

# Canapes on Thursdays

*by pokeystar*

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

## Gratuitous Advice

*Chapter 1 of 12*

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

### Canape 1: Gratuitous Advice

Five years after the war, Diagon Alley had fully recovered; every storefront was occupied and the sun shone on a legion of shoppers. A buoyant Harry Potter was weaving his way through the crowd, in search of a present for his newly-pregnant wife, when a sharp voice rang out in alarm.

“Someone grab him!”

For a split-second, he was thrown back to the Great Hall, Voldemort demanding his surrender, a skinny arm shakily betraying him. As schoolmates stood and shielded him, he snapped back to the present.

Harry turned and caught the blurry missile just as it was streaking by, Auror training and Seeker instinct suffusing his movements.

He hefted the squirming bundle securely in his arms; the boy smelt of fresh powder and cherries, his sticky fingers grasping at Harry's neck. Big black eyes peeped up at green through curly hair. They gazed at each other, smiling in mischievous comradeship, until a frantic voice shattered the moment.

“Oh, thank Merlin! Thank you for catching him!” Motherly arms lifted the small bundle from Harry's embrace. “Thomas Roland Pucey. What did Mummy tell you about running off?”

Thomas was craftily silent, tucking his head into the crook of Pansy's neck. She looked up at Harry, her expression becoming increasingly horror-struck. “I—I... I'm so sorry. So sorry. Thank you for—”

Harry shook his head dismissively, a twinkle entering his eye. “Your moment-of-crisis communication skills haven't changed.”

A bark of laughter escaped her lips. “I stick with what works.”

“Yours?” Harry gestured at Thomas.

Pansy beamed. “Yes. He's just two now.”

“You married Adrian Pucey then?” Harry smirked. “Pansy Pucey?”

She rolled her eyes. “At least I didn't have to change my monogram.”

He chuckled. “Ginny's pregnant with our first. Any tips?”

"Yes," she replied with a sigh. "Buy a leash."

~A/N~

"Someone grab him!" – Deathly Hallows, US hardcover ed. p. 610.

Written for the pphp\_idws LJ community, warm up challenge

prompt: Pansy and Harry's first post-war conversation

## A Pinch of Salt

*Chapter 2 of 12*

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson & Harry Potter.

Canape 2: A Pinch of Salt

Running behind as usual, Pansy Apparated in front of their restaurant and rushed past Tony, the maître d'. She was ransacking her purse when a throat cleared, and her eyes snapped up to meet emerald green.

"I'm going to kiss that sneaky prat," Harry said.

"I am going to kill him," she hissed in return, abruptly turning on her heel. He caught her hand and tugged her into a seat before she could leave.

"Don't," he replied. "Draco explained how much the house means to you. I'm sorry I didn't listen, Pans." He Transfigured the cut-crystal salt shaker into a pansy and presented it to her.

She changed it back and pushed the shaker toward him. Meeting his bleak gaze, she drawled, "It'll make the crow taste better." His expression clearing, he laughed as they clasped hands.

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"Tobias and I had a horrible argument, Grand-mère." Troubled blue eyes met hers over a motley assortment of kitschy figurines. Harry had started the collection, but she had contributed her share too. "It seems all we do anymore is fight. I think I'm making a mistake."

*Ah, young love*, mused Pansy, surveying the dining table covered with shakers. The family didn't understand why she insisted on cleaning them herself. That's what house-elves were for.

"It was such a silly quarrel too. I want singing doves released at the ceremony. He claims they're too ostentatious. He's right, of course. But Grand-mère, I said the most awful things. How can he forgive me?" Nina cried, her eyes filling with tears.

Pansy found the shakers she was searching for. Smiling, she pushed the pair of ceramic doves toward her granddaughter. "The arguing isn't as important as the making up, love," she said gently. "The secret is to swallow your pride with a little salt."

A/N

Written for the pphp\_idws LJ community

Prompt: "No one ever choked to death from swallowing their pride."

## Yarkovsky Effect

*Chapter 3 of 12*

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

Canape 3: Yarkovsky Effect

This is how it goes: he's happy. An oblivious moon circling her treacherous sphere, caught in the gravity of fiery red hair, flashing whiskey eyes, and pale satin skin, content to float along, tethered to her in ignorant bliss.

