

Misunderstandings

by jmlane57

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Chapter 1 of 1

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"I've had it with you, Draco! You never take me anywhere...and your family with so much money!" Pansy Parkinson, main squeeze of Draco Malfoy, was furious at his neglect of her for his "obsession" with the Dark Arts.

"I have better things to do than escort you everywhere, Pansy!" Draco threw back impatiently, looking up from his latest present from home: a rare and very expensive book on the Dark Arts entitled *The Dark Arts Through the Ages*.

"And maybe you're just plain cheap, not to mention obsessed," she shot back. "I think I'll go find someone who'll treat me better! Goodbye!" She flounced angrily out of the Slytherin common room, but Draco didn't even look up as she left, too engrossed in his book.

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"Harry, don't you get it? I felt *used* ... as if I was just a toy for you to play with, a momentary distraction from what was truly important to you ... your obsession with Voldemort!" Ginny Weasley, Harry Potter's main squeeze, was furious at his neglect of her in favour of his "obsession" with the Dark Lord, as she put it.

"What do you want from me, Gin? I go after the Horcruxes and Voldemort, nearly get myself killed, and all you can do is complain!"

"That was your choice, not mine," she threw back.

"And one that I had to make. Voldemort had to be destroyed, and I was the only one who could do it."

"Oh, yes, the 'Chosen One' of the prophecy! I swear, I'm so bloody sick of hearing about that effing *prophecy* that if I hear it just once more, I'll upchuck!"

"If being with me is so repugnant to you, find somebody else!" Harry shot back. "You just don't understand my position!"

"Damn bloody right I don't! No sane person could! As for finding somebody else, I think I just may do that! Good day *Mr. Potter!*" A moment later, Ginny angrily flounced out of the Gryffindor common room.

A short time later, Hermione Granger approached him. "Trouble in Paradise, Harry? I heard that little exchange between you and Ginny."

"No offense, Hermione, but it's none of your concern. Just a little misunderstanding." Harry tried to downplay the seriousness of the argument.

"Sounded like more than a misunderstanding," Hermione retorted skeptically. "I'd be careful if I were you, Harry. You know the kind of temper Ginny has, being a redhead and all."

"Bugger off, Hermione. I'm not in the mood. Why don't you go find Ron, snog him for a while and let me think?"

"Well! That's the last time I try to give unsolicited advice! Good day!" Hermione also flounced out of the Gryffindor common room, totally and thoroughly miffed. Harry sighed. He just couldn't seem to do anything right today. He had Ginny angry with him and now Hermione, and if he wasn't careful, Ron would be too...especially once she told him of their exchange.

Unfortunately for our heroes, Pansy Parkinson had been hiding around the corner of the wall nearest the open Gryffindor portrait hole and heard everything. She didn't ordinarily come anywhere near such a place, it was so full of Muggle-lovers and Mudbloods, Granger being the worst of the lot, but she saw the perfect way to get revenge on Draco. She would seduce a Gryffindor boy right in front of him ... and not just any Gryffindor boy, but the most famous one of all...a certain Harry James Potter!

She ducked further into the shadows in order to ensure that Granger wouldn't see her before she made her way into the Gryffindor common room. Harry's head shot up upon noticing her entrance. "Pansy? What the bloody hell are *you* doing here?" He eyed her warily.

"Draco and I just had a fight. We broke up. I'm tired of his neglect. All he cares about is his bloody Dark Arts books!"

Harry winced in spite of himself. This sounded too much like Ginny's argument for comfort. "So what do you expect me to do about it?"

"Nothing. Just let me unload. May I sit down?"

"I suppose so." Harry couldn't help wondering just what Pansy was doing here, especially at this specific time. What did she have up her sleeve? Nothing good, he was sure. After all, she was a Slytherin and not to be trusted. How did he know that she wasn't here on Draco's orders and instructed to report to him everything he said and did?

Pansy sat down as near as she could to Harry, making sure her perfume laced with love potion reached his nostrils. This couldn't be better if she'd planned it. Potter had just had a fight with his own girlfriend, and as a result, his defences were down. If she played her cards right, he would end up snogging her right in front of both Ginny Weasley *and* Draco! For the time being, though, she had to continue to lull his fears.

