dilemma and, to politely commiserate with his host, agreed to stay for a sherry. After several bottles, Lucius announced they needed more supplies if they were to do this botheration justice. He would let Xenophilius apply his analytical mind to the problem while he did the necessary shopping in the village.

Meanwhile, back at the burrow.

"You can take these things and get out of the house," screeched Molly, throwing the box of Lovehoney, Inc products out the back door.

"But I thought it was the product of contented bees," protested Arthur.

"I opened it thinking it was more hubcaps for that silly car," she said. "I've never been more embarrassed."

"But you know it was a mistake, my love, we couldn't even plug them in," said Arthur. "The description said it was especially for one's lady, and I only misread 'vibrator' as 'vibrant,' and I only wanted to bring color to your cheeks."

"You brought color to my cheeks all right," shouted Molly. "Out!"

Thus it was that Arthur wondered into the village, wondering how to best dispose of his expensive purchase. He saw Lucius Malfoy sitting at a table, and to his surprise, Mr. Malfoy waved him over.

"Let me buy you a drink, Arthur, old bean," said Lucius. "I'm drowning my sorrows, although I suppose, with that wonderful family of yours, you never have occasion to do such a thing."

"You might be surprised," said Arthur.

"What's in the box, my dear fellow?" asked Lucius.

"Just some items to plug holes," said Arthur.

Lucius brightened. "The very thing," he said.

Lucius slapped his head. "Oh, I almost forgot. I left Xenophilius contemplating my gnome problem while I went for more refreshment. We can take your box of whatevers and these two crates of sherry and join him, but be forewarned, he seems to be having problems with the girls."

"It's going around," said Arthur. "Let me get another crate of sherry to see us through the crisis."

When they returned to the manor, they opened a bottle of sherry, and thus fortified, they turned their attention to the box that Arthur had brought. It was full of the funniest looking plugs that Lucius had ever seen.

"I think they need 'lectricity," said Arthur.

"I know what's needed," said Xenophilius. "I'll run home and get it."

He arrived to find his daughter and Miss Granger having tea.

"You're drunk," said Luna.

"Never mind that," he said. "Help me get this generator to the manor."

An hour later, straining with the effort, Luna and Hermione were pulling the machine up the gravel path leading to the garden.

Cissy came out to see what the commotion was about while Arthur ran around employing his strange plugs.

Lucius took another swig of sherry and shook his head. "I haven't seen so many things in so many holes since ..."

"Your grandfather's last New Year's Eve party," injected Cissy.

"I was going to say since I managed an owl post office," replied Lucius.

Exhausted from the mental effort of strategic planning, the three wizards retired to the shade for more sherry, leaving Luna and Hermione to connect the wires and fire up the generator.

"Somehow, these plugs look familiar," said Hermione.

"They remind me of something, too," said Luna.

As the generator ran, the ground seemed to smoothly and gently vibrate. Nothing happened for a while, but gradually a smile spread across the faces of the three witches. After another short period of time, there appeared to be a ruckus underground. A little while later, there was an explosion of male gnomes running for the deep forest with the female population in hot pursuit.

"Problem solved," shouted Arthur and Xenophilius.

Lucius, however, saw the three ladies give each other a knowing look and wasn't so certain that their problems were behind them.

Four prompts from MuseAmusant:

1. Molly's always viewed Arthur's obsession with Muggle objects with typical witchly skepticism... until her insatiably curious hubby gets his hands on a Lovehoney catalog.
2. Hermione discovers Xenophilius Lovegood's not-so-dotty side when he comes to her with a most intriguing proposal. Initially reluctant, the Ministry's latest galling act drives her to accept his offer.
3. A drunken wizard finds himself at war with a particularly aggressive band of garden gnomes.
4. An advert, moonflower pollen, Thestral dung

Author's Note: Old prompts, but I couldn't resist.

Author's Note: A day late due to home improvement and embarrassment at using old prompts.