Until his revolutions bring him within range of the other heedless moons traversing her circumference. Then, he is a satellite, traveling through space, searching out a friendlier planet. Friend. That's me. The invisible planet. The Ceres to her Jupiter. A dwarf planet inferior to she who has sixty-three moons. But a more hospitable clime, with my attention undivided. He idles in my benevolent ether, morose and beholden, vowing indignantly 'never again.' And for a time, I am happy. I am very nearly a real planet, with dark silky hair, ocean-deep eyes, and a button nose.

Then he wobbles out of alignment, once again entranced by her stronger pull, her conventional beauty. And I am alone. Not so much a planet as an asteroid, subject to her ever-changing whims. Bitter and discarded. The forgotten one.

It's a vicious cycle, predictable in its regularity, maddening and endless in its repetition. And I am pathetically eager to be a planet again—to know the comfort of an orbiting moon.

His orbit.

This is how it is: I have observed certain phenomenon, gathered facts, analyzed my findings. And I've come to a conclusion. The trick is to sever the weight of her influence, to make a clean cut through the trappings of his affection.

It was a simple scheme to lure her here. I am the friend, the Ceres to her Jupiter. Her radiant charms make her recklessly blind and complacent. Of course, the social civilities must be observed. A chat with tea and cakes, followed by a *Petrificus Totalus*.

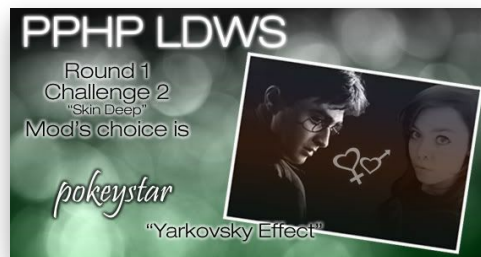
Now: I hold the delicate scalpel above her pale freckled skin and wonder just how deep his fascination goes.

A/N: "The Yarkovsky effect causes asteroids to change their orbits as a result of the way they absorb the sun's heat on one side and radiate it back later as they rotate around. This causes a slight imbalance that slowly, over time, alters the object's path. But the key thing is this: the effect acts much more strongly on the smallest objects, and only weakly on the larger ones." – MIT press release

I owe a big hug and a kiss to Ilkee, who *really* helped me whip this piece into shape. You are the best, sweetie.

Written for the pphp\_ldws community

Prompt: Beauty is only skin deep.



## The Perfect Pitch

Chapter 4 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

Canape 4: The Perfect Pitch

"There's a bright, golden haze on the meadooooooooow... There's a bright, gold—"

"It's a bit early for chipper, don't you think?" She sounded quite grumpy.

Harry paused while soaping his torso and thought about it.

*Obviously, someone hadn't had their tea yet.*

"He bag production he got walrus gumboot—" he warbled, rinsing off.

"That's disgusting." He opened the shower curtain in time to see her pert nose wrinkle. "Walrus gumboot sounds like something Peeves throws at ickle Firsties." She stood in front of the washbasin, applying mascara, her mouth forming a perfect oval.

The transformation from his Pansy to the public façade of Miss Parkinson was endlessly fascinating to Harry. And, if he had to admit, very arousing too.

He toweled off slowly, giving his girlfriend plenty of opportunity to watch the terry cloth glide over firm, muscled abs and pecs, drawing her attention to points south.

"If you want my body and you think I'm sexy... Come on, sugar, let me know—"

She stuck her tongue out at him in the mirror, but her eyes were hot. "That would be more persuasive if it were in key."

*Oh, really?* He'd show her persuasive, then.

Draping the towel over the rack, he ambled to the vanity, putting on his glasses in order to shave.

"Pansy, Pansy, give me your answer do..."

She crossed her eyes at him and picked up her toothbrush.

"I'm half crazy all for the love of you..." he continued while lathering his chin. Her eyes turned soft as her mouth filled with foam.

"It won't be a stylish marriage... I can't afford a carriage..." His eyes met hers in the mirror and he almost laughed at the comical shock suffusing her expression.

"But you'll look sweet upon the sea—mmmph!" And shaving lather met toothpaste foam in a spectacularly bad-tasting but somehow very right-feeling crescendo that put other cheesy musical finales to shame.

A/N: Songs in order: "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" Rodgers & Hammerstein; "Come Together" The Beatles; "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy" Rod Stewart; "Daisy Bell" Harry Dacre.

Written for the pphp\_idws community at Live Journal.

