

# It's a Wonderful Life, He Hopes

*by pokeystar*

A series of Christmastime drabblish vignettes, in the life of Draco & Hermione.

Draco ponders choices...

## Our Choices Show What We Truly Are

*Chapter 1 of 15*

A series of Christmastime drabblish vignettes, in the life of Draco & Hermione.

Draco ponders choices...

Notes/Warning: DH spoilers, very mild swearing, originally posted on the live journal community Dramionedrabbles 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: sled.

The first time Draco Malfoy saw "It's a Wonderful Life" was at Hermione Granger's holiday party. He had not been personally invited; instead he was there as Ginny Weasley's date. Ginny & Potter were on a break. Ginny wanted to get married; Potter was commitment shy. Ginny understood his issues but felt that enough was enough after five years of dating. Draco believed the words she had used were "piss or get off the pot." Draco thought Ginny needed to stop watching the telly. His job, according to Ginny, was to "help Harry make a decision." Draco had interpreted this as "get under Potter's skin as much as possible."

The party had been awkward initially. Potter and the Weasel sent Draco death glares every time he whispered in Ginny's ear or got Ginny punch or gave Ginny the patented Malfoy sexy pout. Draco thought it was probably harder to shoot fish in a barrel. Everyone else was uncomfortably watching the tense scene develop until Granger waved one of her infamous lists and announced it was time to decorate the tree. There was a universal groan, several cries of, "Yes, your majesty!" and then everyone laughed, breaking the tension.

An hour later, after decorating the tree, charades and cracker pulling, they all settled in the living room to nosh on biscuits and watch a film. Draco didn't absorb much of the movie, watching it only to cull ammunition for his current mission: Operation Provoke Potter. The film was charmingly obliging in aiding Draco's efforts. George Bailey was as nauseatingly good as Potter himself. Every scene with Mary was a chance to seductively murmur those lines to Ginny. The villain's name was Henry Potter, for Merlin's sake. Clearly, the universe was on his side. Granger gave Draco and Ginny so many sharp looks, he was sure she wasn't, but she didn't stop him either. As it turned out, the universe was on Ginny's side as well. Less than a year later, she was Mrs. Potter. Draco was not invited to the wedding.

The second time Draco saw "It's a Wonderful Life" was at Hermione Granger's holiday party the following year. When he commented on the lack of variety, Potter made an overexaggerated face of surprise and said, "Malfoy, did you just object to a *tradition*?" Draco and Harry shared a mutual smirk of appreciation, the first of anything they had congenially shared in the history of Wizardkind.

Without a mission, Malfoy was able to concentrate on the film this time. He wondered if the punch had been spiked. The scene where George's brother fell off the makeshift sled and into the river made him think of Crabbe and Goyle; the banker Potter reminded him of his father. He thought about the differences his absence would have made, had Draco been erased from his world. He noticed that Granger was giving him sharp glances again, but his overburdened mind shied away from reasoned analysis. In the end, he left abruptly after the movie finished, without saying goodbye to anyone.

And ended up on Harry's doorstep three days later. Potter was clearly astonished to see him there, but invited him in and showed Draco to his study.

"What brings you here, Draco?"

"I... That movie we watched at Granger's, it got me thinking."

Harry said nothing, waiting for Draco to finish.

"You saved Goyle and me in the Room of Requirement. I never thanked you for that. George... "

"George?"

"George Bailey made a difference in people's lives. I thought about my life... if it had never been... would the world be better? Would Snape, or Crabbe or... Dumbledore still be alive? I've never done anything that wasn't for me."

"You tried to kill Dumbledore to save your family from a mad man."

Draco made a dismissive gesture - that had been for him too.

"It's never too late, Draco. Our choices show what we truly are, far more than our past."

"Thank you, Potter." He sneered in a snide tone. He couldn't help it. His 'sarcasm in the face of sentimentality' reflex was too deeply ingrained.

"I forgive you for dating Ginny." Twinkled the Boy-Who-Was-Dumbledore's-Man.

Draco made a choice and just grinned at Harry.

The third time Draco saw "It's A Wonderful Life" was at Hermione's flat the following year. She hadn't felt like throwing a holiday party. She had broken up with Ron in June, and he was still giving her a hard time about it, making friends and relatives take sides. "As if we were all still in school," Ginny scoffed dismissively. She and Harry and Draco and Hermione had decorated the tree, skipped the charades (they had been Ron's idea), pulled crackers and settled in to nosh on biscuits and watch the movie. This time, Draco thought of Severus Snape, his life erased, Draco's world unrecognizable without him. Ginny and Harry said goodbye soon after the movie had ended. Draco stayed behind to help tidy up.

"You're very quiet tonight, Draco."

"Mmm... I was thinking of Snape... and choices and the past."

"The world would be very different without any one of us."

"I wish he had seen it like that."

"Maybe, in the end, he did." Hermione smiled sadly.

Draco made a choice. He gathered Hermione in his arms, brushed a finger gently against one petal soft cheek, tilted up her chin, and kissed her.

It changed his world.

A/N "Our choices show what we truly are, Harry, far more than our abilities." – CoS

## Proper Nomenclature

*Chapter 2 of 15*

Draco earns a spot on the most important list...

Notes/Warning: Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: snowflake.

"Granger," Drawled Draco.

"Hmmm... " Hermione stopped fanning herself with her diary.

"Have you ever caught a snowflake?"

Granger peered at the clear blue sky, then lolled onto her side to gaze (glaring took too much effort) at her wilting boyfriend. "I know it is December, Malfoy, but it's 80 degrees right now. No chance of snow."

"No. **This** kind of snowflake." He leaned over her and fluttered his eyelashes against her cheek.

"Isn't that a butterfly kiss?" Hermione puzzled.

"In the spring, of course. But it is now December, you might recall. In the winter, it is properly called a snowflake."

"Proper nomenclature is important. Another demonstration is in order, perhaps?"

He obliged, gently brushing her forehead, her nose, her lips.

Hermione hummed her approval and reached for her diary.

"What are you doing, Granger?"

"Adding snowflakes to the list."

"There's a list in your diary?"

"Of things I want to remember when I am old and grey."

## Signals?

*Chapter 3 of 15*

Draco is oblivious...

Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: mistletoe.

Hermione Granger wondered if wrapping herself naked in mistletoe would help. Her normally sensitive boyfriend seemed incapable of taking a hint. Her capacity for subtlety had been strained to the breaking point. What kind of Slytherin was he anyway?

Draco Malfoy was the kind of Slytherin who had decided 1) to let his girlfriend set the pace and 2) as a Gryffindor, said girlfriend was incapable of artful seduction. He was therefore waiting for her to pounce and hopefully, rip his clothes off. With her teeth.

If the candlelight was becomingly dim, it was because Hermione had neglected her shopping that week. If the music was sweet and soft, it was because his girlfriend was a considerate neighbor. If her hands trailed across his shoulders, finding knots and coaxing them away as if by magic, it was because she knew his week had been tense. If there was a fire crackling merrily in the grate, it was because Hermione was cold. If their meal had been superb, featuring Oysters Rockefeller, followed by Veal Piccata and a rich, luscious chocolate mousse, it was because his love was in the mood...

"Miss Granger," Draco growled. "Are you trying to seduce me?"

Hermione rolled her eyes, muttered, "For Merlin's sake." And pounced.

## The Gloves are Off

*Chapter 4 of 15*

Draco starts something...

Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: gloves.

"Alright, Malfoy. The gloves are off."

Draco sneered, "Say it, Granger. Only, try not to be a Hufflepuff about it."

"Better Hufflepuff meekness than Slytherin... all subtle innuendo and poison in Grandmere's tea!"

"At least I have a passing acquaintance with subtlety, unlike certain people I've encountered."

"Keep the Weasleys out of this!"

Draco inspected his manicure. "I don't believe I mentioned a name."

Hermione simply raised her eyebrow at him. It made him want to stop passing notes to Pansy, only he hadn't passed notes to Pansy in eight years.

"The subject of this argument is brunch on Boxing Day."

"Is it? Do you have a topic list somewhere? What's the next item on it – the Ministry's treatment of house-elves, perhaps?" Draco braced himself. He fancied he could see Hermione's hair curl tighter.

"I will not invite your parents to the Boxing Day brunch, Draco." Her voice was barely controlled. "Your mother is the queen of thinly veiled insults, and your father is the king of implied threats. They are the epitome of civility around you, but I don't trust them near my parents."

"They vowed to be on their best behavior."

"That is very reassuring," she replied in a tone that said the opposite.

The silence hung heavy between them for several minutes.

"You said talking about our problems would make us feel better. Do you feel better?" Draco inquired wearily.

"No," she whispered with tears in her eyes.

"Neither do I."

They didn't speak to each other for three days.

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Hermione Granger answered the knock at her front door.

Draco stood there, present in hand. He gave it to her without a word and watched her unwrap it.

"Thank you, Draco. They are beautiful." She held up the finely made cashmere lined leather gloves. "But why?"

"I was hoping you would put them back on."

## It's a Gift

*Chapter 5 of 15*

Draco blows his cool...

Implied sexual scenarios and adult language. Dedicated to A Bee's Buzz, fellow sufferer of MGS; she'll know why. Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: gift.

Hermione's bra magically unhooked for the fourth time in five minutes.

"Stop it, Malfoy," she growled "Some of us need to go to work."

Draco lolled back against the headboard and peered at his girlfriend through sleep mussed hair. "At least have coffee with me before you leave."

"Oh no. I think not, Mr. Malfoy. I am wise to your wily ways." Her voice dropped an octave in a fair imitation of his sexy just awake drawl. "Whatever shall we do while the coffee is brewing, Granger? Such a shame both of us are complete crap at kitchen charms." She huffed, "I was an hour late last time and I didn't even get a cup of coffee."

He leered at her. "Did you really need one?"

She stopped fastening her skirt and looked at him, heat in her eyes. "No," she murmured, softened. Her bra popped open again. Jolted out of her reverie, Hermione gave a little scream of frustration. He adored her screams.

"Malfoy! Do you have to be quite so distracting?"

"It's a gift," he rumbled, chuckling.

A few days later, Draco stood outside Scribbulus Everchanging Inks in Diagon Alley. He was uncommonly nervous and irritated. Merlin on a stick, he thought, how long did it take to pick out a quill? If she didn't hurry, they'd miss their reservation, and as it was New Year's Eve, every restaurant in London was fully booked. What was it about writing instruments that put his normally decisive girlfriend in a dither? He sighed, feeling increasingly put out. Tonight was important. They would talk, and she would listen. He would make her understand or bind her to his bed until she agreed. His eyes glazed over. Perhaps he would use his Slytherin ties...

"Oi!" The unpleasant voice of his least favorite person intruded rudely on Draco's fantasy.

"Oi!" said the Weasel. "What's this I hear about you and Hermione getting serious?"

"Why do you care, Weasel?" Draco spat, his calm facade disappearing quickly. "You've been keeping Lavender Brown's bed warm for several months now. You ought to be a man or cut bait."

Ron turned puce and gripped his wand. "At least our families haven't tried to kill each other," he spat in return, "Lovely Boxing Day brunch, was it?" His tone mimicked Hermione's perfectly. "Mind passing the kippers, Lucius? Please do tell us what you've been up to since dear Bella crucioed me in your front parlour. I suppose the Dark Lord's demise has rather left your days free?" Ron reverted back to his own voice. "Oh. Wait. Now I remember. Ginny mentioned your parents weren't invited." He shuddered but his glare was as sharp as his wits. "I imagine Hermione must be thrilled at the prospect of calling them Mum and Da. How are you going to curb the damn paterfamilias from his Muggle hunting tendencies?"

Bugger him with Wormtail's silver hand, when had the Weasel become so perceptive? Draco was shocked into complete and total honesty. "It's been taken care of, you git." He bit out. "They both performed a Family Name Vow, Weasel." Ron paled at this revelation. Ginny was right. Draco was *very* serious. 'The war changed us all,' he continued, "and my parents have been made indisputably aware that I am irretrievably in love with a Muggleborn. Either they accept her and her family wholeheartedly with graceful kindness, or it will be as if I never existed to them. Hermione will be my wife, if she'll have me. She is the best person I know, and I thank Merlin I am loved by her. I plan to propose to her tonight, you wanker. Between her and my family, I will always choose Hermione. *She* is my family."

Ron's response was cut off by a sharp gasp.

"Well, it seems someone has been rather busy." Hermione stated, her face inscrutable. "Tell me, Malfoy, did your scheme involve informing your Muggleborn girlfriend of that wizarding Vow?" She held up a hand to forestall an explanation that would not come. Draco was struck dumb, finally. She gestured to the curious crowd of shoppers surrounding them. "An ad in the Quibbler, perhaps?" Her eyes filled with tears of embarrassment, and her lower lip wobbled. "Happy New Year, Ronald Bilius Weasley." Saying that, she popped out of sight.

Draco rounded on his nemesis. "If there weren't witnesses and I could spare the energy or time," he ground out. "I would turn you into a teaspoon!" The crowd whistled and hooted appreciatively.

"Oh yeah, Ferret?" returned Ron, "I'd like to see you..." The rest of his sally trailed off. Draco had already apparated. The blond prat.

Draco Malfoy was overwrought. Her flat was blocked; he couldn't Apparate or Floo in and she wasn't answering her door. He had tried Zabini, Goyle, Potter and the Weaselette; no one had seen her, and his owl was worn out. She could be at the Burrow; there was an Order gathering there tonight. But one hostile Weasley standoff was

all his nerves could take. He ran his hands through his hair and opened the door to his bedroom.

The candle light was dim, but closing his eyes did not erase the vision before him. Hermione was perched on the end of his enormous four poster bed, in nothing but the gloves he had given her.

“Marry me,” she said, her voice silky yet strong.

“I... ” Were those Gryffindor ties adorning each post? He blinked. His eyes glazed slightly. “Merlin, Granger. I can’t think. Do you have to be quite so distracting?”

Her grin was voracious. “It’s a gift.”

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A/N(ssss):

Ron adores the Cohen Brothers, as do I. “Damn paterfamilias” is from “O Brother, Where Art Thou?”

These are Hermione’s gloves:



Lucky bint. Draco has fantastic taste, no?

[Gloves by Bruno](#) (Style: couture)

Pokeystar’s mini-essay on the Family Name Vow

The Family Name Vow works very much like an Unbreakable Vow.

The participants invoke their family name, state their promise(s), and a third party performs the binding. The vow only works on members of an immediate family relationship (Parents, Children, Aunts, Uncles, Grandparents, First Cousins) It’s pretty obscure, very problematic and rarely used, even as a last resort.

