

On This Shrunken Globe

by SS Lupin

When Draco Malfoy becomes Harry Potter's next door neighbor, the former rivals become more than hateful strangers to one another. My response to the "Fall 2006 Prompt Challenge" at Potter_Place.

One-shot.

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter and the other characters and places created by JKR.

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On this shrunken globe, men can no longer live as strangers. Adlai E. Stevenson

There was something inexplicably wonderful about playing Quidditch.

To Harry, Quidditch was about the wind ruffling his longish hair as he soared into the sky, be it clear, rainy, dark, or bright. It was about the whirl of players flying with or against him, passing the Quaffle and dodging Bludgers. And it was about the fluttering gold in his hand when he searched for and found the Snitch.

Harry was doing that on a sunny Sunday morning, searching for the Snitch in the sky above his magically secure backyard, when he noticed a moving truck pulling into the driveway his house and the house to his left shared. The sight of the truck itself was not unusual Harry did live in a Muggle neighborhood, after all but the glimmer of white-blond hair was unmistakable... and Harry had seen quite a few blonds after his Hogwarts days.

If Harry's glasses hadn't failed him, Draco Malfoy was moving in next door.

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When Ginny came home with their four-year-old son in tow late in the afternoon, Harry tried to be patient in telling her the news. It wasn't often when Harry had news to share with her that wasn't Auror related Ginny was the one who knew most of the Wizarding world's business.

He managed to keep it to himself until they were in the kitchen preparing dinner, Jamie making plenty of noise with his toy drum in the sitting room.

"Guess who I saw moving in next door?" Harry asked as he prepared the salad.

"Draco moved in today? When I wasn't here?"

Harry felt slightly put off. "You already knew?"

"Well, Harry, I do work in real estate in this area."

"Then why didn't you tell me?"

"I don't know; slipped my mind, I suppose."

Harry looked at Ginny with suspicion; she was one of the most clear-headed people he knew.

"Shit, Harry, the potatoes are burning!"

Harry's speculation ended as he helped Ginny save part of their dinner.

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"So when are you going to visit him?"

"What?"

"Visit. You know: go to his house, say hi, maybe bring something..."

"You're advising me to go speak to Malfoy? Politely?"

"It's not like you're twelve years old anymore. Besides, Draco's children go to the same Wizarding daycare as Jamie, and..."

"So you sold him the house next door, let his kids play with Jamie, and call him Draco. Next thing will be you going off and marrying him."

Ginny laughed and kissed Harry's cheek. "Sorry to disappoint you, but there's little chance of that happening."

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Harry was hunting for Jamie's trainer under the couch when he heard a whoosh of flames behind him.

Abandoning his search momentarily, Harry got up from his hands and knees to face his Floo caller.

"Malfoy, what a surprise."

"Shouldn't be, as I've been your neighbor for over a week now." Malfoy closed his eyes for a moment, shook his head. "Sorry for that... It's just... I need to ask you a favor."

"What would that favor be?"

"Sophia my youngest thinks there's a boggart in her drawers, and she refuses to get dressed until it's gone. Could you come over and take a look?"

Harry could already feel his head begin to nod. "Sure. But first I need to find my son's trainer."

Malfoy smirked. "Ever think about using a Summoning Charm?"

Harry smiled sheepishly as he muttered, "*Accio trainer*." Closing his hand over the offending piece of footwear, Harry said, "Thanks. I'll be there in a minute."

"Not a problem." Malfoy paused, then smiled. "It happens to all of us."

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Harry had expected Malfoy's home to be some sort of mausoleum or showcase of all the things he had acquired from the years he had spent traveling the world instead of fighting the war. Instead, it looked just like the interior of Harry's house, sans the mess.

Harry took in the details of Malfoy's house nevertheless, looking around with an Auror's investigative eye and holding Jamie's hand tightly. Knowing his exuberant son, Harry didn't want the boy breaking some Malfoy family heirloom.

Malfoy led them up the stairs to the second bedroom on their right. "This is Sophia's room," Malfoy said as he opened the door. "She's in her sister's room now" Some high-pitched shouts coming from the room next to them alerted Harry to their presence.

"Ah, my little angels are at it again." Malfoy turned to Jamie and smiled, asking, "Want to go see the girls?"

"Yeah!" Jamie slipped his hand out of Harry's and latched on to Malfoy's.

Malfoy's smile was still on his face when he spoke to Harry once more. "You could take a look, if you wish."

Harry was so stunned by the white flash of Malfoy's smile that it took him a heartbeat to respond. "Er... right."