Prompt: a key

# Waterloo

Chapter 5 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

Canape 5: Waterloo

Pansy and Harry sat at the bar in the Leaky Cauldron and watched Ron get rejected for the seventh time that night. Ever since Hermione Malfoy-Granger had returned from her honeymoon, she had been on a crusade to improve unity in the Wizarding world and secure lifelong happiness for her circle of friends. 'What else did we fight for?' she would ask when any objections were raised.

That she'd hit on a solution both successful and efficient surprised no one, least of all her doting husband. In fact, Pansy was certain he was backing the scheme. In two years, she'd heard the bridal march so often she hummed it in her sleep. And the roster of newlyweds was rather impressive: Gregory Goyle and Susan Bones, Ginny Weasley and Blaise Zabini, Luna Lovegood and Theo Nott, Neville Longbottom and Hannah Abbott, Millicent Bulstrode and Ernie Macmillan—the list went on and on from there.

But then Hermione had met her Waterloo in the form of one Ronald Weasley. Pansy silently snorted. Really, it wasn't like the swot didn't have firsthand knowledge of the Weasel's unique blend of tactlessness, immaturity and complete inability to quit while he was ahead.

Pansy sipped her butterbeer and snorted again, this time audibly. Ron's current target had just left a visible handprint on his right cheek. Harry glanced over at her and they rolled their eyes together.

"This is impossible," Harry grunted.

"Agreed," replied Pansy. "That idiotic book of his didn't work. And neither did Zabini's expert lessons. Why on Earth did she think *we'd* be able to help?"

"She thought he'd have a better chance in the bars and we're her only single friends left to play wingman." Harry shrugged. "Hermione has a tough time giving up on anything. At least you're not stuck here with Zacharias Smith or Cormac McLaggen."

"Merlin forbid!" Pansy exclaimed while shuddering. "Relatively speaking, you're fantastic company." She sighed at his hurt look. "Harry, surely you know that's Slytherin speak for best friends forever."

He took a deep breath. "Just friends?" he asked as his finger stroked her inner wrist.

She closed her eyes, trying valiantly to ignore the tingles skittering up her arm. "If we do this, she'll be *insufferable*."

An uneasy silence stretched awkwardly between them as certain coincidences occurred to them independently.

"Bugger!" he breathed and his finger dropped away.

A favorite expression of Draco's, having to do with birds and stones, flitted through Pansy's brain.

*The Malfoys really would be unbearable.* Next thing they knew, they'd be attending the Snape-Trelawny nuptials.

They were both grateful for the distinct sound of a smack echoing through the nearly empty pub.

"That makes nine," Tom, the bartender, noted.

Pansy and Harry stood, putting their cloaks on. Ron stalked by them without a word, headed for the Floo. They turned to follow when Tom cleared his throat.

"See you next Tuesday, then?" he asked with a grin.

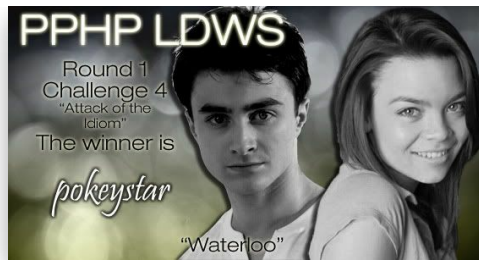
Harry and Pansy's only response was a heartfelt groan.

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Originally written for the pphp\_idws lj community

Prompt: "You can lead horse to water, but you can't make him drink."

Pretty:



## Atonement

Chapter 6 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

Canape Six: Atonement

Harry follows behind the white-robed figure gliding through the halls past sleeping portraits, under his Invisibility Cloak.

*Where is she going this late at night?*

In this, his “eighth” year at Hogwarts, he is having difficulty adjusting to a peaceful existence. He keeps seeing subterfuge in other students’ faces; evil lurking in the shadows.

Hermione says he’s suffering from post-traumatic stress—that they all are, to one degree or another, disgust for wizarding society’s propensity to shove unpleasantness under a metaphorical rug coloring her voice with contempt.

But he knows what he saw *this* time, and so he’s following her to... the Room of Requirement?

He’s so startled, he stops by the tapestry of Barnabas the Barmy and almost misses his chance to slip inside the room behind her.

Even if he’s still living in the past, he has certainly learned from it, so he watches silently as she puts down a satchel and opens it, taking out candles, a small broom, hammered silver bowls and glass apothecary jars. At last, he sees her pull out the small carved jade figurine of a crouching tiger, and he can’t keep quiet any longer.