Instead of dying, if the vow is broken by the promiser, they are obliterated, which removes any memory of the person the promise was made to, while that person retains any inheritance. It’s as if they don’t exist anymore to the promiser. Additionally, a derivation of a confusion charm is triggered to cover the loss of money, et cetera.

So, if Lucius and Narcissa broke their promise to Draco, they wouldn’t know him as their son any longer, wouldn’t remember they ever had a son to begin with (missing out on grandchildren, et cetera.), and the confusion charm would keep them from having any sort of relationship with him ever again as well as cover the reduction in their Gringott’s coffers and whatever else Draco stood to inherit at that point. Effectively, he would remain their heir, and the elder Malfoys would be dissuaded by the confusion charm from thinking about it. If a miracle occurred and Narcissa had another child, that child would inherit half and the Malfoys wouldn’t question it. See, problematic.

## Pet Names

*Chapter 6 of 15*

Draco has a crisis...

Notes/Warning: Implied sexual scenarios. Adult language. Takes place 1 year after It’s a Gift. Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: snowman.

Hermione Granger and Ginny Potter were sitting on the couch in the living room of what used to be Hermione’s flat. As organized as the soon-to-be Mrs. Malfoy was, she had been met and defeated by a craftier foe, and now an avalanche of paper goods in shades of ice blue and cream covered everything in a thick blanket that would give house-elves nightmares. Hermione had not seen Crookshanks for days, though the food in his bowl regularly disappeared. Once, out of the corner of her eye, she thought she saw a giant mass of iridescent curling ribbon sprout legs and attack the paper afghan covering her reading chair.

“Well,” said Ginny, tying an ice blue ribbon in a bow around a parchment scroll, “That’s the last of the programs.” The bride-to-be said nothing. She appeared to be in a trance. “Hermione?”

“Hmmm... what?” Hermione focused on the basket of scrolls Ginny was waving under her nose. “Ginny. Two ceremonies. Two receptions. Whose insane idea was that?”

“The Moms’,” her matron of honor replied by rote. She could go on the road with it, this routine she had down pat.

“Why am I doing this again?”

“If not two of everything, half of the family would be left out,” Ginny said automatically. “They would kill you if you didn’t.”

“I could always leave the country.”

“And the man you love, adore and can’t live without?” Ginny’s voice was monotone. She was a supportive friend, but this was getting old.

‘He’d pack the bags and pick out our aliases.’

“You wouldn’t get to wear that dress.”

Hermione bit her lip as her eyes filled with tears. “There is that.”

She had to admit, as reasons went, it was very pathetic and girlie but she adored that dress. In that dress, Hermione Jane Granger, Muggleborn swot, was transformed into a fairy princess. It was precisely because she wasn’t a girlie kind of woman that the dress had seduced her so easily. It was the only piece of clothing in existence that made her feel the way that Draco did when he looked at her. She could hardly wait to see his reaction as she walked down the aisle. She was even considering an Oblivate to experience it again at the second ceremony. She gave Ginny a hug.

“Thanks for helping, Gin.”

Ginny smiled. "No problem, hon. How about some wine before..." At a loud crack, both women jumped, and a ball of curling ribbon dove under the couch.

"Granger, we can't get married." Draco ran his hands through his already extremely mussed hair.

Hermione gaped at him. Ginny squeezed her hand and quietly popped out of sight.

"I know, I know. Two ceremonies. Two receptions." He gestured at the paper avalanche. "The Whomping Willow's worst nightmare. Enough crab legs to keep the Giant Squid happy for a year." Hermione was entirely sure the Squid was vegetarian, but as Draco had not memorized Hogwarts: A History, he rambled on, blithely unaware. "The thing is, we don't have nicknames."

"Nicknames?" she managed to splutter.

"Yes. Nicknames. Pet names. Terms of endearment. Daphne and Blaise have several, despite seeing each other about four hours out of a week and arguing for three-and-a-half of them. We're getting married, Granger. In seven days. On New Year's Eve. How can we be a true couple without pet names for each other?" He paused for breath.

"Is that all?"

It was his turn to gape. All? All! What if not having nicknames set off a karma-induced chain of events, in which Draco ended up Hermioneless and homeless in an alley, clutching a broken paddleball toy and a thermos? His fiancée broke in on his dramatic moment.

"Well, we'll just have to think of some."

She was brilliant. He loved her.

"You're brilliant. I love you."

"I know, snugglebunny."

"Ugh. Sweet lips."

"Honeybunch."

"Hot buns."

"Babycakes."

"Silky melons."

"Pervy tongue."

"I've got it," he cried. "Curly-haired Snitch."

"..."

"Because I loved catching the Snitch in school, and I love catching you now."

"You can't, Malfoy."

"Why not?" he asked, regarding her innocently.

"It's very close to a certain Muggle euphemism."

"Which Muggle euphemism would that be?" he inquired.

She blushed.

"Oh... oh... is this a see you next Tuesday euphemism?"

Hermione spluttered, "Where did you hear *that*, Draco?"

"Potter charmed Goyle's telly to receive American broadcasts, so that we all could watch some prize fight." He explained, "Sex and the City came on after." Hermione gave him an odd look. "What? Potter told us a bunch of you ladies cackle and drink while watching it at his house every week. We were curious. Besides, Goyle fancies Stanford, and a mate supports his mate's lifestyle choices, even if that mate is a little fuzzy on the concept of fictional programming."

"Which character do you fancy, Draco?" She asked curiously. She was rather fond of Mr. Big, herself.

"Charlotte. Big brown eyes. Rule abiding, prim and proper. Very charming and intelligent. Those classy conservative suits. All that satin and lace underneath." His eyes bored into hers. "I think I have a type."

"Dam."

"I'm good. I know."

"No." she said, tracing the letters in the air with her wand. "D a m. Dangerously amorous man."

"I like it," he smirked, capitalizing the M with a wave of his wand. "My middle name is Abraxis, did you know?" He tilted his head to the side, contemplating her. "Mi one. My one. My own." His voice drops. "My mantra, when I'm inside you." His gaze hot, he traced an M, then an o in the air. "My own heart." An h joined the sparkly script.

"Moh," she whispered.

"Moh," he repeated huskily and threw her over his shoulder. He headed for her bedroom, lightly smacking the image of Frosty on her derriere. "Nice snowman boxers, Moh. Very enticing."

A/N: Hermione's Dress



Exquisitely beaded Cynthia C gown with dropped waist and full tulle skirt.

## Draco Runs an Errand

*Chapter 7 of 15*

Draco can't remember...

Implied sexual scenarios. Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: tinsel

Perhaps he should have listened when his wife suggested purchasing cell phones. Instead, he had naively assumed that it was always possible to do a Patronus, if needed. Likewise, he should have written down the items she required. Or **she** should have. After all, Hermione Malfoy-Granger was known affectionately to family and friends as Queen of the List. A Memory Charm (*Comitto?*) would've worked. If he had thought of it.

What was it he was forgetting? Champagne. Check. Whipped Cream. Check. Santa hat. Check. Lacey French designer teddy. Check. Thigh-high stockings. Check. Maybe he should have left shopping for those two items last. They were catastrophically distracting. They were also his idea, not hers.

Blast it! Champagne, whipped cream, Santa hat... Santa hat? Whatever happened to the one he bought last year? Oh. Yes. It had not survived its excursion in the Jacuzzi. Apparently, red felt and marabou, while looking very fetching indeed on top his brilliant wife's curly locks, were not impervious to monsoon conditions.

