

# Spectacle of the Year

*by SS Lupin*

Draco tries to seduce Hermione but finds a Weasley is in his way.

## One

*Chapter 1 of 4*

Draco tries to seduce Hermione but finds a Weasley is in his way.

Disclaimer: Not mine.

Spectacle of the Year

Chapter One

It was the spectacle of the year. If Lucius Malfoy were to remarry after the death of his wife, most wizards and witches would think he'd share his life with a young blonde buxom beauty, something reminiscent of the old Malfoy prestige and glamour. If Lucius Malfoy would tie the knot at another binding ceremony, most wizards and witches would assume he'd have a grand spectacle on the glorious grounds of Malfoy Manor with the best and brightest of Britain and the rest of the magical world as his guests.

Most wizards and witches were imbeciles.

Severus Snape shared this sentiment as he leaned back against the wall of the Ministry's Ballroom during his friend's reception. Only Merlin knew how less than three years after the War, Lucius was able to convince the Ministry of Magic that: yes, he had been under the Imperius Curse during Tom Riddle's second coming; yes, he switched over to the side of light when Snape was able to break through the spell; and yes, he, his son, and Snape were all fighting for the good of the Wizarding world during the Final Battle.

Under normal circumstances, Snape was sure that a well-placed sack of Galleons had been given to the right officials. But Lucius' fifteen-month imprisonment in Azkaban gave the Ministry plenty of time to seize the Malfoy riches, leaving Lucius dangerously close to destitute. Snape also knew that the Wizengamot was on a fervent mission to rid Britain of "evil forces" after the Dark Lord's demise.

Snape shrugged the surly thoughts away. The important thing was that he was free despite his killing Dumbledore and that the closest thing to a friend he ever had in his life was getting married. Although Snape was comfortable with the fact that he would remain a bachelor indefinitely, he had spotted a handsome young man sipping a drink across the room.

*A Weasley is better than nothing*, he thought as he made his way toward the red-haired dragon keeper.

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"Father, you know that I support you, but... why?"

"Draco, I thought I explained it you already." Lucius reclined in his chair, watching his beautiful new wife talk with her family by an ice sculpture of a hippogriff emitting colorful sparks periodically. Sure, she wasn't svelte or voluptuous, and she was the complete physical opposite of his deceased wife... but he had come to love her,

nonetheless. He thanked Merlin that her first husband had perished along with his wife during the Final Battle. Lucius had cared for his wife in his own way, and he knew that when Arthur Weasley had died, a part of Molly's heart had died along with him. But the new relationship they had developed when she nursed him to health after the War was something tangible and wonderful to Lucius. This was something he had tried many times to clarify to Draco.

"It's just that you married a Weasley, Father. No, to be accurate, you married the bloody Weasley matriarch!" Draco couldn't help but whine at the craziness of the situation.

Lucius sighed. "All you need to know is that I... love her and that you're going to have to accept that. You know what your problem is, Draco?"

"That I am shocked and appalled at your bout of madness?"

"No. Your problem is that you have never fallen in love." When he saw Draco wince, Lucius added, "It took me almost fifty years to learn how to love, and I don't want the same thing to happen to you. Come." Lucius grabbed his son's hands and pulled him out of his chair.

"Look around you, Draco." Lucius gestured to the wide expanse of the ballroom. "There are so many unattached witches here. Beautiful, clever, and successful witches, all of them elated by the romanticism of the afternoon. See, even my stepson has caught onto the idea." Lucius pointed out Ron Weasley, who was happily dancing with Pansy Parkinson.

"Good Lord," Draco whispered. "This means that... that..." His face paled considerably.

"Straighten yourself out and find a girl; that's all I'm saying."

"It's not that," Draco gasped. "I just realized... Weasley's my stepbrother."

And with that, Draco promptly fainted.

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When Draco finally woke, a bushy mass of hair clouded his vision. He blinked and his sight cleared, showing a face tightened with worry and warm brown eyes filled with concern.

"He's come to." A high-pitched voice called out.

Draco sat up with a start. Not only did he faint in front of Weasley and Potter, but their girlfriend was standing over him, her wand pointed at his face.