“What are you doing with that?!” he exclaims as he throws off his Cloak.

“Atonement, Potter,” Pansy replies without batting an eye.

“Cho gave me that tiger to *protect* me from evil—” Harry grits out before Pansy cuts him off with a dismissive wave of her hand.

“She imbued it with a very strong love spell.” Pansy fusses with the bowls and candles, placing them deliberately on the floor while muttering under her breath. “Don’t just stand there like a gaping cod, Potter. Help me cleanse the circle. The shielding ritual is more powerful if the mark participates willingly.”

“I’m not fond of sweeping,” he mutters and picks up the broom.

“It’s not a career choice, Potter,” she retorts, filling the bowls with the directional elementals. “Now shut your gob and concentrate on feeling safe.”

He snorts, but falls silent. *Safe?* He wonders what that’s like. He thinks he’s felt something near it, a time or two at the Burrow, or up in the dormitory, snug in his bed, that first year of school.

“I shouldn’t have tried to turn you over to that monster.” Pansy’s voice is slightly shaky.

*So much for feeling safe.*

“Well—”

“I’d never been scared like that before. And I didn’t know what he was truly capable of... Draco told me a lot of things... After.” Her eyes slip to the glimmering Cloak lying in a puddle on the floor. “That slag has no right to manipulate you like this. No one does. You’ve done enough.”

He’s strangely elated and close to crying all at once.

“Don’t blubber now, Potter. We need to close the circle and invoke the ritual before that crappy green knickknack emits love goo all over us. I don’t fancy having to fumigate Mum’s ceremonial robes of eau de tart.”

They clasp hands and the ritual begins.

~\*~\*~\*~\*~

Originally written for the pphp\_ldws lj community

Prompt: Ancient ritual - made up or factual.

# New Appreciation

Chapter 7 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

## Canape Seven: New Appreciation

The spiked heels entered the lounge before he did, nearly shearing the head off the Fanged Geranium Neville had given them for an anniversary present. Not that Pansy would have minded. She was sure that plant hated her.

"Have a good day, darling?" she inquired as she looked up from the latest issue of Witch Weekly.

Her husband flounced into the room and dropped onto the couch next to her. He made a very pretty girl with his emerald eyes and unruly ebony curls. Pansy wasn't sure whether she should be proud or envious.

"No," he sniped. "My feet hurt. Wearing heels is worse than a bout of Cruciatius."

"Yes, I'm sure Voldemort made all the Death Eaters wear Jimmy Choos when they disappointed him."

"That would explain Snape's attitude." Harry pouted at his wife. "Feet. Hurt." He leaned back against the sofa arm and poked his toes into her hip.

Pansy sighed as she grasped his ankle. "You can always give up, Potter." She pressed her thumbs into the ball of his foot.

He moaned and said, "Not quitting. Not ever wearing heels again, either."

She rolled her eyes. "Stop being such a pansy."

"I don't know how you do it everyday."

"Do what?"

"It... IT!" He gestured at himself. "Makeup sticks to everything or sweats off in nothing flat. Stockings that run if you glance at them wrong. The bras have pointy bits that poke you in the ribs or under your arms—"

"You poor thing."

"Thank you for being only mildly patronizing."

"You're welcome," she said primly.

He rolled his eyes. "And these!" he exclaimed, cupping his breasts. "They jiggle all over the place. They're in the way constantly. I forget they're here and keep mashing them into things."

"You might want to get used to those," Pansy drawled. "We witches don't generally walk around groping ourselves."

"It's a bleeding wonder you don't!" Harry retorted. "I can't believe yours aren't bruised all the time."

"Years of practice," she muttered.

"I heard that." He sighed. "I can't wait until this assignment is over. To top it all off, I think I've wrenched my back. It aches something awful."

She made a noise of sympathy. "Should I get the hot water bottle?"

"I suppose," he bleated, reclining fully on the sofa. "You know, my abdomen hurts too. Like someone's poking needles through it."

She tilted her head to the side. "Oh? What did you have for lunch, Harry?"

"A chip butty and a chocolate shake."

"I think you're getting your period, luv."

Harry sat up, overcome with horror. "It feels like this?! Every month?!"

*That explains the excessive petulance... or not,* thought Pansy.

"My... Goddess, woman, you're a—" His eyes were filled with admiration.

"I know, I know." Her smile was smug.

"How long will this last?"

She shrugged. "About three to six days."

He groaned in misery. "Six days?"