How could she expect him to remember anything after thinking of that? Champagne, whipped cream, Santa hat. *Buck up, Draco. Think of England. Think of irritated Granger. Worse, think of an irate Mrs. Malfoy-Granger. Or... No... disappointed Moh.* Champagne, whipped cream, Santa hat... *wobbly pink lip, sad chocolate eyes, heart-wrenching little sigh...* Tinsel!

What had she wanted tinsel for? The Manor was already decorated. It was just the two of them for Christmas Eve. She had promised. It was to be his *special* present.

And she had said, "If it's a present, DaM, it should be wrapped, don't you think?"

*Ah, tinsel. Pretty, shiny, durable tinsel.*

## Hello, Insanity

*Chapter 8 of 15*

Draco is deliriously happy... or just delirious...

Dedicated to Mr. Pokey, who requested more magic in my stories. Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: blizzard.

Draco was being driven insane one teensy request at a time, and he was deliriously happy about it.

After all, the fates had not been very kind to Moh these last five months; morning sickness, forgetfulness, extreme mood swings, and night time sweats had been the least

of her trials. If it was in his power to ease her pregnancy a little, he would do anything she asked of him. As long as she let them keep Mipsy the house-elf for the duration.

At first, the random odd happenings had barely registered; a long lost locket reappeared, his best gloves were dangling from the atrium chandelier. They marveled when Narcissa's prize roses turned blue and blamed an electrical storm when the telly played only Jerry Lewis movies for twelve hours straight. When pink elephants on roller skates had glided through the living room during a cozily intimate moment in front of the fire (holding signs that said "Ooo la la" and "Who's Your Daddy?") they accused George Weasley of testing new products without their consent.

Surprisingly, it was Lucius who finally solved the mystery. The anticipation of his first grandson had led Lucius to stroll down memory lane. Memory lane helpfully reminded Lucius of Narcissa's eventful pregnancy with Draco. He actually forgot his beloved snake-head cane in his haste to warn his son against impending doom.

"So, what you're saying, Father, is that pregnancy hormones cause a witch's magic to be unbalanced? The more powerful the witch..."

"The wilder the magic. House-elves are especially capable of controlling wild magic. It's why they make wonderful nannies."

"And you would like to loan us a house-elf?"

"Yes. Just to make sure you still have a house. For my grandson."

"You get to tell her." Draco might be happily insane but he was no fool.

Lucius had needed to visit St. Mungo's, (they did a fantastic job, one could barely see where the extra nose had been) but Hermione had finally conceded the need for a temporary house-elf. She allowed Mipsy to perform magical damage control, but refused to request anything else of her. That was what Draco was for.

He fetched her furry cat slippers when her feet were cold. He massaged her back before bed each night. He eagerly listened to her obsess over the safety of cribs, bottles and prams; listened to her debate cloth versus plastic, when to give the baby solid food, play dates and home schooling versus Montessori.

Mrs. Clemson, their handsomely paid squib housekeeper, marveled at Draco's fortitude and threatened to quit at least once a day. By this time, Draco was more insane and less deliriously happy. Things came to a head during Boxing Day supper with Ginny and Harry. Hermione was craving Fortescue's gingerbread ice cream. Draco did not wait for the request. He dazedly walked out the front door to Apparate to London in the middle of a snow storm.

"Did you realize there is a blizzard outside?" Harry inquired gently, remembering Lucius' extra nose adventure.

"No!" exclaimed Hermione. "What is Draco thinking?"

Ginny and Harry shrugged. Though they were sane, they weren't fools either.

Draco returned safely ten minutes later, gingerbread ice cream in hand. The two couples settled by the fire after Hermione fussed over Draco's well being. The women chatted pleasantly about Ministry events.

"Harry," asked Draco, "Ginny is a powerful witch. How did you cope when she was pregnant with James?"

There was silence. Harry looked up to find Hermione and Ginny regarding him suspiciously.

"You didn't warn him," Ginny stated with eyebrow raised.

"Oops." Harry grinned sheepishly. His green eyes twinkled mischievously. "I forgot."

"You know," drawled Draco. "I heard at the ice cream shop that Luna and Neville are expecting their first baby in September."

"Are you going to warn him?" asked Harry.

"Nope," replied his co-conspirator. "I've always wanted to see a Nargle."

A/N:

Mipsy the house-elf borrowed from Scifichick774's awesome WIP "Repercussions" rated M. DM/HG, and I'm not saying it's awesome just because I'm her beta.

Pink elephants on rollerskates borrowed from LadyoftheMasque's fanfic - SS/HG. NC-17. Fabulous. All of it.

## Fruitful Expedition

*Chapter 9 of 15*

: Draco facilitates familial relations...

Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: elf.

Lucius Malfoy watched his heavily pregnant daughter-in-law invade his sanctuary and absently touched the slight dimple high on his forehead, left of center, over his original nose. He breathed an audible sigh of relief as he spied Mipsy trotting into his study after her. Still, he weighed his choices carefully, balancing tone of voice against the implications of words and opted to open negotiations with a tentative, yet pleasant, "Good morning, Hermione dear. How are you feeling?"

"Well enough." She beamed at him. Obviously, congeniality had been the correct tactic. "Junior and I turned Mrs. Clemson's kettle inside out this morning. Mipsy fixed it in a trice though. Sev's little brother is taking it easy, it seems. Although your doorknocker has been altered, Lucius. It is now an elf, instead of a serpent. Mipsy and I thought it looked better, so we left it." Ah well, he mentally shrugged. The doorknocker could eventually be set to rights without a visit to St. Mungo's.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of your visit?" He gestured to one of the Chippendale chairs facing his desk. "Make yourself comfortable. Would you care for some herbal tea or crackers?"

"No thank you, Lucius," she replied. "I was hoping you could help me with something."



He arched an eyebrow in surprise. While he and Hermione maintained a pleasant acquaintance, they had never become close. This was the first time she had ever asked anything of him. He suppressed the urge to touch his forehead again and said, "Please elaborate."

"Well, Draco mentioned the other day that your library includes some personal journals of Salazar Slytherin's. I'm hoping to write a book about him and thought maybe I could look at them?"

"That would be impossible had I not taken the Family Name Vow. The journals have extremely strong wards against non-purebloods."

"The Family Name Vow? Why would that make a difference?" she inquired, puzzled.

"Actually, having been apprised of your knowledge seeking tendencies, I'm rather surprised you are not aware of this particular side effect."

She frowned, and Lucius glanced around to make sure Mipsy was still in the room, relieved to find her sitting by the fireplace.

"Well, I've always wanted to read more about the vow, but at first, it was almost impossible to find any information about it, and then, well, I've been ah... busy..." She blushed, unconsciously rubbing her tummy.

"That's my boy," Lucius murmured. Draco had obviously absorbed and employed his own favorite method of handling an energetic wife. "A lesser known effect of the vow -- the reason it can be performed only by immediate family members -- is that it makes the subject of the vow a full blood member of the family."

"Oh!" She gasped and rubbed her tummy. Lucius surreptitiously checked for his wand. She looked down and said distractedly, "You won't be able to try out for Puddlemere United right away, you know. Please settle down in there." She focused on Lucius again. "You mean the journals will think I'm a pureblood?"

"Yes," replied Lucius, "because you are."

"Draco Malfoy," Hermione muttered darkly. "You have some explaining to do."