"What's the problem with you and Ginny?"

Harry gave her a hard look over his Quidditch book.

"Didn't mean to pry; I was just curious."

"She doesn't understand why I had to leave her behind to fight the Dark Lord. She seems to have this idea that I used her as some sort of ... plaything."

"That's rubbish. Whatever the differences between our houses, I feel sure you're not the type to use people, Harry. Particularly not a girlfriend."

"Nice of you to say so," Harry returned, still wary but somewhat more relaxed in Pansy's presence. "Did Draco tell you to say that in order to set me up for a fall?"

"Draco doesn't know I'm here," she explained, truthful for once. "He doesn't know I'm alive. Not any more. As I said, he's too wrapped up in his Dark Arts books to have time for me."

"I'm sure he's just ... preoccupied. After all, you two have been an item for some time." Harry couldn't believe what he'd just said. Was he actually defending Draco Malfoy, of all people? He must be going soft or something!

"No, I'm sure he's become obsessed. It's gone on for weeks. I'm ready to climb the nearest wall."

"Well, I don't know what to tell you except to do something else to keep busy until he comes back to earth."

"I don't know what to do. I've never seen him like this before."

"I think I'll get some air. You're ... welcome to come along if you like," Harry found himself saying after putting his book down and marking his place, still sure he was somehow being set up for a fall. He was right, too...but it wasn't by Draco.

"Thanks. I appreciate it." With that, Pansy stood up and followed Harry out of the still-open portrait hole.

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To say that the looks Harry and Pansy got when they passed their fellow students, particularly the Gryffindors and Slytherins, were strange was to damn with faint praise. It certainly wasn't a common sight to see a Gryffindor and Slytherin, known enemies, walking together in anything resembling a friendly manner ... particularly a Gryffindor and Slytherin of the opposite sex!

"Just ignore them," Harry sent to Pansy in a stage-whisper. "Stranger things have happened than a Gryffindor and Slytherin walking together."

Pansy couldn't think of an answer to that, so she simply nodded and gave her companion a half smile. She was sure that the potion had to be at its strongest by now, so it was up to her to get Harry alone as soon as possible and make her moves on him, although she could only hope that Draco and Ginny would be there to watch.

It was fortunate that in the process Neville Longbottom saw Harry and Pansy go by, knowing such a rare sight could not bode well, either for Harry and Ginny or for Gryffindor House in general. He had to find Ron and Hermione but quick and hope that they would be able to offset (at the very least) the worst of the trouble heading their way.

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After an hour or so had gone by, Draco Malfoy looked up from his Dark Arts book. Pansy was being totally irrational; just because he wanted to study a little more often didn't mean he was neglecting her or that he was "obsessed," as she put it. He had to try to find her and see if he couldn't make her understand that. If he couldn't, well ... those were the breaks. Pansy wasn't the only girl around.

As rich and handsome as he was, he was bound to find somebody else more capable of appreciating what he had to offer. Maybe even a Gryffindor girl ... that pretty little redheaded girl, Ginny Weasley, perhaps. Even considering the fact of her being a Weasley, he had to admit she had gotten to be a real looker, particularly since she'd hit puberty. Even he could see that. If he could convince her to give up that goody-goody half-blood loser Potter for him, he'd certainly show both Potter *and* Pansy a thing or two! Potter and Pansy could even get together then if they wanted to. She would be making a comedown, of course, but those were the fortunes of war.

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It was at this point that Pansy had begun looking for rendezvous spots in earnest, but it seemed that there were students everywhere, almost literally coming out of the stonework. Finally Harry leaned against an obscure corner of the castle wall near Gryffindor Tower and Pansy stood beside him. By an odd coincidence, this just happened to be a fairly private spot ... and Pansy knew she couldn't wait much longer. Potter should be sufficiently softened up for the kill by now.

"Don't you think you should go find Draco, Pansy? I'm sure he's looking for you by now," Harry suggested.

"I doubt that very much," she countered.

"You never know till you try," Harry replied. "That reminds me ... just why are you hanging around me anyway, Pansy?"

