

# Jewel Saga

*by Fairfield*

Our intrepid heroes and heroines are on another quest.

## *Chapter 1 of 1*

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### **Part 1**

There was a woman called Hermione with surname Granger. Her parents were respected professionals, but she chose a different path and became a witch. She had an outstanding academic record, but her brilliance caused resentment among her coworkers. Deciding she was never going to be accepted, she went raiding and returned with rare plants and mystic runes for potent potions. She was industrious and was becoming wealthy.

There was a house elf called Dobby who came to be known as Dobby the Strange because of his independent ways. He was staying in the potion shop and helping with the housekeeping and brewing. People said it was natural that those two would end up together. Dobby was said to wield a huge cleaver, but not everyone believed the heroic tales told about him.

"What'd ya think, boss?"

"Looks easy. Only one witch and a house elf."

"You're right boss, a pushover."

"The wards are down," said a renegade sorcerer the gang had hired.

"No sign of life, boss. I'll climb in the window and open the door."

The still of the night was shattered.

### **Lost and Found Notice**

**Found:** Four fingers by the windowsill of The Splendid Potion Shop. May claim anytime upon proof of ownership.

There was a man called Cormac whose surname was McLaggen. His father was Adolphus McLaggen who owned several retail shops, and his uncle was Tiberius McLaggen who was famous in the potion trade. Cormac worked in a textile store, but he was restless, and his parents urged him to try other trades. People said of Cormac McLaggen that he spent time thinking about himself.

*I need a bigger dong.*

He looked up from his sandwich and contemplations to see a familiar face enter the shop and waved her over.

"Long time, no see," he said. "I hear you're alone these days. I know a sure cure for loneliness, hot lips."

"I'd rather kiss a snake, Cormac," said Hermione.

"You're taking up with the Malfoys?"

"I meant a real snake," she said over her shoulder as she left the shop.

He returned to his sandwich and contemplations which now included images of Miss Granger in the coils of a snake. His imagination, of which he was proud, could provide a trim figure in lace lingerie with a black reptile caressing smooth skin until the proud female moaned in pleasure until he was stabbed with pangs of envy toward the large and magnificent snake of his imagination. *Yeah, bigger.*

There was a man called Draco whose surname was Malfoy. He was the son of Lucius Malfoy and Cissy Malfoy nee Black. They were rich. Draco had tried his hand at much and had done much, but he still lived with his parents and seemed to have no direction. People said of Draco that he had not yet found himself.

A female form came charging out of a building and knocked him to the ground.

"Speaking of the snake," she said.

"And well met to you too, Granger," he said, picking himself up.

"I suppose you've already had lunch," she said, "and even if you haven't you're too picky about your company to be seen with me."

"Your next remark will be that I've put you off your feed, but you're in such distress that any companion will do," he said, "or is it that you've been rehearsing insults in the off chance that we would meet?"

"How rare it is to meet a person of understanding," she said.

"Does that mean you will let me buy you lunch?" he asked.

"It took you long enough to come to that conclusion," she said.

He pulled out a chair for her at a nearby table, but she huffed and asked if he couldn't see Cormac leering at her which made this establishment totally unsuitable. It took the thick-headed lot several tries before he suggested a proper place. After some consideration he begged unfamiliarity with her personal preferences. Once seated, she began telling him about the rigors of preparing delicate potions. After some consideration he remarked that she obviously had great skill. She described the difficulty of living with a house elf that was an unpredictable combination of subservience and independence. After some consideration he offered the opinion that not many could navigate such tricky waters. Encouraged by his display of empathy, she came to the heart of her problems: a lonely life where the one who was once the wizard of her dreams was drifting away from her.

"Oh, what am I to do?" she asked.

He mused a while before saying, "The usual suggestions are parties, hobbies, and professional associates."

"It was a rhetorical question, Draco."

She gave him a close look. "You're processing things before you say them. You're tempering your wit with consideration for others."

"It might be better for business."

She shook her head. "It doesn't come natural for you. It makes you slow witted."

He agreed.

"Well, untemper your wit and speak to me."

"Ronald could accept you being much brighter than he is, and he could accept you being much wealthier than he is, but not both."