"Are you going to *Avada* me for good this time, Granger?" Draco felt someone poking his back, and he turned to see his father giving him a stern look.

"Malfoy, could you please turn around so I can examine you?" Draco obliged and saw that he wasn't in the ballroom of the Ministry of Magic, but was sitting in a hospital bed at St. Mungo's. Granger, still wearing her emerald green dress robes from the reception party, had cast a *Lumos* spell and was shining the bright wand light into his eyes.

"Looks like everything is fine here, Mr. Malfoy, only a small fainting spell and not of the magical variety, either. What do you think triggered it?" Granger asked, focusing her attention on the younger man.

"Nothing," Draco said.

"Nothing at all? Did you ingest any new foods or drinks? Take any potions recently? I would have cast an *Ennervate* on you, but with the alcohol at the reception..."

"What time is it?" Draco asked.

"Seven-thirty. You were out for five hours," Molly said as she looked at the hospital room's clock.

Draco started; he hadn't been aware of the fact that the older witch was with them.

"Oh, you didn't see me, dear? I've been waiting with your father until you came to."

Draco was prepared to say some cutting remark to her, but he noted how she had stayed with his father in the hospital when they could have been in France for their honeymoon. "I didn't see you, that's all... What are you doing here, anyway? Go on and enjoy yourselves. I'll be fine."

Lucius laid a hand on Draco's shoulder. "We'll be off now then. Remember what I told you earlier. Don't wait too long."

"Take care, Draco." Molly hesitated a moment before rushing toward the wizard and giving him a sound kiss on his forehead.

As the door swung closed behind the newlyweds, Granger said, "It was a lovely wedding."

"I know." His stepmother couldn't be so bad, he decided.

"Well, now that you're awake..." Granger took out a piece of parchment and a quill. She spelled both to hover in the air and began to dictate.

"Patient's name: Malfoy, Draco. Age: nineteen."

"Twenty."

"Twenty. Symptoms: fainting spells "

"There's been only one."

"No other medical history in your family, then?" Granger stepped away from the quill and parchment and took out her wand.

"No... ow!" Draco flinched as the witch prodded him with her wand. "What are you doing?"

"Good to see that your reflexes are working as they should... normal temperature, clear lungs..." Granger stood in front of Draco again and held out her wand.

"Please follow the wand with your eyes," she said.

Draco did so, moving his eyes left, right, up and down, and in a circle... over and over and over....

"Mhmm, everything is in good order," Granger murmured, stopping the progress of her quill and taking both items from the air. "You may go now, but be sure to come back tomorrow."

"What for?"

"Additional testing. Although I don't think there is anything serious here, there is the history of mental illness from the Black side of your family that we need to be wary of."

Draco stood from the bed and took a step in the direction of the door when he lost his balance and grabbed onto the closest thing he could find.

He froze he realized that he was latching on to the warm body of Granger.

"My apologies," he muttered, hurrying out the door.

"Impaired motor skills... and partial erection?" Hermione added the information to her file.

She headed for the staff room to shrug on her Healer-in-Training robes when she bumped into a red-head with a silly grin on his face.

"Fred Weasley, what are you doing here?" She laughed, pushing herself off of the twin.

"Delivering some Nosebleed Nougats the other ends of them have been really useful for St. Mungo's with cases of extreme blood loss. What's with you?"

"Nothing, except you're the second unattainable male in the past minute that I have felt up." She smirked at him.

"I think we can change that," Fred said, embracing Hermione and leading her back into the empty hospital room.

Author's Note: If you've read this chapter, you have noticed at this point that some characters are slightly OOC, some more than others. This is meant to be a silly ficlet, and I hope you enjoy the next installment.

## Two

### *Chapter 2 of 4*

Draco visits Lucius and Molly for dinner at the Burrow.

Disclaimer: Not mine.

Spectacle of the Year

Chapter 2

Draco observed the surroundings of his Apparation point. His lips curled into a smirk at the chaotic mix of rooms and windows that made up the... Dirt Hole? Rat Nest? No... that couldn't be right.