"Look at the bright side, honey—at least you're not up the duff."

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~

Originally written for the live journal community pphp\_idws.

Prompt: Piece must include banter and be inspired by the quote ~ "What can I say? I'm a bad ass!"

# Nothing

Chapter 8 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter

## Canape 8: Nothing

Everyone is a little shocked when Ron shows up at Sunday brunch with Pansy in tow. After he and Hermione broke up, we'd all figured his next girlfriend would be a Lavender clone.

Pansy is nothing like Lavender, despite having floral names in common. She's defensive, a little brittle but definitely brilliant. Once she settles in, she's arguing with Bill about current exchange rates and the Goblin monopoly on wizarding loans, discussing advances in Potions with George, trading quips with Draco. Her gestures are graceful and ironic, a spark of punctuation to every word she utters, her face flushed, her eyes sparkling. She and Ron barely look at each other.

Once the meal is over, everyone splits up. Bill puts the kids down for a nap, Fleur helps Molly with the dishes, Draco and Hermione make their apologies and leave—she's taken too much time from her caseload as it is. I decline George and Arthur's invitation to listen to the Quidditch match—Ginny's game isn't being broadcast today—and wander past the old work-shed on my way to the pond.

A sudden gasp draws my attention, and I glance over to see Pansy backed up against the wall of the shed, shirt undone, bra pushed aside, Ron's hands up her skirt and his tongue down her throat.

My fists clench, my stomach rumbles and a harsh pain tightens my chest.

I know I shouldn't have eaten that last kipper.

*It's nothing.*

All week, I sit across from my partner, my best mate, in our office at the MLE. I'm irritable and restless, dismissive and short. We're under tremendous pressure to solve this murder case, but then, we're always under pressure about one case or another. Ginny hasn't been home in weeks, but then, she never is during Quidditch season.

Every once in a while, I look up to see Ron staring into space, gob hanging open, a fatuous expression on his face. I try to remember the last time I looked like that—felt like that.

I can't.

He's misplaced the evidence file again, and suddenly, it's all I can do not to sucker punch him in the gut. My best friend, the gormless wonder.

*It's nothing.*

A month later, Ginny's home at last, the Harpy Seeker victorious after battle. We meet up with Ron and Pansy at the Leaky Cauldron to celebrate the end of the season and give Ginny a chance to inspect her brother's new girlfriend.

We sit across from the happy couple, chatting about vicious Beaters and cases solved, Ministry gossip and business trends. Ron and Pansy touch each other constantly as they talk—elbows knocking, hips shifting against each other, fingers grazing over the peanut bowl.

She's wearing deep blue robes that match her eyes and a hint of cinnamon in the scent on her skin tickles my nose.

Ginny and I barely look at each other.

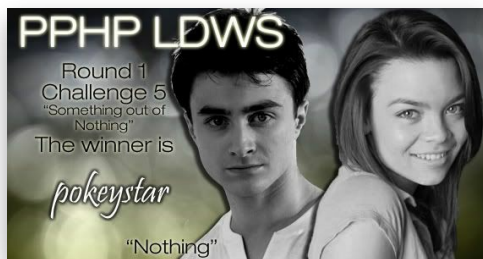
*It's probably nothing.*

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~

Originally written for the Live Journal community pphp\_ldws

Prompt: "Making something out of nothing."

Pretty:



# Somewhere Only We Know

Chapter 9 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

## Canape 9: Somewhere Only We Know

It is a waking dream.

It begins as all his waking dreams do. He is a young man again—supple of limb, fleet of foot, a hundred plus years falling away from his body as if they have never been.

He is walking into the forest, his movements calm and sure, a flood of memories buffering the pain and terror of *that day*. He ambles over the path worn smooth from endless dream-walking, the Snitch in his hand fluttering in time with the beat of his heart.

He passes the wispy silhouettes of mementos—events in his life played out on an invisible screen before his eyes, in his mind—centaurs and pink toads, chocolate frogs, hand-knitted sweaters and woolly socks. A brook meanders by the path, babbling like a fussy friend constantly reminding him of rules broken and papers due. He smiles to himself with bittersweet fondness, bidding his life farewell.

He stops near the fallen elm like he always does and brings the dully gleaming Snitch to his lips, whispering, "I am about to die."

And the wings cease fluttering, the golden metal cracking open to reveal nothing, the two empty halves rocking slightly in his flattened palm, as they always do. The Stone is not there.