"Anything else you'd like to say to me, o' silver-tongued one?" asked Hermione.

"You already know what I've said is true, and you know there's no going back. Why do you want someone else to say it for you?"

## Part II

One morning Lucius told Draco they must ride into town. They had to inspect the books and collect rent at the stores they owned. It was weary business but since it had to be done there was no help for it.

Cissy saw them off, but as they were leaving, she said, "It is a good day for diplomacy."

"Strange words are often an omen," said Draco.

Lucius replied that they were strange words indeed but only the events of the day could prove them to be an omen.

There was a woman named Andromeda the daughter of Cygnus and Druella Black and the sister of Cissy Malfoy, but her family had cast her out because of her marriage. She was now a widow taking care of her orphaned grandson, Teddy. On the same day that Lucius and Draco were in town, she and her grandson were resting at a tea shop before returning home.

Seeing Andromeda, Lucius said, "It has long been on my mind to approach my wife's sister. They've been apart far too long, but I know there are reasons for her to bear me hatred, and my efforts may only cause harm. Nevertheless I will try my luck."

"It is always good fortune to bring a family together," said Draco.

Lucius and Draco approached Andromeda and gave her their greeting. She returned it in a civil manner, and they joined her at the table.

"Are you Uncle Lucius?" asked Teddy.

"Yes."

"Are you evil?"

"You have asked a deep question," said Lucius. "My experience is that the greatest evil comes from trying to do the greatest good. It is a lack of balance."

"I don't understand," said Teddy.

"None of us really do," said Lucius, "but you can ask if I've done bad things. If you did, my answer would be yes."

"Are you here to do bad things now?" asked Andromeda.

"That is the furthest thing from my mind," said Lucius. "I would like to see you better provided for, but I know you would not welcome charity. On the other hand, you may not object to our using family connections for both your benefit and ours. We have a business arrangement with a lady who has a potion shop that caters to the rich. We fear, however, that she is overworked, which puts our investment at risk."

"You're talking about Hermione Granger," said Andromeda, "and if your proposal improves your finances then I can accept it without being beholden to you."

"This affair is full of speculation," said Lucius. "We have not approached Hermione about this, and we do not know her wishes. The thought of your working with her did not occur to us until we saw you sitting here a moment ago. Perhaps you can suggest a strategy."

"If you are of a mind to do this," said Andromeda, "then beginning by having Cissy offer sympathy to an overburdened woman is the approach mostly likely to produce results."

"The feminine touch may succeed where manly directness can make no progress," said Draco.

Andromeda treated Lucius to a pair of flashing eyes. "On the other hand, if you're not here to do bad, then instead of relying on your wife, you can manifest your manliness by interceding personally on my behalf."

"I can carry out your wishes in this matter," said Lucius, "if you are willing to accept a smaller chance of success in return for a procedure that is more pleasing to you."

"Daughters never fall far from the family tree," observed Draco as the two made their way to the Splendid Potion Shop to act on Andromeda's behalf.

"If I had given more thought to the matter, I could have foreseen this outcome," said Lucius as he gathered his manhood and entered the potion shop.

Hermione greeted them and said, "I thought you had agreed that I should run my business as I saw fit and you would be content with your share of the profit."

"That indeed was the agreement, and we are willing to abide by it," said Lucius, "but we did not anticipate the popularity and market for your potions. We have no intentions of interfering, but we may be able to help."

"Your timing is not the best," said Hermione. "Customers are coming and the work has piled up back in the lab."

Lucius and Draco agreed to wait in the lab until closing time while Hermione gave her full attention to her female customers. They found Dobby in the lab and gave him their greeting.

"How's it hanging, old chap?" asked Draco.

Dobby was downhearted. He wanted to keep the lab functional by cleaning the equipment and preparing the potion ingredients, but it reminded him of his time in the Hogwarts kitchen from which he had escaped. Lucius and Draco decided that they wished Dobby and Hermione to be in a good mood and that they could accomplish this by doing the scut work. Thus, when closing time arrived, it found both Dobby and Hermione willing to accept the Malfoy's invitation to dinner.