He walked up the path to the hodgepodge house, avoiding the garden gnomes that tried to obstruct his path. Draco couldn't believe his father would volunteer to live for half of a year in such a wretched place. Because both Lucius and Molly did not want to abandon their homes or start anew in an unfamiliar place, both agreed to stay with their spouse in one of the homes for six months and then switch.

Draco didn't know how he could possibly spend an hour in the house every week. Molly, pining for the hustle of cooking for an entire troop of Weasleys, had begun a new tradition of inviting the Malfoy and Weasley families for dinner every Friday evening. Draco, being the only Malfoy besides his father at the dinners, felt awkward amongst the hoard of Weasleys sitting at the huge kitchen table. And of course, Potter and Granger would show as well, the adopted additions to the troupe of redheads.

This was to be his second dinner since the inception of this new tradition, and Draco was not looking forward to it. He had enough trouble getting through the meal last week, what with Potter and the Weasley girl waiting to pounce on each other, and Granger sitting directly across from him at the table...

He didn't know what to do about her. That scene at the hospital... it was only a physical reaction to a girl. A soft, pretty girl in green silk robes...

But apparently, she was taken by one of the Weasley twins, the one called Fred. That prat slobbered all over her last Friday, and Granger loved it. Draco had to hold back the urge to sneer at the sight.

It wasn't important that Draco's pulse quickened every time she smiled or that a tic at the corner of his mouth would twitch whenever she placed a hand into Fred's ugly freckled one.

Merlin, he was going to have a hard time this evening.

As Draco raised a hand to knock, the door swung open, revealing Fred and Granger in a tight embrace. Granger pulled out of Fred's arms to get some air and smiled at Draco's snarl in the doorway.

"Welcome to the Burrow," a dejected Fred said.

"Ah, the Burrow... that's what this shack is called." Draco stepped into the house and went to the kitchen. He would not be affected by the sight of Granger's flushed face and tousled hair. He would not grow annoyed with that pathetic public display of affection. He would not –

"Draco, it's about time you came. Dinner's almost ready," Molly said as she gave Draco a warm hug and brought him further into the kitchen.

"Where's Dad?" Draco asked, pulling off his cloak.

"Out getting some potatoes in the back garden. Bill, Fleur, and the kids are coming tonight and just Floo'd to let me know. Sit down with the others, dear; I'll get you something to drink."

Draco took the seat closest to the doorway. He supposed Molly had to be some woman to get his father to harvest vegetables in the backyard. He surveyed the table and saw Potter and his girl happily "talking" at the other end of the table, while the other Weasley twin held his newborn as his wife, Katie Bell, rested in the chair next to him. Draco's eyes flickered over to Weasley and Pansy, who had become an item during the wedding. Draco's former girlfriend turned in her chair to flash a grin at him before turning back to her current lover.

Draco nodded back and took the glass of cider Molly offered him. These events were madness. What were these Gryffindors doing to turn their Slytherin counterparts mad?

Draco's musings were interrupted by the sight of his father, covered in mud and holding a basket of potatoes in his hand. Draco had never seen Lucius look happier.

"Here you go, Molly. I had to fight the gnomes for potatoes, and the pesky blighters have good aim with mud balls," he said, kissing his wife and leaning against the counter.

Molly's cheeks turned red as she took the basket and magically began to peel the potatoes. "Get out of here and clean up. You're tracking mud all over the house," she admonished.

"Yes, Mrs. Malfoy." Lucius spotted his son and smiled. "How are you, son?"

"Fine."

"Heeded my advice?" he asked in a lower voice.

"Haven't found the opportunity to do so." Granger and Fred entered the kitchen then, arms linked.

Lucius noticed the direction of Draco's glare and smirked to himself. "Sometimes you have to fight for what you want," he said, leaving the kitchen before Draco could respond.

He studied the way the couple whispered together; once again across from him, even though Draco made sure he sat in a different chair from the one he sat in the previous week.

If he were to pursue her, he'd make sure not to end up like the love-sick Slytherins grinning in this odd house.

~\*~

Draco made his way through the stew, occasionally pausing to observe the couple in front of him. They were oblivious to his cold stares, feeding each other spoonfuls of stew and giggling when some of it spilled onto each other's faces. It was a disgusting display, and Draco would have ended all plans if it weren't for the way Granger's brown eyes danced whenever Fred cracked a corny joke for her amusement.