"I'm sure Draco is not aware of it," Lucius interjected. Hermione gave him a sharp look. He hastily continued, "I only discovered it a few days ago. Severus was able to pick up my cane without triggering the wards. I did some research."

Hermione took a deep breath. "How did Severus get to your cane, Lucius?"

He shifted in his seat. He had been hoping the mention of research... "I had put it down for a moment to give him a hug. I was distracted by Narcissa, and when I looked down, Sev was kissing the snake."

Hermione closed her eyes and sighed. Lucius Malfoy was a very lucky man. If her baby had been hurt... an extra nose would have been preferable.

"I have been unable to remove the pureblood wards from my cane," he said. "But I was able to disarm the harmful curses. I replaced them with a Rictusempra."

She opened her eyes and smiled warmly at him. "Thank you, Lucius."

"Shall I get those journals for you?" he inquired.

"Yes, please. If you're not busy, would you like to peruse them with me?"

Several hours later, Hermione slipped into Draco's study and snuggled with him by the fire.

"You were gone a long time, Moh. Was it a fruitful expedition?"

"Yes, DaM," she replied, "More so than expected."

"You seem preoccupied."

"Mmmm... Draco, if you don't mind, I have a name picked out for our new son."

"Yes?" he encouraged.

"Salazar Lucius."

Draco raised an eyebrow, but merely nodded his consent. A very fruitful expedition indeed.

## Queen of the Lists

*Chapter 10 of 15*

Draco supplies a holiday...

Notes/Warning: Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: holiday.

Hermione Malfoy-Granger was a very busy woman. So busy, she had not had a chance to sit down and mark off tasks completed for several days. She glanced down at the list on her antique writing desk and drew lines through a few more items. Baking with Mum, wrap presents for the children, wrap presents for Draco, owl care package to Charlie and Oliver in Romania, purchase season tickets to the Royal Opera House for the in-laws. Lucius was so obsessive about Wagner, Draco had half jokingly suggested purchasing a horned helmet for Narcissa.

Just two more hours until her in-laws' annual Christmas party. Grandchildren had made marshmallows of DaM's parents. Where once this party had meant canapés and champagne, it now meant carols, hot cocoa and childish glee. They thought the sun rose and set on Sev, Sal & Zuzu. Especially Zuzu. One bat of her chocolate brown eyes and suddenly Lucius and Narcissa were the indulgent guests of honor at a teddy bear tea. To be fair, Zuzu had the same effect on Hermione's parents; when invited to a teddy bear tea, they brought pastries and cakes. With real sugar in them.

Hermione shook herself from bemused woolgathering and focused on her neat handwriting. She dearly loved the Christmas season, but every year the to-dos increased.

She crossed off two more items; donate clothing to homeless shelter, knit scarves with Molly and Ginny. Hermione sighed. Only four more inches of projects to go. She peered closely at the next messily written task on the long piece of parchment. That could not be her penmanship. She really needed a break.

#### 15. *Snog Draco.*

Even his cursive drawled sexily.

*For a holiday, that will do nicely,* she thought and went to find her husband.

## Tis the Season

Chapter 11 of 15

Draco has an unsettled sensation...

Notes/Warning: Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: season.

Two weeks before Christmas, Hermione Malfoy-Granger rolled over in bed and tried to go back to sleep *Shut up!*, she thought. *Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!* Stupid lists. They never listened to her. She pulled Draco's pillow over her head in an effort to block out their persistent and annoying cries for attention. Just one little Incendio, she tempted herself, no one would ever know. Her usually buoyant Christmas spirit had totally deserted her this year. All of the children had other plans for the holidays, as did most of her friends and extended family. The lists on her desk seemed like a lot of make-work with very little reward. *Hermione Malfoy-Granger*, she scolded herself, *the reward is in the doing!*

There were a few tasks she was looking forward to completing; she loved knitting with Molly and Ginny, she adored making crafts with the children at the shelter, she **counted** on those messily scrawled tasks penned by her husband. Over the years, Hermione had left more room on her lists for DaM's suggestions. He had added items onto the holiday lists at first, but had soon graduated to starting lists himself as well. On DaM's lists, the first assignment was always "snog Draco", but frequently included such onerous chores as: smile for Draco, remember to breathe, hug the children, sing a song, wear the gloves, look at our tree, and catch snowflakes. She sighed, wishing all other lists to perdition. *Tis the season*, she thought morosely.

Draco sat by the fire in his study, trying to identify the unsettled sensation that had been nagging at him since he woke up that morning. Was he unhappy the children weren't coming home for Christmas? Yes. But that wasn't it, he was still feeling unsettled. Did he forget to buy his wife that last little perfect gift? No. He bought the self-sticking parchment yesterday. He smiled distractedly. Hermione was always complaining about her lists disappearing, now... *A-ha!* Moh had not been by for a snog yet this morning. He frowned. She was always up by this hour. She had usually visited his study three or four times before now; once or twice claiming he forgot to write "snuggle with Draco by the fire" or another equally pleasant diversion he hadn't dreamed up. Thinking back, Draco realized Moh had been avoiding her lists *and his!* for days. Silly little love probably convinced herself she couldn't start his list until hers were finished, and he would bet his favorite lacy teddy that there wasn't much on her lists Moh wanted to do. Draco saw only one possible solution. Time to brave the lioness in her den.

Mere moments later, Draco stood over his marital bed, gazing at his sleeping wife. *Well, this was unexpected.* Girded for battle, he was at a loss until he spied the lists obscuring Hermione's writing desk. With well-practiced stealth, he soundlessly shuffled through them, leaving only the messily green inked papers behind and left their suite, having not disturbed Moh in the slightest. There was more than one way to skin a cat.

When Hermione appeared in the dining room for lunch three hours later, finally awakened by her insistent stomach, she found her husband standing by her chair, smiling impishly. If she had been less hungry, she would have gone on guard instantly. As it was, DaM's countenance didn't register until she was seated and looking at her plate. Instead of Mrs. Clemson's delectable shepherd's pie, Hermione was confronted with a thick stack of lists. Her loud groan rivaled the rumble of her tummy. Her evil mate had the audacity to chuckle. She would have shot him the glare of death, but was distracted by the stack of papers. They looked different, no longer pristine. *Well, pristine except for Draco's additions.* Hermione shuffled through them, gob smacked. Except for the tasks messily scrawled in green ink and one or two neatly penned items here and there, *all her favorite things to do* each entry had been crossed through. She set the lists down and looked up at her self-satisfied husband.

"I really am very hungry," she said. "Please tell me this **is not** a mirage."

"It is **not** a mirage," he dutifully replied. "Mrs. Clemson, Mipsy and I all wished you to have a happy holiday this year. We realize under normal circumstances doing all of this," he gestured at the stack, "is what makes you happy. But things aren't normal this year, are they, Moh?"

She stood up, pushed Draco into her chair and perched on his lap. Wrapping her arms around him, she replied, "No. But you always make me happy, DaM. You have been exceedingly sneaky and clever today. I think I might wear the gloves tonight."

"If you must, you must," he sighed. "It would complete this list." He plucked a paper from the pile and tore it in half.

## Thank You, George Bailey

Chapter 12 of 15

Draco counts his blessings...

Notes/Warning: Ladies (and gentlemen?), get your fluffiness antidote ready. Dedicated to the mob at DD. Originally posted to the Live Journal community Dramionedrabbles, 12 Days of Christmas Challenge. Prompt: tree.