Well yes, agreed the Malfoys, a lab in bristle condition called for several glasses of Champaign. And Hermione could use someone she could trust. Well yes, agreed the Malfoys, they could begin with Dobby's favorite dish of snails in garlic sauce. And Hermione did consider Andromeda reliable. Well yes, agreed the Malfoys, they thought it reasonable that Hermione had been thinking about asparagus fried in butter all day. And Hermione was certain that Andromeda would be good company for both her and Dobby. Well yes, agreed the Malfoys, Dobby's yen for mussels in wine sauce was understandable along with Hermione's flippant remark that they, too, could get stewed in the same white wine. And Hermione agreed that she could afford to pay such a capable helper as Andromeda very well. Well yes, agreed the Malfoys, they were aware that most sophisticates would support Hermione's desire to end dinner with an array of dark chocolates. And Hermione said they could have suggested Andromeda several months ago.

The story now moves six months into the future. Lucius and Draco had been enjoying business as usual, but Lucius had been feeling uneasy.

"Cissy and Andy have become friendly," he said, "and while that warms my heart, I know that Andy will not long be content as a shop assistant."

"Black ambition is a joy to behold," said Draco, "preferably from a safe distance."

The next evening, Cissy gave them a warm welcome when they returned, followed by a dinner of their favorites.

As they were withdrawing for brandy and coffee in front of the fireplace, Lucius asked, "When do we meet with you and your sister?"

"Tomorrow for lunch, and it's with Andy and Dobby, o' unsurprised one," said Cissy, "and a considerate husband would have let his wife spring it on him."

Andy and Dobby, to their surprise, had discovered a passion and talent for goldsmithing. Cissy had assured them that Lucius would use his contacts to market their product to the wealthy non-wizards. To set off their work and give them an edge over the competition, they could use the most famous stash of jewels rumored to exist. It was the castoffs, the shards, from Fabius Untermeier, the mythical jeweler who used only the best of the best while discarding the mere best. It was only a matter of trekking into the wilderness around the Lonesome Pass and fending off a few trolls who now claimed the land, which should be no problem because there would be five adventurers. Andy and Dobby would go of course, and as a coup, Cissy had agreed to let Cormac McLaggen join them which would create enormous goodwill with his powerful family. Cormac would be paid a flat fee, and he did not know the purpose of the quest. Lucius would keep him safe, wouldn't he?

It was an altogether splendid arrangement. Cissy beamed.

The others were sipping their tea when they noticed Cissy staring into the distance. She spoke.

*Lonesome Pass belies its name*

*Cold and danger cause deep burns*

*Two go up to play their game*

*Lo and behold, a couple returns.*

Cissy returned to the here and now.

"I had hoped you had stopped doing that, sister dear," said Andromeda.

### Part III

There were three trolls called various names among themselves and whose surname is not known who regarded the Lonesome Pass as their preserve. It was not long before they noticed the intruders and put their minds to the matter. They were brighter than the average troll and decided to split themselves into two equal groups -- one to attack from up-trail and the other from down-trail.

Upon spotting the approaching up-trail troll, Andromeda hid in the shadow of a boulder until it had passed whereupon she assumed a power stance, swung, and buried the long, pointy part of her pickaxe in its bung hole.

"Whoop!" went the troll as it and the pickaxe toppled over the edge of the trail.

"You bring that back!" shouted Andromeda to the troll tumbling down the mountainside.

The first troll was now out of the battle.

Upon spotting the trolls, Cormac declared that he would find a position where he could keep a lookout and direct the battle whereupon he began scrambling up the rocky slope. His energetic climb knocked loose numerous stones, and a large one landed on Lucius's toes. A smaller one struck him in the groin area, bringing him to his knees. A third rock, however, took a high bounce and hit the second troll in his eyeball.

Draco sang a song.

Our Valkyrie  
With a mighty whack  
Drove her pick  
Up the troll's crack.  
The wily weasel  
Scrambling to spy  
Rolled sharp stones  
That hit a troll's eye.

Observing Lucius down for the count, Andromeda placed herself between the wizard and the second troll. She crouched on her right leg with her left leg extended. Her left hand was extended, palm up, and her right hand was over her head.