When dinner was over and dessert was about to begin, Draco extended his right foot and gently rubbed it along Granger's calf.

"A word?" he asked as her shocked gaze met his.

"Sure." She kissed Fred's cheek and told him she'd return, following Draco into the hallway. "What is it, Malfoy? If we take too long, Ron will eat all the pudding."

"Then I'll skip the talking entirely." Draco tilted Granger's chin up and pulled her in for a kiss.

Her lips were warm, and when she parted them for a sigh, Draco tasted her. It was just as warm there, tasting of stew and Granger and of a cozy crazy home he wished he could have had as a child.

His hands wandered from her face to her back, soft and covered by the cotton of her shirt. If he only had the bloody courage to do something in the hospital room that night, he could have had cool silk underneath his fingers instead.

As he moved his hands up to tangle themselves in her hair, Draco remembered how unruly it had been when he'd first walked into the Burrow.

Damn that Weasley.

"Why did you stop?" Granger gasped.

"Because I—" He suddenly developed a conscience?

"Fireworks." Draco heard the booming noises sounding from outside.

They ran to the backyard, where Fred and George had set off some fireworks of their own creation. Green and pink sparkles spiraled through sky, and purple and blue explosions showered over everyone in a bright light.

Draco pulled Granger close to him, amazed by the splashes of color in the night sky, though he kept his face set into a look of boredom.

Fred didn't seem fazed by Draco's handling of Granger and let a red and gold banner rocket into the sky. It exploded to show the words "Fred and Hermione" dazzling amongst the stars.

Draco loosened his hold on Granger and watched her run to Fred and jump into his arms for a hug.

Draco made an addendum to the resolution concerning his plans with Granger: If he were going to pursue her, he would do much better than setting up light shows.

## Three.

### *Chapter 3 of 4*

Draco spends more time with Hermione.

Disclaimer: Not mine.

### Chapter 3

Draco left the Burrow soon after, making sure to bring some of Molly's pudding with him. Even though he was having jealousy problems with one of her children, he wasn't going to stop himself from enjoying her food.

Draco paused his train of thought once he Apparated into his flat. He was ~~jealous~~ *jealous*? That couldn't be right at all. Malfoys didn't feel envy. They always got what they wanted and never had to share what was theirs.

Merlin, his mind was wandering again. As much as he enjoyed kissing Granger some scant minutes earlier, those short seconds of snogging did not make Granger his. At the moment she was probably all over Fred in the backyard of the Burrow.

Besides, Draco didn't even know why he was so eager to break up an existing relationship to get the girl. The last remnants of his honor seemed to be fading away as he continued to plot on how to get his lips on Granger's again.

Draco stretched out on the couch and Summoned a spoon for his pudding. At least he'd never be hungry while he planned his seduction.

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Draco strode into Gringotts the following morning with a sense of purpose. He was going to go forward in his plan to seduce Granger. Although he was sure his hands and mouth had left a lingering mark in her memory, Draco thought that a pretty piece of jewelry couldn't hurt.

He stepped into his modest vault with care and looked through the few jewels his mother had been able to safeguard for him before the worst of war. A sparkle caught his eye as he surveyed his small pile of riches, and he looked for the source.

*This will do very well*, he thought, slipping the article in a handkerchief and exiting the vault.

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"You're late, Draco." Snape raised his head from the cauldron he was inspecting and glared at his apprentice.

"My apologies, Severus. I had to do an errand before I arrived," Draco said, absently patting his pocket. "What am I expected to do today?"

"Three batches of Pepper-Up for the Infirmary, grading yesterday's assignments – first through fourth years. But first, help me finish inspecting these cauldrons." Draco nodded and peered into the cauldron next to Snape's.

Draco relished in the work of being a Potions Apprentice. He'd always loved the subject, and it was an odd comfort learning from his former teacher, Head of House, and fellow spy during the last years of the war. Snape was a knowledgeable master and wasn't as condescending as he was in the past. Come to think of it, Snape was even nicer – if you could use such a word to describe Snape – in recent weeks.