"You listen to me, you show me ... sympathy, not to mention attention. More than Draco can be bothered to do lately. I'm really getting tired of his neglect."

"Well, I'm afraid I can't help you much. I already have a girlfriend, you know."

"A girlfriend you had a fight with," Pansy reminded him. "I'm afraid I heard you two arguing earlier."

"That doesn't mean we've broken up," Harry pointed out. "We're just having a ... minor disagreement."

"With all due respect, it didn't sound minor to me. She sounded pretty mad."

"She'll cool off. Ginny doesn't generally stay angry for long. Now why don't you go see if you can find Draco?"

"Because I'd rather be here with you," Pansy purred, moving closer, then reaching up to stroke the back of Harry's neck to make him look at her. "Have you any idea how handsome you are? I've always had a thing for green eyes ..."

"Pansy ..." Harry's heart began to pound, and his groin tightened in spite of himself. "Not here. Somebody could find us."

"I don't care. I hope they do," she crooned. "We could teach them a thing or two."

Particularly my neglectful boyfriend and your unappreciative girlfriend she thought wickedly as she moved in to give Harry what she intended to be the most fantastic snogging of his entire life. The next thing she knew, his arms had gone around her and he was holding her tightly, kissing her passionately. The potion was really outdoing itself! "Harry ..." she found herself crooning, running her hands through his silky but unruly black hair. "I had no idea you were such a good kisser. Compared to you, Draco is an amateur!"

"Shut up," Harry found himself growling as he pulled Pansy close to resume kissing her.

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Neville found Ron and Hermione just coming out of their own snogging session and ran up to them, breathless. "Ron, Hermione, come quick! Pansy Parkinson's gone after Harry! It looked to me like she was wearing something with love potion in it, because I can't see him going anywhere with her under normal circumstances."

"Bloody hell," Ron swore. "This has to be Draco's idea! The bloody bastard! Just wait till I find him...I'm going to hex him into the middle of the next century...and Pansy after that!"

"Come on, Ron!" Hermione called, pulling at his hand to make him run along with her. "There's no time to argue! We've got to find them!" With that, the three took off running, praying that they would find the couple before both Harry and Pansy got themselves in too deep to get out.

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Unfortunately, trouble had already arrived ... for Draco had arrived on the scene, and shortly before that, Ginny...both of them looking for their missing partners. They found them, too ... but not alone. "Harry," Ginny called. "I've come to apologize. I overreacted, and ..." She was stunned speechless at the sight before her, momentarily unaware that Draco was taking in the same sight...of Ginny's boyfriend and his girlfriend snogging each other senseless. "Pansy, I need to talk to you. I ..."

But the heavily-snogging couple had no idea anyone else was even there, not having missed a beat the whole time. Draco had to admit, at least to himself, that he was just as stunned as Ginny was ... and once they recovered, they looked at each other and got the same idea at virtually the same time. "It would seem that our erstwhile companions are ... otherwise engaged, so what do you say we go somewhere and...get to know each other?"

"Why not?" Ginny found herself agreeing, although under normal circumstances she wouldn't have given Draco Malfoy the time of day, much less consider snogging with him. She was, and always had been, far too much in love with Harry. But it now seemed as though Harry and Pansy had found ... other interests, to put it mildly. Interests such as each other. Well, two could play at that game! "From the looks of things, I truly doubt they'd miss us!"

Fortunately for the romances of all concerned, Neville, Ron and Hermione came running up at just that moment, the other two boys having to literally pry Harry and Pansy apart. Harry fought off the hands pulling him away at first, then settled down when he spied Ginny out of the corner of his eye, watching him, her eyes blazing, having no idea how in Merlin's name he was ever going to straighten this mess out...or even if he could!

"Ginny, Draco ... *freeze!*" Hermione ordered. "We're going to get this straightened out right here and now!"

Once they had been pried apart, Hermione slapped one, then the other, hard...that brought them back to themselves, albeit a bit too late to avoid what was going to be an ... *extremely* awkward and embarrassing situation, to put it mildly.

"Hermione? What? Why did you slap me?" Harry's hair was even messier than usual, his face flushed and his clothing rumpled, not to mention the fact that he had Pansy's lipstick all over his mouth.