Harry stepped into the room, which appeared to be an ordinary little girl's bedroom. Until he felt a thread of fear wrapping around his chest.

By the feel of it, the boggart was... there. Malfoy had neglected to inform Harry that the girl had three different sets of drawers. No matter. If the feeling wasn't an indicator, the shaking set of drawers by the far wall was a tell-tale sign.

Harry pulled out his wand and faced the drawers. Flicking his wand, Harry waited for the boggart to transform into his greatest fear.

The top drawer opened, and Jamie crawled out, jumping to the floor. Harry felt his stomach clench as the Jamie-boggart ran to Harry, his arms outstretched. Harry wanted to look away and say the spell, but he continued to watch in horror as a jet of green light struck Jamie, the boy falling to the ground.

Harry closed his eyes. He should have prepared himself with something funny before he let the boggart out.

"It's not real. *Riddikulus!*" Green light once again enveloped the lifeless form, and the boggart became a dancing leprechaun.

"Much better." Conjuring a wooden box, Harry Banished the boggart into the box and closed its lid.

Taking the box in his hands, Harry exited the room to find Malfoy standing right outside the doorway.

"That's it?" Malfoy pointed to the box.

"Yeah."

"Well... thanks. Now I can get her dressed."

Harry nodded, even though he wondered why they couldn't have just used clothes from one of her other dressers. "No problem. It was... nice seeing you, but I need to drop Jamie off"

"He's still in Severina's room. I'll get him."

After Harry dropped Jamie off and left the boggart with someone in the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures, he couldn't stop thinking about Malfoy's smile.

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Ginny Floo'd home that afternoon with a smile and surprise. "Jamie's at Draco's house."

Harry, who had gotten home a few minutes before Ginny, dropped his jacket. "What?"

"Jamie didn't want to stop playing with Severina and Sophia at the daycare, so Draco offered to watch him for awhile." Ginny picked up Harry's jacket and added, "You wouldn't mind picking him up later, would you?"

As Harry agreed, he told himself that it had nothing to do with seeing Malfoy again.

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"Our kids seem to like each other."

Malfoy laughed. "Ironic, isn't it?"

Harry agreed wholeheartedly. It was strange, seeing his little boy, who was a visible blend of both him and Ginny, playing with Malfoy's girls, who had Malfoy's pointed features and Pansy Parkinson's straight black hair. And it was the third time this week he had seen it, too.

Harry uncrossed his legs and set the drink Malfoy had poured him down. "Malfoy, I was thinking."

"You? Thinking?"

"Shocking, I know. Anyway, I'm always free on Sundays, and that's when Ginny spends her day with Jamie, so I was wondering if maybe she could also bring your girls with her, and we could play Quidditch."

Malfoy smirked into his drink. "Weasley can't play with you?"

"Ron's alright, but ever since he's been playing for the Cannons, Quidditch is the last thing on his mind when the season's over."

Malfoy downed his drink. "It's a deal, Potter. This Sunday."

~*~

Ginny was ecstatic when Harry had told her about Sunday's game. He had no idea why that was so, but he was just happy he could play Quidditch with another person.

Harry soared in the air, looking for the Snitch along with watching Malfoy look for the Snitch. Malfoy was flying with precision, scanning the sky much like a hawk would search for its prey.

Harry let out a silent whoop of delight when he saw the Snitch near Malfoy's foot. He flew after it excitedly, closing his fingers around the Snitch and part of Malfoy's trousers.

Malfoy yelped, pulling his foot away from Harry, who still held on, not wanting to lose the Snitch. He tugged the Snitch and Malfoy's trouser leg closer to him, causing the other man to lose his balance and fall off his broom.

The force of Malfoy's fall caused Harry to follow him, losing his one-handed grip on his broomstick and tumbling to the ground with Malfoy. Luckily, they had been flying close to the ground and didn't suffer any physical damage from the fall.

But Harry felt he'd suffer much psychological damage from it, lying on top of Malfoy with an erection. Any male who had played Quidditch would get one with the broomstick between their legs for so long, but Harry didn't want to admit to himself that his hard-on could have occurred from other reasons.

"Sorry 'bout that." Harry pulled himself to his feet.

Malfoy who looked a little red in the face, said, "You always had a weird way of catching the Snitch. Let's put our brooms away and get something to drink.

Glad Malfoy didn't mention the other thing, Harry pocketed the Snitch and looked for his broom.