"Draco how have your visits to the Burrow been in the past?" Snape asked, jolting Draco so much that he bumped his head against the rim of the cauldron.

"Excuse me?" Draco rubbed his head. Snape wasn't much for conversation, and his sudden question startled the young man.

"You have ears, boy. Don't make me ask you again."

*So much for a nicer Snape.* "My visits have been... fine." How could he describe out loud the combination of Gryffindor estrangement, good food, and Granger's lips? "Why do you ask, Severus?" Draco added. Would the professor be knocking on Molly's doorstep anytime soon?

"You've been... distracted in the past few weeks. I only hope the Weasleys don't negatively influence your apprenticeship."

"No Weasley has an influence on my higher learning," Draco said, peering into the cauldron once more *Has Granger gotten to me that badly?*

~\*~

Draco had to pay for his tardiness by working an additional two hours alone in the dungeons of Hogwarts. By the time he had arrived at the back entrance of Purge and Dowse, Ltd., the streets of London were bathed in the light of the storefronts.

He should have waited until the following Friday, but he didn't think he could stand giving Granger such a wonderful present and then watch her throw herself at Fred moments later. And it wasn't that Draco couldn't wait; Malfoys weren't impatient. Malfoys also didn't have fantasies of a highly inappropriate nature concerning a certain bushy-haired Gryffindor...

A figure exited the store's brick wall. Draco leaned forward to get a better look, but the hair underneath the turquoise witches' hat was straight and blonde.

*Amazing how anyone would trust Lovegood in the medical profession.* Draco barely had time to smirk before another Healer, this one with thick brown hair, emerged from the wall.

Draco grabbed the witch and pulled her into his arms. He felt Granger struggle for a few moments until she realized whom her abductor was.

"Draco," she breathed, "what are you doing here?"

"Just wanted to say hello." He proceeded to end all future talk for some minutes.

"Couldn't we continue this elsewhere?" Granger asked. When she regained her bearings, she saw that she was in front of a restaurant in Diagon Alley.

"Wouldn't you prefer some dinner? I haven't eaten for some hours." Draco smiled, knowing his Apparation destination surprised her.

"I would love to," Granger said, slipping a hand into Draco's.

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"I must admit," Granger remarked as she tucked into her meal later on, "I'm glad you brought us here, instead of..." She trailed off and stared into her plate.

"My flat, you mean?" Draco took a sip of his wine and waited for her to answer.

"Yes, that. I've never... propositioned anyone like that before, and... thanks."

"You're welcome." Draco thought about her words. So she wasn't as wanton as he'd thought. That relieved him; he'd had enough of the scandal he'd suffered with Pansy Parkinson in their Hogwarts years. But if that was the case –

"I don't want to be blunt, but I wonder. Why are you interested in me when you're with Fred?"

"I believe that you expressed your interest in me first," Granger said coyly. She continued in a more serious tone, "We're enjoying the evening now, why bring him up now?"

Draco acquiesced and did not talk about Fred any further.

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"I had a wonderful evening with you, unexpected as it was," Granger said when Draco and she were in front of her flat's door.

"So did I. Before I go, I want to show you something." Draco procured a box from his pocket that he was able to purchase before he went to St. Mungo's.

When Granger opened the box, her lips curled into a smile at the brilliant emerald linked to a gold chain.

"Any subliminal messages with this, Draco?"

"No, the real subliminal message would be in the robes you wore to my father's wedding."

"So you noticed," Granger said pensively. She kissed Draco quickly, murmured a goodbye, and went into her flat.

Draco stared at the closed door in front of him and waved a hand through the space Granger had occupied moments earlier.

He had no idea how to proceed. He wanted her, but he didn't want to rush and suffer for it later. Then there was the problem with the Weasley twin...

*I'll figure it out come Friday*, Draco thought before he Disappeared.

## Four and Epilogue.

*Chapter 4 of 4*

Mudfights and revelations.

Disclaimer: Not mine.

### Chapter 4

The sound of shouts and laughter floated through the night sky as Draco reached the Burrow. Curious, he walked around the house and toward the backyard where he found a large wooden table surrounded by Gryffindors and one tall blond Slytherin.