He casts aside his broken hope and walks on alone, through a maze of twisted tree limbs grown so close together they resemble intertwined lovers. His heart pangs at the thought, remembering bright blue eyes, silken ebony hair and a sinfully wicked smile. Arms like alabaster, only warm and soft, always open to him.

He stumbles at last into the clearing, chilled beyond comfort by ghosts of the past—giant spiders ruthless and hungry, red eyes hostile and calculating. A wind blows through the field, the trees rustling overhead, and Harry thinks of his gentle friend, immense even in death, buried in a sun-soaked valley in France with his beloved Olympe.

*Beloved*. His heart aches. The dream ends here, always alone. He slumps onto a rough boulder, desolation threatening to swallow faith. He suddenly feels all of his hundred and twenty years.

Here at the end of everything.

Where he began again, one moonlit night long ago, making promises to have and to hold, to cherish and keep. A graceful figure in a slip of white linen, her laughter chasing the demons away. Ushering in an age of warmth and peace, marked by children, companionship and love.

A thestral approaches, luminous eyes holding his muddled gaze, a crooning whinny easing his despair. A velvet snout nudges his fingers, depositing a cracked object in his hand, and as the long-sought Stone turns over in his slick-skinned grasp, she appears before him.

Bright blue eyes, silken ebony hair and a sinfully wicked smile.

Arms like alabaster, only warm and soft, always open to him.

~\*~\*~\*~

A/N:

Originally written for the pphp\_idws community at Live Journal.

Prompt: Open your music library, pick any ONE song, write a drabble inspired by it. Song title must be the title of the drabble.

*Somewhere Only We Know* by Keane

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmXY2MSrguE>

"I am about to die." - p. 698, *Deathly Hallows* US edition.

# The Presumptive Proboscis

Chapter 10 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

## Canape 10: The Presumptive Proboscis

Normally, he wasn't one to complain. Hadn't he been pooped on by owls and never mentioned it? Being whomped up against people's heads could be very unpleasant. He understood that drool or snot or—he shuddered in horror—even vomit were unavoidable hazards in his line of work. But in all his years of service, he had never encountered anything like... her before.

She... sniffed him. Every morning while Owner was in the shower, she would roll over, press her nose down in his fluffy surface, and sniff. No—sniff was not an adequate word, really. She would breathe in. Deeply. Like a vacuum, only with more suction. He could feel her nose hair tickling bits of his covering. If he had a union, he would



lodge a grievance.

He could forgive her the lipstick, mascara... even nail polish that soiled his protective slip in her careless disregard for his appearance. He tried his best to forget that she *bit* him regularly during activities best left unmentioned. Her perfume lingered long after she went away, making him yearn for the ability to sneeze. She had even caused him bodily harm once, forgetting a lit cigarette too near his highly combustible stuffing.

He simply could not tolerate her casual invasion of his personal space. He tried to wait it out, assured of her eventual disappearance (based on prior observations), but as more and more of her things encroached on his territory—all of them pink, frilly and gaudy—he realized it was up to him to banish her for good.

And so, he declared war.

At 0730 the next morning, when the sound of falling water filtered through the door, he sucked in his sides and thrust his stiffest feathers forward, aiming them at the saucy snout plummeting toward his unspoiled envelope. Her startled cry of pain was like honey to his ears.

The resultant harsh thumping of his frame necessitated a slight recalculation in strategy.

The morning after that, once Owner had left the warmth of his bed and stumbled toward his ablutions, he flipped stealthily to his other side. Then he waited with bated breath for her audacious muzzle to swoop down upon his icy wrapper.

He savored her shriek of surprise for a full day and night. Until the following morning, when he was once again sniffed with impunity.

Clearly, she had not taken the hint.

His hand was forced. To save his dignity, he must violate his code of ethics. As Owner ambled out of the room, he reluctantly slid off the bed, torn between duty and pride. He heard her brassy beak topple against the extra-firm surface of the bed and the "Ouch!" that followed. But he felt no satisfaction; his victory was bitter and hollow.

A long arm reached down, and a hand snagged him up. And as he tolerated yet another hovering of his pristine veneer, he raised the flag of surrender, and thought, *There are worse things to suffer than a presumptuous proboscis.*

~\*~\*~\*~

A/N: Originally written for the pphp\_idws Live Journal community

Prompt: Write a 500-word drabble from an inanimate object's point of view.

