

Biting Back

by a_bees_buzz

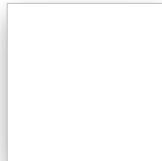
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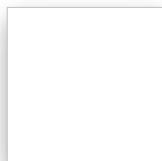
one-shot

Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N I am a truly lucky girl to have the amazing Bambu345 to beta my stories.



Day Twenty-Nine

It was with a supreme air of confidence that Hermione selected a roast potato from the platter set before her. While the ceiling still wasn't working properly, and tended to flicker between sky-scapes and views of the interior of Madame Puddifoot's (which had managed to survive the war entirely unscathed), most of the castle was functioning and students from all the Houses had returned to Hogwarts to complete the year's studies, including those who had missed the previous months' school-work.

"Aren't you nervous? Even just a little bit?" Parvati asked.

"Not in the slightest. Oh, look. There's the mail."

Sure enough, there was a Ministry owl headed directly for Hermione. Giving the bird a bit of roast chicken, she detached and opened her post. "Colour me shocked, I've had another marriage proposal. It's from Zabini." She waved cheerfully at a very nervous-looking Blaise Zabini and an only slightly less nervous looking Draco Malfoy, who were watching her carefully.

"Hold on. Don't you still have to get married tomorrow?" asked Lavender, clinging tightly to Ron's arm.

"Nah," her boyfriend reassured her. "The waiting period starts over every time there's a new proposal. She's safe for another month."

"I do need some time to properly asses the latest candidate," agreed Hermione.

Day Fifty-Eight

Lavender peered over Hermione's shoulder at the official-looking scroll that had just been delivered. "Don't tell me you've got another one! And just in the nick of time, too."

"Who's the lucky bloke this time?" Seamus asked.

"Crabbe," replied Hermione, winking saucily at her latest suitor, whose face had taken on a rather unlovely Slytherin shade of green.

A chorus of voices joined in on the response. "Eww."

"It's not like I'm actually going to marry him."

"So you've chosen, then?" Lavender perked up at the news. "Who's it to be? Malfoy or Zabini?"

"Neither."

Day Eighty-Seven

"Drumroll, please."

Ron and Seamus beat out a quick tattoo on the table.

"And the winner is: Theo Nott."

"Damn! I had two Galleons on Goyle."

"Pay up."

Day One-Hundred-Fifteen

Four very uncomfortable Slytherin boys stood outside Severus Snape's office, waiting for him to grant them an audience. At precisely 8:00 the door swung open, knocking Vincent Crabbe to the ground.

"You have ten seconds to either seat yourselves or clear my doorway," the Potions master declared without looking up from his desk. From the rapid movement of his quill, the essay he was marking was not going to take pride of place on anyone's mum's mantelpiece.

Nott scrambled to get a spot on the bench between Goyle and Zabini after Malfoy ducked in front of him to claim the only vaguely comfortable chair in their Head of House's office.

"So, gentlemen. What is so urgent that you absolutely had to see me this evening?"

The other boys turned as one to Draco, who snarled at them briefly before replying. "It's Granger, sir."

Day One

"Bloody hell, Hermione. That's ..."

"Yes, Ron. I know what it is."

She got up from her seat at the Gryffindor table and walked steadily across the Great Hall to stand across from a smirking Draco.

"Checking out your fiancé, Granger? Just think, in a month, all this will be yours." His gesture encompassed his full form, but ended pointing directly at his crotch.

"Actually, Malfoy, I'm looking forward to it." She let Draco exchange smug grins with his mates before continuing. "In fact, I have a special treat planned for our wedding night. It's a special charm I've discovered." She paused and leant across the table. "Sex magic. Very old sex magic." Reaching forward, she dropped a bit of parchment onto his plate. "I do hope you'll enjoy it."

"I fail to see the problem. Do you object to an eager bride?"

Draco silently passed the parchment to the Potions master.

Picking it up, Severus glanced at the two words and flinched. Even from their seats across the desk, the boys could see the way his thighs clenched reflexively. "I see how that could be ... unpleasant."

"Unpleasant!" Nott was on his feet. "She's grown bloody teeth in her cunt! Whoever marries her gets his dick chewed off every time he fucks her."

Snape spread his hands, palms upward, his expression conveying a sense of complete disbelief. "Every time? Surely only the once? Though, I would imagine it would be near impossible to achieve even that much, knowing the penalty."

"The Marriage Law involves a binding contract that compels ... consummation on a regular basis," Zabini explained. "Whoever the unlucky bloke is will have to regrow it and find a way to make it function twice a week until she's pregnant."

"Which will never happen, unless you know some way we can impregnate the sodding bitch without functioning dicks," Nott concluded.

His elbows on the desk, fingertips just touching in an almost prayer-like attitude, Snape took a long look at each of the boys in turn. "'Sodding bitch'?" he asked. "If I am not mistaken, each of you has made an offer to marry the young woman. Might one ask why?"

Once again, all eyes were on Draco.

He shifted in his chair. "It was Father's idea. He thought allying ourselves with her would help restore the family name."

"I would think by now you would have learned not to trust your father's schemes. As I recall, the last one did not turn out to your benefit."

The flexing of his jaw was the only indication of the effort it took for Draco not to reply.

"I see. You thought to improve your reputation by repeatedly raping a well-connected and extremely powerful witch. Interesting plan."

Draco mumbled something.

"E-nun-ci-ate, Mr. Malfoy."

"I said it wouldn't have been rape. I'd have been good to her."

"Are you under the mistaken impression that your bedroom skills are so refined that you could force an unwilling witch to enjoy your puerile efforts? Perhaps a touch of Imperius? Or were you planning on the illegal administration of lust potions?" Both his voice and his body rose as he spoke, until he was towering over the frightened boy and shouting at him from across the desk. "Whatever you attempted, it would have been rape, and neither I nor the rest of wizarding society would ever have forgiven you." He turned to the other boys, lowering his voice only slightly. "Make no mistake, this law will not stand, and those who took advantage of it to force themselves on Muggle-born witches will be condemned for their licentiousness and their vile debauchery of innocents." He sank back into his chair. "And now, having got yourselves into this ... situation ... you expect me to get you out of it. Is that correct?"

It was Zabini who spoke. "We didn't expect the law to last, at least, most of us didn't." He threw a brief glare at Draco before continuing. "The plan was to keep getting her a new proposal every month until the law is repealed, but the word's spread. No one else is willing to take the risk. With your experience, sir, I thought you might know some way to counter the charm."

"That would be Dark magic," Snape replied. "Are you suggesting that I disavow my life's work in the struggle against the Dark and risk wasting my remaining years in Azkaban in order to aid you in your quest to abuse a fellow member of the Order of the Phoenix and a student under my care?"

"Please, sir," sobbed Crabbe, finally speaking up. "There must be something you can do. We're desperate."

Day One-Hundred-and-Sixteen

"Miss Granger. Thank you for meeting with me on such short notice."

"Not at all, Professor. What can I do for you?"

Snape sighed. "I had hoped that we could postpone this matter until after you had graduated, but it seems we have run out of time."

"Oh. That. They were rather more eager than I'd expected. I was hoping the first proposal wouldn't come until much later. Can't you find a way to drag it out a bit longer?"

"Not if we are to make the most of the opportunity. At this moment, there are four very wealthy men willing to offer me anything I like to save their precious brats from a fate worse than death. If we wait too much longer, they may begin to suspect."

"They will suspect anyway."

"Yes. But I would prefer that to occur after we have our hands on as large a share of their fortunes as possible. Tell me, my love, would you prefer Malfoy Manor or Crabbe Castle as a wedding gift?"