"Draco, son, I'm so happy that you could come tonight. Molly made lamb chops." Lucius' steel-grey eyes almost sparkled with the prospect of his wife's cooking.

Draco said nothing and continued on his path to the table. He grimaced as his foot sank into the ground, squelching in its descent.

"Best not to be walking over there, dear. Last night's rainstorm made the ground a bit muddy, but the weather is so clear now!" Molly made sure to avoid the large patch of mud and kiss her son-in-law.

*A bit muddy. Right.* Draco muttered a *Scourgify* to get the mud out of his shoe before kissing Molly back. He then bent over to see if his only pair of fine shoes had been damaged.

When he stood, Draco realized that everyone in the garden went silent. He turned around and saw Charlie Weasley standing next to

"Professor Snape!" Hermione's shrill voice rang out from behind him.

"It's a pleasure to see you as well, Miss Granger," Snape said wryly.

"Severus, what a surprise!" Molly smiled and spelled some dishes to fly out of the kitchen window of the Burrow and land gently unto the table. "What brings you here?" She asked Snape, rushing over to Charlie and giving him a hug. They, Draco included, sat together at the table.

"Charlie invited me... He was interested in several new calming draughts for the Hungarian Horntails"

"No, Severus, no more lying." To the surprise of everyone there except for Molly, Charlie held on to Snape's hand and kissed it. "Severus and I have been in a relationship with one another since Mum's wedding." He spoke no more and asked Ginny to pass him the salad.

After the momentary silence, the Weasley family began to view the Potions master with interest save for Ron and Harry, who still shared a deep dislike for their former professor. As Fred turned to Charlie to ask his brother about the actual content of Snape's hair, Draco met Granger's eyes. He nodded to the door leading to the kitchen and slipped away unnoticed. He hoped that Granger would have as easy a time escaping from the Weasley clan as he did.

Draco, however, didn't notice a pair of black eyes following his exit.

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"Did you see that, Charlie?" Snape murmured as he saw a head of bushy hair leaving through the same door as a young man with blond hair went through minutes ago.

"See what?"

"Draco and Miss Granger leaving separately, but purposely."

"Draco and Hermione? You can't mean"

"Charlie, you practically shouted!" Snape hissed.

His warning came too late all at the table had heard Charlie's outburst, and an angry-looking Fred ran into the house.

~\*~

Draco didn't have time to ask Granger about her relationship with Fred, as the Weasley stormed into the kitchen of the Burrow moments after Granger had walked in.

"Hi, Fred. Draco and I were only talking"

"So he's 'Draco' now? What ever happened to the Malfoy you despised so much?" Fred's face reddened as he spoke.

"It's okay now, Fred; you can stop now," Granger pleaded.

"What if I don't want to stop now?" Fred said furiously. "What if I want to show everyone what a git he really is?" Fred pointed an accusatory finger at Draco.

"Please stop, you've done enough, honest." Granger seemed to be begging at this point.

"How about we take this outside?" Draco internally winced as soon as he said it. He couldn't do that there, not with everyone outside. That was really a stupid idea.

"We were outside before you took Hermione in here to take advantage of her."

"I would never take advantage of her!" Maybe mess with her a little, but he would never

Fred grabbed Draco by his shoulders before hauling him out of the kitchen and into the backyard. As Fred glared at him, Draco thought for a moment that Fred had winked at him before he was hurled to the ground. Draco righted himself from the ground and felt a heavy weight on his back. He took off his outer robe and saw that it was covered in mud.

"You arse!" Draco pulled out his wand to cast the worst hex he knew, but the sound of an "Accio" spell made Draco's wand fly from his robes.

Draco looked around and saw that Snape was holding three wands in his hand. *At least the bastard's unarmed.* That was the last thought Draco had before Fred tackled Draco into the mud.

"Shit!" Draco knew that this point that his clothes and pride had been thrown into the mud, Granger was watching it happen, and his shoes were no doubt ruined.

This Weasley was going to pay.

Draco fought against his attacker with a newly-found strength, taking mud into his hands and slinging it at Fred. Fred managed to knock Draco down into the mud after a few well-aimed mud balls, and Draco pushed Fred off of him to gain the upper hand. He pounced on Fred, ready to get a good stranglehold on him, when he felt his whole body freeze up.