Hermione and Draco sat on the couch in their living room, surrounded by family and friends. After decorating the tree, playing charades (by Ron Weasley's request), and pulling crackers, everyone had settled down to nosh on biscuits and watch a movie. "It's a Wonderful Life," of course.

Draco gazed fondly at his youngest daughter, Jane, namesake and near replica of his Moh, down to the curly hair topping her brilliant mind. His Little General, now pregnant with her first child, (Teddy and Albus Severus's adopted son, Wulfric, would be a fantastic father; no worries there.) was entreating his other grandchildren into silence with gentle admonitions. Bee, CJ, Yume, Lovey, Aurora, Dori, Flo and Alexia were especially giggly, but a plate of gingerbread settled them quickly.

His mind busy, Draco paid the movie little attention. Instead, he gently stroked his dear love's hand and counted his blessings. His eldest son, Severus, cradled his wife, Rose, in his arms. His second son, Sal, held a gangly girl in his lap. Cissy, who put Zuzu's antics to shame. Zuzu herself was curled on the floor, whispering nonsense into Molly's ear. Draco sighed. Little Molly's father had been a brute, but Lily and Zuzu would make sure her Christmases were bright from now on.

He noted the movie would be ending soon and turned to appreciate and acknowledge the rest of his family and friends. His father and mother, cuddling like newlyweds. Harry and Ginny were watching the movie, his arm wrapped around her. Neville and Hannah, feeding each other bits of biscuit. Luna and Ron. Charlie and Oliver. Seamus, here on his first outing after Lavender had passed. Goyle sat next to Pansy, both holding one of Pansy's twin grandbabies. Blaise and Daphne, glaring and cooing in turns. Bill and Fleur, talking quietly with Victoire. George and Angelina, shamelessly listening in. Hermione's hand squeezed his, signaling the end of the film.

*You are a pauper next to me, George Bailey*, he thought smugly as he shook hands, gave hugs and received sticky sweet peppermint kisses. *But thank you for showing me I could have all this.* He smiled when he saw that Cissy and little Molly made sure to brush against the bell wreath on the Manor's front door.

Later in bed, as they were drifting off to sleep, Draco murmured in Moh's ear, "Did I ever thank you for inviting me back to your holiday party?"

"You mean the year after Operation Provoke Potter?"

"Yes." He peppered her face with snowflakes. "Why did you?"

"Invite you? Everyone deserves a second chance, DaM. After all, our choices show what we truly are, far more than our past."

Draco gathered his own heart tenderly in his arms, running his hands over her shoulder blades.

"Checking for wings?" She chuckled sleepily.

"No bells," he grumbled. He wasn't sure whether it was an answer or a prayer.

A/N:

"Our choices show what we truly are, Harry, far more than our abilities." – CoS

My 12 Days of Christmas drabbles are all part of the same universe. If you were to read them in chronological order (as opposed to prompt order) they would read: It's a wonderful life he hopes, (1 year later) nomenclature, signals (1 year later) the gloves are off, it's a gift, (1 year later) pet names, (2 years later) Draco runs an errand, (1 year later) hello insanity, (2 years later) fruitful expedition, (4 years later) a golden thread", (5 years later) Queen of the lists, (15 years later) Tis the season, (14 years later) Thank you, George Bailey.

\*A Golden Thread written for the luvlikerocketz lj community - prompt "petals".

Prompt order: Tinsel, sled, snowflake, gloves, holiday, blizzard, gift, season, snowman, mistletoe, elf, tree. (Actually, it should have been tree, elf. I took artistic license.)

Finally, love, hugs and total awe to Frank Capra. Seriously, he was an amazing director. It's a Wonderful Life, Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Arsenic and Old Lace, and It Happened One Night are all required viewing.

## A Golden Thread

### Chapter 13 of 15

His daughter's birth makes a few things very clear.

~\*~\*~

Draco Malfoy discovered the truest meaning of love the day his first daughter was born.

He adored his erudite wife with the same fierce devotion. His heart had expanded to include his two sons in its protective, watchful glow. Yet it had taken Zuzu's birth to strip him bare of his defenses and his artifice, to reveal to him that the changes in his character and conduct were more than strategy or survival. That they had penetrated deeper than skin or brains, down to the soul and marrow of who he was.

As he held his tiny progeny in his arms and stroked the delicate velvety fuzz of her cheek with one gentle finger, Zuzu opened her eyes and her innocent gaze burned away the last stubborn remnants of Draco's anger and resentment. He would sacrifice anything for her, for her brothers, for her mother. For his family. He could not condone his father's actions, but he could no longer condemn him for them, either.

The image of George Bailey frantically checking his pockets for the leavings of a wilted flower floated through his mind. He knew now that as much as the thousands of deeds George performed had impact on the world around him, what was truly important, what made life worth living, was his family. Transfixed, Draco peered into his daughter's sweet blue eyes and murmured so softly only she could hear,

"My Petals."

~\*~\*~

A/N:

There's something like a line of gold thread running through a man's words when he talks to his daughter, and gradually over the years it gets to be long enough for you to pick up in your hands and weave into a cloth that feels like love itself. ~John Gregory Brown

George Bailey is the protagonist in *"It's a Wonderful Life."*

written for greenschist as a contribution to the luvlikerocketz community on live journal.

## Blue Yule

*Chapter 14 of 15*

A series of Christmastime drabbish vignettes, in the life of Draco & Hermione. Blue Yule fits between Hello, Insanity and A Fruitful Expedition.

"Bue!" Severus toddled across the floor as fast as his little legs would carry him. The enormous pile of presents under the fairy-lit tree, wrapped in hues ranging from aqua to midnight, was a lure few one-year-olds could resist.

"Oh, no, you don't, little man," drawled Draco as he levitated an especially tempting box topped with a sparkly silver bow out of his son's sticky peppermint reach. "Your mummy will have my head on a platter if her flawless tableau is ruined." He scooped Sev up into his arms.

Severus's chubby little hands grasped for a navy velvet bow in vain, and he pushed at his father's chest with tiny fists, his brow furrowed in frustration.

"Bue, Dada! Bue! Bue!"

Draco dropped a kiss on his forehead and carried him out of the room. "Let's go up to the nursery where crazy Mummy can't find us, and play Snitch-a-Roo with Mipsy, shall we?"

It wasn't really a joke...his wife was obsessed with making Severus's first Christmas absolutely perfect, down to the coordinated gift wrap that was Sev's favourite colour...but his son gurgled with laughter and clapped his grubby hands in delight. Then Severus wrapped his arms around his Dada's neck, giving him a sticky-wet peppermint kiss.

"Sich! Sich! A Wooo!" He yodeled in glee.

\*\*\*dm\*\*hgm\*\*sm\*\*\*

Hermione walked briskly into the drawing room, consulting one of her infamous and infinite lists, Mrs. Clemson at her side.

"...And after brunch, we'll serve cocoa, coffee and tea here in the drawing room with a selection of sweets before opening the presents," she continued, marking off an item on one list and then shuffling the sheaf of parchment in her hands.

Mrs. Clemson rolled her eyes while her employer wasn't looking, but schooled her features to neutrality before answering. "Yes, madam."

She was extremely fond of the Malfoys, who treated her like a member of the family, but she was very close to slipping a Calming Draught into Mrs. Malfoy's morning tea. The young mother was on the brink of a nervous breakdown with all her lists, colour-coding and insistence on perfection.

