

Birthday Plans the Slytherin Way

by Mint Stick

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Chapter 1 of 1

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A/N: This ficlet was written as a birthday present for shiv5468.

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'A present? For me? Are you sure you're feeling well?'

Hermione looked at her husband of five years. She couldn't help but feel a little suspicious. True, Severus did have the habit of bringing her little things every now and then – a bar of the loveliest chocolate hidden in the pocket of her favourite coat (it was a lovely gesture and she had appreciated it, even if getting the stains out of the coat had been a real hassle; but he hadn't known the chocolate would melt), wild flowers masquerading as potion ingredients, because Severus was not the sort of man who would just come and bring his wife *flowers* – but not once during their time together had he specifically remembered her birthday.

Perhaps he didn't want a reminder of how much older he was. The poor sod. It made her sigh and pout, but she did understand. And forgive. Really. Every time. Especially after a bout or two of his favourite way of not-apologising.

So what had changed this time? Was he tired of not-apologising? Hermione almost felt like sniffing.

'Aren't you going to open it?' Severus asked, his voice just a tiny bit petulant.

Hermione gave him what she hoped was a grateful, encouraging smile, and unwrapped the gift. Carefully, because the wrapping paper looked ... grand. Majestic. Certainly expensive.

The box she uncovered looked equally grand. Lifting the lid, she wondered what it could possibly contain. It almost looked like a *shoebox*, but Severus would never, ever get her shoes, surely? Her taste in shoes was something she never expected him to share or understand. Good quality was important, of course, but she wanted more – they had to be special. Exquisite. Not necessarily practical, and certainly often on the expensive side.

It was a shoebox. Containing, in fact, shoes. Exquisite ones. Shoes that she immediately fell in love with. They even looked the right size – give or take a bit, but that's what magic was for.

'Oh, Severus!' she cried, after having put the box down with care, and flung herself at her husband, smothering him with kisses.

When they had extricated themselves from each other, she asked, 'But how ... how did you know? Where did you get them, anyway? I haven't seen a pair like these anywhere in the Wizarding shops. Or Muggle ones.'

Severus squirmed a little, looking somewhat embarrassed. He looked adorable with a blush, Hermione decided.

'Well, actually ... I asked Lucius.' The last part was said in not much more than a whisper. 'He directed me to the place where he gets his own custom made. And he had some good advice, too.'

Hermione smiled, a plan quickly forming in her head. 'Well. I suppose we should invite Lucius here, this evening, so I could thank him in person. It's my birthday, after all, and a girl is entitled to more than one present.'

As she busied herself with her newest acquisition, she missed the triumphant smirk on her husband's face.