"I said STOP, Fred. Don't you know when a ruse ends?" Granger shouted, her wand drawn.

"A ruse?" Draco had wanted to say this and luckily enough, Potter shared the sentiment.

"Yes." Granger pointed her wand at Draco and Fred. "Can I set you two free, or will you start acting childish again?" Seeming satisfied by the silent response of both men, Granger removed the spell.

"An explanation, Hermione?" Ron looked at the scene with confusion.

"There wouldn't need to be one if Fred would know when something's ended!"

"You mean you two are breaking up?" Draco asked hopefully.

"No... I mean yes... what I mean is that Fred and I aren't actually together. It was all a lie in order for... for Draco to notice me."

"WHAT?" Everyone outside was shocked with the news.

"It was only supposed to be temporary we were only going to fake being together for a short time until Draco would... get jealous. Fred doesn't like me that way at all. He's"

"It's okay, Hermione. They have a right to know." Fred stood. "I already have someone else."

"Who?" George asked.

"I dunno yet, but we've been writing for each other for awhile now... through one of those agencies."

"It's all been a lie then?" Draco wondered. Had he been fooled so easily?

"Not all of it." Granger knelt next to Draco in the mud. "You know," she said quietly, "you look sexy wrestling in the mud for my honor." She smiled and ran a finger down Draco's cheek, making a clear trail of clean skin on his face.

"You're not getting off that easily." Draco seized Granger's arms and pushed her into the mud, then leaning over her to kiss her soundly.

When they pulled apart, Granger smiled. "I guess I deserved that, didn't I?"

"After making me think I was some kind of home wrecker? Definitely." As he said this, Draco couldn't help but brush some of the muddy hair from her face.

"But you wouldn't have done anything unless I made you jealous all that stupid Malfoy pride."

"There is nothing wrong with a proud Malfoy." Lucius' comment reminded the pair where they were.

"Maybe we can discuss this later?" Draco wanted to get clean and further establish his place in Granger's life.

"Yes." Granger smiled again and kissed Draco once more.

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## Epilogue

Exhausted by another day of Potions making, Draco Apparated into his flat bleary-eyed.

"What day is it?" Draco wondered aloud. He couldn't wait until Friday, when Hermione said she would have a surprise for him before they went to the Weasley dinner.

He whirled around when he heard Hermione answer "It's Friday" from behind him.

"How'd you get through the wards?" Draco asked as he kissed Hermione in greeting.

"You reset them to let me enter last week, remember?" Hermione replied as she burrowed her face in Draco's neck.

"Oh." Draco led them to the couch. He must have done it for her, but the memory of it was a blur. Actually, the whole past month had been a blur with Hermione: memories of Weasley dinners and dinner dates and kisses before, during, and after said dates. Which reminded him...

"Draco, stop." He did as Hermione asked, his lips hovering over her mouth.

"Yes?" He may have been tired, but he could summon up the energy for a post-work snog.

"We have to go. It's almost dinner time." She straightened out her robes and stood.

"So soon?"

"Don't you want to see the surprise?"

Draco sighed and stood with her. "I'd rather see" The rest of his words were lost in the 'pop' of their Disapparation.

~\*~

Seated at the dinner table, Draco ate alongside Hermione, still thinking about the surprise.

"It wasn't Fred's girlfriend, was it?" As it turned out, Millicent Bulstrode had been Fred's pen pal and consequent lover and was introduced earlier during the dinner.

"No, that was Fred's surprise for everyone." Hermione took another bite of food.

"What is it, then?" Draco's answer came in the form of a horn sounding outside.

"Oh, that's them! I'm glad they got the directions right," Hermione said, running from the kitchen table and out of the house.

"Hermione, wait!" Draco followed her out of the Burrow where he saw a Muggle car on the front yard. Out stepped a man and a woman in Muggle clothes, looking out of place and confused.

"Draco, here they are I'd like you to meet my parents, Drs. John and Jane Granger."

Draco could hear someone mutter "Here we go again" before he passed out into the grass.

- end.

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