"Thousand Flower Fist," she announced.

"Huh?" went the troll.

The troll mesmerized by Andromeda did not notice Dobby circling behind him. Dobby leaped and buried his cleaver in the troll's right shoulder giving it a flesh wound, bone wound, or marrow wound that caused it to yowl and retreat with the cleaver still embedded.

"Most excellent kung fu," said Draco.

"They're running off with our stuff," said Andromeda.

The second troll was now out of the battle.

Cormac, having reached his vantage point, yelled down, "Behind you, Lucius!"

Lucius, helping himself to his feet with the aid of a shovel, now swung it and smashed the creature's nose. He swung again and connected, giving the troll a flesh wound, bone wound, or groin bruise that caused his opponent great distress. The troll was making his escape, but the shovel had caught in his loin cloth. Lucius was desperately holding on as he was dragged down the gravel path. Andromeda was chasing after him, flinging zingers from her wand, and screaming, "Don't let it take our shovel."

Enough zingers connected to shred the loin cloth. The shovel fell loose, and the troll, covering itself as best it could, dashed into the woods to hide behind the trees in embarrassment.

"I saved the day," said Cormac.

The third troll was now out of the battle.

Dobby was sitting disconsolately on a boulder, but he looked up and spoke as Lucius and Andromeda approached. "Dobby has lost his cleaver. Dobby is half an elf. Dobby will take his worthless self home and not be a burden."

Cormac from his vantage point called down. "Is there something wrong with Dobby? I can take him under my wing."

The elf sighed. "See the depths to which Dobby has fallen."

Andromeda addressed Dobby. "It is only a momentary funk after the exhilaration of battle. You are a warrior born and will soon regain your spirit, but a small boon from comrades will hasten recovery."

So saying, she took the shovel from Lucius and, with a wave of her wand, gave it a razor sharp edge that flashed in the sun. When placed in the elf's hands, he assumed a heroic pose that emanated such ferocity that both Andromeda and Lucius took a step back.

"Dobby is whole again," said the elf.

Her side-ways glance at Lucius also flashed as she commented that she would gladly help a wizard warrior both rest and regain his edge. He would rise the next morning bright eyed and bushy tailed -- because she would be bright eyed and bushy tailed all night.

"Your mere company no matter what your mood would restore any wizard," began Lucius, but he was interrupted by the clatter of rocks. They all turned to see Cormac slide down the hill to land on his tailbone.

"I'm fine," he said as they helped him to his feet.

"It was the easiest way to get down the slope," he said as he limped after them.

"Even after being abandoned for generations, a wizard's abode and workshop should leave visible traces," said Lucius, and it was not long before they noticed an overgrown clearing.

Dobby planted the handle of his shovel in the ground, stood to attention, and announced, "No troll shall pass."

The others searched for the treasure using hands and wands with Cormac observing that if he had been leading the expedition, they would have brought spare shovels, a remark that caused the others to rethink the working arrangement. They posted Cormac as the guard, assuring him that they would hear him squeak, er, sound the alarm, if

anything untoward happened and asked Dobby to help with the search. Dobby was clutching his shovel tightly and holding it close, but Andromeda explained they only wanted to take advantage of his elf senses.

"No tool shall be misused," said Draco.

But try for all his might, Dobby could only report that he had an aversion to a bramble of bushes whereupon Lucius declared success and swept away the growth with a swipe of his wand. Then, with deft weavings of his wand, accompanied by admiring glances from Andromeda, he removed layers of dirt and rocks, each one yard in area and one inch deep. The tops of two leather bags appeared. Andromeda concealed them in her cloak, picked up a piece of wood, and carved it into an Earth Goddess. She paused, reflected, and with a few more strokes of her wand, made it anatomically correct. Lucius nodded approval. When they showed it to Cormac and declared they had found the object of their quest, he blushed and looked away without giving it a close examination.

"A clever lady is a joy forever," said Draco.

Later, when the McLaggens related their son's pivotal role in the adventure, people agreed that he had acted courageously, but they always added that the Malfoys supported their relatives and returned everyone safely.