Hermione gasped in dismay, and Mrs. Clemson was jolted from her reverie.

*Oh, for Merlin's sake. What now?*

"That man thinks he's so funny!" Hermione muttered, stomping over to the tree.

The presents underneath the branches, attractively stacked around the low basin of moist dirt keeping the tree alive, were a uniformly deep Slytherin green trimmed with grey ribbon. She looked over at Mrs. Clemson, who tsked and made a moue of disapproval...though secretly she was tickled pink.

Hermione flicked her wand at the offending wrap. *"Finite Incantatem,"* she intoned, nodding her head in satisfaction as the packages reverted to their original hues.

"Now, Mrs. Clemson," she said, turning to her housekeeper. "Shall we go over the brunch menu again?" She led the way to the kitchen, Mrs. Clemson following reluctantly behind.

\*\*\*dm\*\*hgm\*\*sm\*\*\*

"Sev? Where are you?" Draco ducked his head into the study. Empty.

"Severus!" He walked-ran down the hall, glancing through doorways into quiet rooms.

He'd only taken his eye off his son for a moment, to help Mipsy find a particularly stubborn Snitch-A-Roo. But a moment was all it took these days with Sev, who...Draco could swear on his Gringott's vault...learned to fly before he could walk.

Draco's mentor would have been proud of his little namesake, indeed.

He heard a gurgle of laughter and stopped suddenly, holding his wand aloft. "Point me," he intoned. His wand twitched west, tugging him along to the drawing room.

"There you are!" Draco exclaimed with some relief.

Severus turned to his father with a grin on his face.

"Bue! Bue!" He chortled, pointing at the tree.

Several streaks of chocolate decorated his chin and cheeks. He'd clearly made a beeline for the candy dish on the sofa table before plopping down in front of the forbidden

presents. Draco crouched next to him, noticing the brown smudges on various orange-covered boxes with a cringe. He dearly hoped a softened *Scourgify* would...wait. Orange?

His wife was most definitely off her proverbial rocker if she thought he'd allow the Weasel's favourite colour to adorn ~~this~~ his son's presents. Perhaps Mrs. Clemson would consider putting a Calming Draught in his beloved's morning tea? Irritated, he flicked his wand at the boxes, and watched in relieved satisfaction as the chocolate stains dissolved away and the gifts reverted to their original hues.

*The blasted witch is lucky I love her*, he thought. *I would have much preferred a deep Slytherin green.*

"Come on, little man," he said to Sev, hoisting him up onto his back. "You can ride your hippogriff up to a good scrubbing and a nap before Nana and Papa come to visit."

"I wide!" Severus chortled, pulling on his Dada's hair. "Gwiff! Go! Bue!" He wrinkled his nose at the gifts as Draco galloped out of the room.

\*\*\*dm\*\*hgm\*\*sm\*\*\*

"Mum! Dad!" Hermione hugged each of her parents in turn. "I'm so glad you're here. Draco's just waking Severus up from his nap. Let's have drinks in the drawing room while we're waiting for them to come down." She led them in and, making sure they were comfortable, crossed to the drinks trolley situated in the far corner.

"Gin and tonic, right, Dad?" At his nod, she fixed his drink. "Pimm's for you, Mum?"

Her mother nodded absentmindedly. "Lovely, darling." She gestured at the sparkling tree and the gifts under it, which were wrapped in deep reds and golds. "Has Draco seen the presents yet? I'm not sure he will appreciate your colour choices." Her eyes twinkled with merriment.

Hermione deposited the drinks on the sofa table with a thunk. "Really, this is too much. Obviously, he'd rather not sleep on the Chesterfield tonight." Her parents observed her agitation with concerned curiosity. "We agreed on blue wrapping, since it's Sev's favourite. But I came in here earlier, and everything was swathed in Slytherin green trimmed with grey ribbons!" Her eyes welled with frustrated tears.

Her parents exchanged a look laden with meaning. Their son-in-law had not been exaggerating by half. Helene Granger patted the empty cushion between herself and Stephen. When Hermione sat down, her parents each wrapped an arm around her.

"Take a deep breath, muffin," Stephen said, smiling as his daughter let out a long, shuddering sigh.

"The wrap colour doesn't matter, darling," Helene murmured. "You will hardly remember it. What you *will* cherish is the expression on your son's face as he rips open a box to reveal the teddy bear his grandparents bought for him."

She leaned against her mum's shoulder. "I know, it's just that..."

"Life is not perfect, muffin, and you don't have to be, either. Draco and Sev, we all love you the way you are...lists and all," said Stephen, hugging her close.

"I think Mrs. Clemson wants to dose my morning tea with Calming Draught," Hermione muttered into her father's chest.

"She loves you too. Who do you think invited us to dinner?" asked her mother.

"Draco said..." Hermione started.

"I caught Mrs. Clemson Owling your parents on Monday," Draco drawled as he entered the room carrying Sev. As soon as he set him down, Severus toddled over to the couch and crawled onto Stephen's lap.

"Papa!" Severus patted his grandpa's face fondly. "Bue!" he yodeled, pointing at the gifts.

Draco eyed the crimson and gold gifts, then gazed at his wife with amused exasperation. "I know you like to change your mind, Moh, but I'm not any more keen on your House colours than I am on Chudley Cannons orange."

"But Slytherin green would be acceptable?" she asked, rising to stand in front of him. "And...orange?" She shuddered. "Not in my house, thank you very much. That's Ron's thing."

"Won! Won!" Severus cried, wrinkling his nose in glee. Ron was his favourite honorary uncle. "Bue!"

Helene and Stephen gasped. Draco and Hermione turned to see the presents under the tree shimmer as they changed in hue, a veritable rainbow of colours embellishing each box in polka dots, swirls and stripes.

"But I thought you..." Draco and Hermione said together in surprise. Their eyes filled with tears of laughter and joy.

"His first magic," Hermione murmured as Draco hugged her close.

"It's perfect," Draco said, giving her a tender kiss.

"Bue!" yelled Severus, wrinkling his nose. The gifts shimmered again, and reverted to their original hues.

~~\*~fin~~

\*\*\*dm\*\*hgm\*\*sm\*\*\*

**A/N:** Originally written for the dramione\_advent Live Journal community (prompt: wrapping paper)

I TOTALLY deserve a lump of coal in my stocking this year, because I forgot to thank corianderpie for the awesomely thorough beta on the comm post. ~sigh~

You rock my socks (and commas, and dangling participles, and...) off, babycakes.

## Snow Day

Draco could not concentrate.

*Snow day! Snow day! Snow day!* yelled his inner child.

*Snow day! Snow day! Snow day!* the fire cackled merrily.

"Be quiet!" He ordered, "I must work."

He analysed the market in silence for several minutes before a cacophony of sound erupted in the garden.

"Snow day! Snow day! Snow day!" his adorable children yelled.

*Was that Hermione's voice drowning out everyone else?*

"Snow day!" Sev yelled with glee.

*Sev? Second year Ravenclaw Sev? Who thought games were for babies now that he was a sober and grown up man of twelve?*

Draco's study overlooked the garden.

It was impossible for him not to go to the window.

Jane burbled up at him, cosy in one of his wife's colourful knitted caps. "Sow day! Dada!"

Hermione wrinkled her bright red nose at him and beckoned him outside.

*Snow day! Snow day! Snow day!* the fire egged him on.