## Level Best

*Chapter 11 of 12*

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

Canape 11: Level Best

The fire had burnt low in the grate by the time Pansy joined Harry on the Chesterfield. She collapsed gracefully into a heap next to him, burying her nose into his shoulder.

"Tell me again why we decided to have children," she said, her voice muffled by his hand-knitted jumper.

He sighed. "Honestly, I can't remember our reasons. Perhaps we were temporarily insane?" He draped an arm around her, massaging her shoulder as they contemplated the fire.

"You know, I think wolf spiders have it right," Pansy commented sleepily. "Don't they eat their young?"

"So I've heard. Terribly intelligent of them. A little pepper... problem solved." Harry leaned over, grabbed the wine and topped off their glasses.

"She wants to go to an overnight party for New Year's at the Scamanders."

"Over my dead body," Harry stated without opening his eyes.

"She'd be happy to arrange that, I'm sure."

Harry snorted. "Did she mention the fact that Luna and Rolf will be in Peru on a research excursion during this party?"

"Of course not." Pansy rolled her eyes. "What we don't know..."

"Won't hurt us." He drank his wine and refilled the glass. "Thank Merlin I never told Sophie about my Invisibility Cloak."

"Hear, hear," murmured Pansy with heartfelt agreement.

"And just think, we have all this to look forward to again in a few years, with James."

They both shuddered.

"Well, at least boys are easier," Pansy remarked.

She did her level best to ignore her husband's dark chuckle.

~\*~\*~\*~

Originally written for the pphp\_idws Live Journal community

Prompt: freestyle, 250 words.

Pretty:



## You Win

Chapter 12 of 12

A series of small bites featuring Pansy Parkinson and Harry Potter.

Canape 12: You Win

It was a rainy afternoon. The kind of dismal rain that encouraged one to stay inside, Saturday or no. So the Potters were. Inside. In their flat. Laying about. And Harry was bored, bored, bored.

So he turned to Pansy and said, "Let's play a game."

She half-shrugged. "I always win."

"Oh, do you now?" he replied with a glint in his eye.

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They lay across from each other on their bellies on the cleared-off carpet. A magically drawn circle separated the adversaries, comprising the battle field.

Pansy's tongue peeped out the corner of her mouth as she lined up her last shot. She casually flicked her thumb, which sent the smooth stone cradled on her grandmother's Aubusson rug in a true push toward Harry's last man, knocking it out of the circle as it careened toward the "mother" gobstone. Harry groaned and dropped his head to his folded arms just as a healthy dose of muck landed in his hair. It matched the patch decorating his neck.

"I win," Pansy murmured and smiled sweetly.

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The pile of cards teetered precariously on the wagon wheel coffee table between them. Harry flipped a card and added it to the stack. He had to nudge Pansy into action, as she was idly watching the wind flatten the raindrops against the window in odd, almost kaleidoscopic patterns. It was mesmerizing.

She flipped a card and carefully placed it atop the teetering tower, her eyes still on the window. She looked up at Harry's sharp intake of breath, just in time to see the pile blow up in his face, the flurry of cards making odd, almost kaleidoscopic patterns as they fell to the carpet.

"Best of seven, then?" she inquired smugly.

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Harry contemplated the checkered board before him, unwilling to concede defeat. No matter how he looked at it, his king was surrounded and about to be checkmated. By a pawn. Again. Pansy sat across from him, tapping her wand against her fingernails, producing an array of pretty effects, none of which seemed to please her much.

He finally tipped over his King with a sigh, and she stood up from the table, her expression carefully blank, not meeting his eyes.

It was the Slytherin equivalent of "HA!"

As she passed him on her way to the kitchen, he tripped her neatly, cushioning her fall to the floor. He swiftly and efficiently straddled her, her arms pinned over her head in his gentle grasp and grinned down at her. She struggled against him briefly, but there was no hope.

His smile widened.

A glint entered her eye and she rolled her hips upward, smiling sweetly.

Harry moaned and said, "You win," as his lips crashed down onto hers.

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Originally written for the pphp\_ldws LiveJournal community.

This was my first attempt at the 250 word freestyle entry, inspired by a friend's comment that he "always wins any game he plays" and an in-joke of sorts between Manda & me. It came in at 460-odd words. I didn't have the heart to cut it any further than I had.

I decided to present to my most worthy opponent, somandalicious, as either a congratulatory or consolation gift. You always win in my book, bb.

The Potters played Gobstones, Exploding Snap and wizard chess.