"What the bloody hell did you think you were doing, Harry?" Ron all but roared at him, ready to take him apart, best friend or not. "Pansy's a ruddy Slytherin! Worst of all, you were snogging her senseless right in front of Ginny and Draco!"

It was the mention of Ginny's name that brought Harry completely back to earth. "God almighty," he murmured.*What have I done? What must Ginny be thinking?*

"It's all right, Harry. You're not ... entirely to blame. Pansy just slipped you a love potion in her perfume, that's all," Hermione informed him. "It takes an hour to work, so she had to stay around you that long so she could soften you up for the kill. I frankly think she was coming on to you to get revenge on Draco for neglecting her."

That was when all eyes turned to Pansy, every bit as rumpled and red-faced as Harry, particularly when she realized that Draco was there, staring daggers at her. "Is that true, Pansy? Did you go after Potter merely to get revenge on me?"

For a long time Pansy was unable to speak, finally bowing her head and nodding.

"We need to talk. Let's go." Without further ado, Draco took hold of Pansy's arm and almost literally dragged her off with him; none of the others made any attempt to stop him. Now all Harry had to worry about was salvaging his romance with Ginny ... if that was still possible.

Ginny was frankly reluctant to face Harry; only Ron and Hermione pulling her by each arm enabled her to do it. "Well, what have you to say for yourself, Mister? I come to apologize to you for my earlier outburst and find you snogging Pansy Parkinson six ways from Sunday!" She sounded upset, certainly, but not as upset as she could have

been. Harry knew that had it not been for his friends' intervention, that he and Ginny might be history even now.

"I'm ... so sorry, Gin. I never meant for it to happen. Pansy just caught me with my defences down."

"Well, at least that last part I can believe," she returned. "That's the perfect way to blindside you with a love potion! I'm not so sure about the rest, though, considering what you've put me through lately."

"Bloody hell, Gin, I already said I was sorry! You should know by now that I'd never do it under ordinary circumstances! What is it going to take to get you to believe me?"

"Meaning it would help," she threw back. "Demonstrating it would go even further."

"You want a demonstration? All right, then." He caught her arm. "Let's go somewhere more private, and I'll give you all the demonstrations you could ask for. And maybe by the time we're finished, you'll realize that I mean it, too!" With that, the second couple...the *proper* couple...disappeared around the corner of the castle and were gone.

"Whew! That was close!" Neville breathed. "I wasn't sure I was going to make it ... or find you two in time."

"Well, you did. That's what matters," Hermione assured him. "And we thank you, both of us."

Neville smiled nervously. "Glad I could help. I just hope Harry will."

"He will if we have anything to say about it," Hermione stated determinedly.

"I don't want you twisting his arm," Neville gently admonished them. "Harry may be a bit gullible on occasion, but he's not stupid. Sooner or later he would have seen through Pansy's trick."

"Yeah, but what would have happened to his and Ginny's romance in the meantime?" Hermione reminded him. "No, Neville. You did the right thing, coming for us right away. That way I was able to literally slap some sense into him. With that kind of potion, that's what's necessary to bring the affected person back to themselves."

"Do you think that Draco's got Pansy straightened out?" Neville couldn't help asking.

"We should find that out shortly," Hermione smiled. "Look." She pointed to her right, and sure enough, there were Draco and Pansy, happily snogging under a nearby tree, totally unaware they were being watched. "Well, that's that. Now let's go see if we can find our other couple." This was when Neville begged off, stating some urgent homework.

Ron and Hermione began to search, soon finding Harry and Ginny literally wrapped around each other under the next tree, a short distance away, lips locked and both pairs of hands moving deliciously over each other. "Looks like those two have made up, big-time," Hermione smiled knowingly, her smile widening when they heard soft moans and sighs of pleasure. "We'd better go now. Our work is done. Besides, we've got our own rendezvous to get back to."

Her smile was all it took for Ron to follow her without a word of protest ... and not long afterward, they resumed what they had been doing when Neville found them. This time, however, no one interrupted them...or either one of the other snogging couples, for that matter. That was probably best for all concerned, considering what had happened between members of the two rival houses. But if Hermione had anything to say about it, nothing like that would ever happen again.