~*~

They sat on Harry's porch swing, drinking lemonade and asking each other questions about their post-war lives, as discussing the weather didn't hold much interest for either of them.

"What brought you back to England?"

"It was wonderful traveling with girls, but I didn't want them to be alienated from Wizarding society the way I was as a boy."

Harry nodded in agreement, satisfied that his son would not be ignorant of his magical heritage the way he had been. "How is life as a single dad?" he asked.

"It isn't easy, but I like it this way. Pansy never liked the girls, and when she died... it was easier."

"But... she was their mother."

"Not every woman is like Ginny. She had my heirs as the marriage contract had stipulated, but she liked being Mrs. Malfoy more."

Harry sipped his drink in silence, still unable to fathom how a mother would kill herself without any concern for her children.

"I thought it was strange... your boggart, I mean."

Harry almost choked on his lemonade. "You saw it?"

"I had figured you'd be finished by the time I came back..."

"Oh. So what did you find strange about it?"

"I understand how you'd worry about Jamie I feel the same way about my girls. But I was surprised that your wife wasn't in it."

"Ex-wife."

"Pardon?"

"Ginny and I... we're divorced. I mean, we still live in the same house, but in different rooms."

"For how long?"

"A few months after Jamie was born. We finally accepted we weren't right for each other."

"How so?"

Harry looked down at his feet. "Different reasons."

"I don't mean to pry."

"No, no. It's fine. It's just that no one's ever asked me not even Ron and Hermione. And... if I tell you, you probably wouldn't want to see me again."

"Abandon Quidditch with you and our children playing together because you and Ginny's marriage didn't work out? I'm not that shallow, Potter."

"Right. Well, Ginny realized she didn't love me like a spouse, that it was still a crush for her. As for me..."

"What happened?"

"I found out I was gay."

Malfoy laughed, a reaction Harry didn't expect. "That makes it easier."

"Makes what easier?"

Harry then noticed that his face was moving closer to Malfoy and that Malfoy's lips were tilted up just so...

Their kiss was slow and warm, both sour and sweet from the lemonade they had been drinking. Harry could feel his heart beat faster as he raised a hand to Malfoy's neck, feeling the soft short hair there.

"Harry, I'm home. The kids are inside, and I was" Ginny stood at the front door, not even bothering to hide the grin on her face.

Malfoy broke the kiss. "Hello, Ginny. We were just"

"Snogging the hell out of each other? I know. If you'd like Draco, you and the girls could stay over for dinner."

Harry nudged Malfoy, and the blond smiled. "I'd be honored."

~*~

"I think it's time for me to move out."

Harry tried to protest Ginny's words, but she shook her head. "We aren't married anymore. Haven't been for years."

"What about Jamie?"

"He'll be fine it's not like he's moving, too."

"But this is your house as well as mine. Where will you go, anyway?"

"I'll move into the floor above my office. I haven't rented it out for months, and I'll be right across the street."

"Is this about Draco?"

Ginny shook her head. "A little, but more for me. I want to start dating again, and I can't tell prospective partners that my ex-husband's bedroom is across the hall."

Harry smiled. "I see your point. But I'll miss you."

"As soon as I leave, you'll be too enamored with Draco to notice. Besides, I'm still Jamie's mother, so you'll still see me around more often than not."

"I wouldn't want it any other way." Harry gave her a hug.

"Oh, stop it... makes me wish you're straight." Ginny returned the hug with a smile.

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"Did you ever think about moving in?"

"Where?"

"With me."

"Why would I ever do that?"

"I like the girls, the girls like Jamie, Jamie likes you... we all like each other. Might as well have it all in the same house."

"You're crazy."

"No, you are for passing up such a good offer. I have plenty of room, and your house is boggart-infested."

"Is not... Don't you think it's too soon?"

"Six months is too soon? Also, Christmas is coming up, and I don't want to decorate two houses."

"You're just lazy."

"And you're stubborn. Move in with me? Please?"

"Since you asked nicely... I'll have to talk it over with Severina and Sophia first."

Harry grinned wildly and showered Draco's face with kisses. He had already talked with the girls while their father was playing Quidditch against Ginny that Sunday, and he

knew the answer was yes.

- end.

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Author's Note: This was in response to the Potter Place Prompt Challenge: *Number 7. Harry and Draco (or other similar 'enemies') have grown up, settled down, got married and had kids. . . Now maybe they can put aside their enmity and (talk about the war/become friends/realize they love each other/ play Quidditch against each other/ stop their children from getting married/ as absurd or not as you like).*

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