Not that he needed to be egged. He threw on a heavy fur-lined cloak and practically ran out the door.

"Daddy!" squealed Zuzu, holding out her arms for a hug. Her next words were nearly muffled by the voluminous folds of his cloak. "Make me a snow man!"

Hermione raised an eyebrow at her incorrigible daughter as Zuzu emerged from a fall of deep green velvet.

"Please!" Zuzu added eagerly.

"Pwease!" chorused Jane, with an adorable pout.

Draco picked Jane up, kissing her on the nose. "Since you asked so nicely, mini Moh." He set her down, giving a gentle, affectionate tug to an errant curl.

"All right, young men," Draco called out, catching his sons' attention. "Your sisters have requested a snow man. Shall we indulge our young ladies?"

Sal and Sev ran over, peals of laughter announcing their arrival.

"Do it again!" implored Sal, still chuckling.

Draco merely raised an imperious eyebrow at him and heard his wife snort behind a mitten-clad hand.

Jane clapped in delight. "Gwandpa!"

"Clever boots," said Hermione, cuddling her close. "Let's find a face and clothes for the snowman, shall we?"

Zuzu tripped along behind them, abandoning the men to the cold and their cheerful task. "Me too!"

"Hot chocolate would be smashing," called Draco hopefully.

"And Mipsy's peppermint biscuits would be too," added the ever-hungry Sev. He had a bottomless stomach, like his Uncle Ron. Though he did manage to chew with his mouth shut. Most of the time.

"Yes, please!" chorused Sal.

They saw Hermione nod her consent as she and the girls ducked through the kitchen door.

Draco and the boys shaped the pile of wet snow into a body in a leisurely fashion, enjoying each other's company with laughter and a small snowball battle, soaking their mittens through in anticipation of hot cocoa and delicious biscuits.

Ages went by, yet no time at all passed before the ladies appeared again, with a smiling Mipsy in tow.

She magicked a heavy rug over the snow for everyone to sit on and laid out a magnificent bean feast in the middle of it; holding court was a luscious red and green frosted seven-layer cake.

"Mipsy, you spoil us," Draco said approvingly.

The little elf beamed at her master before popping out of sight.

"I can never get her to do things in a simple manner," Hermione muttered, leaning into her husband's chest. "And you're terrible, encouraging her like that." She tweaked his nipple.

"Ow!" he shouted, drawing his children's attention. "I'll get you for that later," he whispered.

Hermione grinned, giving him a slow wink. "Promise?" She turned to face their ravenous little beasts. "Let's eat."

"Can we dress the snowman first?" asked Zuzu.

Sev groaned. "Why?" he whined in protest.

Zuzu aimed pleading eyes at her eldest brother. "Because then the snowman can eat too."

Sev rolled his eyes, but he was not immune to his sister's sweet nature. "Oh, all right."

\* \* \* \* \*

The snowman beamed at the noisy, jolly little family through shiny black button eyes. He sported a jaunty carrot nose that almost, but not quite wriggled in delight. Every joke shared made his rope smile wider; every cherished memory filled his icy heart with spirit of the season.

"I found the bean," Zuzu announced, her small mouth full of cake.

Draco gave her a courtly bow. "My queen."

"Huzzah!" everyone cheered as Zuzu gave a pretty curtsy.

"Stowey!" Jane ordered.

It was price of being queen, to fulfil her subjects' demands.

Zuzu frowned in thought, and her gaze settled on the merry snowman.

"Teacher told us a story about a snowman last week," she began shyly, looking at her family.

They all smiled back at her; Sev and Sal added nods. They both had Miss Limone in primary school, and knew the story well.

"The snowman is so new he doesn't know what the sun or moon are," Zuzu started. "An old dog chained in the yard tells him what they are." Her eyes teared up a little. "The people in the story are so mean, chaining up that old dog in the snow! All it wants to do is lie under the warm stove."

"Maybe they let it in at night," Hermione said, trying to soothe her tender-hearted daughter.

Little waves of maternal magic wrapped around Zuzu, and eddied over the snowman's feet.

"It was still mean," said Zuzu, warmed by her mother's concern. She continued with dry eyes, "Then the weather gets even colder and the wind blows, leaving frost everywhere. All the trees in the snowman's garden are covered in white and they sparkle like diamonds."

Jane clapped her hands exuberantly. "Diawonds!"

She loved glittery things most of all, like a little magpie. Narcissa had to be especially careful around her youngest granddaughter.

"A couple walks in the garden. When they leave, the snowman asks who they are," Zuzu said, pausing to nibble on a peppermint biscuit before Sev ate them all. "The dog tells him they were nice to him and they will marry one day, living together and sharing the same bone."

Sev sniggered a little and snatched the last peppermint biscuit. Sal sniggered too, without knowing why.

Zuzu's brow furrowed, and Draco quieted her brothers with a pointed look. They weren't laughing at her, but as tender as she was, she might take it that way.

"The dog tells him they are servants in the House, and that the dog lived there too, for a while. He slept under the stove and was petted and fed treats. But they kicked him out when he bit the Master's son."

Again, Zuzu's eyes filled with tears. "The dog shouldn't have bit the boy, but he was just defending his bone."

Sev stopped a snigger just in time. "Zuzu, didn't the dog tell the snowman about the stove?"

"Yes," said Zuzu, beaming at her brother. "He tells the snowman all about the stove and shows the snowman that he can see the stove through the window. The snowman looks at the stove for a long time, and he falls in love with it."

"The snowman falls in love with the stove?" asked Draco, looking at Hermione. She shared a cream tart with Jane, feeding her bites and smiling at the toddler's reaction to the lemon sugar filling.

Then she caught Draco staring, and gave him a secret smile that warmed him straight through.

The snowman felt a tingle shiver along his bare branch arms.

"Yes, Daddy. And he doesn't listen when the dog tells him the stove will melt him. He's in love." Zuzu said, taking a sip of cocoa.

"Sometimes, snowmen can't help themselves," Draco murmured mostly to himself, still staring at his wife. "They have to be near the stove, even if they melt completely away."

"How did you know, Daddy?" Zuzu said, amazed. "That's what happens! The snowman melts and the dog sees that he had a coal shovel holding him up, tied to a stick. The dog thinks the snowman loved the stove because part of him belonged with the stove."

"What a clever snowman," said Hermione. "To know where he belongs, even if he doesn't know why."

Draco looked at his family, sitting on the rug, filled with love and sweets. He knew why, down to his marrow. He saw Jane shiver and how red the boys' noses were. "Time to go inside. Mipsy!"

The elf came and cleared the feast with a snap of her fingers. The Malfoy family trooped inside, trailing joyful laughter and sparks of magic, like the jingling of sleigh bells, behind them.

The snowman woke, as if from a nap, determined to find his stove.

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Author's Note:

Prompt was Snowman

Bean feast - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bean-feast>

The Snowman, by Hans Christian Andersen - [http://hca.gilead.org.il/snow\\_man.html](http://hca.gilead.org.il/snow_man.html)

Snow Day is a stand-alone story, but it also fits in the "It's a Wonderful Life, He Hopes" universe of ficlets, which can be read at Hawthorne and Vine. It falls between "Queen of the Lists" and "Tis the Season". I'll post it there when appropriate. (Reading it would explain Draco calling Jane "mini Moh")

Many thanks to my betas , J & A. Any faults that remain are my own.

Merry Christmas to all, and a Happy New Year!!!!